Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) Prekindergarten (Pre-K) Program!

We know this is an exciting time for your family, and you may have many questions about Pre-K. This guide is a resource to help your family prepare. If you have any additional questions about our Pre-K program that are not included in this guide, please contact your child’s school or visit www.mnps.org.

What’s inside?

Information about:
• School Hours and Attendance
• Meals
• Uniforms and Supplies
• Curriculum
• Rest Time
• Field Trips
• Before and Aftercare
• Special Education Services
• Family Conferences
• And more!
Pre-K can help prepare your child for success in kindergarten and beyond. In MNPS, we provide a welcoming and engaging environment for Pre-K students and their families. Our Pre-K programs prepare children for elementary school with meaningful learning experiences through purposeful and intentional play and discovery.

Pre-K is an important part of your child’s academic path in MNPS. The district offers full day Pre-K programs for 4-year-olds and some preschool programs for 3-year-olds. Studies have shown that 90% of a child’s brain develops by age 5. Pre-K provides the necessary lessons, activities and practice to ensure a child has the experiences that will support the development of the whole child.

Throughout the school year, your child will participate in lessons that will encourage exploring, discovering, questioning and pretending through the use of a research-based curriculum that allows Pre-K students to learn how children learn best—through meaningful and purposeful play. Teaching staff participate in ongoing training to enhance their craft and to guide a child’s learning. Students learn to understand and express their emotions, solve problems and to get along with others as they advance academically, socially and emotionally.

Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning.

FRED ROGERS

? HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?
Please contact the Family Information Center at (615) 259-INFO (4636) or familyinfo@mnps.org.
CURRICULUM
Most Pre-K classes utilize an intentional play-based curriculum, which provides diverse learning environments where activities are driven by students, and allows the teaching staff to help children play and explore as a path to learning. A year of learning is broken into sections of six to nine weeks where different topics are explored, called studies. This provides an opportunity for your child to explore, experiment with and investigate topics in a hands-on way through activities in the classroom, during read-aloud, centers, small and large group instruction, and while exploring outdoors.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCHES
The Office of Nutrition Services offers healthy, nutritious meals for breakfast and lunch every school day. Breakfast and lunch are free to qualifying families. Information on nutrition is included in the Student-Parent Handbook and is available on the MNPS website. The MNPS Pre-K program has implemented family style dining in the classroom to decrease the amount of transitions occurring within a day and to promote conversations and discussions that would build a child’s vocabulary and oral language skills. For more information on breakfast and lunch fees, please contact your child’s school.

REST TIME
Pre-K students have an hour of rest time each day at school. If a child does not want to rest, then after all students are settled into their cots, a teacher will provide a book to a child and encourage them to remain on their cot quietly during rest time.
HOMEWORK
We encourage families to use everyday experiences to support literacy and math concepts to extend learning at home. For example: reading with your child at bedtime, writing letters to family members to develop literacy skills, or cooking dinner together to develop math and fine motor skills. For additional activities and ideas, please contact your child’s teacher or visit the Countdown to Kindergarten website at www.mnps.org/countdowntokindergarten.

FAMILY CONFERENCES AND REPORT CARDS
Family conferences and report cards help keep you updated about your child’s development of academic and social skills throughout the year. Family conferences, which occur in the fall and in the spring, provide an opportunity to meet with your child’s teacher to discuss your child’s progress.

Report cards are sent home each quarter, and they will indicate whether your child’s skill and abilities are below, meeting, or exceeding the widely held expectations for students their age, as well as what skills they will be developing next.

FIELD TRIPS
Each school site will determine field trips based on curriculum or upcoming activities. Families can contact the school for information on parent attendance and chaperone requirements. Families may be asked to pay a fee for each field trip to cover the cost of admission and bus transportation.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
Families are encouraged to work closely with their child’s teacher to enhance their school experience. By attending parent teacher conferences, reviewing their child’s progress report, attending parent meetings and workshops and visiting the Countdown to Kindergarten website at www.mnps.org/countdowntokindergarten for news and information on how to work with your child at home, families and school staff can become partners in their child’s academic career.
BEFORE AND AFTERCARE SERVICES
Some Pre-K school sites have before and aftercare programs to extend your child’s educational experience beyond school hours. Providers and program fees vary by school site. A complete roster of before and aftercare providers by location can be found on www.mnps.org.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
In accordance with Tennessee State Law and Child Find, our schools strive to provide every child with exactly the kind of learning environment they need. Child Find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires school districts to identify, locate and evaluate children ages 3 to 21 with suspected disabilities who may need special education services. For more information or to discuss your child’s needs, please contact 615-687-4551, extension 665702 or visit www.mnps.org/students-with-disabilities.

PRE-K TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Tuition assistance is available to qualifying families placed in fee based seats. Prior to or during the school year, if your family experiences a hardship, family emergency or trauma and meet the eligibility criteria, you may qualify to submit a Pre-K Tuition Assistance Application with documentation to your child’s school site. Applications along with documentation will be reviewed by the early learning leadership for consideration. Tuition assistance will offer a reduced tuition rate to qualifying families accepting a Pre-K fee based seat. For more information, visit www.mnps.org/early-childhood-education.

NEED MORE RESOURCES?
Visit our kindergarten readiness website for additional information and at home activities at www.mnps.org/countdowntokindergarten.
Reading aloud with your child is one of the best ways to prepare and enhance a child’s school experience. Reading aloud with your child increases vocabulary, builds story understanding and encourages a love of reading.

BEFORE YOU START
» Choose books that you and your child enjoy!
» Read books aloud and listen for rhyming words or repeated phrases.
» Give children time to get ready to listen.

MAKE READING ENJOYABLE
» Share the name of the author and illustrator.
» Read slowly and clearly.
» Make eye contact with children.
» Read with expression.

SUGGESTED TITLES & AUTHORS
DUCK ON A BIKE by David Shannon
HAVE YOU SEEN MY CAT by Eric Carle
LLAMA LLAMA RED PAJAMA by Anna Dewdney
ROSE GOES TO PRESCHOOL by Karen Katz
TEN BLACK DOTS by Donald Cruz
TEN LITTLE CATERPILLARS by Bill Martin
THE NAPPING HOUSE by Audrey Wood
WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A TAIL LIKE THIS? by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page
WHERE IS THE GREEN SHEEP? by Mem Fox
YO! YES? by Chris Raschka

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE
» Ask questions. “What do you think the story might be about?” “What happened in the story?” “What did you like best?”
» Invite children to join in for repeated phrases or verses.
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