



Plano Independent School District

HANDBOOK
FOR
KINDERGARTEN PARENTS

2019-2020

Kindergarten! ... here I come!





Dear Parent,

We welcome you and your child to the kindergarten program of the Plano Independent School District. The experience of this memorable year will be exciting and rewarding. We look forward to working with you as a team to support your child's social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic development.

The staff of Plano ISD has prepared this handbook, which highlights basic information and suggestions that can help you and your child as you begin the kindergarten year. Best wishes for a successful school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sara M. Bonser".

Sara Bonser
Superintendent of Schools

PHILOSOPHY

The kindergarten program in the Plano Independent School District has been developed within Texas Education Agency guidelines. The program is uniquely adapted to meet the needs and interests of the kindergarten child.

The kindergarten program is designed to promote children's knowledge and skills in all developmental areas - cognitive, social/emotional, physical, and aesthetic - and to establish a foundation for lifelong learning.

The kindergarten program reflects the belief that children are active learners. They build meaning and understanding through full participation in their learning environments. This child-centered program combines high expectations for each child with respect for individual development.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUNG CHILD

Development in young children is a continuous process. Kindergarten children are at different stages in their growth and development, and therefore, they differ in their ability to perform certain tasks. It is important to recognize where the child is in his/her stage of development in order to individualize instruction. Even if two children are exactly the same age, they might be quite different in their rates of development. Consideration needs to be given in all areas -- physical, social/emotional, aesthetic, and cognitive. Because each child is viewed as an individual, different from every other child in a variety of ways, kindergarten instruction is carefully organized to provide for different developmental levels of children.



GOALS

The Plano ISD kindergarten program provides a learning environment that affords each child opportunities to develop:

- self-confidence and self-worth through secure relationships and independence through successful learning experiences;
- responsibility for one's own behavior;
- positive attitudes toward learning;
- a sense of responsibility for completing assigned tasks;
- good habits in the care of self and materials;
- the ability to share and cooperate with others;
- appreciation of family, neighborhood, and country;
- oral and written language skills and strategies;
- an understanding of mathematical concepts;
- the ability to observe, explore, discover, predict, and solve problems through concrete learning experiences;
- awareness of health and safety habits;
- physically through use of large and small muscles;
- aesthetic expression and appreciation through art and music;
- full potential in all areas of learning.

WHEN YOUR CHILD STARTS SCHOOL



The first day of school is a milestone in your child's life. Your understanding at this "turning point" is important to the child's future attitude toward school and to his or her growth and development.

Experts in child development emphasize that you, the parent, can play an important role in starting your child off with the self-confidence needed throughout life. This self-confidence is built upon good feelings about parents, other adults at school, other children, and himself or herself as a worthwhile human being.

Here are some things for you to keep in mind:

- Recognize that the first day your child goes to school is an important event.
- Remember that learning to like school and liking to learn are closely related.
- Prepare your child for the new school experience by explaining what to expect and answering all questions honestly.
- Convey a positive attitude about school.
- Make transportation plans clear to the child.
- Create a normal routine atmosphere at home the first few days of school.
- Get to know your child's teacher.
- Attend scheduled grade level meetings to be informed about your child's educational program.
- Plan your day so that you can spend time with your child.
- Help your child cope with occasional frustrations and disappointments at school.
- Avoid comparing this child's school experiences with how brothers and sisters or neighbors did when they began school.



GENERAL INFORMATION

SAFETY TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Whether your child walks or rides in a car or bus, be sure your child is clearly aware of the safety rules associated with that form of transportation.

If your child walks to school, it is suggested that you walk with your child until you are absolutely sure that he/she knows the way. Please teach your child where to cross streets safely, to refuse rides from strangers, and to recognize the location of homes of known, safe people in your neighborhood. It is also important for your child to learn the family's telephone number and address.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

For the protection of the child, the teacher **MUST** be notified if there is a change in the way your child goes home from school. Send a note explaining any such transportation changes. In the event of a last minute change, call the school immediately.

SEVERE ILLNESSES AND HOSPITALIZATION

When a child is hospitalized or ill for an extended period of time, contact the teacher. Teachers enjoy close relationships with students, and they like to visit students or send get-well messages when they are in the hospital or ill for a lengthy period of time.

CLOTHING

Kindergarten children need to wear clothing and shoes that allow for easy movement. It is advisable that your child dress in clothing that is easily washed since students spend time in activities such as painting and cooking.

Outdoor learning time is an important part of the kindergarten program. Your child will participate in outdoor activities unless it is raining or extremely hot or cold. It is important that your child's clothing is appropriate for the weather.

LABEL ALL CLOTHING

Please label all articles of clothing with your child's first and last name. Numerous articles of clothing end up in the school's lost and found each year. White sweaters, jean jackets, and yellow raincoats can look amazingly alike!

REPORTING TO PARENTS

Kindergarten through second grade teachers provide portfolio progress reports and conference reporting to parents. The kindergarten staff at your child's school will be contacting you to schedule several conferences during the year.

BACKPACK/BOOK BAG

Communication between the home and school is vital. To help your child carry messages and information to and from school, you are encouraged to provide a backpack or book bag for this purpose. Have your child share the contents of the backpack with you daily. This will encourage the development of personal responsibility.

PEST CONTROL NOTICE TO PARENTS

The school periodically applies pesticides as part of an Integrated Pest Management program. All persons applying pesticides at this school district are required to receive special training in pesticide application and pest control. In addition, the school has a policy that requires use of non-chemical pest control tactics whenever it is possible. Pesticides may periodically be applied.

Should you have further questions about pesticide use, including the types and timing of treatments, you may contact Facilities Services at 6600 Alma Dr., Plano, TX 75023 or at (469) 752-0180.

ONLINE PAYMENT FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

Plano schools offer online payment for school lunches. Parents should visit the district website or go directly to www.paypams.com to sign up. Parents need to provide their child's student identification number and birth date. Lunches are prepaid with credit/debit cards. Students are able to pay for their lunches at school by typing in a personal identification number when they reach the cashier. Their name and any restrictions parents place on the account are displayed to the cashier. Parents receive email alerts when funds are low.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

A primary focus during the kindergarten year is literacy development. Teachers recognize that all children entering kindergarten are at various stages in their literacy development. To accommodate these differences, the kindergarten program offers a balanced literacy program for young children. A balanced literacy program includes rich language experiences involving speaking and writing, and instruction in reading skills and strategies. An overview of the kindergarten literacy program is provided below. Together, these activities allow for a variety of interactive and independent reading and writing experiences to occur.

READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN

Besides giving children a pleasurable experience, reading aloud introduces them to basic reading concepts, allows children to hear the sound of rich language and to internalize language patterns. Students develop listening comprehension and a more extensive vocabulary.

SHARED READING

This is an interactive process used with the whole class. As the teacher reads a story, children join in on phrases or words that they know. During subsequent rereading, children read more and more of the text, until they are able to read the story independently. Shared reading is an opportunity for the teacher to model conventions of print and the use of reading strategies.

GUIDED READING

In kindergarten, the definition of reading encompasses a wide variety of behaviors. For example, some kindergarten children may require teacher support to read stories with predictable text, while others will read simple texts independently. At the same time, there may be children who are beginning to recognize letters of the alphabet.

Guided reading provides an opportunity to teach children the variety of reading strategies they need in order to become fluent, independent readers. The teacher works with small groups of students who are similar in their reading development or have a similar need for a particular concept or skill. These groups are flexible and change according to the students' needs and progress. The goal of guided reading is to help readers develop and use effective strategies for understanding increasingly difficult levels of text. During guided reading, the teacher monitors and evaluates each child's progress.

INDEPENDENT READING

Because children learn to read by reading, they need plenty of opportunities to read independently. Sufficient time and appropriate materials are critical to develop and strengthen reading abilities.

WRITING

Research in language development has shown that growth in reading and writing is interdependent; opportunities to write increase ability to read, and vice versa. Kindergarten children participate in various writing activities such as interactive writing and journal writing.

Young children learn to write much as they learned to talk. Even though toddlers make many "mistakes" or approximations in speech, parents enjoy the conversations and encourage the child to talk, knowing that speech develops by talking. In kindergarten, writing is approached in much the same way. Teachers accept children's approximations of spellings. Just as parents are proud of a child's every attempt to say words, teachers praise young writer's efforts at writing. They allow much practice by encouraging very young children to use written language for real purposes: phone messages, shopping lists, labels, and stories.

Your child's written stories may contain examples of spelling approximations (temporary phonetic spelling). For example, a child might write "love" as "luv", because that's the way it sounds. Teachers model correct spelling and children gradually incorporate conventional or standard spelling into their writing. Be assured, however, that your child will progress to age-appropriate conventional spelling.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

In Kindergarten language arts, your child will learn:

LISTENING/SPEAKING

Students:

- listen to information, rhymes, songs, conversations, and stories
- listen and talk about experiences, customs, and cultures
- make announcements, give directions, and make introductions
- act out plays, poems, and stories
- clearly request, retell, and/or describe stories and experiences
- listen responsively to contemporary and classic stories and other texts read aloud

READING

Students:

- recognize that print represents spoken language and conveys meaning, such as their own name, and signs such as Exit and Danger
- recognize upper and lower case letters in print and understand that print represents language
- manipulate sounds in spoken words (phonemic awareness)
- decode simple words using letter-sound knowledge
- identify words that name persons, places or things, and words that name actions
- learn new vocabulary words through selections read aloud
- develop a sight word vocabulary
- retell or act out important events in a story
- gather important information and ask relevant questions

WRITING

Students:

- write their name and each letter of the alphabet
- write messages using their knowledge of letters and sounds
- record or dictate questions, ideas, stories
- write labels, notes, and captions for illustrations, possessions, charts, and centers

NOTE: Students of limited English proficiency (LEP) enrolled in Spanish Language Arts and/or in English as a Second Language (ESL) will be expected to learn these same knowledge and skills for this grade level; however, students in Spanish Language Arts will learn these skills through their native language and through English, and students in English as a Second Language will apply these skills at their proficiency level in English.

MATHEMATICS IN KINDERGARTEN

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

Math involves not only basic skills such as developing whole number concepts and using patterns and sorting to explore data, number and shape, but also learning to think in a logical way. Children begin exploring mathematical concepts before starting school. This happens naturally as children play. Centers in the classroom can be arranged for children to continue making discoveries informally. Structured games and lessons are also provided to teach math concepts and skills in kindergarten.

Children's first experiences with numbers influence the way they will deal with mathematics the rest of their lives. Mathematics is useful for children if we teach it in ways that make sense to them. In order to make sense of number concepts, children need experiences with real things rather than with symbols.

Manipulatives are an essential part of the math program. Real, meaningful materials involve the child's senses and allow the math concepts to be illustrated concretely. Learning with manipulatives is developmentally appropriate for kindergarteners. Understanding is enhanced when children are given opportunities to first learn a concept using real things and then are taught to label that concept with the appropriate symbol(s).

In Kindergarten mathematics, your child will learn:

NUMBER, OPERATION, AND QUANTITATIVE REASONING

Students:

- use numbers to describe how many objects are in a set
- read, write and represent numbers from 0 to at least 20
- model, solve, and explain addition and subtraction problems within 10
- use comparative language to describe two numbers (more than, less than, equal to, etc.)
- identify coins by name

PATTERNS, RELATIONSHIPS, AND ALGEBRAIC THINKING

Students:

- count to 100 by ones and tens
- count backwards from 20
- count on from any given number by ones and tens to 100

GEOMETRY AND SPATIAL REASONING

Students:

- identify two and three dimensional geometric shapes and their attributes
- classify and sort two and three dimensional geometric figures
- create two dimensional shapes

MEASUREMENT

Students:

- compare two objects by length, capacity, and/or weight
- identify objects as longer/heavier/holds more than, shorter/lighter/holds less than or equal to a given object
- give an example of a measurable attribute of a given object

PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS

Students:

- collect, sort and organize data into two or three categories
- construct and use picture graphs
- use graphs to answer questions

PROBLEM SOLVING

Students:

- identify mathematics in everyday situations
- solve problems with guidance, using a problem solving model
- select or develop an appropriate problem-solving strategy

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Students:

- identify ways to earn income and simple skills required for jobs
- know the difference between money earned and money received as a gift
- understand the difference between wants and needs



SOCIAL STUDIES

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

In Kindergarten social studies, your child will learn:

HISTORY

Students:

- explain the reasons for and identify customs associated with national patriotic holidays
- identify contributions of historical figures who helped to shape the state and nation
- identify contributions of patriots and good citizens
- place events in chronological order
- use vocabulary related to time and chronology

GEOGRAPHY

Students:

- use terms and locate places to describe relative location
- identify tools that aid in determining location, including maps and globes
- identify the physical characteristics of places such as landforms, bodies of water...
- identify how the human characteristics of places such as ways to earn a living, shelter, clothing, food, and activities are based upon geographic location

ECONOMICS

Students:

- identify basic human needs and explain how they can be met
- identify jobs and why people have them

GOVERNMENT

Students:

- identify rules and reasons for having them
- identify authority figures

CITIZENSHIP

Students:

- identify U.S. and Texas flags
- recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Pledge to the Texas Flag
- identify Constitution Day as a celebration of American freedom
- use voting as a method of group decision making

CULTURE

Students:

- identify similarities and differences among people
- identify, describe and explain the importance of family customs

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY

Students:

- identify examples of technology and describe how they meet people's needs

SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS

Students:

- obtain information from a variety of valid oral and visual sources
- sequence and categorize information
- identify main ideas
- express ideas orally and visually
- use problem-solving and decision-making processes



SCIENCE

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

In Kindergarten science, your child will learn to plan and safely implement classroom and outdoor investigations using scientific processes including inquiry methods, analyzing information, making informed decisions, and using tools to collect and record information, while addressing the major concepts and vocabulary, in the context of physical, earth and space, and life science.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE

Students:

- observe and record properties of objects, including relative size and mass
- observe, record, and discuss how materials can be changed by heating or cooling
- use the senses to explore different forms of energy such as light, thermal, and sound
- explore interactions between magnets and various materials
- observe and describe the location of objects in relation to one another
- observe and describe how objects move

EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCE

Students:

- observe, describe, and sort rocks by size, shape, color, and texture
- observe and describe physical properties of natural sources of water
- give examples of ways rocks, soil, and water are useful
- observe and describe weather changes from day to day and over seasons
- identify events that have repeating patterns, including seasons of the year and day and night
- Observe, describe, and illustrate objects in the sky such as the clouds, moon, stars, sun

LIFE SCIENCE

Students:

- differentiate between living and nonliving things
- examine evidence that living organisms including plants and animals have basic needs
- sort plants and animals into groups based on physical characteristics
- identify parts of plants
- identify ways that young plants resemble the parent plant
- observe changes that are a part of a simple life cycle of a plant

For more information on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Kindergarten, please visit the Texas Education Agency (TEA) website at:

<http://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/teks/> .

LEARNING CENTERS

Young children learn by doing. Teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration and interaction with adults, other children, and materials. Young children benefit from having a classroom with clearly defined, well-equipped learning centers that are arranged to promote independence, foster decision-making, and encourage involvement.

At the **LITERACY CENTER** children:

- sequence a story
- retell a familiar story
- express ideas, thoughts, feelings
- associate print with spoken language
- participate in reading and writing activities
- enjoy listening to and reading stories and books



At the **LISTENING CENTER** children:

- develop vocabulary
- listen to favorite stories
- learn new language patterns
- listen to the ideas of others
- develop an interest in poetry



At the **CONSTRUCTION / BLOCK CENTER** children:

- develop perceptual skills
- explore spatial relationships
- compare sizes and shapes
- develop large and small muscle coordination
- learn how to work and plan together
- explore problem solving techniques
- develop language and vocabulary
- explore cause and effect
- develop aesthetic awareness

At the **ART CENTER** children:

- develop creative thinking
- plan, design, and construct
- express ideas and feelings
- experiment with colors, shapes, sizes, and textures
- develop eye-hand coordination and fine muscle control
- develop appreciation for the artistic expressions of others
- develop self-concept and confidence
- develop language



At the **LIBRARY CENTER** children:

- respect and care for books
- dictate stories
- develop an interest in words and books
- sequence pictures
- sequence a story
- develop left-to-right directionality
- choose books to enjoy reading again and again

At the **DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER** children:

- develop self-confidence
- act out familiar situations and roles
- work out problems and concerns
- develop interpersonal skills
- engage in extensive communication



At the **MATH CENTER** children:

- create and record patterns
- estimate and measure
- sequence objects in order by size
- develop one-to-one correspondence
- make and discuss graphs
- develop problem solving skills
- count objects
- classify objects
- write and read numerals

At the **SCIENCE CENTER** children:

- explore the world of plants and animals
- observe and describe life cycles
- formulate and evaluate predictions
- recognize relationships
- gather simple data and draw conclusions
- develop visual and tactile senses
- classify materials
- use hand magnifiers and balances



At the **SAND and WATER TABLE** children:

- learn to share ideas and tools
- make comparisons
- develop eye-hand coordination
- measure
- develop oral language
- complete a task and are responsible for cleaning up after self
- make predictions
- estimate
- develop fine motor skills
- learn to take turns



At the **PUZZLES and MANIPULATIVES CENTER** children:

- develop perceptual skills
- develop fine motor skills
- develop problem solving skills
- explore basic concepts in a variety of curriculum areas
- experience a sense of achievement and develop self-confidence



At the **MUSIC AND MOVEMENT CENTER** children:

- sing and make up songs
- play musical instruments and move to the beat
- listen to music
- participate in musical games and activities

A TYPICAL KINDERGARTEN DAY

7:45 – 8:30 Arrival Routines and Whole Group Instruction

This large group time includes the following routine activities:

- Pledge of Allegiance and Campus Announcements/Routines
- Attendance
- Whole Group Instruction:
 - Oral Language - Vocabulary, Phonemic Awareness
 - Word Study - Phonics, High-Frequency Words
 - Reading - Listening Comprehension, Application of Phonics and Word Study, Shared Reading, Read Aloud
 - Language Arts - Writing, Grammar

8:30 – 9:00 Writing

Writer's Workshop

This large group time includes a mini lesson and modeled writing experience led by the teacher. Students then participate in independent writing. Teachers conference with students and provide opportunities for students to share their writing.

9:00 – 10:00 Literacy Development

Independent Stations

Students work independently, with a partner, and/or in small groups to complete literacy activities arranged in workstations throughout the room. Stations are differentiated to meet the needs of all learners. These stations should include, but are not limited to:

- Phonics
- Word Study
- Handwriting
- Writing
- Listening Comprehension
- Reading
- Computer

Small Group Instruction

Teacher works with individual students and small groups to provide differentiated instruction, guidance, and support while other students are working independently at stations. Instruction might include:

- Guided reading and writing
- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Oral Language
- Individual Conferences (reading, writing)
- Individual Assessments
- Mini-lessons on targeted skills

10:00-10:45 Science, Social Studies, and Health

The whole class begins with teacher instruction. Students break into multitasking activities involving science, social studies, and health.

- 10:45 – 11:45** **Lunch**
Outdoor Play – Gross Motor Skill Development
- 11:45 – 12:00** **Read Aloud and Independent Reading** – Quiet Time
- 12:00 – 12:45** **Specialized Instruction** – Physical Education, Music, Art, Counselor
- 12:45 – 1:45** **Mathematics**

The whole class begins with the teacher instructing. Students break into multitasking activities involving number, operation, quantitative reasoning, patterns, relationship, algebraic thinking, geometry/spatial reasoning, measurement, probability & statistics, and problem solving.

1:45 – 2:30 **Learning Centers**

Students will be working independently and in small groups at designated learning centers. These centers could include:

- Art (painting, play dough, clay)
- Science (observation table, living animals and plants, investigative activities, Integrated Curriculum follow up activity)
- Construction (blocks, Lincoln Logs, Legos, puzzles)
- Dramatic Play (restaurant, puppet theater, homemaking center)
- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Fine Motor (puzzles, beads for stringing, scissors, peg board)
- Social Studies
- Music
- Sand and/or Water

* The teacher's primary responsibility is to interact with students in the centers to develop oral language and build vocabulary.

The teacher might work with individual students and small groups to provide instruction, guidance, and support through:

- Shared reading and writing lessons with small groups
- Guided reading and writing lessons led by teachers
- Individual Conferences (reading, writing)
- Individual Assessments
- Mini-lessons on targeted skills
- Hands-on math activities

2:30 – 2:45 p.m. **Sharing Time**

Students are given an opportunity to develop oral language. Several students share personal experiences through Show and Tell to develop explaining and describing skills and Sharing Time to develop personal narratives. Other students practice active listening skills. The activities of the day and student learning are reviewed.

WHAT WORKS AT HOME

Parents are their child's first and most important teacher. Parents can do many things at home to help their child succeed in school. They do this by offering encouragement and support. The following information is provided to assist parents as they work with their young child.

Speaking and Listening

Research Finding: **A good foundation in speaking and listening helps children become better readers.**

Comment: When children learn to read, they are making a transition from spoken to written language. Reading instruction builds on oral language skills; the better children are at using spoken language, the more successfully they will learn to read written language. To succeed at reading, children need a basic vocabulary, knowledge of the world around them, and the ability to talk about what they know. These skills enable children to understand written material more readily.

Research shows a strong connection between reading and listening. A child who is listening well shows it by being able to retell stories and repeat instructions. Children who are good listeners in kindergarten and first grade are more likely to become successful readers.

What Parents Can Do At Home:

- Ask young children special questions, especially ones that require more than a "yes" or "no" answer. Then be sure to give them your attention while they answer your questions. Some examples:

What is the favorite thing that you did at school today, Jenny?

What did you enjoy about that?

What did you do when you got home from school today?

What learning centers will you work at tomorrow, Jenny?

What will you plan to do after supper tonight?

- If you make a habit of asking all of your children about their favorite daily activities, they will get used to having a turn and will begin to prepare for it. Don't forget to share your favorites, too!
- Use positive reinforcement to encourage your children to listen to others. Encourage your children to ask questions of each other. They need to listen to be able to ask for more information. Praise them. "Jenny, I can tell that you're really listening carefully to your brother's story. You're a careful listener!"

Reading to Children

Research Finding: **The best way for parents to help their children become better readers is to read to them--even when they are very young. Children benefit most from reading aloud when they discuss stories, learn to identify letters and words, and talk about the meaning of words.**

Comment: The specific skills required for reading come from direct experience with written language. At home, as in school, the more reading that happens, the better.

Parents can encourage their children's reading in many ways. This can be done by pointing out letters and words on signs, containers, and elsewhere in the child's environment. But reading aloud is probably the single most important activity you can do to encourage your child's success with reading. Kindergarten children who know a lot about written language usually have parents who seize every opportunity to read to their children.

What Parents Can Do At Home:

Here are some reading activities to use at home during story time.

- Have a regular story time before or after meals or at bedtime. It will help relax and calm your child.
- Look at the book cover together. Use the words "front cover," "back cover," "title," "author," "illustrator," "top," "bottom," etc. You will expose your child to reading vocabulary.
- Look at the pictures or title on the cover. Can your child predict what the story will be about? Help him use pictures or contextual clues for reading comprehension.
- Read the title page together. You will do it quickly, but reading together will help your child learn the format of a book.
- When reading to your child, follow under the words with your finger. Your child will learn the left to right progression for reading and writing.
- You may wish to look at one page in the book and have your child locate any words or letters he recognizes. You could play a game: "Can you find a letter "b" on this page?" You will help your child with letter identification.
- After you reach a dramatic point in the plot of the story, you may wish to stop and ask your child to predict what he thinks will happen next, work on a new ending for the story together, or finish reading the story. Again, your child will learn to use contextual clues for reading comprehension.

- Don't forget to read the story purely for enjoyment. Talk about it afterwards and stretch your child's imagination and creativity by asking such questions as "How would you feel if that happened to you?" "Do you wish you could try to do that?"
- Finally, try telling your child a story. He will learn to listen carefully as there will be no pictures to serve as clues. Ask your child to tell you a story and try writing it down and reading it back to him. You could also pretend to play out a favorite story of your child's. You could be Little Red Riding Hood and have your child play the Grandmother!

Don't drop story time once your child goes to school. Children love to be read to, and your reading to them shows that you believe reading is an important and valuable activity. As your children get older, take turns reading aloud with them. Don't forget to let them "catch" you reading by yourself, too! Children love to imitate their parents!

Reading to your child regularly will have a positive effect on your child's ability to learn to read. Reading together is a family affair! Enjoy it and do it often!

Early Writing

Research Finding: **Children who are encouraged to draw and scribble "stories" at an early age will later learn to compose more easily, more effectively, and with greater confidence than children who do not have this encouragement.**

Comment: Even toddlers, who can hardly hold a crayon or pencil, are eager to "write". Studies of very young children show that their carefully formed scrawls have meaning to them, and that this "writing" actually helps them develop language skills. Research suggests that the best way to help children at this stage of their development as writers is to respond to the ideas they are trying to express.

Very young children take the first steps toward writing by drawing and scribbling or, if they cannot use a pencil, they may use plastic or metal letters on a felt or magnetic board. For this reason, it is best to focus on the intended meaning of what very young children write, rather than on the appearance of the writing. Children become more effective writers when parents and teachers encourage them to choose topics to write about and then leave them alone to exercise their own creativity.

What Parents Can Do At Home:

- **Model writing.** Parents and older siblings serve as models for children, showing them what writers do. When you have writing tasks to do, try to get in the habit of doing them when your child is around.
- **Include your child** when you write out the weekly grocery list or jot down a reminder to yourself or another family member. Have the child help with writing party invitations, thank-you notes, and cards or letters to relatives and friends.

- Provide a variety of materials, such as markers, crayons, pencils with erasers, colored pencils, paints, and chalk—as many choices as you can. Variety keeps children experimenting with different writing tools and combinations of paper.
- Not all experiences need to be on paper, however. Chunky pieces of chalk for drawing on the sidewalk are great. Later, house-painting brushes dipped in a bucket of water will easily get the chalk off the sidewalk. Activities like these help your child learn to write.
- Be accepting and enthusiastic of all attempts at writing. Your encouragement is a critical component.

Mathematics

Research Finding: **Young children learn math naturally, through play and informal experiences.**

Comment: Math learning happens naturally as children play. Young children discover, test, and apply math concepts naturally every day, in just about everything they do. Some kinds of math learning seem obvious, such as when a four-year old counts to see how many blocks are in his tower. But children are "doing math" as they discuss whose cup is biggest or which bucket holds the most sand. They are developing problem-solving skills by working through playtime dilemmas, such as deciding which size block will make the best roof for a building.

What Parents Can Do at Home:

- Find opportunities in children's play to encourage and support the development of math concepts.
- Ask questions with many possible answers: "I wonder how many ways you could build a bridge with this set of blocks?"
- Use literature to encourage children to verbalize math concepts.
- As they search the picture for the smallest bunny or the four bluebirds, they can talk through their discoveries.
- Provide every day materials to encourage one-to-one counting, classifying, patterning, estimating and measuring: keys, buttons, measuring cups, measuring spoons, containers, seeds, jars and lids.

STUDENT ADMISSION FOR KINDERGARTEN

Enrollment:

As a public school system, the Plano schools **welcome all students who live within the boundaries of the Plano Independent School District and meet state age and health requirements**. Students moving into the district during the summer may call their school to register before the start of the school year. Students who move into the district during the school year should make an appointment to enroll. A student is required to attend school in the attendance zone in which the family resides or obtain an approved transfer.

The natural parent, legal guardian or other person having legal control under a court order must enroll a student. Any person who is not the natural parent or is not designated guardian of the child by a court order must register with the office of Student Services prior to enrolling the student. **The person enrolling the student must present their driver's license or department of transportation identification card at the time of registration.**

If a family has not yet moved into the school district but is building or purchasing a home within the district boundaries, a Certificate of Eligibility Form must be completed and the contract for purchase must be submitted to the office of Student Services prior to enrolling.

Records necessary to enroll are:

- Birth Certificate or Passport
- Current Immunization Record Signed by a Physician
- Proof of Residency in Plano ISD (natural gas or electricity bill, original lease agreement, or approved Certificate of Eligibility to Enroll form)
- Most Recent Report Card/Withdrawal Slip from Previous School (Kindergarten - 12th grade)
- Social Security Card (if available; if not, the student will be assigned a State ID number)
- Parent's Drivers License or Texas Department of Transportation ID card or Guardian information Form and Guardian's Drivers License or Texas Department of Transportation ID card (if parent or guardian is not a licensed driver in Texas nor has the person obtained a TXDOT ID card, other photo ID will be considered in combination with a birth certificate).

Note: During the enrollment process, students who indicate a language spoken other than English will be administered an oral language proficiency test as required by the Texas Education Code before the enrollment process is completed. Call the Multilingual Assessment Office at 469-752-8874 for additional information.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

Snack

Parents provide a nutritious snack each day. Simple snacks such as fruit, pretzels, crackers, cheese, and fresh vegetables are encouraged. We discourage bringing nut products due to increased allergies. Send the snack in a bag or container labeled with the child's name. Water fountains are available in the classroom.

State and Local Food Regulations

The Texas Department of Agriculture has issued regulations regarding what can be served during the school day to the children in public schools. For any type of party or food experience, the following foods are **prohibited**:

- Carbonated beverages (soda)
- Water Ices (Popsicle)
- Chewing gum
- Hard candy (e.g., lifesavers, lollipops, sour balls, mints, candy sticks, cough drops, Starbursts, Jolly Ranchers, candy canes, communication hearts)
- Jellies such as gum drops or jelly beans
- Marshmallow candies
- Fondant
- Licorice
- Cotton candy

Severe Illness and Hospitalization

When a child is hospitalized or ill for an extended period of time, please notify the teacher and the school nurse. Please see the attendance guidelines for absence notes.

Illness

A child with any of the following conditions should not be in school:

- fever (100° or higher) or vomiting within the past 24 hours
- diarrhea
- undiagnosed skin or eye irritation
- generalized rash
- symptoms of any other illness or condition not diagnosed by a doctor
- complete list and other information can be found on

<https://www.pisd.edu/health>

Medication

Medication must be kept in the clinic and shall be administered to a student in the school office under the following conditions:

- Only medication that cannot be scheduled for other than school hours may be given.
- All prescription medication must be in the original container and have a prescription label.
- Nonprescription medicine must be in the original container/bottle labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, and explicit instructions for giving.
- All medication must be brought to school by the parent/guardian and must be stored in the school clinic. Children are not allowed to keep medication anywhere in the classroom area.
- A written request on a Plano ISD medication request form to administer the medication from the parent or guardian must accompany all medication.
- Any unused medication shall be destroyed two weeks after the dosage if not otherwise instructed by the parent. Medication will not be sent home with a student. It may be picked up by the parent at the school clinic.



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