

# 10 Things to know about Kindergarten in LISD

## 1. Children who are five years old on or before Sept. 1, 2020 are welcome to enroll.

- Children may have little knowledge of letters/sounds or know all their letters/sounds. Teachers work with children on their own levels, differentiating to meet their needs.
- Children with disabilities, developmental delays or limited experiences, as well as those with intellectual and creative talents benefit from kindergarten.

## 2. Kindergarten isn't what it used to be!

- Kindergarten is more than coloring and playing, but those are still there! All LISD teachers teach a curriculum based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. It includes instruction in language arts, math, science, social studies, technology, art, music and physical education.
- Although it is more structured than traditional kindergarten, teachers still make learning fun in developmentally appropriate ways.

## 3. Instruction is learning through play and structured academics.

- Through independent and partner activities, hands-on activities and games, students explore literacy, math, science, and social skills.
- The day includes time working at tables, on the floor, at computers, in the library and outside or may also include "specials" such as physical education, art, music, and STEM.

## 4. Most children will leave kindergarten reading and writing.

- Their knowledge of letter names and sounds before kindergarten is a strong predictor of how quickly they will become independent readers. Teachers work with children in guided reading groups at their level.
- In writers' workshop, the students will learn to express ideas on various topics using pictures, letters, words & sentences.

## 5. Kindergarten includes learning social skills and routines.

- Learning to get along with others is a skill needed throughout life. They will develop respect for others, listen when others are talking, and keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- Kindergarten is a time to learn one's self-control. Children learn there is a time to be quiet and a time when you don't have to be!

## **6. Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible.**

- Students will develop a sense of responsibility as they bring their backpacks, folders, library books, etc. to and from school. Children will use basic learning tools—pencils, crayons, scissors, computers, and books.
- Encourage your child to fasten and unfasten seat belts and clothing as needed (zippers, buttons, etc.) If some clothing fasteners are still too challenging, it is best for the child to wear ones with which he/she can be successful. They will be expected to use the restroom independently.

## **7. Students are assessed individually on skills during the year.**

- Teachers observe the children's thinking, problem solving approaches and student products such as writing samples to show signs of their learning.
- It is a state requirement to use early reading assessments. In LISD, iStation Indicators of Progress assessment is administered to students individually at least three times a year to check their learning progress. Parents will receive student progress expectations on report cards four times during the year.

## **8. Parents/child care providers are partners with the teacher.**

- Homework will include expectations for parents and children to read together. There may also be some short assignments, and at-home projects.
- School communication will include newsletters, email, and parent conferences. Please don't be afraid to ask!

## **9. Parents/child care providers can help prepare children for transition.**

- Prepare your child by encouraging his/her curiosity and to ask questions. Enjoy picture books with them. The love of reading is an important part of becoming a successful learner. Teach him/her respect for others.
- Help your child to name colors, shapes and letters and to recognize his/her own name. Work with them on writing their name by using an uppercase letter for the first letter and lowercase for the others (Anna rather than ANNA).
- Phonological awareness is another strong predictor of reading success. Help children become aware of the sounds in words and how they can be changed to make new words. They will come to appreciate rhyme and recognize how new words can be made by substituting letters (cat, mat, hat) or putting sounds together (b-e-d).

## **10. Kindergarten is another step in learning to enjoy life!**

- Parents are their children's first teachers. We look forward to joining you in aiming for high school graduation and whatever career path your child will choose some day!

LISD offers Dual Language and Spanish Immersion experiences for children grades K-5. Beginning in kindergarten or first grade, children learn in both Spanish and English, with a goal of proficiency in both and strong academic skills. See the Dual Language and Spanish Immersion pages of the LISD website for more details.