


Tomah Area Timber PUPS
(Partners United 4 Pre-School)
 FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN IS PUBLIC PRESCHOOL.

<p><u>Why offer public preschool?</u> Research says that high quality relationships and experiences during the first 5 years are the foundation for later learning and success in life. Public preschool "levels the playing field" by ensuring that all families have access to quality experiences.</p>	<p><u>How would the program be funded?</u> Wisconsin is unique in that it includes funding for "four-year-old kindergarten" in its school aid formula. This means state funds are earmarked for this program; funding preschool does not take aid away from other programs offered in the school district.</p>	<p><u>Are parents required to send their child to public preschool?</u> No, many children are already engaged in quality experiences at home or in other settings. Public programs provide all families with another option.</p>	<p><u>What does "community-based programs" mean?</u> It means offering quality public preschool to children where they already are during the day, and reducing the need for transportation and transitions. It also takes advantage of the successful programs in the community.</p>
<p><u>Where would programs be located?</u> There will be classrooms at Warrens and Oakdale Elementary Schools, Timber PUPS Learning Center (formerly RKLC on County CA), Away to Learn Childcare Center, and Tomah School of Childhood. Families already receiving services from a site would have first priority at that site.</p>	<p><u>Some families need child care, too. How would public preschool affect this?</u> Since some of the new preschool programs would be located in child care settings, parents who needed child care could enroll their child at these locations and pay for the child care services.</p>	<p><u>How many times would the program meet and for how long?</u> Timber PUPS classes will meet Monday-Thursday for a half day program, following the public school calendar.</p>	<p><u>Who are the teachers?</u> All teachers will be licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and employed either by the Tomah Area School District or by the child care/preschool facility. The goal is class sizes of less than 18 children with 2 adults.</p>
<p><u>Who is eligible for 4K?</u> Children must be four years old on or before September 1st of the year they enter and be a resident of the Tomah Area School District or apply for open enrollment.</p> <p><u>Would transportation be provided?</u> Transportation would be provided based upon the school district's transportation policies.</p>	<p><u>Could a child with a disability participate, too?</u> Yes, special education services in a public preschool are available, based upon the needs of the individual child.</p> 	<p><u>What are the Economic and Financial Benefits of 4K?</u> Research in Wisconsin shows for every \$1 invested in quality 4K, a school district could see \$0.68 in educational savings. <i>Belfield & Winter Perry Preschool Project</i> \$10,000 spent/year for one child can yield an estimated savings to society of approximately \$100,000/child. <i>Abecedarian Project</i></p>	<p><u>What are the Academic and Societal Benefits of 4K?</u> National research shows children with preschool achieve greater success during and after school years with higher reading and math tests, reduced special education placements, reduced occurrences of grade retentions, higher rates of high school graduation, lower rates of juvenile arrests, reduced arrests for violent offenses, increased employment rates and higher wages.</p> <p><i>Reynolds, Perry Preschool and Abecedarian</i></p>

What would children learn at preschool/4K?

Research indicates that a child's social & emotional well-being provides the foundation for later learning and success in life. Quality programs make each child's social and emotional development a top priority.

Timber PUPS is a developmentally appropriate program for 4-year-olds that does not replace 5-year-old kindergarten and is not a "down-sizing" of the 5-year-old kindergarten curriculum.

Creative Curriculum®, Handwriting Without Tears®, and the Second Step® programs would be used, based on the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (which provide a framework of appropriate expectations for children from birth until the end of kindergarten). Children would receive the same "curriculum" regardless of where they attended the Timber PUPS program.

In general, "curriculum" for young children is based on child development and the needs and interests of the children engaged in the program. A quality, developmentally appropriate preschool curriculum includes strong family involvement and promotes growth and learning in all areas of development:

- physical/motor
- social/emotional
- communication/language
- cognition/general knowledge
- "approaches to learning" - attitudes, habits, and learning styles

Four-year-olds learn best through play. Children would engage in daily opportunities to play and interact to develop social skills, self-control, and confidence. By choosing their own play materials, children learn how to make decisions and take responsibility. Teachers support this by setting up the classroom environment and providing materials and activities to foster learning in all areas of development. The session would be a blend of "child choice" and "teacher led" experiences. Music, art, read-aloud stories, and speaking and listening would be integrated into each session.

For more information...

Visit the school's website: www.tomah.k12.wi.us and click on 4K Kindergarten Ad Hoc Committee or visit the WI Dept. of Public Instruction (DPI) 4K Home page: <http://dpi.wi.gov/ec/ec4yrpag.html>