Welcome to Kindergarten!

Watertown Mayer
Elementary School

Parent Information Packet
2026

Contact Information

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Watertown-Mayer Elementary School	**952-955-0300**
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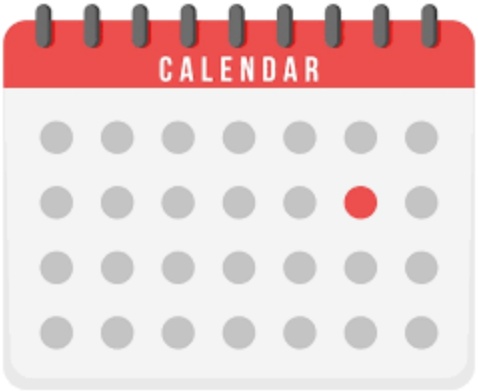
Kids Company	**952-955-0283**
Michelle Hess, Kids Company Coordinator	952-955-0283
Kids Company Attendance Line	952-955-0291
Kids Company Fax	952-955-0201
Community Education	**952-955-0280**
Tim Dalton, Program Director	952-955-0282
Valerie Curtis, Community Education Secretary	952-955-0284
Early Childhood Screening	952-955-0280

Additional District Contacts

Koch Bus Company	952-955-1866
Watertown-Mayer District Food Services	952-955-0619
Watertown-Mayer District Health Services	952-955-0611

Important Dates for Kindergarten 2025

January 15th	Kindergarten Registration Opens (*The first 50 students to complete and submit registration will receive a "Class of 2039" t-shirt. These will be distributed at Royal Connection Conferences)*
March 2nd	Preferred Due Date for Registration (as registration numbers impact staffing/class sizes)
June	School supply list can be found online
August	Teacher information will be available online Bus notification mailed from Koch Bus Company
September 1st & 2nd	Royal Connections
September 3rd	1st day of Kindergarten



Watertown-Mayer Kindergarten Program

At Watertown-Mayer Elementary School, we understand that all students come to school with different levels of social, academic, physical, and emotional development. Our school and student programs are developed to meet the needs of ALL students. Our teachers and staff are excited to partner with you to help promote your child's skills and to develop his or her strengths.

We provide standards-based curriculum in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health, Physical Education, Technology, Media Center, Art, and Music for kindergarten students at Watertown-Mayer Elementary School. Language Arts and Math provide the core of academic programming for our students.

Each day you can expect your child to engage in the following activities:

- Morning meeting to build classroom community and establish strong relationships with peers.
- Literacy instruction including explicit, direct instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing.
- Choice time to provide opportunities for students to develop socially and emotionally through interactions with their peers and practice being a caring, safe, problem solver.
- Recess to develop gross motor skills as well as practice appropriate social interactions and navigate friendship issues such as taking turns and sharing.
- Mathematics instruction to build number sense and develop the ability to think flexibly about mathematical concepts in a variety of ways.
- Specialist (physical education, innovation, art, music) for sixty minutes per day. Students get to experience these specialized subjects that promote the development of fine and gross motor skills as well as social skills. Students will have weekly experiences with these content areas and participate within a rotating schedule.

Classrooms Designed with Learners in Mind

Our classrooms and learning spaces are intentionally designed to provide flexible seating options, leading to improved outcomes over traditional seating arrangements. Traditional classroom layouts operate under the assumption that all students learn in the same way, which we know is not true. For those who need more movement, wiggle chairs, that appear similar to the regular classroom chairs, allow children an opportunity to move without disrupting others. Similarly, raised desks afford students the chance to stand and work if that is their preferred modality. Flexible classroom furniture also allows students to be more involved in their own learning. Moveable chairs and desks with multiple configuration options due to unique shapes encourage collaboration between students and allow for more independent learning.

In addition to flexible seating options in our classrooms, the layout of our school supports spaces for collaboration and innovation. Each grade level has its own space within the building accompanied by a 'flex space' within the pod. These spaces allow for students to have access to work outside the classroom, independently or collaboratively with classmates. These spaces support our ability to provide additional support to students for differentiation for each student as an individual learner. The flexible seating options in this space also provide students with a voice and choice about how they prefer to use the space while learning in this area; they can sit on ottomans on a flat or rounded surface, or stand at tables. The varying heights of work stations also provides students with varied options of positions for standing and sitting while in the space.

Instruction at Watertown-Mayer Elementary

Language Arts

Our teachers provide students with direct instruction of literacy through a Science of Reading (SOR) approach learned through advanced literacy training in LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling). These techniques provide a research based approach to literacy education. We pair our core literacy resource, Arts & Letters, which provides students with a language and vocabulary rich comprehension program that incorporates repeated experiences for writing, with explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency through UFLI Foundations; an explicit and systematic program that teaches students the foundational skills necessary for proficient reading. Our teachers follow a carefully developed scope and sequence designed to ensure that students systematically acquire each skill needed and learn to apply each skill with automaticity and confidence. Our teachers differentiate instruction to meet the unique needs of each learner, guide whole group and small group learning focused on the core standards.

Mathematics

Our math instruction is designed around the Minnesota math standards and provides hands-on, developmentally appropriate instruction. Our core resource for mathematics is Envisions Math which focuses on developing deep conceptual understanding and strong number sense, aided by visual models and personalized learning experiences. Students learn math concepts through whole group and small group instruction and as well as through partner work. In addition to addressing the Minnesota math standards and focus skills set forth in Envisions, students practice applying math during our calendar math routine and class number talks. Students also work at their unique pace and are provided with opportunities to extend their thinking through our adaptive technology resource, DreamBox. This resource provides students with an adaptive game-based math program that is aligned to state standards. The program is self-paced and visual, helping children at all skill levels understand math concepts.

Science

In kindergarten at Watertown-Mayer Elementary School, children have many opportunities to explore several areas of science including physical, earth, and life science. Children are taught how to be scientists by using their five senses and performing fun hands-on experiences. In addition to direct instruction in science, students have ample opportunities to interact with their senses throughout their day in their classrooms via sensory tables whose content changes seasonally, and through classroom activities.

Social Studies

Our social studies lessons focus primarily around teaching students the value of citizenship within their classroom and their community. We help students to understand their personal role in their communities and to know their impact. We also teach a wide variety of theme-based units throughout the year that address remaining social studies standards.

Character Education

In addition to academic programming, we also spend a great deal of time working on character development through Responsive Classroom and Second Step. We devote time to helping our students learn our Royal Expectations of being caring, safe, problem solvers.

Responsive Classroom is a research-based approach to K-8 teaching that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social-emotional learning. This approach to teaching emphasizes academic, social, and emotional growth in a strong school community. We believe that how children learn is as important as what they learn, and that academic success is inextricably tied to building social-emotional competencies.

Second Step SEL is a research-based social-emotional learning curriculum designed to give students the tools to excel in and out of the classroom. Skills include growth mindset and goal setting, emotion management, empathy and kindness, and problem-solving.

Specialists

Our students rotate between our four different specialists weekly: music, innovation, art and physical education. Students are actively engaged in these content areas through hands-on, experiential learning explorations and activities. During these experiences, students are able to access a different portion of their brain and build skills thinking creatively, critically, collaboratively and using their hands (and in some cases entire body). Students paint, draw, create, improve, build, tinker, and play throughout these learning experiences. Our specialists also build connections between what the students are learning in their kindergarten classrooms and what they are working on during specialist time. As many of the activities are new to students, specialists provide a unique time for students to work on their grown mindset and find new talents and strengths that they might have, while improving those that they don't have 'yet'.

Getting Ready for Kindergarten

Many parents ask “Is my child ready for kindergarten?” While there is no typical child, the following characteristics occur most frequently at the kindergarten-age level:

Physically

- Is very active
- Is in a period of slower growth than previously
- Can zip own coat, put on shoes - able to dress and undress

Mentally:

- Is eager for information, asks many questions and remains on topic while talking about the answer
- Has a good memory for past experiences
- Is very imaginative, can offer ideas about what happens next
- Stays on task for 10-15 minutes

Socially:

- Takes turns and shares
- Beginning to show self-control
- Form and sustain new friendships
- Develop sensitivity to others' feelings
- Follows 2-3 step directions and asks for help
- Has a sense of curiosity and imagination
- Solves problems
- Plays simple games with rules
- Use polite manners: please, thank you, excuse me

Emotionally:

- Discusses own feelings
- Understands impact of their behavior
- Understands consequences of their behavior
- Self-regulates emotions and behavior
- Feel self-confidence and pride in their work
- Separates from caregiver
- Shows respect for others and environment

Academic Skills:

- Know about half of uppercase and half of lowercase letter names
- Know three or more letter sounds
- Recognize and write first name
- Names letters in first name
- Understands that print is read from left to right
- Is familiar with stories and books
- Recognizes the following basic shapes: circle, square, rectangle, triangle
- Recognizes some numbers 0-10
- Count to 10
- Recognizes the following basic colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown, black
- Draw a person with at least three body parts
- Use a mature grasp to hold a pencil
- Holds scissors appropriately
- Draws simple pictures
- Copies or writes letters or numbers
- Tells and listens to stories
- Sings songs and recites rhymes
- Speaks in five- to six-word sentences

Activities to Help Your Child Get Ready

The following activities are suggestions to help promote and develop kindergarten readiness. Work with your child and let him or her explore and develop new skills. Enjoy!

Language Development
Read stories - visit the library, read many different kinds of books, and talk about what you read.

Cognitive Development
Provide your child with opportunities for exploration and problem solving with hands-on activities such as counting objects, or determining how many place settings to set on the table for a given number of family members.

Social and Emotional Development
Play with your child and arrange a time for your child to play with other children. Try to find time to be apart from your child by leaving your child with a caregiver for short periods. Play helps foster the development of social skills such as problem solving, sharing, managing conflict and expressing feelings.

Fine Motor Development
Provide time for your child to use crayons and child-safe scissors, roll dough, and any other activities that involve using their hands to tear, cut, trace, write, draw or paint..

Gross Motor Development
Provide play equipment or go to the park or neighborhood playground. Practice jumping, running, skipping, and hopping. Play or dance indoors to music.