



## Kindergarten Question/Answer Document

### At what age do children start kindergarten?

A student is eligible to attend our full-day kindergarten program if they are five years of age or older on or before September 1 of the school year. A student who is younger than five years of age as of September 1 may enter kindergarten if they are able to pass the third grade TAKS tests.

### Is kindergarten all day?

Kindergarten in FISD is a full day program. Kindergarten students begin the day at 8:00 and are dismissed at 3:00.

### What will my child's day include while at school?

While schedules will vary, a typical kindergarten week will include:

- daily literacy, science and math instruction
- daily calendar time
- centers: academic reinforcement
- social studies and health instruction
- physical education
- fine arts including music and visual arts
- library time
- computer lab
- daily quiet time to enjoy self-selected texts
- daily recess with peers
- daily lunchtime

## **What will my child's academic program include in kindergarten?**

A typical kindergarten day will include a literacy block consisting of shared reading, independent reading, shared writing, independent writing, guided literacy groups, center activities, word work, phonological and phonics work and handwriting instruction (D'Nealian style of manuscript). Also included is a calendar time and math instruction including math centers and math manipulatives. Kindergarten students will also engage in science and social studies instruction, regular access to the library, computer lab, physical education, and fine arts. Students are offered a daily quiet time during which they can relax and enjoy a variety of books, as well as daily recess time.

The academic program for kindergarten addresses all the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

Core Areas:

- Literacy: Reading/writing

Literacy assessments are administered to all kindergarten students. Assessment information is used to customize the students' instructional program. It is not necessary for a student to know how to read to begin kindergarten. However, if a student enters kindergarten reading, literacy instruction at the student's reading level will be provided.

- Mathematics

FISD incorporates a hands-on manipulative based approach to mathematics concept development. Students receive whole group as well as small flexible group instruction, and teachers also work with students individually to review, reteach, or extend mathematics concepts. Assessments are administered throughout the year to keep abreast of the individual student's progress in mathematics.

- Science, Social Studies and Health

FISD kindergarten teachers approach science through hands-on learning opportunities. Students work in cooperative groups while performing experiments dealing with the five senses, light, heat, plants and animals. In social studies, students learn about their role in the classroom and their school environment. The student is also introduced to important figures in their school environment and community. In health students study topics such as making healthy choices in the areas of food, bicycle safety, and exercise, as well as thorough handwashing technique, weather safety and appropriate use of the 9-1-1 service.

## **How will I find out about my child's progress in school?**

Parents are informed of their child's progress in various ways throughout the school year.

- Teachers have a daily conference/planning period to meet with parents as needed or requested.
- A weekly folder is used to communicate expectations and accomplishments.
- School newsletters are regularly sent home.

- A fall conference day is set on the school calendar each year. To better accommodate parent schedules the hours for conferences are 10:00-6:00 pm.
- An academic checklist noting the child's progress is given to parents following each nine-week grading period.

## **Do kindergarten students share common school areas with older students?**

Every FISD school is designed using pods/hallways that accommodate specific grade levels. Restrooms are located in each pod or hallway and designated for use by the particular grade levels in the area. Each grade has an assigned recess and lunchtime. Kindergarten students will eat at tables with other kindergarten students and will participate in recess with other kindergarten students as well.

## **Is there a lunch program at school?**

Lunch is prepared and served at every campus. Parents will receive a calendar at the beginning of the year with lunch choices listed. Kindergarten students eat at designated tables in the school's cafeteria. Students may select a variety of 2-4 items. Students are assigned a six digit student identification number or given a bar-coded identification card. This number is used to access lunch accounts. There are several payment options for parents. Free and reduced-price meals are available to students who qualify based on family size and income as established by federal guidelines. For more information visit our website at [www.friscoisd.org](http://www.friscoisd.org) and click "Menu" to visit the Child Nutrition page.

## **What can I do to prepare my child for school?**

- Make reading with your child part of your daily routine.
- When reading with your child, stop periodically to discuss the content of the text including pictures. This promotes reading comprehension.
- After reading a story with your child, immediately engage them in retelling the story (with your support).
- Provide a wide variety of books.
- Make a special place for books in your child's room.
- Obtain a library card for your child. Click here for more information about the Frisco Public Library: [www.friscolibrary.com](http://www.friscolibrary.com).
- Give your child books as presents.
- Encourage your child to draw pictures and tell a story about their drawings.
- Accept your child's pretend reading.
- Point out print in the environment (signs, cereal boxes).
- Make signs and labels for objects.
- Provide materials (crayons, pencils, paper) and a space for writing.

- Provide opportunities for your child to scribble and draw. Scribbling is early writing.
- Have a place to display your child's writing efforts.
- Provide magnetic letters for your child to practice forming words.
- Let your child see you write and read.
- Encourage your child to recognize their first name in print.
- Allow your child the opportunity to practice writing their name with the first letter capitalized and the remaining letters in lowercase.
- Sing familiar songs.
- Teach your child nursery rhymes.
- Focus on your child's strengths and celebrate their accomplishments.
- Set up a routine or sequence for personal care and other daily routines.
- Talk with your child about what interests him or her.
- Use open-ended questions that have more than one answer such as "What do you think?" "How would you feel?"
- Encourage language development by listening carefully to your child and encouraging two-sided conversations.
- Play rhyming games.
- Get down on eye level and show your interest.
- Encourage other family members to listen.
- Provide age appropriate toys that require thinking. This includes puzzles, blocks, or sorting toys.
- Foster creativity.
- Provide experiences with scissors such as cutting pictures from a magazine.
- Provide opportunities to use crayons, markers, pencils, and glue.
- Save scraps, bits, boxes and other things from around the house to use for building and other creative experiences.
- Let your child set the table and count objects around the house such as plates and forks for the table, crackers for snacks, etc.
- Provide opportunities to compare objects.
- Play games with your child using directions such as: "Put the ball under the chair."
- Play Simon Says.
- Take your child to the park to play on outdoor equipment.
- Allow your child time to dress himself/herself.
- Provide opportunities for your child to experiment with balls, tricycles, and jump ropes.
- Practice hopping, skipping and balancing.
- Set expectations for behavior and consequences.
- Help your child to develop appropriate skills for learning by: following directions, attending to a speaker and getting an adult's attention appropriately.
- Most importantly, enjoy your child.



## What skills will help ease my child's transition into Kindergarten?

<b>SKILLS THAT HELP EASE TRANSITION INTO KINDERGARTEN</b>			
<b>READING READINESS</b>	<b>LISTENING &amp; SEQUENCING</b>	Hops	Identifies other children by name
Remembers pictures from a printed page	Follows simple directions	Alternates feet walking downstairs	Takes care of toilet needs independently
Repeats a 6 to 8 word sentence	Pays attention	Marches	Washes hands thoroughly after toileting and before eating
Pretends to read (has been read to often)	Recognizes common sounds	Stands on one foot/10 seconds	Cares for own belongings
Identifies own first name in writing	Retells a simple story in sequence	Walks backwards/5 feet	Dresses self
Attempts to print own first name	Repeats a sequence of sounds	Throws a ball	Brushes teeth
Answers questions about a short story	Repeats a sequence of numbers heard	Glues pictures on paper	Can be away from parent several hours
Looks at pictures and tells a story	<b>SIZE, POSITION &amp; DIRECTION</b> Understands the following concepts:	Claps hands	Joins in family conversation
Understands words are read left to right	Big and little	Buttons clothes	Carries a plate of food
Familiar with the letters of the alphabet	Long and short	Zips/Snaps clothes	Maintains self-control
Can recite some nursery rhymes	Up and down	Ties shoes	Gets along well with others
Knows the meaning of simple words	In and out	Builds with blocks	Talks easily
<b>TIME</b>	Front and back	Completes simple 5 piece puzzle	Meets visitors without shyness
Understands day and night	Over and under	Draws or colors beyond a simple scribble	Puts toys away
Knows age and birthday	Hot and cold	Controls pencil and crayon well	<b>MY CHILD KNOWS...</b>
<b>RECOGNIZES COLORS &amp; SHAPES</b>	Empty and full	Handles scissors	Body Parts
Recognizes primary colors	More and less	Cuts and draws simple shapes	Own first name
Recognizes shapes: rectangle▭, triangle△, circle○, square□	Fast and slow	<b>SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL</b>	Own last name
<b>NUMBER CONCEPTS</b>	Top and bottom	Expresses self verbally	Own gender
Counts to 10	<b>MOTOR SKILLS</b>	Looks forward to going to school	Parents' names
Can count objects	Runs	Recognizes authority	Siblings' names, if any
	Walks in a straight line	Shares with others	Home address
	Jumps	Helps with family chores	Home phone number
		Works independently	When to use a handkerchief/tissue
			Left/ right

*The above skills do not represent the Frisco Independent School District's Kindergarten curriculum. This listing simply provides a checklist for parents noting skills that will ease the child's transition into kindergarten.*



## **Information about handwriting instruction:**

Frisco ISD teaches D'Nealian handwriting because it involves a unique, lower-case manuscript alphabet that is very easy to write. Most letters are formed with one continuous stroke, so that rhythm is built in from the beginning. The manuscript letters are slanted as cursive letters are. As a result, when the time comes to learn cursive, the basic patterns are already in place.

Medium-soft pencils are used for most handwriting lessons. Children should grasp their pencil lightly between the thumb and index finger, usually about an inch above the pencil point. The index finger should rest on the top of the pencil, and the pencil should be supported on the first joint of the middle finger. This pencil position is the same for left- and right- handed children.

The posture of children learning handwriting should be the same good posture essential to healthy body growth. Children should sit tall, with both feet on the floor and arms relaxed on a table or desk.

The paper should be positioned at a slant. The slant of the paper should be approximately parallel the writing arm.

For more information about D'Nealian Handwriting visit their website at:  
[www.dnealian.com](http://www.dnealian.com).

## **How can I get involved at my child's school?**

Your involvement and participation in school is essential to your child's success. We believe that your child's fullest potential can be reached when home and school work collaboratively. There are ample opportunities for parents to help in kindergarten classrooms. The teacher may need assistance with laminating center materials, making class books, copying instructional materials, etc. Parent volunteers may also work directly with students in ways such as reading, tutoring, playing games that reinforce concepts, and monitoring centers. For the safety of our students a Criminal History form must be completed before working in the classroom. Student safety is of utmost importance, thus it is critical that we monitor all visitors entering our schools. Another avenue for involvement is PTA (Parent Teacher Association). All FISD elementaries have active PTAs.

**What do I need to register my child for kindergarten?  
(Click for registration checklist)**

[http://www.friscoisd.org/forms/docs/reg\\_checkList.pdf](http://www.friscoisd.org/forms/docs/reg_checkList.pdf)

To register your child for kindergarten you will need:

- state-issued birth certificate
- social security card, if applicable
- immunization record
- proof of residence, (currently utility bill other than phone, closing statement on house or lease agreement)
- enrolling parents' or guardians driver's license.