

Kindergarten



Welcome
to
Kindergarten
in
Unit 5 Schools

*McLean County Unit District No. 5
Normal, Illinois*

Kindergarten Parents,

Welcome to the McLean County Unit District No. 5!

This newsletter contains important information for parents/guardians regarding the McLean County Unit District No. 5 kindergarten program. The newsletter includes information about:

- What to do before school starts
- The differences between the half-day and full-day kindergarten program
- The first day of school
- The rest of the school year

Before School Starts

To enter kindergarten, students must reach age 5 on or before **September 1** of that school year. Those children turning 5 after September 1 will enter kindergarten the following year.

Transfer students applying for admission to kindergarten during the school year must meet these age requirements. For a student entering the district for the first time after having completed a full year of kindergarten, but who will not be six (6) on or before September 1, the building principal will determine whether the child is placed in kindergarten or in first grade.

Illinois law requires all students entering kindergarten to have a new physical examination performed within one year of entering school. Kindergarten children must also have the following immunizations:

- Chicken Pox
- Hepatitis B
- Diphtheria-Whooping Cough-Tetanus (DPT)
- Polio
- Mumps
- Measles
- Rubella



Your doctor must sign and date the immunization form (forms are available through the school or your doctor's office). The form must be on file at school to complete registration. Transfer students must meet the same requirements.

All Illinois children in kindergarten are required to have an oral health (dental) examination by a licensed dentist and to submit proof prior to May 15 of the school year. School dental examinations must be completed within 18 months of the deadline.

A *certified* birth certificate must be presented on registration day or the first day of school for all kindergarten children.

The Week Before School Starts

Please make sure your child has the following equipment:

- Supplies listed on the district's supply list
- Items on the supplementary supply list provided by the classroom teacher
- Please mark your child's name on each article of outside clothing.
- Clothes should be simple, washable, sturdy, not too tight, safe and easy to manage. Overshoes should be large enough so the child can put them on.



Start your morning school routine. This will make the first week of school much easier. We suggest that clothes are laid out the night before. Allow time for breakfast.

Open House

The first day of school is an Open House. At the Open House, parents and kindergarten students have an opportunity to meet the kindergarten teacher and learn a little bit about the daily routine. Starting the school year off in this manner helps the kindergarten students feel comfortable in their new surroundings and gives parents a little clearer picture of the kindergarten classroom and all that happens each day.

The first week of school

- If you bring your child to school, leave him or her cheerfully at the school or classroom door.
- Make sure your child knows how he/she will get home and who will be there.

Half day or full day

The Unit 5 kindergarten program is a full-day instructional program scheduled from 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Parents who believe their child is not ready for a full-day experience may elect to end their child's kindergarten day at 11:15 a.m.

The focus of the morning instruction will be on helping children develop competencies in reading and mathematics. Efforts will be made to weave science and social studies concepts into the reading and mathematics instruction. Children will receive weekly instruction in vocal music, technology and visit the school library during the morning session.

Kindergarten students who remain at school the full day will have the opportunity to eat lunch at school. Instruction in the areas of reading and mathematics will be extended in the afternoon session with opportunities for review as well as enrichment and extension. Students also will receive instruction in the areas of science, social studies, art, and physical education during the afternoon.



Parents are encouraged to carefully consider the opportunities provided in the kindergarten curriculum before making their decision about full or half day attendance. We understand that as the school year progresses parents may wish to alter their decision. Requests for changes must be submitted in writing to the building administrator within thirty days of the first day of student attendance.

If transportation is provided by the school district, the building administrator will notify the Transportation Department of all changes.

If the student rides the bus, the student's new schedule will start four days following the submission of the written request for change. If the family provides transportation, the student's new schedule will start the day following submission of the written request.

For the rest of the school year

Please keep the following items in mind for the rest of the school year.

The school board believes a major cause of academic failure is frequent absence from school. Anytime a student cannot attend school, the parent/guardian must report the child's absence to the school prior to 9:00 a.m.

When students are ill, they must stay home. Please call the doctor if necessary. Do not send your child to school if he or she has a fever, has vomited recently, has diarrhea, inflamed eyes, a rash of undetermined origin, or obvious signs of a respiratory infection. Call the school to report the reason for the absence and send a note when your child returns to school.

Feel free to visit your child at school anytime after the first month. It is important to give your child enough time to adjust to school life. Please contact the classroom teacher before your visit. Keep in mind, the days before or after holidays usually don't follow the typical schedule. Through observations of your child with his or her classmates, you may gain a better understanding of your child's progress.



Parent/guardian-teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the year so the teacher and parents can meet as a team, discuss and evaluate your child's educational needs. When additional discussions are needed, parents are encouraged to ask for a conference with the school principal or teacher by calling the school office.

When the weather permits, the class may spend time outdoors. Please dress your child appropriately for the time of year.

If you give your child money for milk/lunch or other reasons, please put the money in an envelope with your child's name and the purpose for the money written on the envelope.

For your child's safety

Please teach your child the following identification information:

- His or her first and last name
- Parents'/guardians' full name
- Full address
- Phone number

When your child walks to school or to the bus stop, he/she should know about:

- Traffic lights
- Policemen
- School safety patrols
- Walking, not running, across the street
- To cross the street only between white lines

For you as a parent

We hope you will take an active interest in the parent-teacher organizations of your child's school. As a member of these organizations, you will be working together for quality public education of your child. We are certain you will continue to support these organizations and take advantage of many fine programs. You will be notified of these programs, and we hope you will contribute to the discussions of the organizations.



Board of Education

The Board of Education and the personnel of McLean County Unit District No. 5 hope the years your child spends in our school system

will be a positive experience that will benefit your child throughout life. The McLean County Unit District No. 5 Board of Education meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 1809 W. Hovey Ave., Normal, Illinois. You are welcome to attend the meetings.

In kindergarten your child will learn:

- ~ To get along with others
- ~ To share toys, games and experiences
- ~ To explore new things and ideas
- ~ To express him or herself
- ~ To plan what is next
- ~ To listen
- ~ To look at books, learn how to like them and tell words and their meanings
- ~ To use new words
- ~ To spot differences in colors, pictures, sizes, shapes and sounds
- ~ To care for self, bathroom needs, hanging up clothing, and caring for toys and materials
- ~ To write by dictating stories, letters or invitations to the teacher
- ~ To count
- ~ To play outdoors
- ~ To eat with others using good manners
- ~ To care for pets and plants
- ~ To think of others with gifts for parents
- ~ To protect self



And when your child is ready, he or she will learn to **read** and **write!**



If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact your school principal or the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction (309/452-4476).



Please check out the Unit 5 and school websites at www.unit5.org.