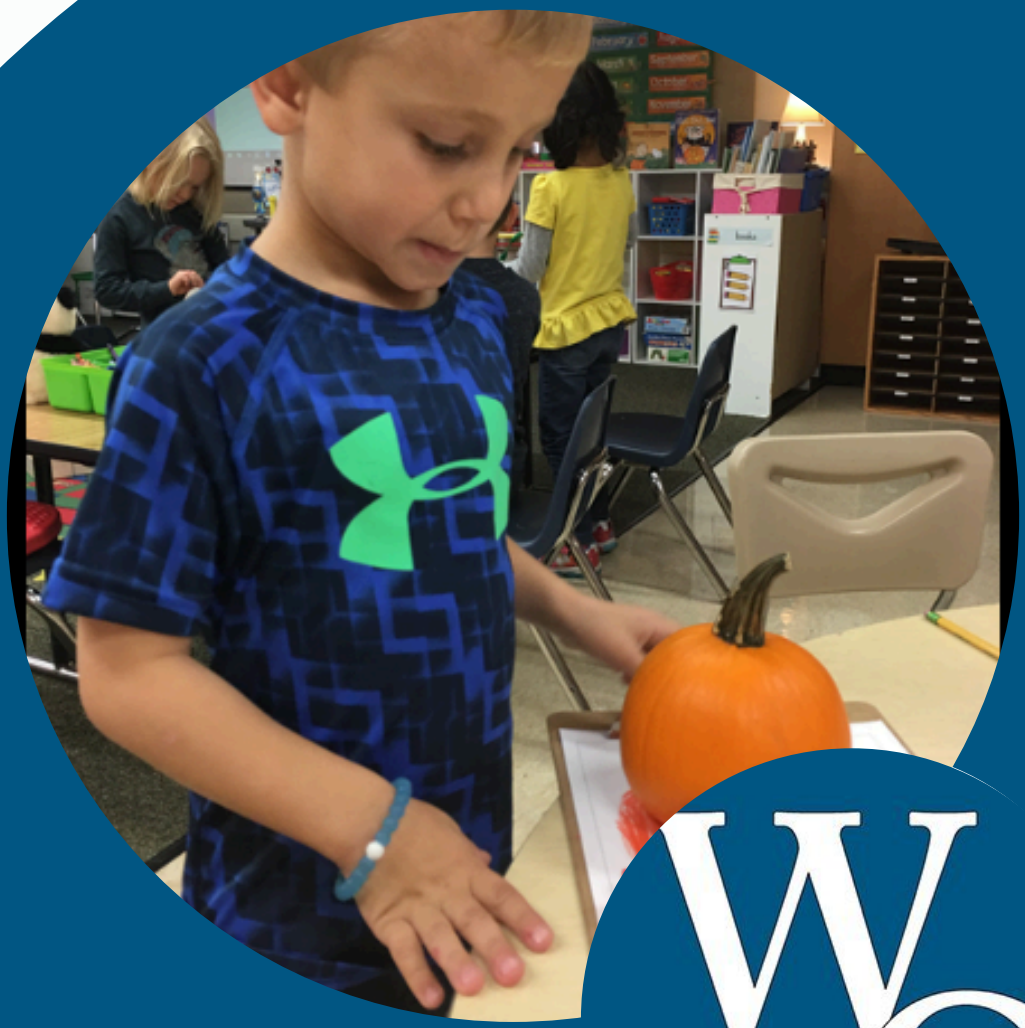

Get

Kindergarten

Ready!

Español

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Dear Families,

Kindergarten is such a magical time of growth and learning, and you play a crucial role in preparing your child for this wonderful year ahead. Whether it's reading stories together, teaching new skills, or giving warm hugs, remember that you are the most precious teacher in your child's life.
This book is here to guide you through the exciting skills developed in kindergarten and how you can actively support your child's readiness for this important journey.

So, embrace this special time with your little one, and let's embark on this amazing adventure together! Enjoy every moment! Please reach out to me at smissett@wcasd.net if you have any questions. You may also call my office at 484-266-1009.

Sara M. Missett. Ed.D.
Director of Elementary Education

Beginning Kindergarten Skills

While beginning kindergarteners have varying levels of readiness, children entering kindergarten are generally expected to be able to do most of the things listed below.

Language & Communication

- Knows and says first and last name
- Uses complete sentences
- Five to six words
- Expresses frustration/anger with words
- Follows two to three-step directions
- Understands questions and responds to them

Behavioral & Emotional

- Emerging impulse control and ability to delay gratification
- Usually able to follow rules and multi-part directions
- Understands right and wrong, takes ownership for actions
- Dressing self, sleeping in own bed at night, brushing teeth
- Able to persevere when confronted with age appropriate but challenging tasks
- Respects authority
- Focuses on activities for five minutes or more
- Separates from caregiver without undue stress
- Increasing ability to control emotions
- Emerging ability to name and understand basic feelings (happy, sad, angry, etc.)

Social Skills, Independence, & Hygiene

- Speak in full sentences
- Share with others
- Follow simple instructions
- Make choices
- Take turns
- Show empathy for others
- Listen attentively to a story
- Can manage personal hygiene
- Is able to dress and handle small tasks

Kindergarten Readiness

The following pages provide a number of ideas to help you prepare your child for kindergarten.

Reading & Writing

Pre-Reading/Literacy Readiness Skills

- Matches some letters to sounds or sounds to letters
- Recognizes own name when it's written or typed
- Writes own name and can identify the letters in his/her name
- Recognizes rhyming words
- Listens to stories/books
- Holds a book correctly

Home Connection

1. Read Together Regularly: Set aside time each day to read books together. Reading aloud promotes language development, enhances vocabulary, and nurtures a love for learning.
2. Sound Games: Practice rhyming, clapping syllables, and playing games with initial sounds (e.g., "What words start with the 'b' sound?").
3. Letter Recognition: Use alphabet books, magnetic letters, or flashcards to make it fun and interactive.
4. Print Awareness: Point out words and letters in the environment. Show them that text carries meaning and is read from left to right and top to bottom.
5. Writing Practice: Provide opportunities for your child to practice writing letters, their name, and simple words.
6. Word Hunts: Look for specific words in books or around the house. This activity reinforces word recognition.
7. Storytelling: Encourage your child to create and tell their own stories. This fosters creativity and language development.
8. Play Word Games: Do a word puzzle, word search, or play scrabble to make learning fun.

Remember, each child is different, so it's essential to make learning enjoyable and not put too much pressure on them. Celebrate their progress and keep a positive and supportive environment to nurture their reading readiness skills.

Numbers, Shapes & Colors

Math Readiness Skills

- Counts from one to ten
- Counts using one-to-one correspondence - Understanding that each object corresponds to one number when counting.
- Identifies basic shapes - circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles.
- Identifies colors

Home Connection

Preparing your incoming kindergartener with math readiness skills at home can set a solid foundation for their future mathematical learning. Here are some suggestions for math readiness activities:

1. Counting: Practice counting with your child regularly, both forwards and backwards. Use everyday objects like toys, fruits, or utensils to make it more tangible.
2. Patterns: Explore patterns with your child, using colored blocks, stickers, or beads.
3. Sorting and Classifying: Ask your child to sort objects based on different attributes like color, shape, size, or type. This promotes logical thinking and classification skills.
4. Puzzles and Building Blocks: Engage your child in age-appropriate puzzles and building block activities. These help develop spatial awareness and problem-solving skills.
5. Real-Life Math: Involve your child in real-life math experiences, such as cooking (measuring ingredients), shopping (counting items), or setting the table (number of utensils).

Remember, the key is to make math fun and practical. Celebrate your child's efforts and progress, and always provide positive reinforcement. By incorporating these activities into their daily routines, you can help your child develop a strong math foundation and a positive attitude toward math.

Motor skills

Fine Motor Readiness Skills

- Traces lines and basic shapes (square, circle, etc.)
- Can copy basic shapes and lines
- Holds a writing utensil with a non-fisted grip
- Uses scissors to cut on lines and around shapes/simple objects

Home Connection

Fine Motor Skills

Preparing incoming kindergarteners with motor skills readiness activities at home can help them feel more confident and capable when starting school. Here are some fun and engaging activities to try:

1. Sculpting My Name: Have your child sculpt their name with playdough and practice identifying the letters.
2. Cutting Practice: Provide child-safe scissors and let your child practice cutting paper or playdough.
3. Coloring and Drawing: Offer crayons, markers, and colored pencils to let your child explore their creativity and improve hand-eye coordination.

Gross Motor Skills

1. Obstacle Courses: Create simple obstacle courses indoors or outdoors to challenge your child's motor skills and coordination.
2. Ball Play: Practice catching, throwing, and kicking a ball to enhance hand-eye coordination and gross motor skills.
3. Balance Exercises: Set up balance beams using tape on the floor or create stepping stone paths to develop balance and coordination.
4. Scavenger Hunts: Organize scavenger hunts that involve finding and picking up objects, which improves hand strength and coordination.

Social Interactions

Speaking, Listening, and Social Readiness Skills

- Able to play with others as well as alone
- Able to interact appropriately with other children with minimal guidance supervision
- Able to share/take turns/wait for turn
- Shows empathy
- Plays cooperatively with others, including making group decisions, role assignments, and fair play
- Able to play imaginative games and simple board games
- Able to negotiate disagreements
- Able to wait for adult attention

Home Connection

Social Skills

Strengthening speaking, listening, and social skills is crucial for incoming kindergarteners as they prepare to interact with peers and teachers in a school setting. Here are some activities you can do at home to foster these essential skills:

1. Listening Games: Play listening games, such as "Simon Says" or "I Spy," to enhance active listening skills.
2. Show and Tell: Encourage your child to share a favorite toy, object, or experience during a show and tell session with family members.
3. Ask Open-Ended Questions: Pose open-ended questions that require more than a simple "yes" or "no" response. This encourages critical thinking and communication.
4. Group Activities: Involve your child in group activities with siblings or friends, fostering cooperation and turn-taking.
5. Cooking Together: Involve your child in simple cooking tasks, where they can follow directions and cooperate in the kitchen.

Independence & Hygiene

Kindergarten Confidence: Independence with Hygiene Skills

- Can wash hands and blow their nose to stay healthy and prevent spreading germs.
- Is able to take care of personal needs, like using the bathroom and dressing independently.
- Can complete simple tasks without reminders or help.
- Is able to button, zip, and handle small items like tissues.
- Practices good hygiene habits to stay clean and healthy every day.

Home Connection

Independence and Hygiene Skills

Preparing your child for kindergarten includes building their independence and confidence with personal hygiene tasks. Here are key skills to focus on:

- Using the toilet independently: Teach your child how to use the toilet on their own and remember to flush afterward.
- Washing hands thoroughly: Practice proper handwashing techniques, including using soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Blowing their nose: Show your child how to blow their nose and dispose of tissues properly.
- Fastening clothing: Help your child practice putting on jackets, buttoning buttons, and zipping zippers.

By developing these skills, your child will feel more capable and confident, creating a healthier and more focused learning environment for everyone in the classroom.

Getting Ready:
First day Checklist

The following tips and advice will help ensure that your child's first day goes smoothly!

- Children take cues from their parents. As you get ready for the first day, be calm, and let your child know that you are confident he/she will have a wonderful day.
- Explain what your child can expect and answer their questions simply and honestly.
- Ensure your child knows how they will get to and from school. If your child rides a bus make sure their bus number is on a bag tag attached to their bookbag.

Full Day Kindergarten

The full-day kindergarten program in the West Chester Area School District is a dynamic, hands-on program that allows children time to play – in both directed and non-directed ways – as a critical part of their school day. With consultation from child development expert and author Dr. Kathy Hirsh-Pasek (author of Einstein Never Used Flashcards), our kindergarten curriculum was built with the knowledge that play is a central component of children's growth. It helps them make meaning of their world, learn about themselves and how things work, and guides them as they learn how to get along with others and develop the crucial social skills that are necessary for them to flourish. In our kindergarten program, children plan their play scenarios; they take on roles, create story lines, and make props as they engage in dramatic and construction play. Language skills are fostered and children learn to take risks, work in groups, and focus their attention in new ways. We believe that play-based learning forms the foundation for future academic success as our students advance through the grades and face increasing academic rigor.

Morning

- Arrival / Social Activities
- English Language Arts
- Mid-morning snack / Break

Lunch / Recess

Afternoon

- Art, Library, Music, Design Lab and Physical Education
- Math Workshop
- Science / Social Studies
- Purposeful Play

Hours of Instruction

Early Schools	Late Schools
8:40 am - 3:10 pm	9:10 am - 3:40 pm
Drop-off after 8:20 am	Drop-off after 8:40 am

- East Bradford, East Goshen, Exton, Glen Acres

- Fern Hill, Greystone, Hillsdale, Mary C. Howse, Penn Wood, Starkweather, Westtown Thornbury

An Exciting Year Awaits

The following guidelines will help ensure that your child has a great year in kindergarten.

Communicate with Teachers:

- Stay in touch with your child's teacher to stay informed about their progress, challenges, and activities at school. Building a collaborative relationship with the teacher is essential for your child's success.

Foster a Love for Learning:

- Make learning enjoyable by incorporating fun educational activities and games into your daily routine. Sparking curiosity will nurture a positive attitude towards learning.

Promote Healthy Habits:

- Ensure your child gets enough sleep, eats nutritious meals, and engages in physical activities. A healthy body supports a healthy mind and enhances their ability to learn and focus.

Establish a Daily Routine:

- Create a consistent daily routine that includes designated times for waking up, getting ready for school, meal times, play, and rest. A predictable schedule provides stability and helps children feel secure.

An Exciting Year Awaits

The following guidelines will help ensure that your child has a great year in kindergarten.

Practice Social Skills:

- Encourage your child to share, take turns, and play cooperatively with others. Reinforce positive social behaviors and model appropriate communication.

Promote individual interests

- It's important for children to have activities that can be done alone, such as painting or playing with Legos, dolls, or action figures.

Limit Screen Time:

- While technology has its benefits, limit excessive screen time and ensure that screen content is age-appropriate and educational.

Encourage Questioning:

- Welcome your child's curiosity and answer their questions thoughtfully. Encouraging inquiry supports their learning and cognitive development.

Celebrate Achievements:

- Acknowledge and celebrate milestones, accomplishments, and personal growth throughout the kindergarten year.

Notes from the Meeting

West Chester Area School District

Thank You.

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