

About Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten

How do I obtain a certified copy of my child's birth certificate?

A certified copy of your child's birth certificate has an official raised seal. School staff will make a copy of the birth certificate and return the original to you, but we must review a certified birth certificate. If you do not have one, you will need to go to the county of your child's birth or order a replacement certified birth certificate online.

If you are a legal guardian, you should bring those court documents with you as well.

How do I get my child a vision screening?

It is Michigan law that every Kindergarten student has their vision screened prior to starting school. This can be completed in a number of ways.

If your child's pediatrician or primary care doctor conducted a vision screening, provide documentation of the results of that screening. County health departments also offer free vision screenings. Contact your county's health department if you wish to utilize that option. If a county vision screening was done at your child's daycare or preschool, you can provide that documentation as well. Vision screenings may also be conducted by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

My child has most of his/her vaccines but is not completely up to date. What do I do?

Schedule your child's remaining vaccines and in the meantime, provide the school with the most up to date vaccine records for your child. Provide updated records after your child receives the remaining required vaccines but before the start of the school year.

If you need a copy of your child's vaccine records, you can contact his/her pediatrician or primary care doctor, or request an official copy from www.MCIR.org.

What is the first day of school like for Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten students?

Students in 1st through 12th grade have a half day of school on Tuesday, September 3, 2019. Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten students do **not** attend school or ride on the bus this day!

On September 3rd, Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten students are instead invited for an open house in their classroom. Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten students will be given the opportunity to meet their teacher and explore their classrooms with a parent or guardian on September 3rd. Each school coordinates this a little differently so begin to look for information from your school over the summer.

In the meantime, please plan for your child's first official day of school on Wednesday, September 4th. This will be a full day of school for ALL students and is the first day Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten students attend school or ride the bus if that is how they are getting to and from school.

Starting the Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten students one day after all other students allows the school to get everyone else settled in on the first day before welcoming our youngest learners!

How do I help my child prepare for the start of Kindergarten or Junior Kindergarten?

There are a lot of ways to help your child prepare for school!

It is a great idea to follow your child's elementary school on Twitter. Sometimes seeing pictures of this year's Kindergarten class having a great time helps to alleviate fears!

Research tells us that one of the **best** ways a family can support a young child in school is to read aloud as often as possible! Make read alouds a regular part of your child's daily routine.

It can be helpful to read books about starting school during this time as well. We recommend:

- *The Kissing Hand*, by Audrey Penn
- *The Pout-Pout Fish Goes to School*, by Deborah Diesen
- *Kindergarten Rocks!*, by Katie Davis
- *Wemberly Worried*, by Kevin Henkes
- *First Day Jitters*, by Julie Danneberg
- *Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!* By Nancy L. Carlson
- *Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten*, by Joseph Slate

Make sure your child can say and recognize his or her first and last name. This is the time to start working on writing his or her first name as well!

Work on self-care skills such as:

- Independent toileting
- Taking on and off shoes, boots, coats, hats and mittens
- Properly using and disposing of a tissue
- Cleaning up after oneself

Work on social skills such as:

- Following directions
- Knowing how and when to use indoor (quiet) and outdoor (louder) voices
- Sharing and taking turns
- Problem solving when conflicts arise during play

As we get closer to the start of the school year, it is very helpful to get your child on a schedule that will match his or her schedule once school begins. The American Association of Pediatrics recommends that 5 year olds get between 10 to 13 hours of sleep and that 6 year olds get between 9 to 12 hours of sleep. Start about a month before school begins by adjust bedtime and wake up times in 15 minute increments so that your child is ready for when school starts.

Our early start elementary schools (Bartlett, Kent Lake, Pearson, and Sayre) begin school at 8:15 AM. Our late start elementary schools (Brummer, Dolsen, Hardy, and Salem) begin school at 8:57 AM.

How do I prepare to send my child to Kindergarten or Junior Kindergarten?

As a parent, this is a good time to gather information about groups you may want to join, like the Parent-Teacher Organization or learn more about volunteer opportunities at your child's school.

Does my child have specials classes in Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten?

Yes! Both Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten classes have art, music, physical education, and library times. Your child's teacher will provide you with a specific schedule once school starts.

Is there nap time in Kindergarten or Junior Kindergarten?

Students in elementary school do not nap during the day. There is a quieter time after lunch and recess in both Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten. This time may be spent doing activities like listening to a read aloud.

If your child is currently still napping, speak with your pediatrician for tips on how to help transition your child to no naps during the school day.

When will my child learn about how to ride a school bus safely? How can I help get him or her ready to ride a bus?

During a meet and greet in August or during the first week of school, all Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten students be provided with an opportunity to participate in a bus experience. They get to ride the bus and learn:

- How to line up for the bus, get on and get seated
- How to ride properly
- What happens at a railroad crossing
- How to safely cross at a bus stop

If your child will be riding a bus, look for more safety tips from our Transportation Department prior to the start of school in September.

It is important to remember all adults need to follow driving laws and pick up and drop off procedures in order to ensure student safety at arrival, dismissal, and bus stops! Please do your part to keep all of our learners safe!