

# Neenah Joint School District



## Kindergarten Handbook

**2025-26**

January, 2025

The Kindergarten experience is designed to provide your child the opportunity to grow academically, socially, and personally. Success in Kindergarten depends on several factors. I encourage you to participate in school activities, support your child's learning at home, and get to know your child's teacher, school principal, and other caring adults who will be interacting with your child.

This booklet has been prepared by members of our professional staff to provide answers to questions you may have regarding the Kindergarten program provided by the Neenah Joint School District. Do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or building principal should you have questions that remain unanswered. My office is also available to answer questions related to the Neenah Joint School District elementary program. Please feel free to contact me at 751-6800 ext. 10113 or at [jmunozellmann@neenah.k12.wi.us](mailto:jmunozellmann@neenah.k12.wi.us).

Best wishes to you and your Kindergarten student for a successful school year.

Sincerely,

Jackie Muñoz-Ellmann  
Asst. District Administrator for Leadership and Engagement

# Table of Contents

PART I:	Getting Ready.....	3
	Kindergarten Sessions.....	4
	Preparations for Kindergarten.....	5-7
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Kindergarten Screening</li><li>● Parent Orientation</li><li>● Kindergarten Readiness Suggestions</li><li>● Health Information<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Communicable Diseases</li><li>Illness</li></ul></li><li>● Health Examination and Immunization</li><li>● Medication/Administration</li><li>● Emergency Procedure</li><li>● Vision/Hearing/Dental Health</li></ul>	
PART II:	The Kindergarten Year.....	8-12
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Social &amp; Emotional Development</li><li>● Work Habits Development</li><li>● Art</li><li>● School Counseling</li><li>● Language Development</li><li>● Library</li><li>● Music</li><li>● Mathematics</li><li>● Physical Education</li><li>● Reading</li><li>● Language Arts</li><li>● Social Studies</li><li>● Science</li><li>● Supportive Reading Program</li></ul>	
PART III:.....	The Parent School Partnership.....	13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Home-School Cooperation</li><li>● Parent Volunteers</li><li>● Kindergarten Reporting System</li></ul>	
	Notice of Nondiscrimination Policy.....	14
	Special Education.....	14

# Part I: Getting Ready

## **Is my child old enough to enter school?**

Your child is eligible for Kindergarten if he or she is five years old on or before **September 1, of the school year they are enrolling for.**

## **Does my child need immunizations?**

Wisconsin State law requires that any child entering Kindergarten must have immunization records up-to-date including a minimum of the following immunizations:

- 4 DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus)
- 4 Polio
- 2 MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) - see page six of this booklet
- 3 Hep B (Hepatitis B)
- 2 Varicella (Chicken Pox). Chicken Pox disease history is also acceptable.

You will be required to complete and return an immunization form prior to the first day of school. Failure to comply may prohibit your child from entering Kindergarten.

## **Does my child need a checkup?**

A physical examination is recommended prior to entrance into Kindergarten. Forms are provided with enrollment materials and are also available on the District website at [www.neenah.k12.wi.us](http://www.neenah.k12.wi.us). A print out of your child's physical, from your doctor, is also acceptable.

It is a good idea to bring your immunization record to the physician at the time of examination so that your child's record may be updated if immunizations are given.

It is suggested that children have a **dental, vision** and **hearing** exam before entering Kindergarten.

## **When should I enroll my child?**

On-line enrollment begins in January for families who do not currently attend the Neenah Joint School District. It is not necessary to enroll if your child currently attends the 4K program in the NJSD. New families in the school district are encouraged to enroll as soon as possible when they move into the Neenah Joint School District.

## **What school will my child attend?**

Children are assigned to their neighborhood school whenever possible; however, due to enrollment changes, students may be enrolled at another district elementary school. Parents will be notified of these changes as soon as possible.

# KINDERGARTEN SESSIONS

Kindergarten classes begin at 8:15 a.m. and dismiss at 3:05 p.m. The school day for **Alliance Charter Elementary** begins at 8:00 a.m. and dismisses at 3:05 p.m. On Friday, Alliance Charter begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 12:00 noon.

The following information is for your convenience:

<u>School</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
Alliance Charter	Carrie Naparalla	751-6970
Clayton	Kassandra Shipman	751-6950
Coolidge	April Keepers	751-6955
Horace Mann	Ryan Hammerschmidt	751-6995
Lakeview	Mary Renning	751-6965
Spring Road	Lyzette Maroszek	751-6975
Taft	Karen Russell	751-6980
Tullar	Ben Johnston	751-6985
Washington School of Early Learning	Michaela Neitzel	751-6990



## **PREPARATIONS FOR KINDERGARTEN IN THE NEENAH JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **Kindergarten Screening**

State and federal laws require that children entering school for the first time shall be screened to determine if special education services might be needed. Neenah Joint School District personnel will review enrollment information and will determine if there is a need for an individual developmental screening. If a developmental screening is necessary, you will be contacted to arrange the time, date, and location for your child.

### **Parent Orientation/Kindergarten Screening**

A meeting is held prior to the start of the school year at your child's school when parents will have an opportunity to meet the school principal, Kindergarten teachers, and related school personnel. They will be available to answer any questions you may have. Students may be assessed in academics, gross motor, fine motor, and social skills during the screening.

### **Kindergarten Readiness Suggestions**

Many parents ask, "What can I do to help prepare my child for Kindergarten?" There are many activities, which can easily be done at home to help your child.

Some suggestions include:

- Read to your child - ask questions about the story (for example: what happened next?). Let your child "read" to you from pictures. Use books as sources of information as well as for pleasure.
- Include your child in family discussions, hobbies, trips, and fun.
- Encourage your child to speak in sentences about his experiences. Discourage baby talk.
- Expand your child's vocabulary and word meaning.
- Stress the importance of listening to and following directions.
- Give your child definite responsibilities, such as picking up toys after play. Encourage your child to complete tasks that have been started.
- Acquire outer clothing that your child can put on and take off independently.
- Teach your child the following:
  - own name
  - parent(s)/guardian(s) names
  - home address
  - own date of birth
  - home telephone number
- Help your child establish independence in caring for self-toileting needs.
- Your child should be taught to respect rules and guidelines at home and away. This will more readily enable adjustment to school.
- Label all gym shoes, boots, mittens, hats, coats, and backpacks.
- Teach your child to tie his/her shoes.

- Walk to school or to the bus stop several times with your child as opening day nears to become familiar with the best and safest route. Instruct your child to come directly home after school. Those who walk should cross at intersections where there is a crossing guard.
- Let your child play on the school playground as you supervise them.
- Talk about school as a happy place where other children and teachers are your friends.
- Have your child practice cutting on a line, coloring large pictures, and gluing items to a larger sheet of paper.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

### **Physical Examinations**

The Board of Education recommends that students have a physical examination, dental evaluation, and vision screening before entering kindergarten and freshman year. The family physician, dentist, and optometrist or ophthalmologist should do this examination at the parents' expense.

Parents of all students should complete health information yearly as a means of informing school personnel of current student health concerns. Forms can be found on the district website. The district has three registered nurses, which are assigned to schools within the district. If you wish to contact a nurse regarding your child's health, please contact your child's school.

### **Screenings**

Vision: Students are screened by volunteers from Valley Vision Clinic on an annual basis for grades 1, 3 and 5.

Hearing: Upon request and Kindergarten students are screened as time permits.

Dental: Tri-County Dental provides dental screening for all 3rd grade students. Grades K-6 who receive free or reduced cost for hot lunch or who are classified as low-income or on Medicaid will be eligible for free dental care by registering with their school office.

**NOTE:** If you wish not to have your child participate in these free screenings, please contact your child's school office and specify your child's name, and in which screenings you DO NOT want them to participate.

### **School Restrictions**

If your child is not to be involved in physical education or recess for more than one day, a note from the doctor is required stating the nature of the condition and how the activity must be restricted.

### **Immunizations**

The Wisconsin Student Immunization Law requires all students to be immunized. A student immunization record must be completed and signed at the time of your child's initial registration with Neenah Joint School District. Immunizations are available from your primary care doctor or local health department. City of Neenah residents should call the health department at 1-800-250-3110 with any questions for eligibility for immunizations.

## **Communicable Disease, Accidents, and Health Emergencies**

Parents have the primary responsibility for sick or injured students and are requested to follow these recommendations:

- A student with a fever or other symptoms of illness including a sore throat, rash, cough, or pink eye are to be kept home from school.
- A student should be without a fever for 24 hours and without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school.
- A student's rash that is open, draining, or spreading should be evaluated and treated by the child's physician before he/she returns to school.
- A student with a sore throat should have a throat culture done. If a throat culture is positive for strep, students may return to school after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and when feeling well without a fever.
- A student with pink eye may return to school after 24 hours of antibiotic drops or as soon as symptoms of infection (eye drainage, itchiness, tearing) are gone.
- A child with chickenpox is considered contagious and should be kept home until all lesions are dry and scabbed over.
- A student should be kept home from school until 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.

Concerns related to possible head lice should be brought to the attention of your child's school principal. Children diagnosed with head lice are to be kept home until treatment is completed and live lice are removed. Nit removal is highly encouraged, as it is imperative to prevent re-infestation. It is good practice to routinely check your child's head for lice. See district policy for further details.

If your child is injured, first aid will be administered. It is extremely important to keep emergency contacts up to date with your child's school office so that they can contact you in case of an emergency. A child with a major health problem such as asthma, heart problems, diabetes, bee sting allergy, food allergy, seizure disorder, etc. is to have an Emergency Plan completed annually and filed with the school administration. Forms are available in the school office and on the school website.

## **Medication Administration at School**

Medication should be given at home if at all possible. Please check with your doctor to arrange times of administration outside of school hours.

No medication is administered by school employees until the medication consent form is completed and signed by the parent. Over the counter meds only require a parent signature. Prescription and herbal medication also require a physician signature. All medications should be brought to the school by the parent. At the end of the school year a parent or guardian should pick up all medication. All medications must be in the original container. No baggies or other non-labeled pharmacy containers will be accepted. Please see medication policy for more detailed information. Any change in medication dosage needs a new consent form to be completed. Medication forms are available at school or on the district website. The school district nurse may be contacted at 751-6800 ext. 10122.

## **Student Inhaler Law**

Wisconsin Statute 118.291 allows students with asthma to carry and use inhalers provided proper forms are completed at school. A physician signature is required on the form explaining the protocol for use during school and or after school hours as needed. This form can be found on the school website.

## **Part II: The Kindergarten Year**

The Kindergarten school year is a very busy year for a young child. Each child learns as both an individual and as a group member.

The Kindergarten program in the Neenah Joint School District combines experiences for each child as an individual and as a group member. Developing the total child around the physical, social, emotional, and academic components is our overall goal.

Within the daily Kindergarten curriculum, your child will experience a variety of learning activities. The following is a brief outline of the Kindergarten curriculum:

### **Social and Emotional Development**

Social/emotional skills are key components to success in school. Carefully planned lessons and activities focus on the following:

- listening attentively
- following classroom routines
- caring for property
- playing well with others
- being courteous, cooperative, and respectful with adults and peers
- exhibiting self-control
- following school rules

### **Work Habits Development**

Throughout the Kindergarten year, children are encouraged to establish productive work habits. Each day the following skills are practiced:

- following directions
- working independently
- using unstructured time productively
- staying on task
- seeking help when needed
- organizing materials

### **Art**

Your child will participate in art class for 30 minutes twice weekly. All children are creative and may find great satisfaction and enjoyment through art activities. Given the opportunity to use, to experiment with, and to discover for them what happens with various art materials, each child can further develop individual creative abilities.

As parents, it is helpful to understand the early stages of the child's creative art development. The first sign of visual communication begins with scribbles when the child is seeking control in using his/her hands.

Later, the child's scribbles become vertical or horizontal. This shows increased development of the hand muscles. At this point, the student may begin to tell stories about their drawings. Gradually, drawings of the human figure will develop. The size of the objects shows a direct relationship to the child's interest. The ability to express themselves through pictures, which develops quickly, is remarkable.

Showing a real interest in the child's work encourages continued growth in art expression. Instead of saying, "What is this?" you can say, "Tell me about your picture." Do not judge by adult standards, for flowers may well be larger than trees, or horses may be blue in color. Be positive!

Be sure to have a place at home where children's work may be displayed. Provide a place for the child to work. Encourage your child to be neat about their working area and to take care of supplies. Some simple, inexpensive materials to keep on hand for five and six-year olds are:

crayons	play dough	chalk
glue/glue sticks	tempera paint	markers
scissors	finger paint	pencils
drawing paper	newspapers	old magazines
colored paper	buttons	

### **School Counseling**

Services are available to all Kindergarten children in the form of classroom presentations, group and individual counseling. School counselors are also available for consultation with parents. Lessons reinforce Kindergarten socialization skills, peer relationships, feelings, respect, and making good choices. Activities and lessons can vary according to teacher preferences and students' needs.

### **Language Development**

Speaking is an activity that requires coordination much like walking, running, or jumping. Children vary in their rate of speech development.

Children will talk whenever they have:

- Something they want to say.
- The muscle coordination and physical structure to say it.
- Someone to listen to them.

Although children develop their speaking skills in a developmental sequence, there are certain guidelines that help measure their progress.

<u>Age</u>	<u>Speech Sounds</u>
3-1/2	m, p, b, h, w, and all vowels
4-1/2	k, g, t, d, ng
5-1/2	f
6-1/2	v, sh, ch, l, th (as in "three"), r

Please note that children usually do not pronounce all sounds correctly by the age of five years.

By the time children enter Kindergarten, they should be able to talk in complete sentences and ask questions without omitting words. Their speaking vocabulary should be approximately 2,200 words. Ninety percent of what they say should be intelligible. They should be able to understand almost everything said to them.

Preschool children sometimes confuse singular and plural forms of nouns. They might say, "mans" when they mean "men" and "foots" when they mean "feet." Confusion also occurs in the use of word endings. They may say, "runded" for "ran" and "rided" for "rode."

Sometimes five-year-olds repeat beginnings of words or entire words. Their minds often race faster than their mouths can move. Five-year-olds, like children at all ages, need interested, caring adults to listen to their ideas, needs, and feelings.

## **Recognizing Speech and Language Problems Early**

If you are concerned about any of the following items, call the speech and language pathologist or the principal at your neighborhood school.

- A. If your child is over three years old and:
  - a. does not talk
  - b. talks, but is hard to understand
  - c. uses only single words
  - d. uses gestures instead of words
- B. If your child is over four years old and:
  - a. doesn't pronounce most words
  - b. omits words in sentences
- C. Your child's voice sounds too loud, too soft, or too hoarse.
- D. Your child doesn't seem to hear you talking or doesn't seem to hear household sounds.
- E. Your child's speech or speaking rhythm seems to be unusual.

Please remember that these are general guidelines and some differences in development can be expected.

## **Library**

Your child will meet with the school's Instructional Library Technology Specialist regularly. Kindergarten students check books out of their school library on a regular basis. They will bring the books home, and you are encouraged to read them frequently to and with your child.

## **Music**

Your child will participate in music class for 30 minutes twice weekly. Music plays an important part in the life of a child. In Kindergarten, the musical growth of each child is encouraged. The overall goal is to have each child become aware of music as a natural part of life, acquire skills, receive a feeling of satisfaction, and develop a wholesome attitude toward music.

With this general aim, fundamental skills are developed in the following areas:

- 1. Listening
  - a. Finding enjoyment in listening
  - b. Feeling a mood in piano music or recordings
  - c. Instrumental recognition-piano, drum, rhythm instruments
- 2. Singing
  - a. Finding the singing voice - matching tones
  - b. Acquiring a varied musical repertoire--nursery rhymes, singing, games, fun songs, special day songs, personal concept songs, and songs of the world
- 3. Rhythm
  - a. Recognizing varied rhythms and being able to move accordingly--walk, run, hop, skip, gallop, march and sway
  - b. Responding to a steady beat and accented beats
- 4. Playing Instruments
  - a. Becoming familiar with rhythm band instruments and how to play them
  - b. Playing instruments on the steady beat
- 5. Creative Interpretation
  - a. Expressing feelings by free bodily movement, making up tunes, rhythms, words, and dramatizations

## **Mathematics**

The mathematics program is designed to help the children develop an understanding of math concepts. Those concepts are:

- know number names and the count sequence
- count to tell the number of objects
- compare numbers
- understand addition as putting together and adding to, and understand subtraction as taking part and taking from
- work with numbers 11-19 to gain foundations for place value
- describe and compare measurable attributes
- classify objects and count the number of objects in each category
- analyze, compare, create and compose shapes

## **Physical Education**

Your child will have 30 minutes of physical education classes twice weekly. A pair of tennis shoes should be kept at school for physical education classes. The physical education teacher will cover the following concepts:

- locomotor skills (hopping, jumping, skipping)
- coordination (jumping jacks)
- ball skills (bouncing, catching, dribbling)

## **Literacy**

The reading program consists of helping children develop skills in:

- enjoying books, stories, and songs
- recognizing his/her name in print
- retelling a story
- demonstrating print knowledge (left-to-right, top-to-bottom, identifying parts of a book)
- identifying rhyming words
- identifying all capital and lowercase letters out of sequence
- identifying letter sounds
- demonstrating phonemic awareness (blending sounds into words, dividing words into parts)
- reading high frequency words
- reading text with multiple lines moving from patterned text to traditional text structure with illustrations providing support
- Using phonics principles to word solve
- printing his/her own name
- Writing using grade level appropriate conventions and punctuation

- speaking in complete sentences
- participating appropriately in discussions
- reciting at appropriate times
- listening at appropriate times
- following directions
- writing short stories in the genres of narrative, informative and opinion
- writing multiple sentences with multiple pages correctly sequenced with illustrations supporting the written text

### **Social Studies**

The social studies concepts presented in Kindergarten are:

- describing different family types and members
- identifying family members' roles within the family
- understanding that people need to work and play together in a community
- identifying and following safety rules
- demonstrating an awareness of holidays

### **Science**

The science concepts presented in Kindergarten are:

- Animals and Algorithms
- Pushes and Pulls
- Structure and Function: Exploring Design
- Structure and Function: Human Body

### **Reading and Math Intervention**

Literacy coaches and math interventionists are available at all elementary schools. They often work collaboratively with the kindergarten teachers to support the development of literacy and math skills of the students.

## Part III: The Parent School Partnership

We value developing a supportive working partnership with parents. Communication between home and school is vital to providing a consistent support system for your child's education. A successful start in school generates tremendous benefits throughout your child's formal school career. The cooperation of the home and school together is instrumental in ensuring this success. Some basic needs of Kindergartners both at home and school include:

- Assurance that he/she is LOVED and VALUED
- Encouragement, praise, and understanding from adults
- Opportunities for group play
- Varied activities to satisfy short attention spans
- Sleep from 11 to 12 hours plus a time to relax during the day
- Time to do things on their own. This freedom will begin to develop their sense of independence and responsibility.
- Training in habits of personal hygiene

By working together, parents and the school can help develop each child's potential. Parents with questions or concerns about their child's development are encouraged to contact the teacher.

### **Parent Volunteers**

Parents are encouraged to volunteer their time and talents in the elementary school program and to become active members in the school's parent teacher organizations. Volunteers must let the child's teacher know if they would like to be part of a field trip or volunteer at school. A background check must be completed and is valid for 3 years. The background check can be completed on-line by going to the District website at [www.neenah.k12.wi.us](http://www.neenah.k12.wi.us) and selecting Human Resources & District Job Opportunities. Volunteers must complete the check 2 weeks before volunteering. Volunteers must go through the **Raptor** system every time they are in a building past the main office. A badge will be given at the office when volunteering in school. When volunteering on a field trip the teacher will bring the badges.

### **Kindergarten Reporting System**

Information reflecting your child's progress is shared periodically throughout the year. Progress reports are sent home at the end of the second and fourth quarter and conferences are held twice a year. Parents should feel free to request a conference whenever they feel there is a need.

Newsletters, notes, and individual student work are also sent home on a regular basis. Participation in all forms of school communication enhances the working relationship between the home and school, and strengthens the child's opportunities for success.

## **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

It is the policy of the Neenah Joint School District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity and in employment.

All career and technical education programs follow the district's policies of non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. In addition, arrangements can be made to ensure that the lack of English language skills is not a barrier to admission or participation.

Any questions concerning Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and inquiries related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap, should be directed to:

Dr. Michael Cyrus  
Director of Human Resources  
Neenah Joint School District  
410 South Commercial Street  
Neenah, Wisconsin 54956  
(920)751-6800

### **Special Education**

Children with disabilities between the ages of three and twenty-one years who reside in the Neenah Joint School District are provided with a free, appropriate, public education as defined by state and federal statutes. Special education and related services are available to children with autism, intellectual disabilities, emotional/behavioral disabilities, hearing disability, learning disabilities, orthopedic (physical) disabilities, other health impairments, significant developmental delay (occurring in three- to nine-year-olds), speech/ language disability, traumatic brain injury, visual disability, or any combination of these disabilities.

The school district provides screening opportunities upon request to all public and private school students and to those below school age who reside within the boundaries of the Neenah Joint School District. A child suspected of having a disability as a result of screening is referred for an educational evaluation that is conducted by the school district. Written parental consent is required before such an evaluation is conducted. An Individualized Educational Plan is developed for each child who requires special education and related services. Written parent consent is necessary before placement for special education and related services occurs.

Contact your child's principal or Valerie Hurn, Director of Pupil Services, at 751-6800 ext. 10130 with questions about these services.