



North Allegheny School District

Kindergarten Handbook



Revised February 2021

NORTH ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Welcome to Kindergarten!

The elementary grades (K-5) provide children with their first experiences in a formal school setting. The North Allegheny School District acknowledges and respects the importance of these first years of formal education. We subscribe to the belief that all children are unique and come to school with diverse knowledge and experiences. They have the right to the highest quality educational programs and services that the District is able to provide. It is the District's responsibility to meet the needs of each child and to provide an education that is meaningful and rewarding to every student.

The North Allegheny School District recognizes the need to develop the whole child in terms of social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth. We recognize that children learn best when they are actively engaged in meaningful experiences. The teacher is a professional decision maker who observes, analyzes, and facilitates children's learning. The teacher establishes an environment and a structure within which children will demonstrate continuous progress with the North Allegheny curriculum.

The children's individual learning styles are nurtured through a variety of learning experiences, cooperative ventures, and social interactions in which critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-discipline are encouraged. Concrete and sensory materials are the natural learning media of children and are purposefully used in obtaining educational outcomes.

We acknowledge that parents are children's first teachers. As children progress through formal education, continued parental involvement is an essential component of academic success. Quality and excellence are best achieved through teamwork and collaboration.

As a District, we have the responsibility and challenge to foster the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of the child. It is our belief that formal education designed to develop the whole child creates life-long learners.

Dr. Michele Dowell Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education



Requirements for Entering Kindergarten

To enter kindergarten in the North Allegheny School District, the child must meet these requirements:

1. Be five years old before September 1 of the year he/she enters.
2. Have a birth or baptismal certificate to show proof of age.
3. Should complete the kindergarten registration process in the spring or before the end of the second week of school, unless he/she is transferring from another school.
4. Produce proof of residency.
5. Present proof that the child has completed the following series of immunizations:
 - 4 doses Tetanus (1 dose after 4th birthday)
 - 4 doses Diphtheria (1 dose after 4th birthday)
 - 4 doses Polio (1 dose after 4th birthday)
 - 2 doses Measles
 - 2 doses Mumps
 - 2 dose Rubella
 - 3 doses Hepatitis B
 - 2 doses Varicella or written statement from physician/designee indicating month and year of disease or serologic proof of immunity.

These immunizations may be obtained from your family doctor. **NO CHILD WILL BE ADMITTED TO SCHOOL WITHOUT PROOF OF IMMUNIZATION.** If you have further questions concerning immunization, contact the school nurse.

(NA School Board Policy No. 3110)

EXEMPTION TO IMMUNIZATION LAW:

Medical – Student whose physical condition is such that an immunization would endanger their life or health. Such a statement must be signed by a Physician.

Religious – Written statement by parent/guardian of religious or moral belief opposed to such immunization.

The Allegheny County Health Department provides free immunizations to children.
Call 412-578-8060 or check their website for more specific information. www.achd.net



Kindergarten Readiness

Children enter kindergarten with varying degrees of abilities and experiences. It is difficult to list prerequisite skills for kindergarten because children develop at varying rates. Below are a few questions to answer and consider about your child. The questions below will provide a better understanding of your child's strengths as he/she prepares for school.

Does my child:

- Separate easily from a parent/guardian?
- Speak in sentences?
- Follow simple directions?
- Enjoy playing with other children his/her own age?
- Share with others?
- Respect others and the belongings of others?
- Know how to dress him/herself, do buttons, and zippers?
- Recognize colors and name them?
- Write his/her first name?
- Have awareness of the alphabet and basic numbers?
- Hold and use a pencil and scissors correctly?
- Run, walk a straight line, jump, and hop?

While the above questions are a guide for understanding your child's abilities, we recommend talking to your child's preschool teacher to understand your child's individual kindergarten readiness level.



How to Prepare Your Child for Kindergarten

- Use a positive approach with your child. It is important to emphasize that school is going to be exciting and a pleasant experience.
- Begin early to regulate sleeping and eating habits so that your child can adjust easily to the new daily routine.
- Teach your child to dress him/herself and to attend to his/her personal needs. Read to your child daily. Ask questions about the stories, if he/she liked the story and why or why not.
- Expose your child to the letters of the alphabet, their sounds, and basic numbers.
 - Encourage the use of building toys such as blocks, Lego's, Lincoln Logs, and puzzles.
- Engage in activities such as cooking and playing games with your child.
- Have your child practice writing his/her first name.
- Encourage your child to use scissors to cut straight and curved lines.
- Practice writing letters with a proper pencil grip.
- Expose your child to the world of color. Identify the color names of articles or food.
- Remind your child to follow safety rules and procedures on the bus and at the bus stop.



General Information

The Beginning of the Year

The first day and week of kindergarten are very exciting times for your child and your family. Here are a few suggestions to make those first few days a little more enjoyable for your child:

1. Label personal belongings, such as coats, backpacks, etc.
2. Have your child wear comfortable clothes and shoes.
3. Foster a sense of ownership by familiarizing your child with the school.
4. Make sure the teacher has any special information about your child's needs.
5. Show your child the bus stop and walk to or from it several times before school starts.
6. If you give your child money for any purposes, please place it in an envelope and write the purpose for which the money is sent and your child's name on the envelope.
7. Letting your child ride the bus is a good way to foster independence.

Class Assignment

Both morning and afternoon sessions of kindergarten are held in North Allegheny. It is the responsibility of the principal to assign children to each kindergarten session. You will be notified about your child's class assignment during the summer before kindergarten.

Attendance

Daily attendance in kindergarten is vital to your child's academic and social growth. It is very important that your child attends kindergarten daily unless he/she has a legal excuse to be absent. Legal excuses for an absence are the child's illness, a death in the family, or a family emergency.

A written, signed excuse is required from you each time your child is absent, tardy, or to be dismissed early.

Illness

Children who are ill and would not be able to fully participate in a session or who have a fever should not attend school. If your child becomes sick at school, the nurse will care for him/her until you can come to school. When returning from the absence, the child is required to bring a written excuse stating the reason for the absence.

Length of Session

The kindergarten day is a two-and-three-quarter hour session either in the morning or in the afternoon. The morning sessions are from 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. The afternoon sessions are from 12:45 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Transportation

North Allegheny provides one-way transportation for kindergarten students. Students attending the morning session are transported to school, while those students attending the afternoon session are transported home on the bus.

One-way transportation at mid-day is the responsibility of the parents. The parents of the kindergarten students often arrange carpools for ease of pick up and drop off.

School Cancellations and Two-hour Delays

In the event that North Allegheny Schools are closed because of snow or other emergency conditions, the official announcement will be provided on the NA website: www.northallegheny.org. The information will also be placed on NATV Cable and communicated to the three local television stations.

You will also have the opportunity to sign up for our School Messenger system which will allow you to receive a phone call and/or text message in the event of a school closing or delay. Information on how to register for this system will be provided at the beginning of the school year.

In the event of a two-hour delay, AM kindergarteners will attend from 11:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and will still ride the bus to school. PM kindergarteners will attend from 1:45 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. and will ride the bus home in the afternoon.

Reporting Progress to Parents

Your child's progress in kindergarten will be reported to you orally and through written communication. Conferences with parents are scheduled by teachers after the first nine weeks in order to provide an assessment of your child's adjustment to kindergarten. A second conference will be scheduled in May. Conferences may also be scheduled throughout the school year by either the parent or the teacher as needed.

Your child will also receive a report card in January and June. Your child will be evaluated on the report card in the areas of Communication Arts, Math, and Approaches to Learning. Your child's teacher will discuss the report cards and the grading process during Curriculum Night.

The Kindergarten Program

Kindergarten is a very important year in your child's educational career. Kindergarten lays the foundation for success throughout the formal schooling years and for life after school. Children enter kindergarten with different rates of development and experiences. Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of each of the students in all areas. Your child will have instruction in reading, writing, math, science, social studies and health in the classroom. Your child will also participate in physical education, library, music, and art classes during the kindergarten week. Teachers that specialize in those specific areas of instruction teach these "special area" classes.

Instruction in the kindergarten classroom occurs in many, varied ways. Students will learn in large and small group settings daily and will receive 1:1 instruction if needed. Kindergarten learning is very hands on. The children are given many opportunities to explore and play during the learning process. The teacher is a facilitator and instructor in the classroom, guiding each of the learners while fostering a sense of independence at the same time.

Below, you will find information about the curriculum areas that are the core of our kindergarten program. Each teacher will provide a more in-depth overview of the curriculum during Curriculum Night, which will be held prior to the start of school. Additional information about each classroom as well as the curriculum can be found on each school's web page. Visit www.northallegheny.org and select your child's school for more details.

Motor Development

Motor development is an important area in kindergarten. Children develop both fine and gross motor skills. Motor development is the ability to control and handle the body. The freedom and skills of movement come with practice and direction through activities practiced in the classroom. Running, skipping, hopping, throwing, and catching are examples of gross motor skills practiced and developed in kindergarten. Fine motor skills are based on hand-eye coordination and small muscle control. Fine motor skills are important and are practiced through writing, painting, drawing, cutting, and self-help skills.

English Language Arts

Kindergarten students in North Allegheny use the Harcourt Reading Series for English Language Arts instruction. Kindergarten English Language Arts instruction is centered on reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Lessons in kindergarten focus on phonemic awareness activities, phonics instruction, reading, and writing. The concepts taught in kindergarten are the foundation for reading and writing that students will use in school and beyond. Students will learn and practice many important skills such as: letter and sound recognition, sight word recognition, blending, segmenting, reading texts, and journal writing.

Mathematics

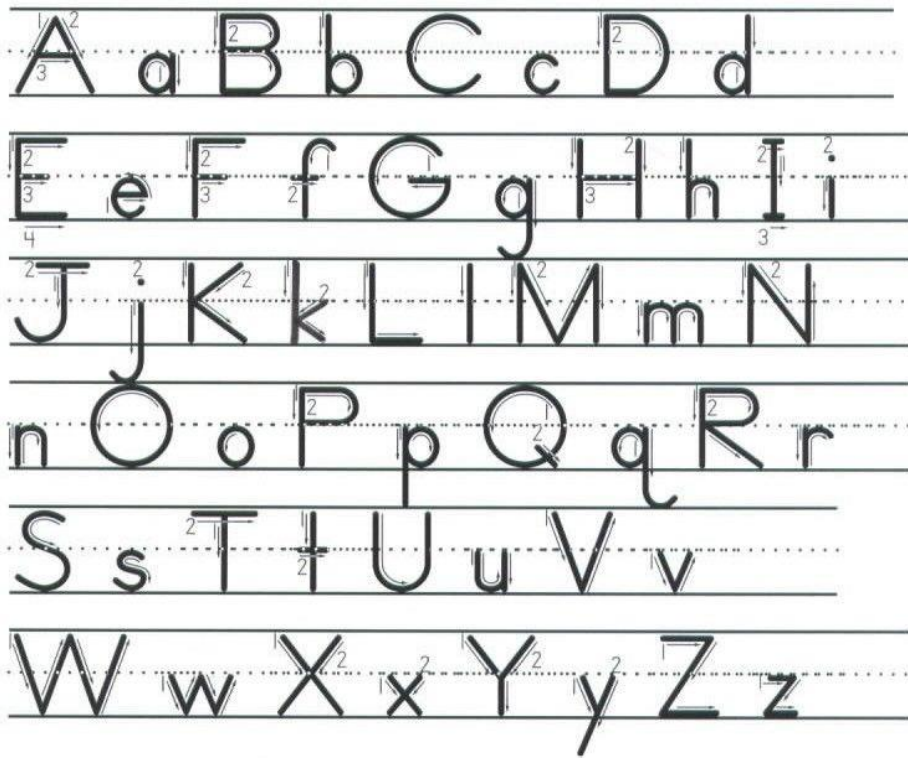
Kindergarten students in North Allegheny use the Harcourt Math Series for Mathematics instruction. Kindergarten math is a hands-on experience for the learners. The concepts taught in kindergarten are the foundation for math skills that students will use in school and beyond. Students will learn and practice many important skills such as: rote counting, counting objects, patterning, sorting, number writing, and number recognition. Addition, subtraction, telling time to the hour, and an introduction to money are also important parts of the kindergarten math curriculum.

Science, Social Studies, and Health

Science, Social Studies, and Health are important areas, and these subjects are integrated into the curriculum. They are taught via large and small group instruction. Most of our science lessons are hands-on with students learning to observe, make predictions, and draw conclusions. Social studies lessons often focus on citizenship, our community and country, holidays, and famous people, such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Health topics in kindergarten focus on personal care, such as dental health and the body.

Writing in Kindergarten: Block Alphabet

How to Print Letters



NORTH ALLEGHENY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Directory of Schools

Central Administrative Offices 200 Hillvue Lane
Pittsburgh, PA 15237-5391 Telephone: 412-366-2100 Fax: 412-369-5513

Bradford Woods Elementary 41 Forest Road
Bradford Woods, PA 15015 Telephone: 724-935-5081 Fax: 724-935-6076

Franklin Elementary
2401 Rochester Road
Sewickley, PA 15143
Telephone: 412-366-9663 Fax: 412-366-5852

Hosack Elementary
9275 Peebles Road
Allison Park, PA 15101
Telephone: 412-366-9664 Fax: 412-366-9019

Ingomar Elementary
602 West Ingomar Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Telephone: 412-366-9665 Fax: 412-366-5679

Marshall Elementary
5135 Wexford Run Road
Wexford, PA 15090
Telephone: 724-935-4044 Fax: 724-935-1064

McKnight Elementary
500 Cumberland Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Telephone: 412-635-4105 Fax: 412-635-4115

Peebles Elementary
8625 Peebles Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Telephone: 412-366-9667 Fax: 412-635-2464

Carson Middle

200 Hillvue Lane
Pittsburgh, PA 15237-5390
Telephone: 412-369-5520 Fax: 412-630-5819

Ingomar Middle

1521 Ingomar Heights Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237-1699
Telephone: 412-348-1470 Fax: 412-366-4487

Marshall Middle

5145 Wexford Run Road
Wexford, PA 15090
Telephone: 724-934-6060 Fax: 724-935-2474

North Allegheny Intermediate

350 Cumberland Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237-5485
Telephone: 412-369-5530 Fax: 412-369-4825

North Allegheny Senior High

10375 Perry Highway
Wexford, PA 15090-9210
Telephone: 724-934-7200 Fax: 724-935-5846

North Allegheny Cyber Academy (NACA)



**North Allegheny School District
Office of K-12 Education 412-
369-5896**