



Countdown to Kindergarten!

Welcome to 2018-2019 Kindergarten Registration

- **Complete the paperwork and return them to ACES, RCS, or our central office**
- **Sign up for 1 hour of time for Kindergarten Screening**
- **Next bring your child back for the 1 hour Kindergarten Screening at the date and time you signed up for.**
- **Watch for upcoming events - community fun Activities at the library, YMCA, schools and within the community**
- **Kindergarten Orientation will be held at the beginning of school.**
- **Bus lists are printed in the Athol Daily News the week before school starts and are also available on the district website, arrsd.org.**



Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

by Peggy Gisler, Ed.S. and Marge Eberts, Ed.S.

While there's no perfect formula that determines when children are truly ready for kindergarten, you can use this checklist to see how well your child is doing in acquiring the skills found on most kindergarten checklists.

Check the skills your child has mastered. Then recheck every month to see what additional skills your child can accomplish. Young children change so fast - if they cannot do something this week, they may be able to do it a few weeks later.

- Listen to stories without interrupting
- Recognize rhyming sounds
- Pay attention for short periods of time to adult directed tasks
- Understand actions have both causes and effects
- Shows understanding of general times of day
- Cut with scissors
- Begin to share with others
- Start to follow rules
- Be able to recognize authority
- Manage bathroom needs
- Button shirts, pants, coats and zip up zippers
- Separate from parents without being upset
- Speak understandably
- Talk in complete sentences of five to six words
- Look at pictures and tell stories
- Identify rhyming words
- Identify beginning sounds of some words
- Identify the alphabet letters
- Recognize some common sight words like "stop"
- Sort similar objects by color, size and shape
- Recognize groups of one, two, three, four and five objects
- Count to ten
- Bounce a ball



For many parents of young children, the end of summer signals one big word-SEPARATION. Your child may be entering childcare for the first time, or changing from a family day care home to a group day care setting or he/she could even be getting on the school bus and heading off to kindergarten.

Transitions often bring that up mixed feelings from both you and your child. While your child may wish to be at home with you, he/she probably will show excitement and enthusiasm at the idea of going to “school”, meeting new friends and having new toys to play with. You, as a parent, maybe experiencing feelings of delight and pride as well as sadness that you're young one is moving out into the “big world” without you. Remember, all of these feelings are normal and natural it is important that we prepare ourselves and her children for these mixed emotions.

Working with your childcare provider/teacher is a sure way to help ease the transition and make it a good experience for both you and your child. The responsive provider, who is ready with hugs and comfort, makes all the difference in the world. The following guidelines are sure to help:

- Talk about upcoming transitions with your child. Be specific about the program, the children, the activities...
- Find out what your child is specifically worried about. Getting lost? Finding the bathroom? Not knowing anyone? Clarify any misconceptions.
- Accept and talk about feelings. Acknowledge that it is scary starting a new adventure. Remember that parents and providers should recognize and share their feelings with each other too.
- Make sure that your child is familiar with the new environment and adults. Start slowly. Gradually work your way to your regular schedule.
- Have your child bring in something special from home: a family picture, a special blanket.
- Set up rituals for reassurance, with goodbye at the window or make a puzzle together before you leave.
- Always say goodbye. Never just disappear.
- Watch for behavior issues that may indicate your child's anxiety. Your child may start off fine, but several weeks later maybe clingy, anxious, sad.
- Convey confidence that all of you will work through this experience even if it takes a while. Your comments will help a lot.

Give your child the time and reassurance needed during the period of adjustment. No matter how difficult the situation may feel at this time, the struggles around separating are normal. Having a successful separation experience sets the stage for future successes and the many separations that life sends our way.



MEDICATION POLICY

Ideally, all medication should be given at home. If the physician feels it is necessary for the student to receive medication during school hours, school must receive the following:

- a) A written, signed, dated form from the parents
- b) A written, signed, dated order from the physician (for each medication)
- c) The medication in a container appropriately labeled by a pharmacy or a physician,
which needs to be brought to the school nurse or office.

IMMUNIZATION LAW:

Under the laws of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the minimum acceptable immunizations for school enrollment are:

- a) a minimum of 5 doses of each D-P-T (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus)
- b) Polio - 4 doses
- c) Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles) - 2 doses
- d) Hepatitis B Vaccine, 3 doses
- e) Lead test results
- f) 1 dose of Varicella or documented proof of having chicken pox.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION:

- a) Documentation of a physical including Massachusetts Department of Public Health immunization is required prior to entry
- b) Documentation of a lead screening test results by a doctor or health care provider is required prior to entry
- c) Original Birth Certificate

Kindergarten screening with the DIAL-4

What is the DIAL-4?

The DIAL-4 is a screening instrument designed to determine whether a child is developing within the average range for their age.

DIAL-4 examines five areas of development. The areas of motor, concepts and language will be measured through fun activities with your child. The areas of self– help and social-emotional development are measured through questionnaires completed by a parent and a preschool teacher/childcare provider.

In the Motor area, we want to see how your child is learning to use their body for throwing an object with accuracy, jumping, hopping, building blocks, cutting, copying and writing.

In the Concepts area, we are looking for your child's understanding of ideas like colors, accounting, and body parts and opposite concepts.

In the Language area, we will be checking to see if your child makes appropriate speech sounds for their age and is able to use words for communicating with others effectively period

In addition to the DIAL-4, school nurses will screen your child's vision and hearing.

Remember your child is not expected to display every skill or perform it perfectly. Tasks are arranged developmentally so that we can determine if your child is performing at an average range according to their age.

Upon completion of the screening, the screener reviews the Parent Information Questionnaire, the Teacher Information Questionnaire and your child's screening performance. This information will be used to determine the need for more formal diagnostic assessments.

Keep in mind that this is only a screening and not a diagnostic assessment. If you have questions for concerns about your child's development, please feel free to discuss them with the screener, your child's classroom teacher and/or Principal.

Parents are always welcome to call the Athol Royalston special education office at 978-249-2403 with any questions, concerns and/or suggestions.

Kindergarten Orientation

In August, you and your child will receive an invitation to attend orientation. This will be held on the first two days of school. The invitation will state which day you and your child will attend, along with the place and time. You will spend your morning in the classroom with the teacher. Transportation will not be provided for your kindergartner on this day. Because this is an important experience for your child, we ask that you bring only the new kindergartner. **Please do not bring other children this day.**

REPORTING KINDERGARTEN PROGRESS

Your child's progress will be reported to you two times a year. Teachers are eager to meet with the parents of children they teach. They welcome after school conferences aimed at improving educational growth and the development of your child.

- **Parent/teacher conferences will be held in November**

Kindergarten report cards go home two times a year. Your child will bring a report card home in January and on the last day of school. Additional assessment information may be sent home to you after benchmark assessments or DIBELS (a reading "test" given three times a year).

SCHOOL SESSION

Kindergarten students first full day of school will be the third full day of the new school year. Remember that the first two days of the school year are for orientation ONLY. If you wish to send your child for a half day for a week or two, this is your option, but you will need to provide transportation if he/she leaves early.

ATTENDANCE

Regularity of attendance and punctuality are both important to the child from the very first day of Kindergarten. The earlier a child learns that school is important, the more successful he/she will be in school.

Please call the office at your child's school if your child will be absent or tardy on any day. Written explanation of the cause of absence or the nature of the illness is required from parents. These must be recorded and filed.

FOR YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

- Keep your child away from anyone with a cold
- Report reasons for absence to school office
- At school, the teacher and school nurse will watch for symptoms of illness; if a child is sick or injured, parents will be contacted. Make sure an emergency phone number is made available for this purpose.
- Parents should see to it that their child is in good physical condition before he/she starts school. Every child must have a physical examination, and be immunized for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German measles), Hepatitis B and Varicella (chicken pox).
- Please encourage your child to wash his/her hands regularly.
- If your child is displaying symptoms of illness, fever, vomiting, diarrhea; please do NOT send them to school until they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours. The symptoms usually relate to something viral which can be passed around the classroom.
- Encourage your child to bring a healthy snack to school each day.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

School may be called of because of bad weather or there may be a delayed start. If this happens parents will be notified through the One Call System unless the parent chooses to opt out of the One Call System. Announcements concerning delays and closings of school are also found through the following sources:

Radio WJDF - FM 97.3

TV WBZ - 4 Boston

WCVB - 5 Boston

WWLP - 22 Springfield

Web www.arrsd.org



Educating Massachusetts Homeless Children

The McKinney–Vento Act, part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, guarantees homeless children and youth and education equal to what they would receive if not homeless.

WHO IS HOMELESS?

According to the McKinney–Vento Act, homeless children and youth include individuals who lack of a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes the following situations

- Sharing the housing of others (known as doubling-up) due to the loss of housing or economic hardship
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Awaiting foster care placement
- Living in a nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings

The McKinney–Vento Act also recognizes unaccompanied youth who are homeless. According to the act, and unaccompanied youth is a youth not in the physical custody of the parent or legal guardian.

WHICH SCHOOL CAN A HOMELESS CHILD ATTEND?

There are two choices for a student in a homeless situation– the school of origin and the school of residency. The school of origin is the school the child attended when permanently housed or the school and which the child was last enrolled. When determining the school of best interest, a homeless child or youth should remain in the school of origin (to the extent feasible) unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the parent or the guardian or to the wishes of the unaccompanied youth.

ENROLLMENT

The McKinney–Vento Act requires that immediate enrollment of homeless children and youth. These children must be allowed to attend school even if they are unable to produce previous academic records, immunization and medical records, proofs of residency, birth certificates, or other documentation that is usually required.

TRANSPORTATION

School districts must provide transportation for homeless children and youth to the school of best interest. District must also provide transportation during the resolution of any pending disputes. Disputes over enrollment, school placement or transportation arrangements are being resolved, students must be transported to the school of choice of the parent or the unaccompanied youth.

THE HOMELESS COORDINATOR

A school district's homeless coordinator plays a vital role in ensuring that children and youth experiencing homelessness enroll and succeed in school. The McKinney–Vento Act requires that every school district appoint a homeless coordinator who serves as the link between homeless families and school staff, district personnel, shelter workers and social service providers.

Athol-Royalston Regional School District Homeless Coordinator:

Katherine Clark Director of Pupil Services

978-249-2403 • kclark@arrsd.org

Athol-Royalston Regional School District Office of the Superintendent
of Schools

1062 Pleasant Street, Athol, MA 01331

UPPER CASE LETTERS

A S D F I H J K Q

W E R T Y G L U

O P Z X C V B N M

Lower Case Letters

a s d f r h j k u

l q w e g t y i

o p z x c v b n m