



Learning Through Play

Full-Day Kindergarten at BVSD

BOULDER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Early Childhood Education

Spark a lifetime of achievement.

303-447-1010
(English/Spanish)

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Welcome to Kindergarten



Transitioning to kindergarten is an exciting time in a young child's early learning years. Transitions in early childhood education are ones filled with many questions and new learning opportunities for you and your child. As educators and parents, we know that a smooth transition to kindergarten is an essential part of a child's academic experience.

The Early Childhood Education department believes there are **three keys** to a successful transition into kindergarten:

1

Start sooner.



Thrive throughout. It is important to build a collaborative relationship with your child's elementary school, teachers, and principals. Strong communication with your child's school is key.

2

Bright minds light up those around them.



Young children need support and guidance to help ease the transition and promote a successful school experience, both academically and emotionally. Summertime and the year before kindergarten is a wonderful time to promote reading, language, and social emotional activities to ensure young learners are ready for the transition to school in August. (Strategies begin on page 7)

3

And away we learn!



It is important for the family to know that sometimes the transition process can take time. Transitions occur frequently throughout one's lifetime. The child who is able to feel safe in a gradual transition will become more confident for future transitions in life.



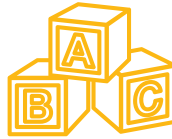
Eleven “I am learning” Skills



Boulder Valley School District has created eleven “I am learning” skills that we see as important opportunities for a successful transition into kindergarten:

1 I am learning through play. Play is how a child makes sense of the world and it helps them understand abstract concepts, improve thinking abilities, and practice making sense of new information.

2 I am learning to follow rules and routines in different places. Rules help children feel safe and help them understand expectations in school.



3 I am learning about numbers. Counting helps children create a foundation for future math skills.



4 I am learning to hold pencils, markers, and crayons with three fingers. Learning the correct grip will make drawing and writing easier for children.

5 I am learning to dress myself, keep myself healthy and use the bathroom independently. Learning self-help skills creates independence for young children.



6 I am learning to answer questions and ask for help using a complete sentence. The more students hear words and practice, the more their vocabulary expands.

7 I am learning to use writing to express myself. Don't worry if I only make partial letters to draw. Writing everyday helps children express ideas, share information, relate to others, and learn.

8 I am learning the names and sounds of letters, especially those in my name! When adults sing together with children, read together and practice letters, it helps children get ready to read.

9 I am learning to follow 3 – 4 step directions (such as get your coat, get your backpack, meet me at the door). This is an important skill to help children become more independent.

10 I am making connections between new information and what I already know. Memories and experiences help children solve more challenging tasks.

11 I am learning to focus and engage with activities that are appropriate for me. Being able to attend to tasks and ignore distractions are skills that will be helpful throughout my life and K-12 school experience.

Keep in mind, children develop at different rates, and there is a wide range of what typical looks like at this age. Boulder Valley School District ensures that administrators and teachers recognize the whole child. As educators we are prepared and ready to work with children who have a wide variety of skills and learning styles. All BVSD elementary schools have two kindergarten welcome days to start the kindergarten school year. Your child's school will provide more information about these welcome days at the start of the year. The purpose of these days is to provide our BVSD incoming kindergarteners with a couple of days to help ease the transition and promote a successful school experience, both academically and emotionally. We see each child as an individual and want to spark their curiosity and ensure success in the early years of their educational journey.

Robbyn Fernandez

Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Kimberly Bloemen

Executive Director, Early Childhood Education

Kindergarten



Play-Based

Learning

Full-Day Kindergarten Development and Learning Beliefs

In Boulder Valley School District, we welcome every child into kindergarten and believe every child deserves to have access to an inspired education that provides an excellent foundation for continued learning and growth. Boulder Valley School District leaders, teachers, and staff work together to create an inspiring learning culture where students know they're valued, they belong, and they can make their own mark, so there are equitable outcomes for all.

We believe...



Infusing core elements of compassion, curiosity, joy, and learning through play into the classroom environment, the language we use, and the way we approach lessons.

Encouraging children to take a lead in their own learning.

Every family and child and all educational professionals realize the benefits of interacting with each other from an inclusive mindset.

Children's play is in work and work is in play.

Bringing hope and joy to our everyday work so we can create thoughtful, intentional, and engaging learning experiences for all students.

Equity and inclusion are at the forefront of all that we do.

As leaders, teachers, and staff are attentive and responsive to the needs of all children and their families.



Sharing mutual responsibility for building caring relationships with each other and with the students and families we serve.



Focusing on where children will thrive based on knowing their strengths, needs, and interests. We integrate both developmental and academic best practices to provide an exceptional foundation in each child's learning path.



We're excited about sparking a love of learning and providing pathways to progress for each student.



Education extends beyond our walls and helps to remove institutional barriers to success.



Partnering with families to create fun and engaging learning experiences both in and out of the classroom.



Commitment to relational trust is designed to ensure a seamless transition from school to home that leads to the best possible outcomes for every student.



Importance of Intentional Play in the Full-Day Kindergarten Schedule

Boulder Valley School District believes the foundation of early learning is the integration of hands-on, complex, long-lasting play, which focuses on supporting and building all areas of child development throughout the curriculum and instructional day.

Why is play important?

Boulder Valley School District believes "rich play experiences are developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to build self knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Play leads to a powerful sense of self or self-concept. It helps children feel capable of influencing others and creating harmony and order in all positive and acceptable ways. Play builds abilities such as problem solving, persistence, and collaboration-abilities people draw upon throughout their lives". (Jones & Cooper, 2006)

Kindergarten teacher role in play:

"Teachers' thoughtful planning of the materials and activities to support educational goals in each center is essential. As children involve themselves in the various activities, the teacher talks to them, gives them information or feedback, and extends their thinking and engagement. Children largely direct their play along the lines of their ideas and interests, with teachers getting involved at times to provide support and interact with them". (Mraz, Porcelli, Tyler, 2016)

Kindergarten Instructional Components



Arrival & Morning Meeting

10 minutes daily

Music and Movement

Integrated throughout the school day

Recess & Lunch Time

40 minutes daily

Recess

One additional **20 minute** recess daily

Reading

100 minutes four days a week

Phonics

30 minutes daily

Writing

45 minutes four days a week

Mathematics

50 minutes four days a week

Science and Social Studies

60 minutes one day a week AND
Daily integration of science and social studies concepts into literacy, math, and intentional play blocks of time to include collaborative investigations and hands-on learning centers

Intentional Play

50 minutes daily

Art/Music/PE

45 minutes daily
Students have a daily specials class (art, music, or PE). These classes rotate on a weekly basis, so students will attend one week of the same specials class before switching to the next one (i.e. one week of art, then one week of music, then one week of PE). *Certain exceptions may occur during the first and last weeks of school or around special events

Clean Up & Dismissal

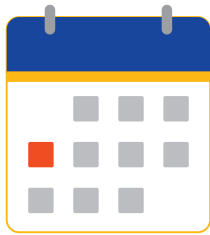
5 - 10 minutes daily

Supporting Your Child's Development and Transition into Kindergarten

Kindergarten Readiness



Boulder Valley School District has developed a school readiness calendar with transition to kindergarten activities each month that can fit into your everyday life. Keep in mind, children develop at different rates, and there is a wide range of what typical looks like at age 5 and 6. Boulder Valley School District ensures that administrators and teachers recognize the whole child. As educators, we are prepared and ready to work with children who have a wide variety of developmental and academic skills and learning styles. We see each child as an individual and want to spark their curiosity and ensure success in the early years of their educational journey.



Find the school readiness calendars at bvsd.org/spark



Scan to visit bvsd.org/spark

Areas of Learning and Development at Home

Social and Emotional Development



What is **social & emotional development**?

Social and emotional development is a child's ability to understand his/her own, peer and adult feelings, regulate one's own feelings, and build relationships with others.

Examples of home social and emotional activities to support your incoming kindergarten student to school:

- setting playdates with friends
- visiting local parks and community activities to give your child the opportunity to play and interact with friends of the same age group
- playing games so your child has experience learning to take turns during an activity
- giving opportunities to make choices at home and in play



Areas of Learning and Development at Home



Physical Development

What is physical development?

Physical development is a child's ability to use gross motor (large muscle) and fine motor (small muscle) skills at school and home.

Examples of home physical activities to help in kindergarten could include;

- providing materials to use at home, such as scissors, markers, crayons and paper
- encouraging children to use squirt bottles, eye droppers and playdough during play to strengthen hand muscles
- playing in the park on the playground equipment, running in the fields, playing sports



Cognitive Development

What is cognitive development?

Cognitive development is a child's ability to analyze, solve problems, and reason within the classroom.

Examples of home cognitive activities to help in kindergarten could include:

- providing time, space, and a variety of interesting materials at home appropriate for a 4 or 5 year old
- allowing children to be innovative and creative by using tubes, old boxes, or recycled materials to make items, and giving children the opportunity to make choices in play
- asking your children about their experiences by asking questions and prompting them to include details such as; What did you think would happen? Could you tell me more about the dog you saw? What did you like best about playing at the park today?
- visiting local parks, museums, participating in activities in your local community, taking walks and talking about what you see on your walk with your child



Language and Literacy Development



What is literacy and language development?

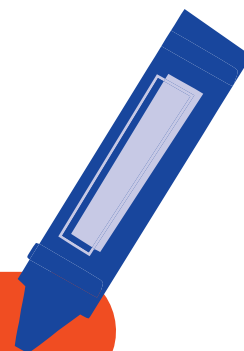
Language and literacy development refers to a child's ability to communicate thoughts and ideas verbally and in writing.

Examples of home language and literacy activities to help in kindergarten could include:

- using magnetic letters on the refrigerator
- drawing or painting with letters, singing the alphabet song, reading books about the alphabet, like Chicka, Chicka, Boom, Boom or The Alphabet Tree
- giving your child the opportunity to help write shopping lists
- writing about their drawings
- making writing materials readily available in the home so children can write and draw
- using picture schedules
- giving children chores with two to three steps to complete
- reviewing the steps for washing and drying hands or other routines at home
- talking often with your children and describing objects in their environment



Mathematics Development



What is mathematics development?

Mathematics development is a child's ability to manipulate numbers, shapes, and patterns.

Examples of home mathematics activities to help in kindergarten could include:

- providing materials for children to count and sort by shape, color, etc.
- singing songs about numbers
- counting objects in your home or when on a walk with your child



Contact Us



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Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Kindergarten Registration, Enrollment and Entrance Requirements

Students are eligible to attend kindergarten if they turn five years of age on or before October 1st of the year of enrollment.

Learn more

Want to learn more about kindergarten in BVSD? See our online guide to kindergarten with all the information you need to know: bvsd.org/spark





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