



Welcome to Kindergarten!

HOUSTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION



Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Mark Scott

Our Beliefs

- ☆ *Safety is our number one priority.*
- ☆ *Failure is not an option. We do expect that all children can learn.*
- ☆ *We will not be satisfied until all of our schools meet or exceed the highest academic standards.*
- ☆ *We are committed to determining what each child needs to fulfill his potential.*
- ☆ *We take responsibility for learning, for both our students and ourselves.*
- ☆ *We are not afraid of change and will embrace change that is research-based and proven to be effective.*

Houston County Board of Education

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Our Mission

To produce high achieving students.

Our Vision

Our system will be world class.



**HOUSTON COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**
HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS



Welcome

TO KINDERGARTEN

Dear Parents of Kindergarten Children,

Entering Kindergarten is a big step in your child's life. It's an adventure for your child and family overall. We want to help make it as smooth a transition as possible.

A mutual understanding and confidence between the teacher and parents are essential to the happiness and success of your child. Educating a child must be a cooperative effort between parents and teachers.

This booklet has been prepared to help you understand the Kindergarten program. It also provides tips to help you assist your child adjust to school.

The Houston County School System is eager for your child to begin the school year. We look forward to working together to prepare your child for a successful future!

Sincerely,



Lazunia Frierson
Executive Director of Elementary Operations





Parent Checklist

Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before September 1. Students should be registered at the Central Registration Office.

Students currently enrolled in a Houston County School System Pre-K program do not need to register again if they will attend Kindergarten at the same school.

What do I need to enroll my child?

- Parent/Guardian Photo ID
- Certified Birth Certificate
- Guardianship/Custody Orders if the child does not live with his natural parents
- Lease or Mortgage as Proof of Residency
- 2nd Proof of Residency by one of the following:
 - Utility bill (electric, water or cable bill)
 - Property tax statement or income tax statement
 - Automobile registration or insurance
 - Mail from any government agency
- Social Security Card
- Ear, Eye and Dental Screening, Georgia Form 3300 (available from a doctor or the Health Department)
- Immunization Certificate, Georgia Form 3231 (available from a doctor or the Health Department)
- School Records and Last Report Card, if transferring from another school system



www.hcbe.net/CentralRegistration

Reading Tips



“Did you know?”

One of the delights of childhood is enjoying books while sitting in a parent’s lap. This is also one of the single most important things a parent can do to help a child learn to read. Children who are exposed to books in their early years are likely to become better readers and writers than those who have not had this opportunity.

Here are some practical ideas for helping your child become a successful reader:

- ◆ Make reading a part of your child’s daily routine. Set aside 20 minutes a day for pleasure reading.
- ◆ Provide a wide variety of reading materials, such as storybooks, picture books, nursery rhymes, fairy tales, informational books, magazines, etc.
- ◆ Visit the public library, bookstores, or yard sales to borrow or buy books.
- ◆ Provide a special place for your child to keep his/her books.
- ◆ Give your child books as gifts, and encourage family members to do the same.
- ◆ Make books available in the car during vacations or while running errands.
- ◆ Notice and talk about signs, labels, and logos. Encourage your child to find words he or she knows each time you’re out and about.
- ◆ Give your child choice in selecting books, and be willing to read favorite books over and over again.

BEFORE reading a story:

- ◆ Introduce the book by discussing the cover, title and illustrations.
- ◆ Look at the pictures to discover what the story is about.
- ◆ Talk about places, people, and things in the story that are familiar to your child.
- ◆ Remember to keep the introduction simple and quick.

Reading Tips



DURING story time:

- ◆ Allow time for your child to look at and talk about the pictures. Pictures and illustrations are very important. Ask what the characters might be saying or thinking.
- ◆ Talk with your child about the characters and story events.
- ◆ Ask questions: What do you think is happening? How would you feel if that happened? What might happen next? Would you ever do that? Did you think that would happen?
- ◆ As you read to your child, slide your finger under the words to demonstrate how you read from left to right.
- ◆ Allow your child to ask questions as you read and answer his/her questions.
- ◆ Make reading time a positive and pleasant experience.

AFTER the story is read:

- ◆ Compare the story to your child's experience. Ask, "Could you do that? Has that ever happened to you? How did the story make you feel?"
- ◆ Share your favorite part of the story and explain why. Encourage your child to share a favorite part.



Writing Tips

Holding a pencil and writing letters and numbers require a lot of finger strength and control. This takes lots of exercise! Things like Playdough, puzzles, scissors, and Legos help develop those little finger muscles.

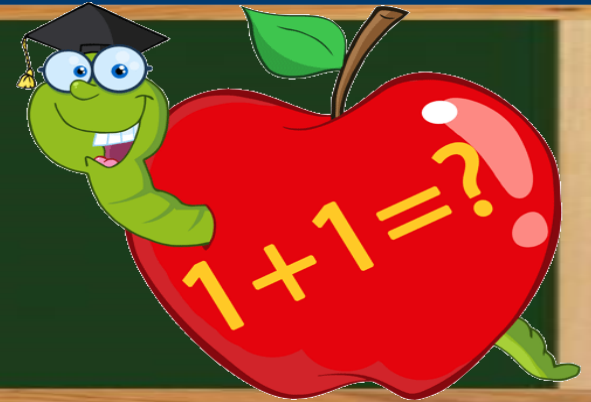
Young children learn from an early age that communicating on paper is a way to share thoughts and ideas. Children begin to make connections between the printed and spoken word.

Here are some practical ideas to help your child become a successful writer:

- ◆ Tell family stories. Encourage your child to retell the stories.
- ◆ Listen with interest as your child tells his/her own stories.
- ◆ Provide a space for writing and materials, such as crayons, pencils, pens, chalk, markers, paper, sticky notes, notepads, chalk board, etc.
- ◆ Let your child see you write and tell your child why you are writing (grocery list, note to your spouse, memos, etc.)
- ◆ Your child's first attempts at writing may appear as scribbles, but be sure to encourage and praise this work.
- ◆ Initially, your child will write letter-like forms. Praise your child's efforts and encourage writing.
- ◆ Invite your child to tell you about his/her drawing or to "read" his/her notes.
- ◆ Have a place, such as the refrigerator, to display your child's drawings and pieces of writing.
- ◆ Spell names or words by cutting letters out of a newspaper or magazine.



Math Tips



“Do you understand?”

For a child to really understand quality and numbers, the child must have an assortment of any one object to handle and count (such as buttons and Popsicle sticks).

But math is much more than numbers. It is also used to compare, classify, and order, as well as to understand time and space relationships. Providing real materials of different sizes, shapes, and weights for your child to manipulate and explore will help your child develop a solid foundation for performing mathematical tasks throughout school and the rest of your child's life.

- ◆ Help your child gain an understanding of what numbers mean rather than just counting. “How many forks do we need? One for you, one for me, and one for Grandma — that makes three!” Have your child point to objects as they count.
- ◆ Give your child the opportunity to sort things that are alike and different. Sort coins, socks, and silverware or match canned goods, plastic containers and lids.
- ◆ Set up a routine or sequence for the morning and at bedtime. “First, I take a bath. Second, I brush my teeth. Third, we read books. Then I go to sleep!”
- ◆ Divide up toys among siblings and friends so they all have the same amount to share. Help them learn to trade and share.
- ◆ Identify shapes in the environment and point them out to your child regularly (circles, squares, rectangles.) “Your cracker is a square.”
- ◆ Provide materials that your child can use to figure out relationships, like longer and shorter, lighter and heavier, bigger and smaller.
- ◆ Play “Write the next number.” You write a number, and your child writes the next number.
- ◆ Ask your child questions that require counting as many as 20 things. For example, ask, “How many books do you have about wild animals?”
- ◆ Ask your child questions that require comparing numbers. “Who is wearing more bracelets, you or your sister?” (Your child might use matching or counting to find the answer.)

Look what I can already do!

- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____
- ◆ _____



General Knowledge + Cognition

Children are born with a sense of curiosity and a strong desire to learn. Parents should encourage their interest and exploration so they may gain knowledge about their world. They also need many opportunities to use thinking and decision making skills. Children will learn these concepts and others as they interact and work with materials, people, events, and ideas.

- Make different expressions or pretend to do something while taking turns. and letting the other guess what you are feeling or doing.
- Toys and materials such as puzzles and blocks, will help build thinking skills.
- Use material scraps, boxes, and other things from around the house for creative play and art.
- Work with your child on learning his/her first and last name, your name, and your phone number.
- Talk to your child about matching and pairing, such as socks and shoes and fork and spoon.
- Point out colors in the natural environment and let your child find colors that are alike and different in magazines, the closet, etc.

Introduce your child to the world around him/her by taking walks, visiting the park. Talk with your child about what you see.

Self-Help + Independence

- Work with your child so that he/she can learn to zip, snap, button, tie, and can take care of toileting needs independently at school.
- Dress your child in clothing he/she is able to manage, if these skills are not mastered yet.
- Help your child learn how to wash hands, use a fork and spoon, and blow his/her nose.
- Give your child responsibility for simple jobs, such as putting away his/her belongings and toys.
- Provide your child with opportunities to make decisions. “What book would you like to read?”; “What shoes would you like to wear?”



Starting School

Tips for the First Day of School

- ◆ First, set the tone that learning is good, fun, and important by phrasing things positively. Don't use school as punishment.
- ◆ Share memories of the fun things you remember about school.
- ◆ Start a "school" routine by going to bed/ getting up at least a week before school starts so everyone will be used to it by the first day.
- ◆ Provide your child with a good breakfast either at home or arrive at school early enough to eat breakfast.
- ◆ Label all personal belongings, such as book bags and lunch boxes.
- ◆ Any money your child takes to school, place in an envelope and label it with your child's name, the amount, and purpose of the money. For example: Teresa Boler, lunch money, \$10.
- ◆ Dress your child in clothing that he/she can manage independently at bathroom time and can get dirty during play times. It is also good to wear shoes that they can run and play easily in.
- ◆ Set aside a special time later that afternoon/evening to talk about the day. "Tell me about your day."; "How did you like your teacher?"
- ◆ Arrival and dismissal are not the best times to try to talk with your child's teacher. Ask the teacher for a time convenient for him or her.





Next Steps

Sometimes parents feel that once their child has started school that their job is finished. The truth is, though, that you are more important now than ever before. The most important thing you can do is get involved and stay involved in your child's learning process.

- ◆ Sometimes parents get anxious about what their child knows or doesn't know and sometimes pushes and pressures. Take cues from your child.
- ◆ A child is like a little sponge that will soak up academic skills more quickly and easily if he or she comes to school eager to learn, self-confident, excited about school, and with a solid foundation of social skills.
- ◆ Offer to help in ways that you can. Let the teacher know you support his/her efforts to help your child. Ask if there are things you can do to help your child outside of school.
- ◆ Keep on top of what your child is learning in school and how he/she is doing. Be sure that notes and "homework" are completed and returned.
- ◆ Entering Kindergarten is a major milestone in both of your lives. Enjoy this special time with your child.



The 5 R's for Parents

Make Sure Your Child:

1. Gets plenty of **REST**
2. Eats really **HEALTHY** food
3. Attends school **REGULARLY**
4. Has **ROUTINES** and a schedule
5. Is **READ** to everyday

These things are extremely important for your child to do well in school. No matter how great a teacher is, he/she still needs your help. Making sure these things happen supports the teacher, and most importantly, your child.

Nothing makes a child feel better than to see a friendly, respectable relationship between the his/her parents and teacher, which are the most important grown-ups in the child's life. Children are pleased when parents express a desire to partner with the school and them.

**Always remember: You know your child better than anyone else.
You were your child's first teacher and will ALWAYS be the most important one!**

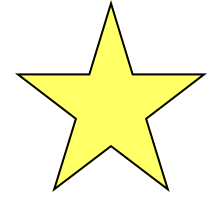
Book Suggestions for Beginning Kindergarteners

Caps for Sale by Esphyr Slododkina
The Three Billy Goats Gruff by Paul Galdone
Big Al by Andrew Clements
Will I Have a Friend? by Miriam Cohn
Bunny Cakes by Rosemary Wells
Peter's Chair by Ezra Jack Keats
Harry the Dirty Dog by Gene Zion
Red Riding Hood by James Marshall
Corduroy by Don Freeman
Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Kraus
Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss
The Ginger Bread Boy by Paul Galdone
The Little Red Hen by Paul Galdone
Extraordinary Egg by Leo Lionne
Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
*Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good
Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst*
Bedtime Story by Mem Fox
Owl Babies by Martin Waddell
The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn
Cookie Store Cat by Cynthia Rylant
The Enormous Carrot by Vladamir Vagin
Kitten's First Full Moon by Kevin Hemkes
Max's Dragon Shirt by Rosemary Wells
Bunny Mail by Rosemary Wells
Max's Cleans Up by Rosemary Wells
Bunny Party by Rosemary Wells
Carry Me by Rosemary Wells
Kiss Good Night by Amy Hest



Be sure to visit your public library and www.hcbe.net/Parents for additional book suggestions.

About Me



Put my picture here!

I am _____ feet _____ inches tall.

I weigh _____ pounds.

My pets are named _____

_____.

My favorite food is _____.

My favorite movie is _____.

My favorite activities are _____

_____.

My Kindergarten teacher's name is:

_____.

Directory

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Mark Scott

(478) 988-6257, ext. 10257; Mark.Scott@hcbe.net

Executive Director of Elementary Operations

Mrs. Lazunia Frierson

(478) 988-6200, ext. 10217; Lazunia.Frierson@hcbe.net

Pre-K Coordinator

Mrs. Blanche Lamb

(478) 988-6200, ext. 10193; Blanche.Lamb@hcbe.net





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HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

The Houston County School System provides special education and related services for children ages 3 through 21 who have been determined eligible for services by the Individual Education Program (IEP) team. Referral, evaluation, identification and special education are provided as required by the Individual Disabilities Act (IDEA).

For more information, please visit our website at www.hcbe.net.

