

The **ABC's** of Full Day Kindergarten

Questions & Answers on Washington Township's Successful Full-Day K

Q: What are the age requirements to attend kindergarten in the Washington Township Public Schools?

A: To be eligible to attend kindergarten your child must be five (5) years old on or before October 15th.

Q: How long has the District offered kindergarten in a full-day format?

A: Following many years of a half-day program, the District made the decision to expand to a full-day platform and launched it at the start of the 2016-17 school year.

Q: Why was the decision made to move to a full-day kindergarten platform?

A: Providing a quality full-day kindergarten program can produce educational gains, including improved reading and math achievement. It offers social, emotional and intellectual benefits to all kindergarteners, giving them more time to focus and reflect on activities and transition between them. Investments in early childhood programs mean lower grade retention and dropout rates for students later in life. Full-day kindergarten provides a bridge between pre-kindergarten programs and more structured learning in first grade. It also gives teachers more time to identify and address learning needs.

Q: What does full-day kindergarten look like?

A: Every kindergarten classroom in the District includes the following resources: meeting and relaxing areas, block center, kitchen center, dramatic play center, science discovery center, art and music center, and literacy and math centers. Students are engaged in a comprehensive program that includes shared and guided reading, math explorations, games and investigation, phonics and word work, music, songs, poems, art and ample snack/lunch, rest, play, physical activity and recess time.

Q: Does my child have to be tested for entrance to the District's kindergarten program?

A: Kindergarten administrators will not be testing your child but will be taking a "snapshot" of your child's knowledge of literacy and number concepts. This snapshot will take place in the summer for all incoming kindergarten students at your child's school and will provide information about your child that will help us to design instruction targeted to his or her needs.

Q: How will I know to which location my child is assigned? Can I choose what location I would like my child to attend?

A: School sending zones are assigned based on the neighborhood in which you reside. Parents may not request an alternative placement for their child. Students residing in the Birches, Hurffville and Wedgwood sending zones will attend Grenloch Terrace Early Childhood Center. Bells and Thomas Jefferson students will attend the full-day kindergarten program at Thomas Jefferson, and Whitman students will enroll in the kindergarten program at Whitman.



Q: Why do Bells Elementary students have to attend Thomas Jefferson Elementary for full-day kindergarten?

A: Thomas Jefferson is our largest elementary school and therefore has the capacity to house kindergarten students from two sending schools. Bells Elementary was selected because these students neighbor Thomas Jefferson geographically. Bells and Thomas Jefferson have historically been paired as "sister schools."

Q: What is a "sister school"?

A: Each of our elementary schools has a "sister school." Students at both schools eventually attend the same middle school and share educational resources like child study teams, speech and physical therapists and gifted and talented programming. Our schools are currently paired as follows: Bells and Thomas Jefferson; Birches and Whitman; Hurffville and Wedgwood.

Q: Will my child have an opportunity to visit their assigned kindergarten classroom prior to the start of the school year?

A: Yes. A link to sign up for a spring bus tour has been posted on the front page of the District website (www.wtps.org). This tour will give your child an opportunity to ride the school bus and visit his/her school. Additionally, your child will have an opportunity on an assigned day in August to "Meet the Teacher." These practices have been in place for many years in Washington Township and will continue as an effective way of reducing anxiety and successfully transitioning our youngest learners to the school setting.

Q: Will my child receive transportation services to kindergarten?

A: Yes, the District will provide round-trip transportation for all pre-school disabled and kindergarten students attending both Grenloch Terrace Early Childhood Center and the programs housed at Thomas Jefferson and Whitman Elementary Schools, regardless of their proximity to the school. No pre-school disabled or kindergarten students will be required to walk.

Q: How will my child receive lunch in kindergarten?

A: Regardless of where your child is slated to attend kindergarten, all kindergarten students in the District will eat lunch in their classroom each day. Lunches can either be sent in from home or purchased from our food service department. Our food service department will serve hot/cold lunches to the children each day.

Q: Will there be a before- and after-care program for kindergarten students?

A: Yes. Established before- and after-care programs are in place at all three kindergarten locations.

Q: Will my pre-school disabled student attend the Grenloch Terrace Early Childhood Center?

A: Yes. All pre-school disabled students will continue to attend Grenloch Terrace Early Childhood Center.

Let the Learning Begin!

Full Day Kindergarten School Hours



Grenloch Terrace ECC

Arrival: 8:50 a.m.

Dismissal: 3:10 p.m.

Thomas Jefferson Elementary

Arrival: 8:50 a.m.

Dismissal: 3:10 p.m.

Whitman Elementary

Arrival: 8:50 a.m.

Dismissal: 3:10 p.m.



Parents are encouraged to visit the District website

www.wtps.org



to sign up for a Spring bus tour



to register for a Snapshot appointment