

KINDERGARTEN RESOURCE GUIDE



First Day of Kindergarten

Children must be five years of age by September 1, 2020 to register for kindergarten for the 2020-2021 school year.

Welcome to NPSD from the Superintendent

Dear Families,

Welcome to the North Penn School District! Your child will begin an exciting adventure this fall when he or she starts kindergarten and hopefully a life-long love of learning. We know this time can be full of excitement and anxiety. We want to help ease any fears and anxieties about your child beginning school by answering some of the many questions you may have regarding kindergarten assignments, transportation, day care and extended school care opportunities. We also want to share some tips for engaging with your child's school, and fun and educational ways to best help your child prepare for his or her first year of school.

The elementary years are extremely important because they set the foundation for a child's academic and social future. The information included in this brochure will help ensure your child is well-prepared for the start of his or her educational career in the North Penn School District. Our district provides an educational experience that is safe, nurturing and fun. We hope this information is helpful to you and look forward to welcoming you and your child to school in September.

Sincerely,

Dr. Curtis R. Dietrich
Superintendent

Letter from the Director of Elementary Education

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I take great pleasure in welcoming you as your child begins his or her educational journey in the North Penn School District. Kindergarten is an ideal time to start teaching children the importance of school and introducing basic skills into their lives. Learning is an important experience and we make it engaging and interactive so kids enjoy coming to school. Therefore, the North Penn School District is pleased to offer very talented and nurturing staff members, a safe and friendly school environment, and a developmentally appropriate and challenging curriculum so that kindergarten students can achieve their highest potential.

As the Director of Elementary Education, one of my greatest joys is visiting classrooms and seeing the enthusiasm of our young children as they learn a new skill, make a new friend or complete a difficult project. I feel honored to be able to see kindergarten students grow throughout the elementary years and am always impressed with their achievement and abilities by the time they graduate sixth grade and move on to middle school. I hope you and your child will have an outstanding experience!

Sincerely,

Dr. Elizabeth Santoro
Director of Elementary Education

Communicating with NPSD

North Penn School District (NPSD) provides information and resources to our families in a number of ways:

E-Matters: This e-newsletter provides information about upcoming events, current issues affecting the district and links to important information. To subscribe to E-Matters, visit the "Quick Links" section of www.npenn.org.

Website: www.npenn.org

Infinite Campus Parent Portal (ICPP): ICPP can be found on the district website and provides parents the ability to review registration/demographic information, daily attendance records, and teacher and bus assignments. Information about ICPP and how to access it will be mailed to your home in August.

Social Media:

www.facebook.com/NorthPennSD

Twitter at @NPSD

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Frequently Asked Questions About Kindergarten

Teacher Assignment

Q How do I know which teacher my child will have?

A You will be able to log in to the online parent portal in August to find the teacher of your student. You will receive information from the district about the posting of teacher assignments.

Kindergarten Orientation

Q When is Kindergarten Orientation?

A Orientation for all elementary schools will be held on Wednesday, August 26, 2020 in the morning. Specific times for the orientation will be communicated to families at a later date.

School Bus

Q How do I know which bus my child will ride?

A Just like teacher assignments, you can visit the online parent portal in August to find out your busing information. If you are unsure of your child's bus stop, contact the NPSD Transportation at 215-853-1139.

Q How does the teacher know what bus my child will ride, and how do I know my child will get on the correct bus?

A Your child should wear the bus tag you receive at orientation for the first few days of school. You should write your child's name and busing/van pickup information on the tag. You can also pick up a tag from the school secretary.

It is important to keep your child's routine consistent. Too many changes, too many times a week can be confusing for the child and our staff; for this reason, we ask that notes are sent in the event of any change.

For more information about transportation, please review pages 5-6.

School Supplies

Q What school supplies does my child need?

A A kindergarten supply list will be sent following registration and may be accessed on school websites during the summer.

School Safety

Q Is my child's safety ensured while at school?

A The buddy system is used so students never walk through the school alone. Teachers are posted at all dismissal doors and used as greeters in the morning. In addition, each school uses a buzzer system that prevents anyone entering the building without being buzzed in by a secretary. Once inside the building, all parents, volunteers and visitors must sign in at the office and take a name tag/ID badge. All persons walking through the building without a name tag/ID badge are stopped.

After School Options

Q How do I communicate that I want my child to be "picked up" by me or a relative or friend?

A In order to pick up your child, send a note to the teacher to let them know of a change in your child's schedule. Let the relative/friend know they must go to the office to sign out the student. They will need to present a driver's license or some other form of picture identification. If it is during the school day, the office will call for the child to come to the office. For security purposes and to maintain uninterrupted curriculum time, relatives/friends will not be permitted to walk down to the classroom during the school day.

Day Care Option for Students

Q Does NPSD offer Extended School Care?

A NPSD offers before and after school care for each of its 13 elementary schools through its Extended School Care program. This program is held Monday-Friday and on several in-service days throughout the year.

For information regarding specific rates and times of the district's Extended School Care program, please contact 215-853-1039.

Home and School Association

Q How can I assist with the Home and School Association?

A You will receive a packet from your child's "Home and School Association" with information on activities and fundraisers, how you can volunteer, clothing sales, student directory and more!

Frequently Asked Questions About Kindergarten

Sick Child

Q What do I do if my child will be absent from school?

A A major factor in a student's school success is regular attendance. Anytime a student is absent, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school. With our absence reporting system, SafeArrival, you can report your child out the day of a sick absence. Plus, if you know your child will be out of school ahead of time, you can preschedule the absence. Access SafeArrival by:

1. Mobile device: Download and install the SchoolMessenger app from the Apple or Google Play stores (or from www.go.schoolmessenger.com). The first time you use the app, select "Sign Up" to create your account using an email address we have on file. Select "Attendance" then "Report an Absence."
2. SafeArrival website: visit www.go.schoolmessenger.com and select "Sign Up" to create your account. Create your account using an email address we have on file. Select "Attendance" then "Report an Absence."
3. Toll-free number: Call 888-239-8495 to report an absence using the automated phone system.

NPSD uses "SchoolMessenger Communicate" automated notification system to contact parents/guardians whose child is absent when the absence was not reported. At the elementary level, staff will begin Safe at Home calls until the reason is known.

Absences are only considered excused for one of the permissible reasons listed in the Discipline Code that is mailed home to all parents in August. Additional information regarding absences can be found in the NPSD Elementary School Parent Handbook which can be found on the district's website at www.npenn.org, under the "For Families" tab.

Extended Vacations (10 consecutive school days or more)

Q If my child will miss at least 10 consecutive days of school, what must I do when it is time for my child to come back to school?

A According to PA School Law, students who miss 10 consecutive school days shall be withdrawn from active school membership. As a result, the student is considered withdrawn from school and must complete the re-registration process before the student can return to school. During this extended vacation, the school will not provide school assignments, nor will credit be given for missed school work.

Dress Code

Q How should I dress my child for school? Where will they keep their backpack/coat?

A Please dress your child in kindergarten-appropriate, comfortable clothing that allows your child to freely move around and participate in all activities. Check the weather so your child is dressed appropriately for each season. It is recommended to label all coats. Each kindergarten classroom has either a closet or cubby space for students to keep their items during the school day. The type varies from building to building.

Lunch

Q Will my child be able to buy lunch?

A Kindergarten students will have a designated lunch period to eat in the cafeteria. Students can bring a packed lunch from home or purchase lunch. Breakfast may also be purchased daily.

Parents are encouraged to prepay for meals through the School Cafe Program. Please visit www.schoolcafe.com or contact NPSD Nutrition Services Office at 215-853-1081 for more information or to register an account.

NPSD encourages its families to participate in the Free and Reduced Meal Program. To see if you qualify, visit www.npenn.org and click on the "For Families" tab, then "School Nutrition Services." Register online or mail completed applications for the Free and Reduced Meal Program to the NPSD School Nutrition Services Dept. at 401 East Hancock Street, Lansdale, PA, 19446.

Recess

Q Will my child have recess time?

A Yes, they will receive 20 minutes in the morning and 20 minutes in the afternoon.

Health

Q What health examinations are required and what types of health tests are conducted throughout the kindergarten year?

A Your child will be required to complete both physical and dental examinations and submit these to his or her school nurse by October 15th. These can also be conducted by the school doctor or dentist at the school if you do not have a private physician or dentist. Please contact the school nurse if this is the case.

In addition to the physical and dental examinations, the school will also conduct height, weight, body mass index (BMI) percentage, hearing and vision screenings.

FAQ (continued)

Health (continued)

Q I don't have insurance. What are my options?

A Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides health insurance to all uninsured children and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance. No family makes too much money for CHIP because there is no income limit.

Curriculum and Assessments

Q What will my child learn in kindergarten?

A Curriculum will be covered at Back-to-School Night in September. Curriculum guides are available from the district office, as well as at www.npenn.org.

Q How will I be informed of my child's academic performance?

A Progress is reported three times per year: December, March and June. Report cards are issued about 15 days after the close of each trimester. A parent/teacher conference is held in early November. Information about conferences is provided by the school. Parents are encouraged to arrange for additional conferences with their child's teacher if needed.

Special Needs Child

Q Who do I contact if my child has special needs?

A Individual services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following: autism, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, intellectually disabled, multi-handicapped, neurological impairment, other health impairments, physical disability, serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability and speech and language impairment. If you believe your child may be in need of special education services or related programs, you may request a screening evaluation to the Director of Special Education & Student Services at 401 East Hancock St., Lansdale, PA, 19446. Call 215-853-1060 for more information.

Gifted Program

Q I believe my child should be in the gifted program.

A NPSD offers services that are designed to meet the unique needs of gifted students in grades K-12, if they qualify as a result of the district's gifted testing process. If your child is thought to qualify for gifted services by school personnel, you will be notified of the evaluation and screening procedures. Parental requests for screening and evaluation should be made in writing to the Director of Special Education & Student Services at 401 East Hancock St., Lansdale, PA, 19446. Call 215-853-1060 for more information.

Busing & Transportation

Participation in Annual K-Day (August)

The NPSD Transportation Department designed this event to ease the anxiety of students who have never ridden the bus before. Participants explore the bus while drivers explain school bus facts and safety information. Students are then able to take a short spin around the neighborhood. The day wraps up with a safety video and information regarding bus tags, bus schedules, emergency phone numbers and day care locations. Families will receive notification by mail around July 1st.

Transportation Guidelines

Bus Transportation vs. Walking Designation: Bussing will be provided to elementary students who reside in excess of one and one-half miles from the school. Exceptions to the one and one-half rule are made in situations where students must travel a PennDot certified hazardous route. In this case, bus transportation will be provided. Handicapped or special education students are transported according to arrangements made by the school district on a case-by-case basis.

Guidelines for Bus Stops: Residential areas which do not have sidewalks are reviewed by school personnel for safety. Designated bus stops shall be located in centralized areas with consideration for student safety and age. Whenever possible, not more than 25 students should be assigned to a designated bus stop. If a residential development precludes the entry of a bus, the number of students assigned to a designated stop may exceed 25. Out of safety considerations, every attempt shall be made to assign at least a minimum of two students at each stop.

Guidelines for Length of Bus Rides: The length of the bus ride is determined by the distance from the residence to school based on the required route that the bus must travel, population density and prevailing traffic conditions. For residences and schools located within NPSD, the length of time the student spends on the bus should not exceed one hour. For students traveling to schools outside North Penn boundaries, the ride time will depend on distance and traffic.

Transportation Arrangement Guidelines for Babysitters/Day Care Centers: Transportation will be provided only along currently established routes. No special route changes will be made for daycare or babysitter arrangements. Locations for stops will be made in accordance with established guidelines. If transportation arrangements are made to daycare or babysitter locations, such arrangements must be the same on **ALL** school days. For example, one set of arrangements for Monday-Wednesday-Friday and a different set of arrangements for Tuesday-Thursday will not be allowed. This guideline is necessary to ensure the safe and secure transport of all students. No exceptions will be made. Transportation to daycare or babysitter will only be provided within the student's home school attendance area.

Busing & Transportation (continued)

Transportation Arrangements for Students Who Cannot Stay in School: Whenever students are ill and should not stay in school, or whenever unusual circumstances require a student to be transported from school, appropriate arrangements will be made for transportation. The principal, nurse or counselor will call the parent and ask what immediate arrangements are available. If a parent cannot be reached, contact will be made with the appropriate people named on the student's emergency card. Parents should not expect school district employees to transport students in their personal vehicles.

For information regarding school closings/delayed openings due to inclement weather, please visit www.npenn.org, NPTV (Comcast Cable channel 28 and Verizon FIOS channel 29) or radio stations WNPV and KYW before your child leaves for school. The snow closing number for NPSD on KYW is #303.

Transportation Video/Audio Monitoring: The NPSD Board of School Directors has adopted a Transportation Video/Audio Monitoring Policy #5126 stating the use of video and audio recording equipment to maintain discipline and ensure the safety and security of students, staff, contractors, and others being transported on district-owned, operated, or contracted school buses or school vehicles. Reviews of video/audio recordings are limited to the Principal, Transportation Coordinator, Superintendent, and/or his/her designee. However, video/audio recordings may be used in expulsion hearings if the video/audio recording provides evidence in the case. A request for viewing a video recording may be made by a student's parents/guardians if the student has been recorded and disciplinary action has been recommended. All requests must be in writing and addressed to the building principal.

Parents are encouraged to talk with their children regarding bus safety and behavior at bus stops and while riding a bus. Students should:

- Walk on the left side of the road facing traffic when going to the bus stop. Be at the bus stop five minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. Allow five minutes after the scheduled pick-up time in the event of a late bus.
- Always use assigned bus stops.
- Accept seat assignments whenever the driver assigns seats.
- Stand off the roadway while waiting for the bus. Respect the property of others—lawns, trees, fences, etc.
- Get on the bus only when it has come to a complete stop and the red lights are flashing. Always look both ways and listen for oncoming vehicles before stepping onto the road.
- Follow instructions by the driver promptly and respectfully. The driver is in charge of the bus and represents the principal.
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion—facing forward.
- Keep hands, feet and head inside the bus at all times.

- Avoid unnecessary conversation with the driver or any motions or actions which may distract him or her.
- Unacceptable behavior includes: obscene and vulgar language or gestures; fighting, horseplay, rowdiness; throwing anything in, around or at the bus; smoking or any use of tobacco; eating or drinking; touching driver controls, steering wheel, door control, etc.; and/or any action which, in the judgment of the driver, threatens the safety of the bus or its passengers.
- Animals of any size or kind may not be transported on buses.
- Large objects such as displays, exhibits and packages may not be carried on buses. Skateboards are also prohibited.
- Students who violate bus rules are subject to disciplinary action by the principal. A conduct report will be completed whenever a student violates a rule. Copies will be sent to the principal's office, parents of the student and the transportation office. Bus-riding privileges will be suspended for 3-5 days for any student who receives three conduct reports. A fourth conduct report will result in a 5-10-day bus suspension. Students who receive more than four conduct reports may lose their bus-riding privileges for the remainder of the school year or be subject to further disciplinary action by the principal. Students who commit serious or dangerous violations may be subject to immediate removal of riding privileges or such action deemed appropriate by the principal.
- Students are not permitted to ride any bus other than the bus they are assigned. In the event of extenuating circumstances, for example: a parent is away and the student is staying temporarily with another district family, a parent who cannot be at the bus stop to meet their student and has arranged for the student to ride home with another student, a bus pass may be issued. The student going to another home must present a permission note from a parent/guardian. The student who is being visited must also have a note, stating that it is a mutually agreed upon arrangement. Bus passes should not be used for after school parties, boy/girl scout meetings, sleepovers, play dates, etc. Issuing bus passes may result in the overloading of school bus.

Obeying these reasonable rules and understanding these policies will ensure a pleasant and safe ride for all students.

Family Friendly Schools

The North Penn School District encourages all families to support their child's academic career and become engaged with their child's school. There are many programs and services in place that enhance communication and partnerships between the school, staff and family. In addition, individual schools and the district provide programming to support families.

Family involvement in early childhood education often results in greater student success in school. With this in mind, focus is placed both at the district and at the building level to provide transition opportunities for new, incoming kindergarten and first grade students through open houses and new family orientations. NPSD staff members are always available to talk with parents/guardians about a child's progress. During the year, parents will be given progress reports and are invited to a parent-teacher conference. However, if a problem or question arises, parents or teachers may request a conference as needed.

Child Readiness

The first five years of a child's life is a critical time for their social, emotional and cognitive development. Children entering school need to be ready to learn, thrive and succeed. The academic program for a child begins in kindergarten. If children are able to enter kindergarten at the appropriate levels, they will be able to continue these successes through to graduation.

Meetings are regularly held with preschool/early childcare center directors and teachers to align curriculum between preschool and kindergarten in North Penn. These meetings create a stronger understanding of what early childhood programs should provide so that children are prepared for kindergarten and first grade instruction.

NPSD recognizes and supports families as their child's first and best teacher. A focus on readiness skills will support early learning and serve to prepare children for success in school and in life. Families can help by providing a safe environment with proper health and nutrition, by sparking curiosity and creativity through play, and by using everyday moments to teach.

Tips to Help Your Child Succeed

Families and child care play an important role in the learning and growing processes of a young child, especially preparing them for school. Some of these tips will provide you with tools necessary to feel confident that your child is well-prepared.

Explore Language

- Recognize words that rhyme
- Identify beginning sounds in words like "s" in "sand"
- Recognize sounds in words like "c" and "at" in "cat"
- Speak in complete sentences
- Listen while others speak
- Take turns using words to communicate needs and wants

Get Ready to Read

- Hold a book
- Use their finger(s) to follow words across a page (from left to right and top to bottom)
- Match words in print with spoken words
- Use pictures to tell what is happening in the story

Pay Attention

- Listen in a group
- Follow directions and routines
- Be interested in learning
- Stay on task
- Clean up after work and play

Get Along with Others

- Express interest in other children
- Follow directions and routines
- Be interested in learning
- Respect others and property
- Display self-control

Know Letters, Numbers, Colors, Shapes

- Recognize name in print
- Write name (first letter uppercase, followed by lower case letters)
- Recognize letters of the alphabet
- Recognize written numbers 1-10
- Differentiate between written numbers and letters
- Count and write 1-10
- Count objects
- Identify and recognize colors, shapes

Do Things Themselves

- Use buttons or zippers
- Dress and undress themselves
- Attempt to tie his/her own shoes
- Use the bathroom and wash hands with minimal help
- Correct use and grip of pencils and scissors

Be Safe by Knowing

- His/her address and telephone number
- Name of his/her school
- Bus pick-up and drop-off locations
- How to cross streets (look both ways and cross at corners)
- How to contact a safe adult in emergency

How YOU Can Help Your Child:

- Show a safe way to walk to school and where to cross the street
- Send your child to school at the same time as other children
- Explain to your child that they should come straight home from school and don't talk to strangers
- Provide a school bag for items to arrive safely to/from school/home
- Model good health habits
- Practice good hygiene
- Practice playground and fire safety
- Received plenty of rest
- Eat a good breakfast and lunch
- Dress appropriately for the weather
- Promote regular attendance
- Encourage your child to talk about his/her experiences at school

NPSD SUZUKI VIOLIN PROGRAM



“Musical ability is not an inborn talent, but an ability which can be developed. Any child who is properly trained can develop musical ability, just as all children develop the ability to speak their mother tongue.

The potential of every child is unlimited.”

~ Shinichi Suzuki

The NPSD Suzuki violin program is a unique opportunity for all kindergarten students to learn how to play violin through the Suzuki Method. Music is the universal language that is central to every human society and is one of the strongest forms of human expression.

Learning how to play an instrument encourages higher level thinking, develops the ability to focus, increases memory skills, and builds self-esteem and self-confidence, among many other benefits.

“Music exists for the purpose of growing an admirable heart.”

~Shinichi Suzuki

© Suzuki Association of the Americas, Inc. 1999

Special Features of the Suzuki Method

More than 50 years ago, Suzuki realized the implications of the fact that children the world over learn to speak their native language with ease and began to apply the basic principles of language acquisition to the learning of music. The ideas of parent responsibility, loving encouragement, listening, constant repetition, etc., are some of the special features of the Suzuki method.

Parent Involvement

Parents have an important role as “home teachers” as a child learns an instrument. In the beginning, one parent learns to play before the child, so that he/she understands what the child is expected to do. The parent attends the child’s lessons and the two practice at home daily. No prior musical knowledge or ability is needed.

Early Beginning

The early years are crucial for developing mental processes and muscle coordination in the young child. Children’s aural capacities are also at their peak during the years of language acquisition, and this is an excellent time to establish musical sensitivity.

Listening

With repeated listening to the pieces they will be learning, children become familiar with them and learn them easily.

Repetition

Suzuki students repeat the pieces they learn, gradually using the skills they have gained in new and more sophisticated ways as they add to their repertoire. The introduction of new technical skills and musical concepts in the context of familiar pieces makes their acquisition much easier.

Encouragement

Each child learns at his/her own rate, building on small steps so that each one can be mastered. A general atmosphere of generosity and cooperation is also established as children are encouraged to support the efforts of other students.

Learning with Other Children

Music promotes healthy social interaction, and children are highly motivated by participating in group lessons and performances.

Please complete this form for more information regarding the **SUZUKI VIOLIN PROGRAM**.

Student Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

My child will be attending:

Parent Email: _____

Elementary School

Parent Phone: _____

Please detach and return to the office in your child’s building by the opening of school.

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