

5 SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED IN SCHOOL



1. Promote a health body and mind



- Begin having a regular bedtime routine a few weeks before the start of school. Doctors recommend that 5 & 6 year old children get **10 to 12 hours sleep**. Children need it to be dark and quiet to sleep well.
- Make sure your child eats a good breakfast at home or arrives at school on time to eat our free breakfast.
- Safety is important. Make sure your child can say his or her first and last name clearly. Also be sure that your child has on a tag with his or her name, bus number, bus stop and phone number.
- Teach bus or pedestrian safety to your child.
- Talk about “Stranger Danger”
- Please let your child’s teacher know if he or she is going through a challenging time at home (death of a pet, illness in the family etc...). The teacher will make sure that he or she receives extra support.



2. Encourage a positive attitude toward learning



- Good attendance is essential for success. Your child may need to miss school because of an emergency or illness. If this happens, call school to report the absence. The teacher will help him or her make up missed work. If a child has **“unexcused” absences such as oversleeping**, he or she will gradually learn that school is not very important. Attitudes developed at this age are strong and difficult to change.

- **Read to your child every night.** If you do not read English, discuss the pictures in the book with your child. Oral language development gets your child ready to read and write.
- **Ask your child about his or her day at school.** This lets your child know that you think school is important and it is another chance to develop oral language.
- Keep pencils, a pencil sharpener, crayons and paper in a special place so that your child can write and draw often.
- Attend evening family events held at Jackson. They are fun, educational and there is usually very good food on hand!
- Let your child know that making mistakes is okay and is part of learning. Praise your child's efforts and point out specific ways that he or she is making progress. *Leo the Late Bloomer* is a great children's book that talks about how each child learns at his or her own pace.



3. Maintain good communication with School

- Always feel free to call or email your child's teacher, the office or an interpreter if you have questions about anything.
- Make sure that the school office has your **most current phone number, address and emergency contacts.** You will receive newsletters and other reminders in the mail. The information is also needed in the event that your child becomes ill at school.
- Check your child's backpack each evening for information sent home by the school. Call if you have questions about any of the flyers.
- If you need changes made to bussing, allow three days for the change to take effect.
- If your child will be picked up instead of taking the bus home, call school and talk directly to the teacher.
- Attend all Parent/Teacher/Student conferences. The first one is before the first day of kindergarten. You will confirm bus pick up and drop off times at this conference. You and your child will get to meet the classroom teacher and will learn more about what to expect during the first few days of kindergarten.



- Attend beginning of the year Open House (even though you will have a conference scheduled). This is a nice time to meet other parents of kindergarten students and a time when your child can meet some of his or her classmates.

4. Help your child be ready academically



- Kindergarten is VERY different than it was just a few years ago. By the end of the year your child will be reading and writing independently. He or she will be able to add and subtract, write numbers through 31 and identify numbers through 100 (when out of order). He or she will count by 5s and 10s, identify coins and measure using a ruler and other tools. Being ready to start kindergarten is more important than ever before!
- During the summer, teach your child to **write** his or her **name** using one uppercase letter, the rest should be **lower case**. Make sure your child is holding the pencil properly and sitting up straight.
- Count everything you see! Have your child count carrots as you put them on the dinner plate. Count toes, fingers, pets, family members, favorite toys etc...
- When **reading to your child**, extend the experience by asking him or her to predict what will happen next or to make up a new ending to a story.
- Make visits to the **public library**. Get a card for your child and one for yourself.
- Find letters and numbers around the house and neighborhood. What are letters and words used for? Where do you see numbers? What are numbers used for?
- Encourage your child to draw daily. Ask about the picture and write his or her story down next to the picture.



5. Help your child be ready socially



- Before starting kindergarten your child should know to zip or button a jacket, open and close a backpack, buckle a belt, tie shoes, etc... Knowing “self-care” skills will give him or her a sense of confidence. If it is too difficult to tie shoes, consider Velcro fasteners.
- Purchase a backpack prior to the first day of school (helps him or her feel prepared).
- Read a few of the many “starting kindergarten” books available at the public library.
- Bring your child to the first conference. Meeting the teacher before the start of kindergarten will help relieve some anxiety.

