

WELCOME to KINDERGARTEN

This is an exciting time for both your child and you! We are looking forward to sharing this important time with you, your child and your family. One of the great pleasures that you have as a parent is watching your child grow, develop and thrive. We are confident that is what your child is going to do this year in kindergarten in M.S.D. Washington Township!

We want you to become acquainted with your school and know that it is a friendly and welcoming place. We want your child to have a happy attitude about school. That attitude will pay dividends as your child grows. After school has begun and we are settled, parents are welcome to visit us anytime. This gives parents an opportunity to see their children in school and to see some of the things we are doing. It is a proud day for your child when a special adult comes to visit.

All our children are growing, learning, and trying to understand themselves and others. A little bit of guidance and a lot of love will make this growing much easier.

Congratulations on taking this important step as a parent, and again welcome to Washington Township! We are committed to making this a great year for you and your child!

Sincerely,



James D. Mervilde, Ed.D.
Superintendent

HOW DO I ENROLL MY CHILD?

Any child residing in the M.S.D. Washington Township who will be five on or before September 1st is eligible to enroll in kindergarten.

An original birth certificate must be presented at registration time. The date of birth will be recorded and the birth certificate returned to you. You will be asked for immunization records from a doctor or health department and proof of residency. This can be a copy of your mortgage payment coupon book, your property tax bill or your current apartment lease.

To complete your child's enrollment, you will be asked to:

- fill out a school enrollment card.
- pay appropriate fees.
- provide necessary health forms.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

Half-day programs are offered without cost (other than supply and activities fees) as part of the regular instructional program.

Full-day kindergarten is available as a program option on a fee basis. The full-day program adheres to the same instructional day and schedules as all other elementary classes.

While working toward the same curricular objectives, full-day programs are able to enrich, expand and enhance the activities of the half-day kindergarten program.

WHAT ABOUT TRANSPORTATION?

One-way transportation is provided for students attending half-day programs at their home school.

When attending their home school, students in the full-day program are provided transportation on the elementary busing system like all other students.

Here are some important points to remember:

When transportation is provided by bus:

- CHILDREN MUST BE PLACED ON THE BUS BY AN ADULT AND RECEIVED BY AN ADULT WHEN THE CHILD IS DROPPED OFF. IF AN ADULT IS NOT PRESENT TO RECEIVE A CHILD RETURNING FROM SCHOOL, THE CHILD WILL BE TRANSPORTED BACK TO SCHOOL FOR PARENT PICK-UP.
- Remind your child of bus safety rules for waiting, boarding, riding and departing the bus.
- The bus driver normally decides what is the best seat assignment for kindergartners.
- Communicate any bus questions or problems to the school immediately.

When transportation is by private car:

- Leave your home early enough to get the children to school on time. Tardiness is a bad habit and robs children of valuable instructional time.
- Please do not arrive earlier than ten minutes before school begins. Children who arrive early will need to be supervised by parent until school begins.
- Establish communication and safety guidelines with other families in your carpool.

If you wish to form a carpool with other parents, the driver may be held legally responsible in case of an accident. It is advisable to carry adequate liability insurance.

If your child is going home using a different method than normal, the teacher must be notified in writing. Other persons picking up a child may be asked for picture identification.

BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE

If you need before and/or after school care for your child, you may be interested in our contracted program, **AYS** (At Your School). **AYS** is a licensed and accredited program. For a fee, your child receives before and/or after school care without leaving the premises. **AYS** provides coverage in the buildings from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. You may access information about **AYS** from the school office or by calling the **AYS** office, 283-3817.

BASIC EXPECTATIONS FOR CHILDREN ENTERING KINDERGARTEN

All students of appropriate age are welcomed into Washington Township Schools. We understand that children differ in their rates of development; this list may help you to understand skills appropriate for entering kindergarten students. It is not offered as a checklist, but as a guide to understand typical development.

- knows his/her full name, address and phone number.
- eats with a spoon/fork and holds cup with one hand.
- goes to toilet without help, flushes toilet and washes hands without being told.
- puts on a sweater or coat alone, attempts to zip, button, snap and tie shoes.
- jumps, skips, climbs with alternate feet, throws and catches a ball.
- holds scissors and pencil and can use both.
- responds to music, sings along and recognizes some songs.
- draws or paints lines and circles and understands the difference between lines and circles.
- names and recognizes at least five colors.
- counts by rote 1 to 10 and recognizes numerals.

- sits and listens to a story 5 to 10 minutes, understands the story and can discuss it.
- recognizes and writes his/her name.
- follows simple directions.
- distinguishes differences and likenesses between sounds, matching words with the same beginning sounds.
- identifies rhyming words in speech.
- recognizes ABCs, letter sounds and some words; can print some letters.
- speaks clearly in sentences.
- engages in conversation with children and adults and is willing to speak in a group.
- waits his/her turn.
- helps clean up and does simple chores.
- looks at picture books from front to back and enjoys books.
- likes to try new things and is able to adjust to a change in routine.
- enters into activity within 10 minutes after parents leave.
- understands reprimands or correction.
- spends more time with own age group than with adults.
- relates to more than one adult and can share a parent or teacher with others.
- shows concern for others.
- expresses affection for others.
- maintains and sustains friendships with other children.
- vents anger in a way that doesn't hurt people or equipment.

EXPECTATIONS FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE COMPLETED KINDERGARTEN

The following expectations are a general guide of what is expected of a child who has completed kindergarten and is ready for first grade.

Language

Oral

- understands concepts of print (knows how a book works – the story is read from front to back and print works from left to right and top to bottom)
- distinguishes words that rhyme
- speaks fluently in complete sentences
- uses words correctly, when speaking
- expresses complete thoughts on a topic
- uses descriptive words and ideas when speaking

Written

- correctly spells some words in writing
- demonstrates independent writing (no prompting from teacher)
- begins to use spaces between words
- uses initial and final consonants to express thoughts
- uses simple punctuation (. , ?)

Letters/Sounds

- recognizes all letters – upper and lower case
- associates letter sounds to letters
- demonstrates beginning word recognition and has a small sight vocabulary

Math

- identifies and draws 6 basic shapes without a model (from report card)
- counts orally to 100 or more without prompting
- recognizes all numerals to 20

- understands combinations of numbers to (at least) 10
- repeats all personal information without hesitating (birthday, address, phone number)
- understands the pattern of days of the week, months of the year and seasons and can recite them
- writes numerals to 20 independently

Fine Motor

- holds pencil/crayon using correct three finger grip
- demonstrates control of scissors, cutting accurately
- forms letters and writes first and last name
- creates drawings that are representative of thoughts and ideas
- works neatly

Gross Motor

- jumps, hops on one foot at a time, gallops, skips, walks on balance beam forward and backward, catches and throws a ball
- demonstrates good sportsmanship throughout the day

Social

- interacts appropriately and demonstrates a good relationship with peers
- acts courteously and respectfully to peers and teachers
- demonstrates a positive attitude and motivation
- cooperates and works well in small groups
- demonstrates use of lifelong guidelines, life skills and character values
- participates in classroom discussions
- pays attention in large and small groups

Work Habits

- organizes work and belongings
- stays on task
- completes work promptly
- demonstrates pride in work
- listens to directions and works independently without constant reminders

WHAT IS THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM?

A great deal of learning takes place during the first few years of a child's life. Research shows that a child learns faster during these years than at any other time of life. Most of this learning occurs through independent and cooperative play. Our kindergarten program takes advantage of this prime learning time by providing numerous and varied opportunities for each child's physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth. The program is designed to develop a positive attitude toward self and school. No two children are alike and not all children learn in the same way. It is important to remember that each child has his or her own timetable for growing and learning.



EXPLORATION IN KINDERGARTEN

Learning experiences are provided through the investigation of themes in the following areas:

Physical Education

- development of large muscles
- development of small muscles
- use of gym equipment and facilities
- use of playground equipment

Literacy

- recognizing letters of the alphabet
- learning letter sounds
- making sound/symbol connections
- rhyming words
- developing oral language
- reading both fiction and non-fiction
- distinguishing likenesses and differences
- writing about one's own experiences

Health and Safety

- encouraging good health habits at school and at home
- promoting good safety habits

Math

- patterning
- rote counting
- recognizing colors and shapes
- naming and writing numerals
- estimating
- sorting
- classifying
- graphing
- modeling addition and subtraction
- understanding time
- calendar concepts

Science

- exploring plants, animals, and the world around us
- studying matter and energy
- developing appreciation for living things
- investigating weather patterns

Social Studies

- exploring the family, school and community
- exploring the world in which we live and improving the environment
- exploring characteristics of leaders in our country and community
- exploring seasonal changes

Art

- reinforcing math, science and language experiences
- using fine motor skills
- expressing oneself through paint, paper, crayons, chalk, clay, and other media

Music

- enjoying songs, rhythms and other musical activities
- reinforcing language skills

MORE ABOUT READING

Our kindergarten teachers use *Building Blocks* model for teaching beginning literacy. This framework addresses reading, writing, and phonics.

Building Blocks, students experience a variety of reading and writing activities which instill the desire to learn to read and write, develop phonemic awareness, foster important language concepts, encourage letter and sound recognition, teach essential print ideas, and extend vocabulary. These six critical understandings are stressed in the Building Blocks balanced literacy program.

- **Desire To Learn To Read & Write** Create an environment where all students see themselves becoming independent readers and writers through a variety of developmentally appropriate activities.
- **Language Concepts** Foster the ability to read and write words through the use of morning messages, journal entries, sentence building activities, and environmental print.
- **Print Concepts** Teach print concepts by modeling how to write and participating in shared reading and shared writing experiences.
- **Phonemic Awareness** Develop phonemic awareness, including the concept of rhyme, through activities with poetry, rhyming books, tongue twisters, and playing with language.
- **Interesting Words** Extend the list of real-life words that students find personally relevant, such as favorite restaurant names, favorite cartoon characters, and family members.
- **Letters & Sounds** Encourage letter and sound recognition through activities with alphabet books, beginning and ending sounds, and shared writing of predictable charts.

The kindergarten teachers work with the parents to provide reading and writing experiences for the children at home. Children share predictable books, both published and student-authored, with their family. They bring home writing projects for the family to do together, and they share craft projects involving the use of magazines and other printed material available at home.

The combination of reading and writing with the language experiences provided at school and home helps students develop a variety of skills which include:

- visual/oral/auditory discrimination of the alphabet letters, colors, shapes, sounds.
- handling books properly (e.g., holding book right side up; turning pages one at a time; following a left to right progression in looking at pages).
- developing vocabulary through informal activities, songs, conversation, discussion, creative dramatics, story telling, and recognizing the uses of types of words and word parts (i.e. antonyms, synonyms, verbs, compound words, adjectives, and prefixes).
- listening and following directions.
- social living (recognizing and respecting individual differences and learning to work together cooperatively).
- dramatization (role-playing, puppetry, finger plays, pantomime).
- music and rhythms (language patterns, appreciation and participation).
- comprehending stories and information presented orally, e.g., children use story books, flat pictures, picture books, tapes, videos, and computers to develop the following:
 - ⇒ main idea (what the story is all about in a few words)
 - ⇒ details (noting specific information)
 - ⇒ sequence (ability to retell a story in its proper order)
 - ⇒ inference (using story clues to gain information not stated directly)
 - ⇒ classification (noting things which are related or in the same category)
 - ⇒ interpreting and identifying emotions

To learn more please visit

<http://www.four-blocks.com/kindergarten.htm>



MORE ABOUT MATH

Throughout the year in our math program, we will cover the following concepts:

- shapes
- patterning
- measurement
- position
- classification
- counting
- identifying sets
- writing numbers
- ordinal numbers
- time (the hour)
- recognizing money
- calendar



Washington Township's math program utilizes a variety of research based programs and strategies aligned to the Indiana State Standards. Research shows that young children develop a strong mathematical understanding when they are actively engaged in manipulating objects to build a strong concrete foundation. To gain a deep understanding of mathematical ideas, children need to be able use everyday objects as math tools. The children will explore the concepts of counting, sorting and classifying, making patterns and modeling addition and subtraction.

THE ONGOING NEEDS OF OUR KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

During the course of the year, we will use many types of materials for special art projects with the children. Your child's teacher will supply you with a list of items that the children often use; e.g. buttons, egg cartons, margarine tubs, rick rack, etc. You may be asked to donate items for snacks and occasional cooking projects. We would appreciate it greatly if you would save and send in the items on your teacher's and/or school's list. If you have access through your work place to any type of scrap paper or other throw-away items you feel we might be able to "recycle", please mention it to us.



WHAT SERVICES DO OUR SCHOOLS PROVIDE?

The school provides a variety of special services for kindergarten children and their parents.

1. School psychologists, resource teachers, and speech pathologists are available in all schools to assist children with special needs.
2. Through a partnership with St. Vincent Hospital, each school clinic is serviced by a trained health staff. Marion County health nurses make periodic visits to the schools.
3. Each school is staffed by a professionally trained media specialist who will help your child become acquainted with the media center through periodic visits.
4. The teacher may plan educational trips with the children via school bus. Parents sign a universal permission for all field trips. It is located on the back of the emergency card that is filled out by the child's family at the beginning of each school year.
5. Parents can expect to receive informational newsletters from the kindergarten teacher and the school.
6. Parents are encouraged to join the parent-teacher organization in their child's school.
7. AYS services are available for before and after school child care for a reasonable fee.

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD AT SCHOOL?

Please remember to:

- Notify the school immediately of a change of address, change of telephone number, or change in emergency numbers.
- Label all outdoor clothing, including hats, mittens, gloves, and boots.
- Teach your child to recognize these labels.
- Send a non-rolling backpack/bookbag to school every day, if suggested by the teacher.
- Use a sealed envelope when sending money to school. The name of the child, the name of the teacher, the room number and the purpose for the money should be clearly marked.
- You may be asked by your child's school to send an extra change of clothes – include shirt, pants, socks, and underwear. Please label these items with your child's name.
- Read all school notices carefully.

CONFERENCES AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Conferences are the best opportunity for following your child's progress in kindergarten and are helpful to the teacher in understanding your child. Two conferences are scheduled for all parents, one in the fall and one in the spring. Arrangements will be made for individual parent conferences as needed.

At the end of each semester you will receive a written report of your child's progress. You are welcome to discuss your child's kindergarten experiences at any pre-arranged time.

SCHOOL VISITS

Parents are welcome to visit their child's kindergarten. It is helpful for the children to wait until after the first month of the school year before you begin your visits. This will help the children become adjusted to their new environment. Consult with the teacher as to the preferred time and length of visits, and remember to always report to the school office before visiting your child's room.



HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD AT HOME?

Teach your child to:

- know his or her full name, address and phone number.
- care for toilet needs.
- put on and take off clothing.
- zip, tie and button clothing and tie his/her shoes.
- use and dispose of tissue.
- cover coughs and sneezes.
- put away toys and other possessions.
- take turns and wait for his/her turn.
- listen when others are talking.
- express himself or herself verbally.
- solve problems through compromise, not force.

Help your child by:

- providing a nutritious meal before coming to school.
- encouraging independence in doing things.
- giving small responsibilities at home.
- directing leisure time in order to provide plenty of outdoor play with other children.
- regulating the amount of television time and being selective about programming.
- monitoring the amount of time playing and the selection of video and/or computer games.
- reading to him or her everyday.
- having proper tools at home, such as crayons, pencils, scissors, etc.
- arranging for adequate sleep each night (10-12 hours are suggested).
- attending parent conferences.
- communicating with his or her teachers.
- labeling all outdoor clothing, including hats, mittens, gloves, and boots.

WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD STAY HOME?

Send your child to school regularly unless he or she is ill. **Be sure school records are kept current**, especially the section on **emergency phone numbers**. Report to the school the following:

- All communicable diseases
- Any serious illness or health problem concerning your child
- Any medication your child is taking (*If your child needs to take medication while at school, a completed prescription(blue) or non-prescription(yellow) permission form must be sent to the school. Students are **not** permitted to transport medication to and from school.*)
- The dates and reason for your child's absence upon his return to school as required for state attendance records.

A child **should not** attend school if he or she is vomiting or running a fever.

Your child needs to be free of fever for twenty-four (24) hours before returning to school. Taking proper precautions can prevent a prolonged illness for your child and the infection of other children.

Washington Township Elementary Schools

Allisonville Elementary School	845-9441
Crooked Creek Elementary School	259-5478
Fox Hill Elementary School	259-5371
Greenbriar Elementary School	259-5445
John Strange Elementary School	259-5465
Nora Elementary School	844-5436
Spring Mill Elementary School	259-5462

***Kindergarten students from Allisonville attendance areas attend John Strange Elementary School for kindergarten.*