

Kindergarten Parent Handbook

Washington Township
School District
2010-2011



Washington Township School District 2010-2011

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General Information Requirements for Kindergarten Enrollment

In order to enter kindergarten in September, a child must be five on or before October 1st of the same year. The child's original birth certificate must be shown at the time of registration for verification.

Children must also have received the following vaccines. No child shall be admitted to school who has not submitted acceptable evidence of immunization according to the schedule specified below:

1. Diphtheria Tetanus Toxic and Pertussis (DTP)
 - a. A minimum of four doses of DTP is required. One dose must have been administered on or after the fourth birthday.
 - b. A child with any total of five valid doses of DTP, DtaP, DtaP/Hib, DTP/Hib, or DT will also be in compliance.
2. Polio Virus
 - a. A minimum of three doses of oral polio vaccine or enhanced IPV is required. One dose must have been given on or after the fourth birthday.
3. Measles
 - a. Two doses of a measles containing vaccine administered on or after the first birthday is required; vaccine doses must be separated by at least one month
 - b. Children vaccinated before their first birthday must be re-vaccinated, unless documented laboratory evidence of measles immunity is provided.
4. Rubella (German Measles)
 - a. All pupils must have had the rubella vaccine administered on or after the first birthday unless documented laboratory of immunity is provided.
 - b. Children immunized before one year of age must be re-immunized, preferably with MMR.
5. Mumps
 - a. All pupils must still have one dose of mumps vaccine administered on or after their first birthday.
 - b. Children immunized before the first birthday must be re-immunized, preferably with MMR
6. Hepatitis B
 - a. All pupils must have received three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine prior to kindergarten entrance.
 - b. Children presenting documented laboratory evidence of Hepatitis B immunity or a physician's written certification of past Hepatitis B disease constitutes a medical exemption and shall not be required to receive Hepatitis B vaccine.
7. Varicella (chickenpox)
 - a. All pupils must have had one dose administered after the first birthday or proof of disease immunity will be required.

Proof of dental and medical exams are also required and must be submitted prior to September 1st in order to attend school.

Transportation Requests

The Washington Township Board of Education's policy regarding alternate route requests is intended to reduce, as much as possible, potential errors of dropping students off at incorrect locations where they have no adult supervision. Only permanent route changes will be considered. Requests must be submitted in writing. Parents or other designated individuals are required to meet the kindergarten bus. If a person other than the parent is meeting the bus, notification must be sent to the office before the bus leaves the school.

- A. Occasional requests from parents to have their children dropped off at a location other than their own home will be accommodated only under the following circumstances:
 - a. The alternate stop is on the same bus run the student normally takes;
 - b. The requests are occasional and do not represent a standard pattern of dropping a student off at a different location;
 - c. Each request is for a single day;
 - d. Each request is made in writing, verified, and approved by the transportation coordinator or principal designee in the absence of the transportation coordinator, and presented to the bus driver. Without a note, the driver will drop the student off only at his/her assigned bus stop or return him/her to school;
 - e. Occasional requests will be denied if the student is to ride any other bus other than his/her normal bus route home (parents are requested to provide transportation).
 - f. Under no circumstances will a student be dropped off at one location on some days and another location on other days; and
 - g. Only in emergency situations will a student be permitted to ride a different bus other than his/her normal bus. Notification must be made to the transportation coordinator or school principal before such a change is made.
- B. Permanent requests from parents to have their children picked up or dropped off at a location other than their home, including babysitters, will be accommodated only under the following circumstances:
 - a. All requests must be submitted in writing to Cathy Kelly, Transportation Coordinator;
 - b. All requests will be for a permanent change for each day of the entire school year;
 - c. Under no circumstances will a student be dropped off at one location on some days and another location on other days. A child may be picked up at a different stop on the same bus route the child normally takes as long as the stop is an established stop. The parent is responsible to see that the child gets to the alternate stop, and the change is approved by the transportation coordinator. Additional stops will not be created for this purpose.
 - d. The permanent alternate stop will be the same for abbreviated sessions, half-days, emergency midday closings, days before vacations, etc.
 - e. Requests for a permanent change which requires a bus other than the one normally serving the student's own home will be accommodated only if space is available and only if the bus does not have to leave its normal routing within the boundaries for that school. If at any time during the school year new students are admitted to the district, babysitting requests will be removed from the route if the bus is over capacity to make room for the new student.
 - f. Requests will be filled on a first come first served basis. Requests will be accepted no later than August 1st prior to the start of the school year. Requests must be sent in writing to the transportation coordinator. Students will be assigned as previous year unless change is requested.
 - g. Spaces will not be reserved for babysitters or daycare centers. All requests must come directly from the parents or legal guardians.

If you have any questions regarding these policies or anything else regarding transportation, please contact Cathy Kelly at 908-689-1119.

School Nurse and Health Program

The Washington Township Board of Education employs the services of two full-time school nurses. If your child is absent from school, the nurse must be notified as to the nature of the absence. A message may be left on the nurse's absentee line 24 hours per day at 908-689-1188 ext 1.

In accordance with new Jersey State law (18A:40-7,8), a pupil may be excluded from school when she/he has symptoms that indicate a serious infection or illness and/or her/his condition endangers the health of other pupils. The parent will be notified of the reason. The child will be readmitted when the condition is no longer present and a doctor's note verifies that a child may return to school.

Please secure a doctor's note for the nurse if your child has any surgery, i.e. tonsillectomy, ear tubes, etc. and/or treatment for a broken bone or laceration. Please have the doctor indicate the name of the surgery or procedure and whether or not it will affect school activities.

Health records are maintained by the school nurse for every child in the Washington Township Schools. During the kindergarten year, your child will have her/his height and weight checked and will receive screenings for vision and hearing. Health screenings will continue throughout the elementary grades. The nurse will inform the parent if any deficit is found during the screening.

Whenever it is necessary for a child to be on medications during school hours, the medication must be prescribed by a physician and arrangements for dispensing said medication must be made through the office of the school nurse.

The physician must send written orders stating the name of the medication, dosage, the reason for its use, and the time it is to be given. It must also be sent in the original pharmacy container. This applies to both prescription and over the counter medication. Children are not permitted to transport medication on the school bus. In addition, the school must also have a note from the parent giving permission for the medication to be administered as prescribed by the physician. Medication forms can be picked up at the Health Office.

If a child becomes ill or is injured at school, she/he will receive first aid and will be kept at school until the parent is notified and is able to take the child home. It is most important that the school has an up to date emergency contact number to call if a parent cannot be reached.

Kindergarten Language Arts Overview

The Washington Township School District uses *Literacy by Design* as the central part of our Language Arts Curriculum. This series is built upon a solid foundation of research with systematic instruction and a variety of resources to ensure success for all. It establishes a clear instructional pathway for core instruction with adaptations to meet individual needs.

Teachers are able to use outstanding literature that motivates their students and helps to develop a life-long love of reading. The variety of texts used for different instructional purposes, including trade books, decodable books, informational texts that integrate the content areas, and leveled books to accommodate the range of abilities in every classroom. There is a built –in acceleration system which allows students to progress at different rates.

Below, please find the language arts skills our kindergarteners will learn throughout the year:

Literature	Informational Text	Foundational Skills	Writing	Speaking & Listening
<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ask/answer questions about key details in a text •Retell familiar stories including key details •Identify characters, settings, and major events in a story •Ask/answer questions about unknown words in a text •Recognize common types of texts •Name the author/illustrator of a story and define the role of each •Describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear •Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories 	<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ask/answer questions about key details in a text •identify the main topic and retell key details of a text •describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text •ask/answer questions about unknown words in a text •identify front cover, back cover, and the title page of a book •name the author/illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas of information in a text •describe the relationship between illustrations and the text in which they appear •identify the reasons an author gives support points in a text •identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic 	<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters •understand that words are separated by spaces in print •recognize and name all upper and lowercase letters of the alphabet •demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes) •recognize and produce rhyming words •count, pronounce, blend and segment syllables in spoken words •blend and segment onsets and rimes of single syllable spoken words •isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel and final sounds (phonemes) in (consonant-vowel-consonant) words •add or substitute individual sounds in simple, one syllable words to make new words •demonstrate basic knowledge of letter-sound correspondences •associate the long and short vowel sounds with common spellings •read common high frequency words by sight •distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ 	<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book •use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic •use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened •with guidance and support from adults, respond to questions and suggestions from peers and add details to strengthen writing as needed •with guidance and support from adults, explore a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers •participate in shared research and writing projects •with guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question 	<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners •confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood •ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood •describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail •add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions as desired to provide additional detail •speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly

Components of a Balanced Kindergarten Literacy Program

Reading Aloud	Shared Reading	Guided Reading	Independent Reading	Shared Writing	Interactive Writing	Writing Workshop	Independent Writing
<p>The teacher reads aloud to the whole class.</p> <p>The collection of literature used contains a variety of genres.</p> <p>These materials give children opportunities to listen to quality literature that they may not be able to read independently</p>	<p>Using an enlarged text that all children can see, the teacher involves children in reading together.</p> <p>The process introduces reading “big books,” poems, and songs.</p> <p>Children may also read the products of interactive or shared writing.</p>	<p>The teacher works with a small group of children who have similar reading abilities.</p> <p>The teacher selects and introduces new books and supports children reading the whole text by themselves.</p> <p>Teaching points are made both during and after the reading.</p>	<p>Children read on their own or with partners from a wide range of materials.</p> <p>Children have the opportunity to apply reading strategies learned during read-aloud, shared reading, and guided reading.</p> <p>Children then practice these strategies independently with a text.</p>	<p>The teacher and children work together as a large group to compose messages and stories.</p> <p>The teacher supports the process as a scribe and writes down verbatim what the children say.</p>	<p>The children and teacher compose messages and stories that are written using a “shared pen” technique that involves the children in the writing.</p> <p>The teacher asks the child to help her write certain words or sounds as needed on chart paper in front of the whole class.</p>	<p>The children engage in writing a variety of texts.</p> <p>The teacher guides the process and provides instruction through mini-lessons and conferences.</p>	<p>Children write their own pieces.</p> <p>Children are provided with a chance to write for different purposes across the curriculum.</p> <p>Fosters creativity and the ability to compose stories and generate ideas.</p>

Ways to Help at Home

Children benefit when teachers and parents reinforce the same concepts and ideas. In order for this to happen, teachers and parents must work together. Below, you will find some suggestions of how to support your child in reading instruction.

Phonemic Awareness

- Sing alphabet songs with your child
- Read stories that your child chooses
- Help your child clap the beats of syllables in words
- Play with language and rhymes
- Sing songs that manipulate phonemes, such as *The Name Game*

Phonics

- Encourage your child to point to words and say them out loud when writing
- Help your child sort words by long and short vowels
- Help your child decode large words by breaking them into smaller chunks
- Play spelling or word games such as Scrabble and Hangman

Fluency

- Read aloud to your child
- Allow your child to reread his or her favorite books
- Model reading for fun and pleasure
- Talk to your child about “reading like you are talking”
- Read a sentence aloud and then invite your child to repeat the sentence (echo reading)

Vocabulary

- Read a variety of genres to your child
- Talk to your child about daily events
- Search for new words in texts with your child
- Help your child learn new vocabulary based on hobbies or interests

Comprehension

- Ask your child to make predictions about what might happen in a story before reading it
- While reading, ask “who, what, why, when, and where” questions about a book
- Ask your child questions about the topic of the book before reading it to build background knowledge
- Ask your child what the main idea or message in a book might be

Concepts of Print

- Point out the title, illustrator’s and author’s name to your child
- Track the words with your finger as you read them
- Play games to match capital and lowercase letters
- Make books with your child
- Expose your child to many types of print

Kindergarten Mathematics Overview

The Washington Township School District uses *Trailblazers* as the central part of our Math Curriculum. This series is built upon a solid foundation of research with systematic instruction and a variety of resources to ensure success for all. It establishes a clear instructional pathway for core instruction with adaptations to meet individual needs.

Problem solving is seen as the connecting thread throughout the strands. Students are encouraged to become active participants in their understanding of mathematical concepts and procedures as they apply them in a problem solving environment.

The most effective way for elementary students to construct a foundation for mathematics is through hands-on experiences. Student motivation and curiosity increase when engaged in hands-on activities. Students make discoveries helping them draw conclusions which reflect myriad ways to reach a solution; therefore empowering them to become independent thinkers who are enthusiastic about mathematics.

Below, please find the language arts skills our kindergarteners will learn throughout the year:

Counting and Cardinality	Operations and Algebraic Thinking	Number Operations in Base Ten	Measurement and Data	Geometry
<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • count to 100 by ones and by tens • count forward beginning from a given number within the known sequence • write numbers from 0 to 20 • represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0-20 • understand the relationship between numbers and quantities • connect counting to cardinality • count to answer “how many?” • identify whether the number of objects in a group is greater than, less than, or equal to • compare two numbers between 1 and 10 	<p>The learner will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • represent addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, sounds, acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, or equations • solve addition and subtraction word problems • add and subtract within 10 • decompose numbers less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way • for any number less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way • for any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to the given number • fluently add and subtract within 5 	<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compose and decompose numbers from 11 to 19 into ten ones and some further ones 	<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight • describe several measurable attributes of a single object • directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common to see which object has “more of/less of” the attribute, and describe the difference 	<p>The learner will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using correct terms • correctly name shapes regardless of their orientations or overall size • identify shapes as two dimensional or three dimensional • analyze and compare two and three dimensional shapes (size and orientation) • model shapes in the world by building shapes from components and drawing shapes • compose simple shapes to form larger shapes

Ways to Help Your Child Practice Problem Solving Strategies

Draw a picture

When a problem is not illustrated, it is sometimes helpful for students to draw pictures or diagrams. A picture may reveal things that are not obvious from just reading the problem. A simple picture using symbols may help clarify the problem

Organize Information

A useful problem solving strategy is organizing information into some type of list, graph, or table.

Act it Out

Experiential learning is sometimes the best way to find solutions or discover strategies that will lead to solutions. Acting out a problem can involve performing the roles of people mentioned in the problem. It can also mean using concrete objects to mimic actions described in the problem.

Guess and Check

This is probably the most commonly used strategy used outside of school. In this strategy, one guesses at an answer, then checks the guess to see if it works. By repeating this procedure, the answer, or at least a close approximation, can often be found. Of course, blind guessing should be discouraged however “guess and check” is used in most fields of science and mathematics where hypotheses are generated and verifying them. Kindergarteners are not yet afraid to guess and be wrong. When using this strategy with your child, be sure to reinforce that even if a guess is incorrect, valuable information can still be gained.

Kindergarten Science Overview

The kindergarten science curriculum places a particular focus on a hands-on, minds-on approach to learning, using inquiry process skills and the scientific method. The curriculum is designed to develop students' understanding of key science concepts and science process skills. It engages students in active construction of knowledge through experiences and allows students to learn new science content and increase scientific literacy.

Through a series of planned learning experiences, students will explore specified major understandings. They will learn to question, hypothesize, experiment, gather data, organize results, and draw conclusions based on their own actions. Moreover, each unit establishes vocabulary, content literacy, and idea development.

The kindergarten curriculum consists of units including wood and paper; animals; weather; seasons; space; and motion. Embedded in each of these units is the study of scientific thinking.

Kindergarten Social Studies Overview

The kindergarten social studies program focuses on helping each student develop an awareness of oneself as a growing individual. Each child's unique qualities, as well as similarities to others are stressed. In addition, the child's relationships with others in the classroom and the school become sources for social studies learning. Children begin to learn about their roles as citizens by accepting rights and responsibilities in the classroom and learning about rules and laws. Children also begin to examine similarities and differences among families. Finally, children begin to define needs and wants, recognizing that people rely on each other for goods and services in families, schools, and neighborhoods.

The kindergarten social studies curriculum also includes a focus on health. The children focus on healthy bodies, food and nutrition, exercise, dental health, and safety rules.