

Volunteering Is For You And Our Schools

Parents, extended family members and community citizens are welcome as volunteers in schools across all levels – elementary, middle and high schools. Volunteers are a valuable addition to the education team and make a considerable contribution to the district's effort and ability to meet its mission and goals for student achievement.

School volunteers assist in various activities under the supervision and direction of school personnel. Volunteers are directed to sign in at the school office each time they volunteer. Once a volunteer has signed in, he/she is covered by the district's liability insurance.

If you would like to volunteer at your child's school, contact the principal or your child's teacher. One hour a week, one day a week, one day on a special project – your efforts make a difference for students.

Who should volunteer? You should, whatever your age and educational background. When you bring your talents, skills and time to a school to work with students, you will help students learn and enrich their school experience.

Why should you volunteer? Because volunteering has never been more important. Teachers can't always provide the individual attention many students need. Teachers know when a student will benefit from extra help and attention. You could provide that and make a difference for the students.

Who volunteers? Moms, dads, older brothers and sisters, and grandparents. Business people. College students. Retired people. Community leaders. Artists. Police officers. Secretaries. Journalists. Doctors. Professional athletes. *Anyone who cares about helping kids get a quality education.*



Every Child By Name, And Face, To Graduation

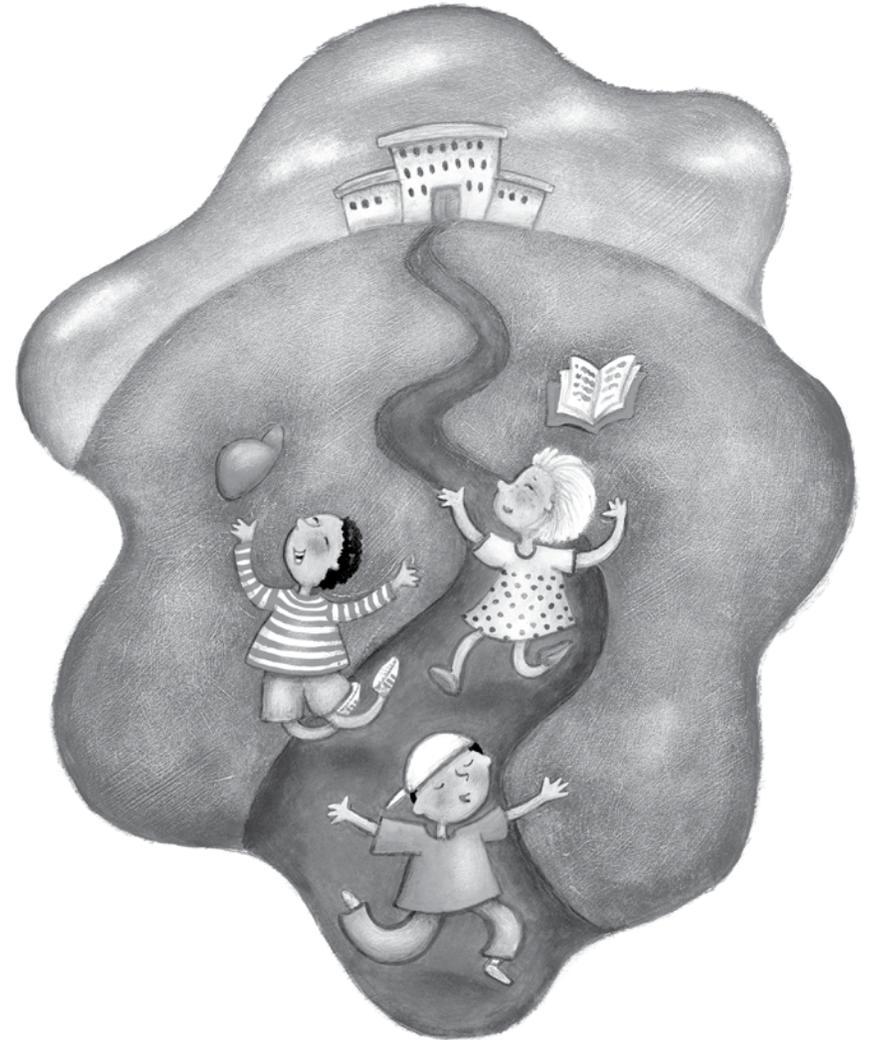
Our Goals

1. Provide continuous academic success for every student
2. Recruit and support highly effective personnel
3. Engage families and community partners
4. Value and strengthen a positive, self-renewing culture
5. Align performance management systems

**Washoe County School District • Kindergarten Office
RCTL**

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Welcome to Kindergarten



Welcome To The Washoe County School District

Kindergarten is an important step in the life of a child. It is an important beginning for you, too, because you are your child's first teacher and the one who makes the most difference in how well your child learns.

This brochure will give you a better understanding of the Kindergarten program in the Washoe County School District. We hope the partnership between you, your child and your school will give your child the best education.

Helping Your Child Get Ready For School 4- to 5-Year Olds

What to expect

Children this age:

- Are active and have lots of energy;
- May be aggressive in their play;
- Can show extremes from being loud and adventurous to acting shy and dependent;
- Enjoy more group activities because they are developing longer attention spans;
- Like making faces and being silly;
- May change friendships quickly;
- May form cliques with friends and can be bossy;
- May brag and engage in name-calling during play;
- May experiment with swear words and bathroom words;
- Can be very imaginative and like to exaggerate;
- Have better control in running, jumping and hopping but tend to be clumsy;
- Are great talkers and questioners, and
- Love to use words in rhymes, nonsense and jokes.



What they need

Children this age need opportunities to:

- Experiment and discover within limits;
- Use scissors, crayons, markers, glue, and put together simple jigsaw puzzles;
- Practice outdoor play activities;
- Develop their growing interest in academic things, such as science and mathematics, and activities that involve exploring and investigating;
- Group items that are similar (for example, by size, shape, color);
- Stretch their imaginations and curiosity; and
- See how reading and writing are useful (for example, by listening to stories and poems, dictating stories to adults, and by talking with other children and adults).

Helping Your Child Get Ready For Kindergarten

This guide is designed to help your child prepare for the world of Kindergarten. As the first day of school approaches, you may want to do extra things to make your new school a friendlier place for both you and your child.

Find out as much as you can about the school before your child enters. You will want to learn:

- The principal's name;
- The Kindergarten teacher's name;
- A description of the Kindergarten program;
- Transportation procedures; and
- How you can become involved in your child's education and in the school.

Walk the route your child will take to school or visit the bus stop with your child several times so the child is comfortable with the route. Find a meeting place for your child to wait if you will be picking the child up after school.

Visit the school with your child. Being familiar with the school will take the scare out. Walk up and down the hallways to learn where important places are: the rest rooms, the office, the clinic, the library, etc.

Talk with your child about school. During your visit, make positive comments about the school – your attitude will rub off! (“Look at all the boys and girls painting in the classroom. Doesn't that look like fun!”) Tell your child about what the children do when class begins.

Talk about the teachers and how they will help your child learn new things. Encourage your child to look at the teacher as a wise friend toward whom children should be courteous. Explain to your child how important it is to go to class each day. *This is your child's job.*

If possible, consider volunteering to help out in the school. School staff appreciate having extra adults to help do everything from passing out paper and pencils in the classroom to working with a small group of children. Volunteering is a good way to learn more about the school and to meet the staff and other parents.

When the long-awaited first day of Kindergarten arrives, go to school with your child (but don't stay too long). Bring a camera along and take a picture of your child at school on the first day. This will be a pleasant memory for many years to come. And, be patient. Many young children are overwhelmed at first because they haven't had much experience in dealing with new situations. They may not immediately like school. Your child may cry or cling to you when you say good-bye each morning, but with support from you and the Kindergarten teacher, this will rapidly change. *Please do not consider staying with your child for the day at this time or taking your child home. This only tells the child that the behavior gets him or her out of the situation.*

As your child proceeds through school, you will need to continue your encouragement and involvement. But for now, celebrate all that you have accomplished as a parent. Share your child's enthusiasm. Let him or her know how proud you are as he or she leaves home for the first day of Kindergarten. ***Let your child know you believe he or she will succeed!***

Prerequisites For Your Child's School Success

Painting

Using bright colors to create satisfying personal symbols. Movement of arms, wrists, hands and fingers.



Writing Skills

Working with paints and crayons is relaxing and gives the thrill of accomplishment as well as providing practice in the use of hand and arm muscles.

Sharing Periods

Relating what has happened at home. Talking about the new baby. Explaining a picture. Describing something. Buying the new family car. Visiting with grandma.



Language Skills

Speaking before a class or giving a recitation or a report is something difficult for children. Telling stories helps overcome this difficulty.

Rhythms and Singing

Hopping, skipping and running in rhythm. Dancing like leaves or gliding like an airplane. Singing of falling snow and growing things.



Self-Expression and Coordination

Children need to do things with others, in harmony, where help of everyone in the group is necessary.

Looking at Books

Turning pages, looking at brightly colored pictures, telling others about them, making up stories about them, showing others what is interesting or funny.



Interest in Books

Books become interesting, friendly things, and words in print tell a story. Children begin to see themselves as readers.

Listening to Stories

Stories are read and discussed. Children tell their own experiences and share made-up stories with their classmates.



Listening Skills

Listening to others isn't easy in an age characterized by activity, but listening and thinking are necessary skills for communicating with others.

Sharing Playthings

Taking turns with toys, games, scissors and glue helps develop an understanding of how a group can have fun and get things done.



Social Skills

At home, playthings are "mine"; in school, they are "ours." It's a hard lesson but a necessary one for living with others pleasantly.

Cutting and Pasting

Scrapbooks. Illustrations for a story. Holiday decorations. Creating your own designs.



Writing Skills

Cutting and pasting within bounds takes concentration. Small hands and young muscles need training and development for finer writing skills.

Going on Trips

Visiting a fire station, post office, grocery store, farm, airport or even the neighbor's new pet.



Awareness of the Larger World

Children need to experience for themselves—to see, touch, hear, smell, feel.

Early School Success

It is the goal of the Washoe County School District to ensure that every child has a successful school experience. We provide a developmentally appropriate screening at the beginning of the school year to help the teacher design appropriate lesson plans for the year to meet the needs of all children. This screening also helps the teacher identify any child who will need extra help to become successful and then provide the necessary services.

This screening is given on an individual basis by the Kindergarten teacher in the classroom with the parent present. The screening takes between 20 and 30 minutes to complete. This screening is done the first week of school. Children who transfer to a Washoe County school during the first semester of school are also screened by the teacher.



What Parents Can Do To Help A Child Learn

- ⇒ Listen and pay attention to his or her problems.
- ⇒ Read to and with your child daily, when possible.
- ⇒ Tell family stories.
- ⇒ Have books and other reading materials in the house.
- ⇒ Share favorite poems, nursery rhymes and songs with the child.
- ⇒ Take your child to the library – and get your child his or her own library card.
- ⇒ Take your child to museums and historical sites, when possible.
- ⇒ Go exploring and learn about plants, animals and geography.
- ⇒ Find a quiet place for study.
- ⇒ Review homework.
- ⇒ Meet with your child's teacher early in the school year.
- ⇒ Provide opportunities for your child to have firsthand experiences to do things in the world – to see and touch objects, hear new sounds, smell and taste food, watch things move, and make his or her own creations using scissors, glue, markers and crayon.
- ⇒ Talk about school in a friendly way.
- ⇒ Guide your child's use of television, VCR and video games.

Ready-for-School Checklist

This checklist, although not exhaustive, can help to guide you in preparing your child for school. It is best to look at the items included as goals for which to aim. They should be done, as much as possible, through everyday life or by fun activities you've planned with your child. If your child lags behind in some areas, don't worry. Remember that all children are unique. They grow and develop at different rates – and no one thing guarantees that a child is ready for school.

Good Health and Physical Well-Being

My child:

- ✓ Eats a balanced diet.
- ✓ Receives regular medical and dental care and has had all necessary immunizations.
- ✓ Gets plenty of rest.
- ✓ Runs, jumps, plays outdoors, and does other activities that help develop large muscles and provide exercise.
- ✓ Works puzzles, scribbles, colors, paints, and does other activities that help develop small muscles.

Social and Emotional Preparation

My child:

- ✓ Is learning to be confident enough to explore and try new things.
- ✓ Is learning to work well alone and to do many tasks for him- or herself.
- ✓ Has many opportunities to be with other children and is learning to cooperate with them.
- ✓ Is curious and motivated to learn.
- ✓ Is learning to finish tasks (for example, picks up own toys).
- ✓ Is learning to use self-control.
- ✓ Can follow simple instructions.
- ✓ Helps with family chores.

Language and General Knowledge

My child:

- ✓ Has many opportunities to play.
- ✓ Is read to every day.
- ✓ Has access to books and other reading materials.
- ✓ Has his or her television viewing monitored by an adult.
- ✓ Is encouraged to ask questions.
- ✓ Is encouraged to solve problems.
- ✓ Has opportunities to notice similarities and differences.
- ✓ Is encouraged to sort and classify things (for example, by looking for all the red cars on the highway, putting the silverware away or helping sort the laundry).
- ✓ Is learning to write his or her full name.
- ✓ Is learning his or her phone number, address and birth date.
- ✓ Is learning to count and plays counting games.
- ✓ Is learning to identify shapes and colors.
- ✓ Has opportunities to draw, listen to and make music, and to dance.