

Your Child's Transition to Elementary School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is time to start planning for your child to move on to kindergarten and/or other special education programs next fall.

There will be changes as your child leaves the Early Childhood Special Education program and enters elementary school. Any transition can be a time of both excited anticipation and of concerns for both you and your child.

In the kindergarten setting, your child will meet new friends and teachers and experience many new fun and exciting learning situations. An important element of the transition planning is to make sure your child's individual needs can be met within the kindergarten setting.

This booklet was designed to help explain procedures, programs, timelines and services, and how you can help your child prepare for kindergarten.

You are the link between Early Childhood Special Education and elementary school. You are the person who knows your child best and who will always be there from year to year and grade to grade. The school and family working together will make this a positive experience.

Welcome to the next step in your child's school life!



As Your Child Moves From the Early Childhood Program into Kindergarten

The District's kindergarten curriculum is based on the belief that all children are valuable, unique and capable of learning and achieving. Our kindergarten programs focus on the academic, social and personal development of all students.

All of our programs provide safe, nurturing and challenging environments in which children can acquire knowledge and skills, think critically and creatively, appreciate diversity and develop positive attitudes toward self and others. Each program incorporates basic concepts of the core academic disciplines including:

Literacy	Science	Technology
Physical Education	Math	Music & the Arts
Social Studies	Health	Personal & Social Skills

Recognizing that not every child learns the same way or has the same needs, the White Bear Lake Area School District offers a variety of kindergarten program options.



White Bear Lake Area Public Schools

Leading minds to learning, hearts to compassion, and lives to community service.

4855 Bloom Avenue, White Bear Lake, MN 55110



Kindergarten Registration

Please register your child at any of our elementary schools or at the Centralized Enrollment Office at the District Center. If you have any questions, please contact the Student Information Registrar at 651-407-7674.

Alternate Formats

Hmong Translations

LUS CEEB TOOM! Yog koj xav tau tsev kawm ntawv, cov ntawv txhais ua lus Hmoob, thov hu rau Mas Lias Xyooj (651) 407-7626 los yogh u rau Xw Xyooj (651) 407-7623.

Spanish Translations

ATENCIÓN: Si usted necesita hablar con una persona que hable Español, por favor, llame al (651) 407-7625.

Our Schools

Birch Lake Elementary

1616 Birch Lake Avenue, White Bear Lake (651-653-2776)

Hugo and Oneka Elementaries

14895 Francesca Avenue, Hugo
(651-653-2798)

4888 Heritage Parkway N, Hugo
(651-288-1800)

Kindergarten and grade 1 students attend Hugo Elementary.
Students in grades 2-5 attend Oneka Elementary.

Lakeaires Elementary

3963 Van Dyke Street, White Bear Lake (651-653-2809)

Lincoln Elementary

1961 Sixth Street, White Bear Lake (651-653-2820)

Matoska International IB World School

2530 Spruce Place, White Bear Lake (651-653-2847)

Otter Lake Elementary

1401 County Road H2, White Bear Lake (651-653-2831)

Vadnais Heights Elementary

3645 Centerville Road, Vadnais Heights (651-653-2858)

Willow Lane Elementary

3375 Willow Avenue, White Bear Lake (651-773-6170)

Your child must be 5-years-old by September 1st, to enter kindergarten.



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What You Can Do To Ensure a Smooth Transition For Your Child

You can help prepare both your child and yourself for the changes that will occur as your child enters kindergarten

Be as actively involved as possible

1. Complete the kindergarten registration packet. *(Packets will be sent by mail in early January).*
2. Take a tour of your district schools during Welcome to White Bear Week, January *(Watch for information in the kindergarten registration packet.)*
3. Attend Kindergarten Parent Information and Registration Night January *****pm at your child's school.
4. Consider attending school functions (i.e. carnival, concerts), and playing on the playground.
5. Attend spring Kindergarten Gathering in *****.

Talk with parents whose children attended kindergarten

They may be able to provide you with support and information based on their own experiences.

Work with your child to develop skills for kindergarten

See page 8 for details of how you can help your child prepare for kindergarten.

Welcome to White Bear Week

Go to any White Bear Lake Area elementary school office at a time listed below to join a tour and learn about the elementary and district program offerings:



Kindergarten Registration Night

January

This in-depth session offers parents of future kindergartners an opportunity to learn more about the District's kindergarten curriculum and programs, ask questions, visit a kindergarten classroom and register their child for kindergarten.

School Functions

For a complete listing of school events, see the district and school websites.
<http://www.isd624.org/>

Kindergarten Gathering

Students and families have a chance to meet the kindergarten teachers and tour the school at this exciting, interactive evening event hosted at elementary schools throughout the District.

Kindergarten Program

All kindergarten classes utilize curriculum that focuses on differentiated literacy and math instruction. Students are immersed in the world of language and reading while applying their skills in cooperative, small group activities.

Hands-on science activities provide children with an opportunity to explore the world around them. Social studies, health, music and the arts are integrated throughout the curriculum through movement, imagination, conversation and discovery.

Each of our kindergarten program options are based on state and national standards for kindergarten instruction. The district offers a half-day and full-day kindergarten option.

Programs are offered at all District elementary schools. Each school serves a designated area of the district. The District 624 boundary map is available at www.whitebear.k12.mn.us/district_map.html.

For kindergarten program options see next page.



Timeline for Your Child's Transition from Early Childhood Special Education to Kindergarten

October - January

- ◆ ECSE staff will contact you regarding your child's transition to kindergarten, and which programs and services are most appropriate for your child.
- ◆ Your ECSE case manager may suggest that you visit with Special Education staff to discuss which programs may benefit your child (EBD- Emotional Behavior Disorder, ASD - Autism Spectrum Disorder, DCD - Development Cognitive Disability)

January - May

- ◆ You are encouraged to visit your neighborhood kindergarten program during Welcome to White Bear Week.
- ◆ You will receive kindergarten registration packets. Please complete the registration information even though final decisions regarding fall placements have not been made.
- ◆ You are encouraged to attend the Kindergarten Parent Information & Registration Night held at your neighborhood school on January 19.
- ◆ ECSE staff will schedule a transition planning conference with your family. The team will identify your child's specific strengths and areas which will assist in developing the most appropriate services for your child in kindergarten.

April

- ◆ You and your child should attend Spring Kindergarten Gathering April 26 at your neighborhood school or the Special Education program your child will be attending.

September

- ◆ The ECSE-K staff will consult with the kindergarten teacher and kindergarten special education case manager to ensure your child's smooth transition to kindergarten.



Kindergarten Program Options

Kindergarten

Kindergarten is a fee based option available for families in the White Bear Lake Area School District in which students are involved in a full-day kindergarten program with a certified, licensed kindergarten teacher.

Your Kindergarten Classroom Visit

You may visit a kindergarten classroom during Welcome to White Bear Week. On the day of your visit, keep in mind that the children in the classroom you are observing have been attending kindergarten since September. Daily schedules may vary. You are seeing only a small part of the kindergarten program. *If you cannot attend Welcome to White Bear Week in January and wish to schedule a visit, please call the school office to set up an appointment.*

With your child in mind, think about the following as you observe the class:

1. The language used in the classroom

- ◆ How many steps are given at one time in the directions?
- ◆ What types of words (vocabulary) might my child be expected to understand?
- ◆ How long are the sentences?

2. How much independence is expected?

- ◆ When going to the bathroom?
- ◆ In caring for materials?
- ◆ With hats, mittens, coats and boots?

3. What are the classroom rules?

4. What skills might my child need to work to develop before they enter kindergarten?

See page 8 for skills and how you can help your child prepare for Kindergarten.

Kindergarten Extended Day

Kindergarten Extended Day is a kindergarten option for parents who want their child to attend their school of choice for kindergarten program and have high quality child-care for the remainder of the day.



The Purpose of the Transition Team Meeting

- ◆ To discuss your child's strengths and your concerns.
- ◆ To help the kindergarten staff learn about your child.
- ◆ To develop the next IEP, including:
 1. To discuss your child's school placement and what special services may be needed.
 2. To discuss how often and where the services may be offered.
 3. To plan for any adaptations that may be needed for the curriculum, the classroom, or the building to meet your child's special needs.
- ◆ To discontinue special education services if your child no longer needs them, and plan for kindergarten instruction and supports for a successful school year.



Your Child's Transition Meeting

At your kindergarten transition meeting, your team will review progress, develop goals and objectives, and plan continued services, including services for next fall. A variety of kindergarten options are available. In your discussion with your team, you will identify which programs and services are appropriate. These services will be listed on the IEP (Individual Education Plan) that moves on to kindergarten.

You will be invited to a parent meeting regarding transition to kindergarten before the end of the current school year.

The Kindergarten Transition Team

The "transition team" members are different for each child, based on his/her needs. The team will be made up of parents/guardians, the Early Childhood Special Education case manager, and a kindergarten representative. Other team members may include: a speech/language pathologist, a special educator, the principal, occupational and/or physical therapists, or other support services.



Kindergarten Special Education Services

The district provides a full array of services to meet the unique needs of kindergarten students with special needs

We are committed to providing all children with appropriate social and academic opportunities in an environment with their peers. Special Education staff will provide services.

Your Child May Receive One or More of the Following Services *(Based on your child's needs as indicated on the IEP)*

- ◆ Speech and Language Services
- ◆ Emotional/Behavioral Support
- ◆ Academic Support
- ◆ Occupational Therapy
- ◆ Physical Therapy
- ◆ Nursing Services
- ◆ Vision/Hearing Services

Your Child's Transition Team May Also Recommend

- ◆ Inclusion Services in the Student's "Neighborhood" School
- ◆ Placement in a Special Program (Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD), Children with Language, Interaction and Processing Disorder (CLIP/ASD), and Emotional/Behavior Disorders (EBD)).

Guiding Principles for Kindergarten Special Education Services

All children in kindergarten will show progress in

- ◆ Academics
- ◆ Social Skills
- ◆ Emotional Development
- ◆ Motor Skills
- ◆ Language Development

Inclusion of all children is a priority

Socially, all students need to be educated in the least restrictive environment, so that parents and children feel a sense of belonging and community.

- ◆ To Develop Self Esteem
- ◆ To Learn From Peer Models
- ◆ To Build On Their Individual Strengths
- ◆ To Learn Socially Appropriate Behaviors

Instruction is provided based on each child's abilities

Through modifications and adaptations, the IEP team will work together to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum to help children meet their goals and objectives.

You Can Help Your Child Prepare for Kindergarten

Help your child develop skills that support success at school by providing experiences in the following areas:

Academic Skills

1. Say name, address and phone number
2. Print name (readable) using upper case and lower case letters
3. Identify letters in his/her name
4. Identify and name basic colors – red, orange, blue, green, yellow, purple, black, brown and white
5. Listened to 1,000 books read to him/her
6. Listen and repeat short sentences correctly
7. Complete a sentence when given a prompt i.e.: A fish swims in the ____.
8. Know & understand prepositions in, out, over, under, front, back, etc.
9. Sing “ABC” song
10. Exposure to “ABC’s” – point out letters in environment, in random order
11. Count to 20
12. Point to and name shapes i.e.: circle, square, rectangle, triangle
13. Name common objects
14. Point to and name body parts - ankle, knee, wrist, chin, knee, thumb
15. Sort common objects into categories i.e.: furniture, kitchen tools, toys, clothing
16. Know the difference between letters and numbers
17. Exposure to rhyme i.e.: Dr. Seuss books, Raffi music

Social/Emotional Skills

18. Share and take turns
19. Follow directions with up to three steps i.e. Get your book, put it on the table and sit down
20. Use good manners by saying “please” and “thank you,” etc.
21. Able to separate from his/her parent(s)
22. Can look at and listen to a speaker
23. Usually expresses thoughts and feelings clearly

Motor Skills

24. Practice correct pencil/scissors grasp
25. Able to color and cut
26. Able to run, hop and jump

Self Help Skills

27. Practice good hygiene (blow nose, wash hands, keep fingers out of mouth)
28. Use bathroom independently
29. Dress self (zipper, snap, button, shoes/boots on)

We realize that children develop at different rates and many of these skills will continue to develop during the kindergarten year. We do not expect these skills to be mastered upon coming to kindergarten.

Skills list taken from Early Kindergarten Concepts designed by kindergarten & early childhood teachers.



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