



GROWING INTO KINDERGARTEN 2025-2026

A HELPFUL GUIDE FOR INCOMING KINDERGARTEN FAMILIES

WELCOME!

It is with great excitement and anticipation that we welcome you and your student to Kindergarten with the Waterloo Community School District (WCSD).

At Waterloo Schools, we believe in creating a safe and nurturing environment where every child can learn, grow, and thrive. Our dedicated team of teachers and staff are here to make sure your student has a positive learning experience. We want to set the stage for a lifelong love of learning!



Communication is key to a successful partnership between home and school. We want to hear from you, have you at school events, and join in your student's learning adventure. Your thoughts matter and we are excited to team up to help your child learn and grow!

We know you may have a lot of questions. We hope this guide helps answer those for you. You can also find information at WaterlooSchools.org.

Thank you for letting us be a part of your family's learning journey. We look forward to a year filled with joy, discovery, and many exciting achievements.

Thank you for choosing Waterloo Schools!

**SCAN TO WATCH:
WELCOME TO
KINDERGARTEN VIDEO!**



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OUR MISSION

WATERLOO SCHOOLS MISSION

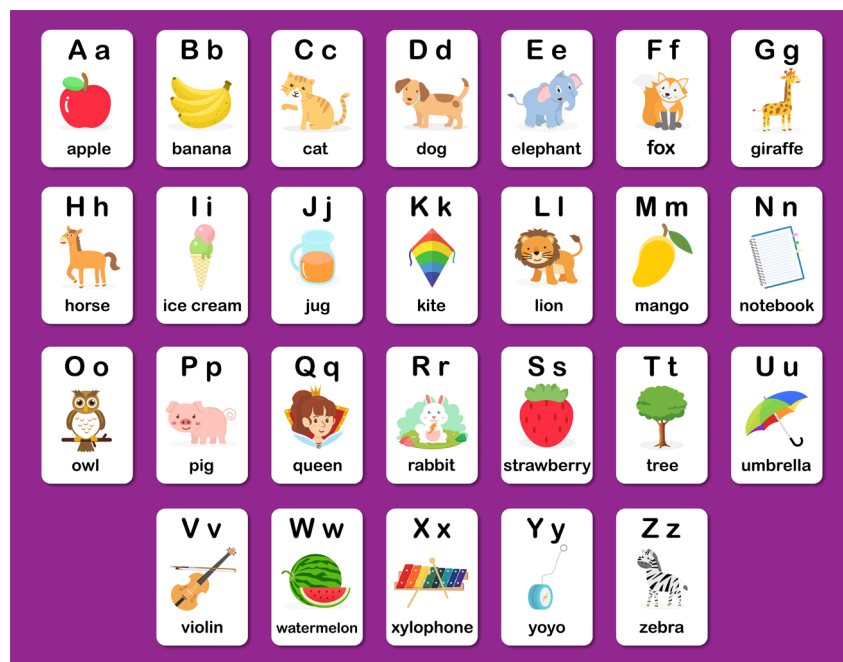
The Waterloo Community School District community commits to a comprehensive system of education and support to ensure that each and every student will graduate prepared for college, career, and citizenship as evidenced by continuing education, pursuing a career path, and contributing to a community.

With us, students discover the clear path to their future possibilities. And it starts in kindergarten!



In kindergarten, your student will be introduced to fun-filled lessons and experiences to help them gain valuable skills in reading, writing, math, science, and relationship-building.

Our teaching staff is committed to spending time with the class as a group everyday as well as doing one-on-one teaching with students directly. Throughout the year, our kindergarten teachers create hands-on learning opportunities for your student to encourage their own unique exploration and discovery in the classroom. While there may be times when students are asked to sit quietly and listen, the majority of the day is filled with interactive activities, excitement, and playfulness.



HEY, KIDS! Practice your letters and sounds!

PREPARING FOR THE FIRST DAY

PREPARING FOR THE FIRST DAY

Most of our students are excited and eager to get started at their new schools. Our staff is ready to welcome our kindergartners in the Waterloo Schools family and help them thrive as they discover individual interests and passions. As you and your student prepare for this exciting journey, we encourage you to practice some of the following skills and experiences before their first day:

- Reading books out loud to your student
- Practicing their own name and other names at home
- Identifying basic colors around the house
- Recognizing the different days of the week and months of the year
- Showing the different feelings and what they can look like
- Grouping different objects by shape, size, or color
- Holding a pencil or pen to draw and/or write
- Raising their hand when they have a question
- Practicing quiet time for reading or coloring activities
- Learning how to button, zip, and tie their clothing as needed
- Understanding how to share something with a friend
- Using their words to communicate when they are upset or sad
- Recognizing and naming patterns such as circles, triangles, and rectangles
- Identifying the times of day as morning, afternoon, and evening



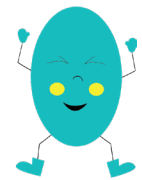
heart



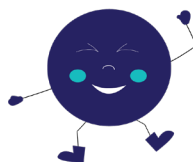
star



pentagon



oval



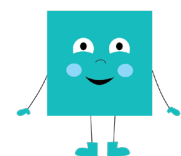
circle



triangle



rectangle



square

HEY, KIDS! Practice your shapes!

STUDENT SUPPORTS

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

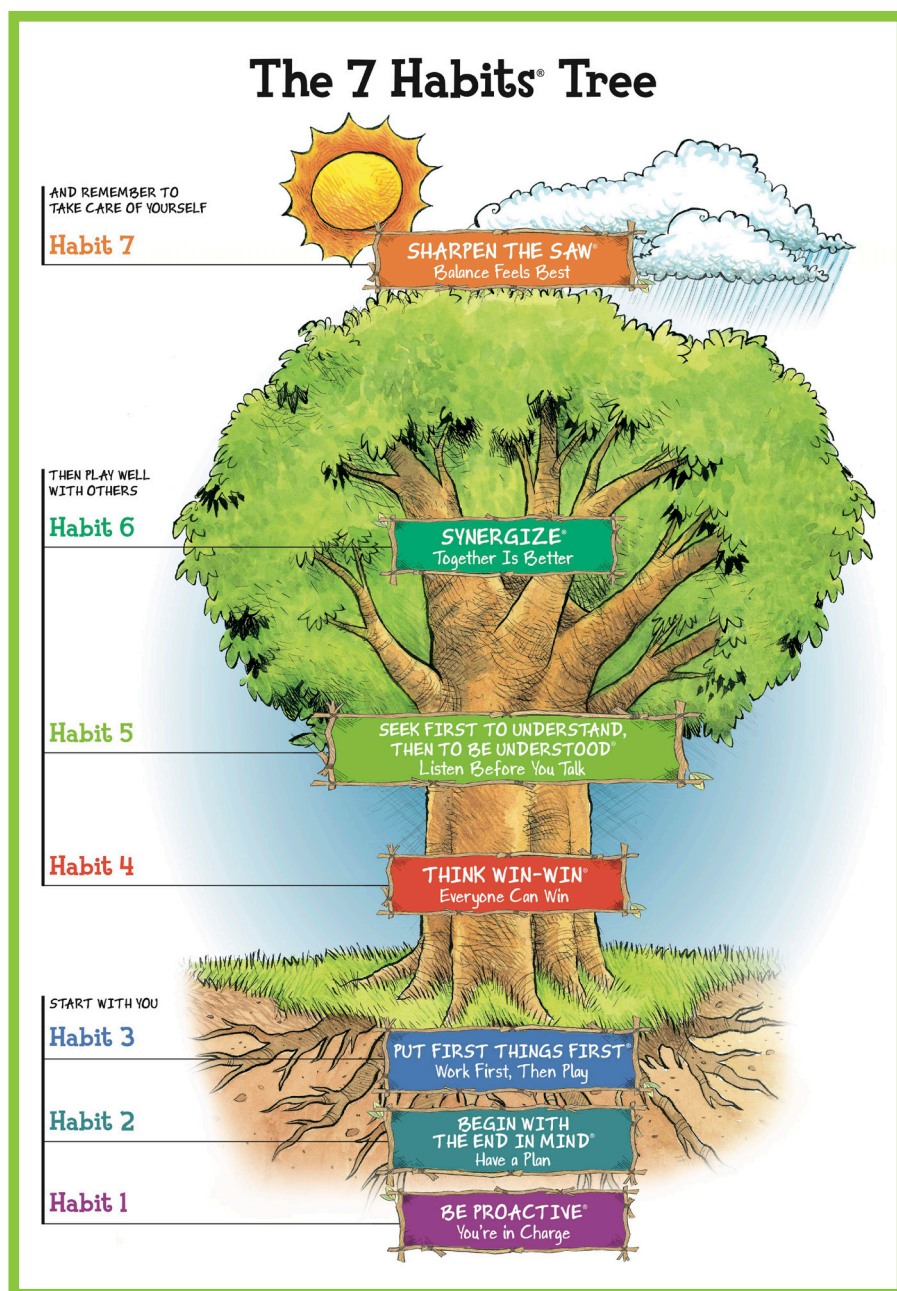
All Waterloo Schools are Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) schools. PBIS is a school-wide program that helps to identify and recognize students who are making positive behavior choices, while also sharing proactive communications with students who are exhibiting negative behavior choices. This system aids in setting clear expectations and boundaries for Waterloo Schools students while they're at school, in addition to individual support and guidance when needed.

Many of our schools help their students remember these expectations through easy to remember acronyms such as Cunningham's STAR PRIDE. (Safe, Trustworthy, A+ Attitude, Respect, Patience, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Excellence)

LEADER IN ME

This program is implemented within many of our elementary schools and is based on Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. Many of the foundational elements of Leader in Me focus on helping students develop leadership within the school, as well as learning how they can make a difference in our community by using their unique leadership gifts.

For more information about Leader in Me, please visit www.leadervalley.org.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING (ELL)

LANGUAGE SERVICES

Waterloo Community School District (WCSD) offers English language services to eligible non-native English-speaking students. The district's English Language Learner Program (ELL) serves approximately 1,400 students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The ELL program employs over 30 ELL-endorsed teachers across WCSD's 19 buildings, providing English language instruction to students in grades K-12. Services are accessible to all eligible students.

Bilingual interpreters are available at both district and building levels to facilitate communication and translations for families. These interpreters assist with conferences, phone calls, and translating important documents.

For inquiries or further information, individuals can contact the Program Coordinator, Dr. Simona Boroianu, at boroianus@waterlooschools.org or 319-433-2034, ext: #19114.



INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

STUDENT WITH AN IEP

We understand that transitioning a child to kindergarten can feel overwhelming as a parent or guardian, particularly if that child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Your student's Preschool IEP team plays an essential role in identifying and communicating your student's needs to the Kindergarten team. Transition meetings are a required component to ensure a smooth transition into the exciting world of Kindergarten. Families are valued IEP team members -your input is needed! In the spring, the IEP teams, including teachers from the current Preschool program and next year's Kindergarten program, meet with families to review the individualized educational needs of the child. This meeting sets the stage for ensuring a smooth transition into kindergarten that best supports the child's needs. In the summer, District and Kindergarten administrators work to ensure that Kindergarten is prepared to meet the needs of each student. As the school year begins, and ongoing, the IEP team will monitor the IEP plan and come back together to make adjustments based on the student's evolving needs. Parents and guardians are an important team member in this process!

For any additional questions, please reach out to your building principal, or contact Megan Allen, Director of Special Education.
Office Phone: (319) 433-1831; Email: allenm@WaterlooSchools.org

MEALS

SCHOOL MEALS

Every student has access to breakfast and lunch at no cost to families! This means that parents and guardians do not have to worry about lunch account balances or packing lunches, ensuring every student has the opportunity to sit down and have a balanced meal.

This is because Waterloo Schools participates in the United States Department of Agriculture's Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) in schools. All of our schools meet the reimbursement formula to qualify for a no-cost breakfast and lunch. This allows all of our students across Waterloo Schools to enjoy two free healthy and nourishing meals twice a day, without the need to fill out any paperwork or meet any qualification guidelines.

**Please be aware that families may still be responsible for a la carte food items such as extra milk, extra entrees, and extra side items, which are more popular in upper grade levels.*



YOUR SEAT YOUR SUCCESS

SCHOOL EVERY DAY

Did you realize that missing just one or two days of preschool or kindergarten every few weeks can make it tougher for kids to pick up reading skills?

Let's Get Ready for School!

With school starting soon, here's how to make sure your kids are super excited to go every day:

- Become a Super Sleeper: A few weeks before school starts, help your child get used to going to bed and waking up around the same time each day. This will help them feel rested and ready to learn.
- School is Awesome! Preschool and kindergarten are like amazing adventures! Kids learn to read, make new friends, and have tons of fun. These early years are super important for their future, both academically and socially!
- Be a Cheerleader! Help your child feel happy and confident at school. Let them know you're there to support them every step of the way.

School is an exciting time! Let's make it a wonderful experience for everyone.

**YOUR SEAT
YOUR SUCCESS**
ATTEND · LEARN · SUCCEED
WATERLOO SCHOOLS

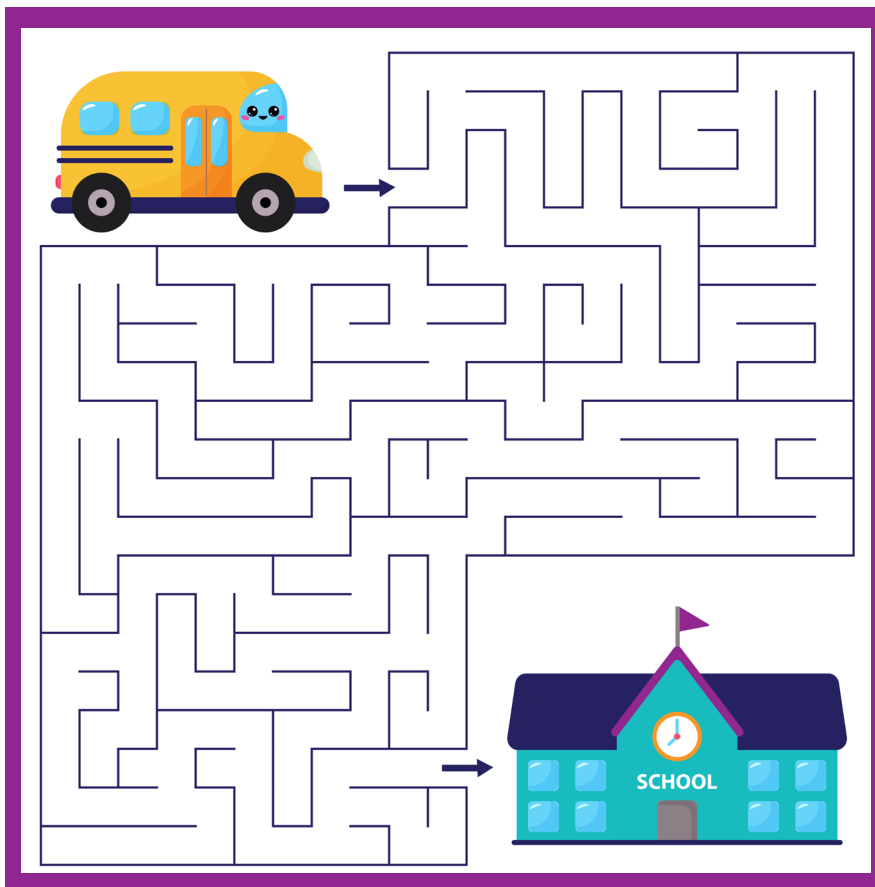
TRANSPORTATION

Bus Pick-Up and Drop-Off

For students who ride the bus, please notify the school office in writing or via phone call if your student will not be riding the bus or is using alternative transportation after school. For students who would like to walk home instead of riding the bus, there is a Waiver to Walk form, that must be submitted to First Student.

Students may be dropped off at a third-party care facility if they meet all the following criteria:

- The student currently attends their boundary elementary school, and resides more than one mile away from the school building.
- The student attends a child care facility, defined as a licensed child care center, a preschool, or a registered child development home in the school's attendance area.
- Parents and/or guardians have submitted, to First Student, the Childcare Transportation Application for the student to be transported to/from the child care facility.



HEY, KIDS! Can you solve the maze?

BUS SAFETY

Below are some important safety guidelines to share with your students before their first day riding the bus:

- Students should only ride their assigned bus and stay seated until they reach their stop.
- Students can talk amongst themselves, but should refrain from making loud noises which may distract the driver.
- Students are discouraged from participating in horseplay or creating other physical or verbal distractions.
- Students must keep their hands and feet inside the vehicle at all times.
- Students must be respectful toward both the driver and school staff.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

EMERGENCY CONTACT

During registration, you're asked to provide your contact information for your student in addition to another emergency contact. This is because a student's parent(s), guardian(s), and/or emergency contact may be contacted during the school day should illness, early dismissal, or other emergency occur. So, you can imagine how critical your updated contact information is for us to have throughout the school year.

NATURAL DISASTER PLAN

In the event of natural disasters such as severe storms or tornadoes, students will shelter in place for their safety. During these situations, we urge you to not come to school to pick up your student until it is safe to travel. Students will not be released or signed-out from school to anyone other than their parents, guardians, or designated emergency contact. For the safety of the children, no exceptions will be made.



Please help us ensure a streamlined pick-up process by keeping both your student's contact information and emergency release information current and up-to-date. Thank you!

GET INVOLVED

PARENTS AND GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

Become an active participant in your child's educational journey by engaging with our school community! Parents play a major role in shaping the learning environment, and there many opportunities for involvement, including the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). The PTO is a volunteer group of parents who collaborate with teachers and the school to fundraise and provide support to students and staff.

Stay connected and well-informed about school happenings through communication channels such as Class Dojo, PeachJar (for receiving digital fliers via email), and other methods. Teachers will share updates, events, and volunteer opportunities. Everyone is encouraged to join, contribute, and participate. Your active participation not only enriches your child's learning experience but also strengthens our schools. Together, let's build a thriving educational community where every voice is valued!



follow us @WaterlooSchools



HEALTH REQUIREMENTS



UnityPoint Health

Iowa Immunization Law requires all Waterloo Schools students to have an immunization record on file at the school by the first day of classes.

KINDERGARTEN IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

DTaP	5 doses required with one dose on or after 4 years of age*
Polio	4 doses required with one dose on or after 4 years of age*
MMR	2 doses required with one dose on or after 12 months of age* OR a positive antibody test for measles and rubella for a U.S. laboratory
Hepatitis B	3 doses required
Varicella	2 doses required with one dose on or after 12 months of age* OR a reliable history of natural disease

Iowa law requires every child to have a completed immunization record on file at the school by the first day of school or religious/medical exemptions on file. If immunizations are in process, the child is enrolled in school on a provisional status. The law allows for up to 60 days for completion. At the end of the 60 days, students will not be allowed to attend school until immunizations have been completed. The child's health care provider should be consulted to ensure the child's immunizations are up to date according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Childhood Immunization Schedule. All immunization records are audited by the Black Hawk County Health Department.

*The minimum age and intervals recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) must be followed.

LEAD SCREENING

Iowa law requires all incoming kindergarten students to have a lead screening completed prior to the first day of school.

VISION SCREENING

Iowa law requires all incoming kindergarten students to have proof of a child vision screening completed no earlier than one year prior to enrollment and no later than six months after enrollment. The Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate of Vision Screening is included in your kindergarten packet.

DENTAL SCREENING

Iowa law requires all incoming kindergarten students to have proof of a dental exam completed prior to the first day of school. A specific form will need to be completed and signed by your dental provider. Call the I-Smile™ dental program at (319) 415-5908 with questions, or call (319) 292-2208 to find a dentist or get help scheduling a dental checkup. The Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate of Dental Screening is included in your kindergarten packet.

MEDICATION AND HEALTH CONCERNS

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURE

Written parental or guardian permission is required for all prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications to be administered at school. Permission forms are available in your school's health office. Medication must be taken to and from school by adults only. Any and all medication must be sent in its original container. If it is an OTC it must be age appropriate and unopened. Please bring any inhalers or nebulizer treatments in the original box with the pharmacy label to be kept in the school's health office. Medications will be administered by the school nurse, health assistant, or staff members who have successfully completed a medication administration course.

HEALTH CONCERNS

It is important to inform the school of any health concerns regarding your child that may affect school performance. Examples of health concerns are: ADD/ADHD, allergies (including food allergies), asthma, autism, diabetes, heart conditions, headaches, and seizures. Be sure to indicate any health concerns on the annual health update form which is in your kindergarten packet.

FOOD ALLERGIES

If your student has a known food allergy, please notify your school's nurse. Special forms must be completed and signed by your child's health care provider.



HEY, KIDS! Color in the picture!

IN CASE OF ILLNESS

ILLNESS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Keeping our schools healthy and safe is a top priority. Please notify your school nurse when your student is ill. We work closely with our local health department in monitoring illness trends and we take measures when illness strikes to minimize the spread at school. Notifying the school nurse helps our staff do their best job in preventing the spread of illness.

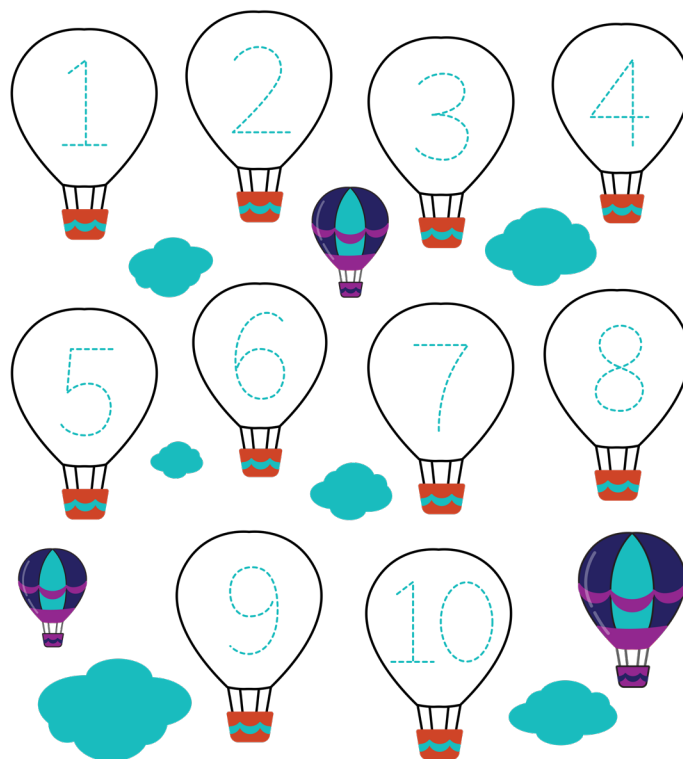
It is important to inform the school of any communicable diseases that your child has contracted. Examples would be chicken pox, impetigo, strep throat, fifth disease, pinkeye, ringworm, COVID, mono, and the flu.



WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL

If your student has any of the following symptoms, please keep them home from school and call to let the office staff know they won't be in attendance:

- A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater. All students need to be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications before returning to school.
- Vomiting or diarrhea.
- An undiagnosed rash associated with fever or behavioral changes that suggest the presence of a contagious disease.
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without affecting the health or safety of other children.
- Illness that disrupts the student's learning or poses a risk of spreading to others.



HEY, KIDS! Trace the numbers!

STUDENT DRESS CODE

DO WEAR CLOTHING APPROPRIATE FOR SCHOOL:

- Clothing serves the purpose of privacy
- Clothing covers the back, chest, stomach, bottom, and private areas
- Close-toed shoes are required at the elementary level at all times (no slippers or house shoes). Middle and high school students may wear open-toed shoes (no slippers, house shoes or flip flops).



DO NOT WEAR CLOTHING OR ACCESSORIES THAT:

- Are a disruption to the learning environment, including:
 - Clothing that displays obscene material, profanity, vulgar statements, gang symbols, hate messages, sexual innuendos, suicide, intolerance, violent messages, references to subversion or other messages which may be interpreted as being inappropriate or offensive.
 - Sagging pants, bottoms shorter than mid-thigh, shorts that expose any portion of the buttocks, clothes/jeans with rips or holes above mid-thigh, midriff- or abdomen-baring tops, open mesh clothing without proper clothing underneath, or tank tops with exposed undergarments.
- Are intended to be undergarments or sleepwear.
 - Examples: a-shirts, undershirts, camisole tops, pajama tops, pajama bottoms
- Promotes illegal use by minors such as alcohol, tobacco or drugs
- The following accessories are NOT permitted:
 - Any headgear, including hats and hoods worn over the head, unless approved by the administration.
 - Headgear worn as part of religious expression is exempt from this section of policy per administrator discretion.
 - Sunglasses may not be worn in school unless prescribed by a doctor



Dressing in any manner that presents a health or safety hazard or is a disruption, or could reasonably be expected to cause disruption, to the educational environment in the school will not be accepted. Administrators will enact the required and optional range of responses in situations where a student is not meeting the expectations of the dress code. The goal is to resolve the situation in the moment and prevent it from occurring again.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS



1239 Sheldon Street
Waterloo, IA 50701

PHONE: (319) 433-2180
FAX: (319) 433-2187



1224 Mobile Street
Waterloo, IA 50703

PHONE: (319) 433-2600
FAX: (319) 433-2603



812 Idaho Street
Waterloo, IA 50703

PHONE: (319) 433-2630
FAX: (319) 433-2633



1115 W. 5th Street
Waterloo, IA 50702

PHONE: (319) 433-2800
FAX: (319) 433-2829



201 Sunset Road
Waterloo, IA 50701

PHONE: (319) 433-2210
FAX: (319) 433-2216



1304 Oregon Street
Waterloo, IA 50702

PHONE: (319) 433-2910
FAX: (319) 433-2916



302 Cedar Bend Street
Waterloo, IA 50703

PHONE: (319) 433-1990
FAX: (319) 433-1997



312 Rachael Street
Waterloo, IA 50701

PHONE: (319) 433-2860
FAX: (319) 433-3040



1707 Williston Avenue
Waterloo, IA 50702

PHONE: (319) 433-1900
FAX: (319) 433-1905



5805 Kimball Avenue
Waterloo, IA 50701

PHONE: (319) 433-2880
FAX: (319) 433-2888



1138 Central Avenue
Evansdale, IA 50707

PHONE: (319) 433-1534
FAX: (319) 433-1535

KINDERGARTEN ADVENTURE GAME

Kindergarten is the first leap onto the path to your AMAZING, OUT OF THIS WORLD adventure! Play this game with a grown up to challenge yourself to some fun kindergarten activities. Don't worry if you don't hit all of the challenges. Practice makes perfect, and they are only recommendations. Grab some dice and some toys as figurines to make your way to kindergarten. Have fun and play it over and over again!

