

MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM- AN OVERVIEW

The Medford Public Schools has kindergartens at each of its four elementary schools: Brooks, Columbus, McGlynn and Roberts Elementary Schools. Children must be 5 years of age by December 31 in order to enroll in kindergarten. For a Kindergarten Registration Packet please contact the Parent Information Center at 781-393-2130.

Each kindergarten classroom is staffed with a licensed Department of Elementary and Secondary Education teacher and an assistant teacher, either full-time or part-time. The length of the school day is the same for all elementary students: 8:30-2:30 P.M. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 8:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M. on Wednesdays.

KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS- Environment and Curricula

Kindergarten classrooms are arranged in areas called learning centers, e.g., a literacy center, math center. The room in some ways may have the feel of a preschool; however, children become engaged in learning on a more advanced level. Learning occurs through both work and play.

The literacy curriculum, Invitations to Literacy, organizes the curriculum into ten units of study and supports an integrated literacy program. The math program used in the district is Everyday Mathematics. Assessments used at the kindergarten level include Concepts about Print (CAP), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and Everyday Mathematics assessments. Kindergarten children have the following specials: gym, computers, art and music.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has produced a document that guides curriculum. This document, *Kindergarten Learning Experiences*, helps guide teachers as they develop learning opportunities for children and is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

FAMILY INVOLVMENT

Family involvement is welcomed at each of the schools. Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) are active at the four schools. The Medford Family Network, a parent support and education program, distributes a newsletter to all kindergarten families. There is a School Readiness Early Childhood Curriculum Committee that meets three times a year and seeks representatives from the school district, the community, and family members.

Take the time to become familiar with the Medford Public Schools website, <http://www.medford.k12.ma.us>. It has much information pertaining to the schools, e.g., history of the schools, transportation bus routes, afterschool etc. The section marked for parents has a tab for the Parent Information Center (PIC). The PIC is the office where kindergarten registration takes place. The site also includes the brochure, Kindergarten Essential Learnings. This brochure details what a kindergarten student should know and be able to do in key subject areas by the completion of the school year.

ACTIVITIES that SUPPORT TRANSITIONS to KINDERGARTEN and from KINDERGARTEN to GRADE ONE

TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

The school district offers the following activities to assist parents/guardians and children to get ready for kindergarten:

- **Building Bridges to Kindergarten-** Two presentations that provide an overview of the kindergarten program for incoming kindergarten parents
Open House in May when each child visits his/her school- children and family members see a kindergarten classroom and receive a **Welcome to Kindergarten Bag**
- **PreK to Kindergarten Transition Forms and Home to Kindergarten Transition Forms-** forms completed by the preschool teacher and parent or by the parent (**Home to Kindergarten Transition Form**) to help the kindergarten teacher learn more about a new kindergarten child
- **Playdates for Incoming Kindergarten Children over the summer months** arranged at each school to provide social opportunities and a time to make new friends

TRANSITION from KINDERGARTEN to GRADE ONE

The school district offers the following activities as children move from kindergarten to Grade One:

- **Informational meeting for family members on the transition from kindergarten to Grade One**
- **A Summer Fun Packet for kindergarten children to take home and bring back to First Grade during the first week of First Grade**

Kindergarten is a fun-filled year offering much opportunity for fun and learning. We look forward to opening the classroom doors to a child's first elementary school experience and laying down the bricks contributing to lifelong learning.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN KINDERGARTEN to GRADE FIVE

For more information about afterschool programs in the public schools and in the community please contact the Medford Public Schools Afterschool Office at 781-393-2102.