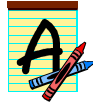


The ABC's of Kindergarten

Everything you need to know (and more!) about your child's kindergarten experience.



Allergies-Please let me know immediately if your child has any allergies that will impact his/her school experience.

Arrival –School begins at 8:15 each day. Students will meet in the gym every morning beginning at 7:55 am. Please do not drop off your kindergartner before this time, as students are unsupervised before 7:55. If you choose to walk your child into the gym, please say your good-byes at that time, and let your child come into the classroom with the rest of our class. The transition to school is much easier if parents have said their good-byes before the children leave for the classroom.

Art-Our class will attend art with Mr. Custer once a week. Look for your child's art project to come home each _____!

Attendance-Regular school attendance is very important in kindergarten. This is the start of your child's formal schooling and good habits are formed early. Many of our activities are hands-on and require that your child participate in order to benefit rather than working on a worksheet at home. Because of this hands-on approach, I ask that you make every effort to plan family trips or vacations during our school breaks.



Backpacks & Folders-Please make sure that your child brings a backpack and folder to school every day. Backpacks should be big enough to hold a regular sized folder and library book. We strongly encourage backpacks without wheels in kindergarten! Prior to the first day, please make sure your child can zip and unzip his/her backpack.

Please check your child's folder and backpack nightly and go over any papers and/or notes with your child. It is very important to empty your child's papers nightly, as the kindergartners are often confused when they return to school with old papers.

When emptying your child's backpack, use that opportunity to talk about his/her day. Ask about something specific you know happened at school such as which center they did that day, what stories they heard, or what they wrote about in their journal. Just asking "What did you do today?" will inevitably get the answer "Nothing!".

Behavior Management-Sugar Creek students are all expected to follow the following four rules in all parts of the building:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Ready
- Be Safe

Please see the sheet in your handbook that explains our classroom behavior plan!

Birthdays-We love to celebrate birthdays in kindergarten! Please feel free to send in treats and/or drinks to celebrate your child's birthday. If you send in snacks or drinks that require forks, cups, etc....please make sure to send those as well. I ask that you do not send in "cookie cakes", as these are difficult to cut into equal pieces. We will celebrate at an appropriate time during the day. If you would like to come for your child's celebration, please drop me a note and I will let you know when we will celebrate. If your child has a summer birthday, he/she may celebrate when they are the Kindergarten Superstar. If your child has a birthday during a weekend or school vacation, please let me know the specific day you would like to celebrate.

Your child will also have the opportunity to take home our class Birthday Bag near his/her birthday. This bag contains birthday activities for you and your child to complete together. I hope your family enjoys the activities in the bag! Please make sure to return all items in the bag by the date noted on the instruction sheet.

Please note that your child may not distribute invitations at school. Passing out invitations at school often causes hurt feelings. You will receive a class directory next week that you may use to find phone numbers and addresses of the students in our class. You will also receive a Sugar Creek directory later this fall.

Book Envelopes & Book Boxes-Repetition and confidence are two key factors in developing secure reading skills. Therefore, the books we make in kindergarten will be kept at school for a period of 8-9 weeks. Your child will keep his/her books in a book envelope. They will have many opportunities during the school week to read and reread their books. When these books are sent home, please keep them in the Book Box you will make on the first day. Encourage your child to read at least a few of these books each day so that he/she can continue to experience success when reading!

Book Orders-Each month your child will bring home a variety of book orders. These orders offer you an opportunity to purchase books at a low cost. Our class receives bonus points for each order that allow me to purchase books and materials for our classroom. If you choose to order books, please return the order form and a check made payable to Scholastic Book Club by the date stamped on each form!

Breakfast-This year Sugar Creek will offer a breakfast program to all students. A breakfast menu is available on the Unit 5 and Sugar Creek website. Breakfast will be served in the gym from 7:55-8:10 each morning, and is \$1.00 each day.



Clothing –Kindergartners are involved in activities that require jumping, running, climbing etc. Tennis shoes with laces or Velcro are required for PE each day. Please also keep in mind that your child will participate in outdoor activities daily. Flip-flops, slip on shoes, clogs and similar style shoes often make these activities difficult. If your child does not wear gym shoes to school, please make sure that he/she can change his/her shoes independently. Velcro shoes work very well if your child is not yet able to tie! However, I encourage you to help your child learn to tie as soon as possible!

Your child's clothing should be easy for him/her to fasten and put on by him/herself. Additionally, as cold weather approaches, please help your child practice zipping his/her coat. It is also helpful if all outside clothing (mittens, hats, etc...) is clearly labeled with your child's name.

I suggest that students keep a change of clothes in their backpack. Children occasionally have bathroom, painting or food accidents at school that require a change of clothes at some point during the school day. If you choose to include a change of clothes in your child's backpack, please keep these clothes in a Ziploc bag and change them seasonally!

Communication-I believe that open communication is essential to a successful kindergarten year! Please always feel free to contact me if you have questions or concerns. The best way to contact me is through my e-mail address: nelsonk@unit5.org. You may also reach me by phone at school (452-0935) or home (824-4114).

Each week I will send home a newsletter outlining the skills we covered for the week as well as upcoming events and classroom announcements. Please look for this newsletter in your child's folder on the last school day of each week. I will "hide" one student's name in the newsletter each week. If you see your child's name, please sign the newsletter and return it to school the first day of the following week-your child will get to choose a prize!

I also encourage you to check our classroom website frequently throughout the year. I make every effort to keep this site updated with events and news!

Conferences-Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for October 26. During this time we will have an opportunity to discuss your child's progress in kindergarten. However, if you have concerns about your child's progress at any time during the year, please let me know. I am always more than happy to meet with you to discuss your child's progress!



Dismissal-Please make sure to fill out the transportation form and leave it at school this evening. It is important to notify me if there are changes in the way your child will be going home from school. Without

parental permission, I will send your child home in the usual manner. Kindergartners can be easily confused and I cannot take their word that they are going home a different way unless I receive notification from you. Please send a note stating any change from your child's usual schedule. If your plans change during the day and your child needs to go home a different way, please call the office and they will notify me.

I will dismiss all students from the gym door north of the main school doors. We will dismiss between 2:50-2:55 each day. If you are picking up your child, please meet us at the gym door at this time.



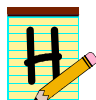
E-mail-The easiest way to communicate with me during the school day is through e-mail. If you have an e-mail address that you check frequently, please fill out the form at the end of this packet and return it to school as soon as possible!



Field Trips-Our class will take field trips periodically throughout the school year. Tentatively planned field trips include the fire station in the fall, a performance at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts in January, and an end of the year, all-day trip in late April or early May. If you are interested in accompanying us on these trips, please let me know as they approach!



Gym-Kindergartners attend PE with Mrs. Eaton each day. Please make sure your child has appropriate shoes every day!



Homework-After Labor Day your child will receive his/her first homework packet. These packets will be sent home every two weeks and contain a variety of language arts activities that reinforce the skills we are learning at school. Please do not expect your child to complete the entire packet in one sitting!

Kindergartners work best in short increments of 10-15 minutes. If your child becomes disinterested or frustrated, take a break or save the packet for another session.

Also included in each packet will be math Home Links and a math log. These Home Links are provided as a reinforcement of the math lessons we have learned in school. The number of Home Links will vary depending on the specific lessons for that two week period. Please note the dates you completed each Home Link with your child on the math log and make any appropriate comments. Your child will return the log only (not the Home Links) in his/her homework packet.

The most important thing you can do to help your child at home is to read to and with your child! Children who are read to experience greater success when learning to read. Encourage your child to choose one or two stories to listen to each night. Talk about the stories you read, and occasionally stop and have your child predict what might happen next. The more experiences your child has with books and reading, the better prepared he/she will be when reading independently.

You can also help your child by establishing a routine at home. Help your child pack his/her backpack at night, establish a bedtime and nightly routine, set up a specific time and place for homework.

Please work with your child on his/her phone number, address and birthday at home as well. This skill is difficult to work on at school, but is reinforced on a regular basis.



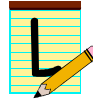
Illness-While regular attendance is important, please do not send your child to school if he/she is ill! If your child is sick, please call the office before 8 a.m. that day. We ask that you do not send your child back to school until he/she has been fever/vomit free for 24 hours.



Journals-Each day your child will write in his/her journal. These journals begin with a simple word and picture. As your child masters the letters and sounds, he/she will begin writing words and sentences independently. You will have an opportunity to see your child's journals at Portfolio Night in the spring.



Kindergarten Superstars-Each week we will choose one student to be our Kindergarten Superstar! We will play a name game to guess who the next superstar will be. On Tuesday of the week before your child is our superstar, he/she will bring home a note explaining the special privileges for their week. Your child will have the opportunity to share a poster of pictures as well as other information during his/her week.



Library-Our class visits the library, or IMC on _____ and _____. Your child will bring home a book that he/she has checked out on _____ of each week. Please read these books with your child and return them to school by _____ of the following week. If you have questions about your child's library book, please contact Mrs. Steers!

Lunch & Recess-The kindergartners eat lunch at 11:15. Please make sure your child knows each day whether he/she is hot or cold lunch. The cost of a hot lunch is \$1.55 per student. The lunch menu is sent home monthly and posted on the Unit 5 and our classroom website. If your child brings his/her lunch and would like to buy milk, they will use their lunch card to purchase each \$0.35 milk. Please do not send change in your child's lunch for milk.

We always welcome visitors at lunch, but please give us a few weeks to establish our routine before joining us! If you choose to eat with your kindergartner you may either bring in food or purchase a hot lunch. Adult lunch tickets are \$2.05. Please notify the office or me by 8:30 if you will be eating a hot lunch. When you arrive, please sign in at the office and meet us at the entrance to the lunchroom at 11:10.

Sugar Creek does not use lunch tickets. Instead, each child has a lunch card with his/her individual code. When you send money to school, it is deposited into your family's account, and money is debited for each lunch and/or milk your child purchases with their card. You can login to the Family Access portion of Skyward to see your family's balance.

All students will go outside for a 25 minute recess, weather permitting. If the weather does not permit the students to go outside (air temperature or wind chill below 20 degrees) the students will enjoy inside activities in the classroom.



Money-Periodically, your child will bring money to school for lunch, field trips, book orders, etc...When sending money to school, please always enclose it in an envelope or Ziploc bag. Please clearly mark the

envelope or bag with your child's name, what the money is for, and the amount enclosed. It is always helpful if you can send exact change when sending cash.

Music-Our class will go to music with Mrs. Belongia on _____ each week. Children in grades K-2 will also participate in a Winter Music Program in December.

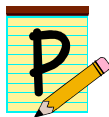
Mystery Readers-We welcome you to be one of our Mystery Readers throughout the year. I will provide a sign-up sheet at Open House and will contact you to schedule a time for you to read to the class. Remember that you are a mystery to your child and the rest of the class, so don't give away the secret that you'll be coming! Please bring a short book (that takes about 15 minutes to read). When you sign in at the office before coming to the room, please have them call me to announce your arrival so that I can get the children ready for your story!



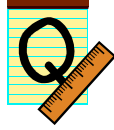
Newsletters-Each week your child will bring home a newsletter on the last day of the week. This newsletter will also be posted on our class website. Please make sure to read the newsletter to learn about our classroom activities and upcoming events!



Office-If you visit the school during the school day, please always check in at the office. They will issue you a Visitor Pass. If your child has an appointment during the school day, please check in at the office as well. They will notify me in the classroom and I will send your child down. This helps reduce distractions in the classroom.



PTO- I strongly encourage you to become involved in the Sugar Creek PTO. They meet monthly in the IMC. Please talk to a PTO board member or me if you are interested in becoming a part of PTO!

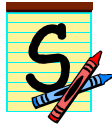


Questions-If, at any point during the year, you have questions about our classroom, procedures, or your child's progress, please do not ever hesitate to contact me!



Rest Time-Kindergartners are busy people during the school day! We are very busy learning all morning. As a result, we need time to rest and re-energize! Our class will have a short 20-30 minute rest period each day. Your child will rest on his/her own mat each day during this time. At the beginning of the school year we use this time to simply rest and relax. The full-day program is a big adjustment for children, even those who are used to a daycare environment. As the students progress during the year, rest time activities will change. Students will have the opportunity to look at books, color and read independently as well as with buddies. Although the activities change, rest time always remains a relaxed and quiet time that provides a necessary transition for the kindergartners. Please do not send in blankets or stuffed animals for your child to have at rest.

Report Cards-This year all Unit 5 elementary students will follow a trimester schedule. Your child's first trimester report card will be sent home on November 30.



Second Step-Our class will participate in the Second Step program this year. This social skills program is taught our school social worker, Miss Perez. You will receive notes throughout the year that detail the lessons your child has participated in as a result of this program.

Show & Tell-In a few weeks we will begin a "What is in the bag?" show and tell in kindergarten. If your child brings home the Show & Tell backpack, please help him/her choose one item for the bag. The next school day, your child will have an opportunity to show this item to the class. We will guess the item using a "20 Questions" format. It might be helpful if you had your child practice answering questions at home the night before!

Snack-Our class has a short, 10 minute snack break every morning. A snack schedule is included in your handbook. Please hold on to this schedule; however feel free to let me know if you need another one! We have _____ students in our class. Please remember that snacks must be non-perishable. Snacks that are individually packaged or wrapped are easy for the students to pass out and eat, however these are not required. I will include snack students in each week's newsletter, however, due to privacy reasons, these names will not be included in the online version of the newsletter. Instead, when the newsletter is published online, I will list student numbers for snack students. A list is included in your packet with your child's number.

Spelling-As the children learn their letters and sounds, we will begin writing words and sentences in kindergarten. We encourage “developmental spelling” in our classroom. Children are encouraged to write words using the sounds they hear, not necessarily using correct, conventional spelling.

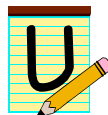
Standards-Kindergartners are special, and our curriculum reflects this unique classroom atmosphere. Therefore, a separate set of state standards has been created for kindergartners. I encourage to review these standards (a link is provided on our classroom website!) to learn about specific concepts and skills your child will learn in kindergarten.

Supplies-A supply list, including extra supplies for our classroom, is included in your handbook. When sending new supplies to school with your child, please remember to clearly label each and every one. Our supplies are often dropped or confused with other students’, and by labeling them it is easy to return them to their owner.



Tardies-Please make every effort to ensure that your child arrives to school on time each morning. Students who arrive after 8:10 must check in at the office and receive a tardy slip. When students are tardy, it makes it difficult for them to begin their day, as their routine is thrown off in the classroom. We greatly appreciate your help with this matter!

Toys-Many children wish to bring toys to school to share with their friends during recess or before/after school. However, these toys can easily be lost/broken etc...Please make sure your child does not bring to school.



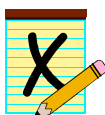
Unique-Every child in our class is a unique individual. We try very hard to respect everyone for who they are and we do not allow unkind words or behaviors in our classroom. It is important that we make everyone feel as special and valuable as they truly are.



Visitors & Volunteers We love to have visitors and volunteers in kindergarten! Sign-up sheets are posted tonight; please take a look and see if there are any areas in which you would be willing and able to help our class! We have various opportunities throughout the year for parents to help both in and out of the classroom. I will contact interested parents about coming into the classroom in the next few weeks. I have found that it is best to let the children adjust to the routine of kindergarten before volunteers begin in our classroom.



Website-Our classroom website is www.unit5.org/nelsonk. I make every attempt to keep this site updated with current information so that it can be a helpful resource for our families. Due to privacy and security concerns, children's names and initials will not be published on the website. Occasionally, I will publish pictures to our website. You can access these pictures through our classroom website or through the following link: www.kodakgallery.com/knelson/kindergarten. For the children's safety, I have made this site password protected as well. The password for this site is Sugarcreek (no spaces ☺). Through this site you can choose to order pictures of our activities and events throughout the year.



eXplore-Kindergarten provides an opportunity for your child to learn through "doing". You will find that many of our learning activities occur through activities, not paper-pencil worksheets.



Younger Siblings-We have many events throughout the year for families, and we encourage family involvement in kindergarten! However, during our class parties, and when you volunteer in the classroom, I ask that you do not bring younger siblings.



ZZZs!-The kindergartners are busy people at Sugar Creek! It is so important that your child has a consistent bedtime and bedtime routine. Even those children who are accustomed to a full day of daycare, preschool, etc...experience quite a transition when coming to kindergarten. Please make sure your child has enough sleep each night!