

# Griffith Public Schools

## Kindergarten



Achieving Success Academic Excellence Panther Pride

Michele Riise, Superintendent of Schools  
Ann Marie Jaros, K-2 Wadsworth Elementary Principal

Dear Kindergarten Parents:

It is with great honor and enthusiasm that we welcome our new Kindergarten parents to Griffith Public Schools. Kindergarten is an exciting and important moment for both you and your child. We wholeheartedly believe that Kindergarten is the foundation in which your child's educational journey begins. For many of our students, it is the first time that he/she is in an educational setting outside of the home. This will be your child's first opportunity to develop lifelong habits that will assist him/her in their academic journey. Griffith Public Schools Kindergarten Program is no exception.

Griffith Public Schools allows each child to develop at his/her own rate of learning, but also promotes the whole child in areas, such as cognitive, language, communication, social and emotional, and/or physical. Kindergarten is a time of change, challenge, and opportunity with an endless amount of activities and opportunities that allow for growth, collaboration, and experimentation. Most importantly, at the heart of Griffith Public Schools, we have skilled and highly effective educators who are and will be responsive to the development of your child. Not only do these educators recognize the differences each child brings to the classroom, but they also embrace these differences and help others to accept these differences by engaging and empowering the whole child.

Griffith Public Schools Kindergarten Program uses a curriculum aligned to the Indiana State Academic Standards. Projects, activities, and lessons encompass and integrate several content areas that not only foster but also enhance active and personalized learning and the overall cognitive development in all of our children. Griffith Public Schools Kindergarten students receive a well-balanced curriculum that allows our educators to instruct in whole and small groupings, as well as individually. We utilize a variety of resources and technology. We are confident that our Kindergarten Program is the best, and your child will continue their educational journey at Griffith Public Schools in confidence. We welcome you and your family to our Griffith Public Schools family!

Educationally Yours,

Michele A. Riise, Superintendent of Schools

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# VISION FOR KINDERGARTEN

## **Kindergarten readers and writers at GPS will:**

- Develop and continue to grow a passion for reading, writing and learning
- See themselves as capable readers and writers
- Know, understand and celebrate their peers as readers and writers
- Feel empowered and develop confidence as learners
- Be inquisitive learners who ask questions, make connections and seek answers
- Use creativity, imagination, play, reading, writing, etc. as avenues for making meaning in their lives
- Understand multiple perspectives in order to be open to new learning
- Build their independence and take responsibility for their own learning/actions
- Take risks in their learning
- Communicate their thoughts and opinions to others
- Listen and respond to others in their conversations
- Develop, build, and apply foundational reading skills
- Build stamina for reading and writing
- Know various purposes for reading and writing
- Use various strategies when reading and writing in order to problem-solve
- Know different ways to read a book
- Know how to choose a just right book
- Understand what makes a story (beginning, middle, end)
- Interact with text by making connections, asking questions and responding to others' questions
- Have a knowledge base of various reading and writing genres
- Make multiple books on their own and share them with a variety of audiences
- Study text and illustrations deeply in order to inquire into the way authors write
- Set goals for their reading and writing
- Master 120 sight words
- Identify upper and lower case letters and their sounds
- Become proficient in the Indiana Academic Reading Standards

### **Kindergarten mathematicians at GPS will:**

- Become engaged in math work and know math is fun!
- Have a desire to pursue math concepts—are excited and enthusiastic about math
- Be ready to tackle experiences with hands-on activities
- Know problems can be solved with real materials as well as on paper
- Verbalize and write about the process used to approach and solve math problems
- Apply math skills, strategies and processes to real world situations
- Know math can be represented concretely (with objects), pictorially and abstractly
- Understand and use consistent math language and vocabulary
- Know there are a variety of ways to solve problems and recognize multiple perspectives
- Have the confidence to tackle and solve different types of problems (story and situational)
- Value the process and the thinking behind math work
- Be willing to take learning risks
- Be familiar with math tools and use manipulatives or other tools to solve problems
- Be able to write numbers and write about numbers (through twenty)
- Efficiently add and subtract small numbers
- Interact and collaborate with peers to solve math problems
- Know about shapes and use them to solve problems
- Be able to count and understand 1:1 correspondence (through twenty)
- Be able to create and describe simple and complex patterns
- Understand and uses positional words
- Become proficient in the Indiana Academic Math Standards



## **KINDERGARTEN BENCHMARKS**

### ***LIFE SKILLS ~ Treat people right and do the right thing***

- Listens Attentively
- Accepts consequences of actions
- Follows classroom and school procedures
- Practices self-control
- Gives personal best
- Requests help from teachers as needed

### ***FINE MOTOR SKILLS***

- Holds pencils and scissors correctly
- Cuts on lines
- Uses pencils, markers, or crayons while holding paper

### ***GROSS MOTOR SKILLS***

- Runs, stops, changes direction
- Hops on one foot (left and right)
- Hops on both feet together
- Marches, gallops and skips

### ***SELF-CARE SKILLS ~ Demonstrates prior to entering kindergarten***

- Demonstrates the ability to put on and fasten outer clothing
- Ties shoes



## **MORE DETAILS ABOUT GPS'S KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Achievement is directly related to academic learning time – even at the kindergarten level.

Children are expected to be at school and on time **every day**.

Student absences should be reported to the school office within 30 minutes of the start of the school day. Parents use link on GPS's website to report student absences.

### **CONFERENCES**

Parent, Teacher, Student Conferences are an extension of the report card and are once a year. Parents and teachers may also request a conference as needed at any time during the school year.

### **SPECIALS**

Students attend weekly specials of 45 minutes in length. They attend Music, PE, Library, STEAM and Art classes. These classes are taught by special area teachers.



## **ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION**

Parents are asked to enroll and register at [www.griffith.k12.in.us](http://www.griffith.k12.in.us). During Kindergarten Round-Up, an annual event typically held in early spring, parents can enroll their child, finalize paperwork, meet school staff, and learn school-specific information. Any child who is 5 (five) years **of age on or before October 1st of the current school year may be registered for Kindergarten.** Students who will be five (5) on or before October 1<sup>st</sup> are eligible for early entrance. Parents must complete an Early Entrance Appeal Waiver form prior to enrollment. This form needs to be submitted to the Superintendent of schools, Michele Riise, at the following email address: [mriise@griffith.k12.in.us](mailto:mriise@griffith.k12.in.us). Students that do not meet these age requirements are not eligible for enrollment in Griffith Public Schools. Parents must provide a valid birth certificate and proof of residency. Proofs of residency include:

### **Homeowners:**

- 1. Mortgage statement**
- 2. Two utility bills in homeowner's name (Nipsco, phone, water bill, etc.**
- 3. Valid driver's license or state ID (Griffith resident address)**
- 4. Valid vehicle registration (Griffith resident address)**
- 5. Proof of custody (if applicable)**
- 6. Original birth certificate**
- 7. Current immunization records**

### **Renters:**

- 1. Current lease agreement listing custodial parent and student name**



**2. 2-7 listed above (Utility bills must be in leaser's name.)**

**CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

Students enter kindergarten with a variety of educational backgrounds, such as preschool, day care and home. Some have the ability to read and write simple words, while others have yet to learn the alphabet. Griffith Public Schools do not conduct academic placement testing or deny students based on their achievement level. Instead, our kindergarten teachers differentiate classroom instruction to provide the appropriate learning situation for each individual child. For more information on differentiated instruction, contact your child's principal.

**FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN**

Griffith Public Schools provides a Full Day Kindergarten program for all students of legal settlement. The Kindergarten experience provides curriculum through units of study guided by the Indiana Academic Standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Science and social studies are integrated using inquiry and real world experiences. Each component of the day is connected and allows for our young learners to develop and grow a passion for learning. Based on the Indiana Academic Standards, Griffith Kindergarten teachers have created a common vision for students as learners. This vision includes children seeing themselves as capable and competent learners that use an inquisitive stance to ask questions, make connections and seek answers as well as using creativity, imagination, play, reading, writing, and so forth as avenues for making meaning in their lives. Additionally, Kindergarten teachers guide students to develop independence and responsibility for their own learning. They assist in building confidence in students so that they are willing to take risks in their learning and communicate their thoughts and opinions to others through a variety of ways. The kindergarten experience is meant to be well rounded as it builds foundational skills for your child's future success.

**REPORT CARDS**

Kindergarten teachers conduct ongoing assessments of student skills and learning activities. Kindergarten students receive assessment reports to keep parents informed of their child’s progress.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Griffith Public Schools provides transportation both to and from school for full day kindergarten students who are not within walking distance of the school.

## **10 THINGS PARENTS CAN TO DO HELP CHILDREN SUCCEED**

### ***1. BUILD REALTIONSHPIS WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER.***

Find out what each teacher expects of your child and how you can help your child prepare to meet those expectations.

### ***2. READ.***

Reading is the foundation for all learning. Read to your young child, encourage your older child to read to you, or spend time together as a family reading. All this helps your child develop strong reading habits and skills from the beginning and reinforces these habits and skills as your child grows.

### ***3. PRACTICE WRITING AT HOME.***

Letters, journal entries, email messages, and grocery lists are all writing opportunities. Show that writing is an effective form of communication and that you write for a variety of purposes.

### ***4. MAKE MATH PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE.***

Cooking, gardening, paying bills, and even shopping are all good ways to help your child understand and use mathematic skills. Show that there may be many ways to get the right answer and encourage your child to explain his or her method. This activity strengthens problem solving and critical thinking skills.

### ***5. ASK YOUR CHILD TO EXPLAIN HIS OR HER THINKING.***

Ask lots of “why” questions. Children should be able to explain their reasoning, how they came up with the right answer, and why they chose one answer over another.

### ***6. EXPECT THAT HOMEWORK WILL BE DONE.***

### ***7. USE THE COMMUNITY AS A CLASSROOM.***

Feed your child’s curiosity about the world 365 days a year. Use the library to learn more about the history of your town. A visit to a farmer’s market can help your child picture your state’s rich agricultural tradition. Take your young child to the zoo and parks and your older child to museums and workplaces to show how learning connects to the real world.

**8. ENCOURAGE SOCIAL INTERACTION.**

Limit the amount of time your child spends watching television and playing video or computer games. Promote social interactions with peers.

**9. HELP OTHER PARENTS UNDERSTAND ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS.**

Use your school and employee newsletters, athletic associations, booster clubs, a PTC meeting, or just a casual conversation to help other parents understand what academic standards mean for them, their children, and their school and how they can help their children learn at home.

**10. SPEND TIME AT SCHOOL.**

The best way to know what goes on in your child's school is to spend time there. If you're a working parent, this isn't easy, and you may not be able to do it very often. But, "once in a while" is better than "never".

Source-Indiana Department of Education

## **SAMPLE KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE**

<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>8:15-8:30</b>	<b>Opening/Morning work</b>
<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>8:30-8:45</b>	<b>Morning Meeting</b>
<b>90 minutes</b>	<b>8:45-10:15</b>	<b>Reading Block</b>
<b>30 minutes</b>	<b>10:15-10:45</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<b>45 minutes</b>	<b>10:45-11:30</b>	<b>Lunch/Recess</b>
<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>11:30-11:40</b>	<b>Bathroom break</b>
<b>30 minutes</b>	<b>11:40-12:10</b>	<b>Science/Social Studies</b>
<b>45 minutes</b>	<b>12:10-12:55</b>	<b>Special</b>
<b>60 minutes</b>	<b>12:55-1:55</b>	<b>Math</b>
<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>1:55-2:10</b>	<b>Wrap up/Dismissal</b>

# GPS's ACADEMIC SUCCESS INDICATORS

*Here are the skills students will work on throughout Kindergarten and be expected to know by the end of the school year.*

## **LANGUAGE ARTS**



- Uses picture cues and illustrations to aid in comprehension
- Uses picture cues and context to make predictions about story content
- Identifies characters in a story
- Identifies setting of a story
- Identifies important events in a story
- Recognizes and names all capital and lowercase letters of the alphabet and consonant sounds (moved from above)
- Writes using pictures, letters and words
- Writes for specific purposes and audiences
- Draws pictures to express ideas
- Correctly shapes capital and lower case letters of the alphabet
- Spaces letters correctly
- Shares information and ideas
- Speaks in complete, coherent sentences
- Identifies the front cover of a book
- Identifies the back cover of a book
- Identifies the title of a reading selection
- Follows words from left to right on a printed page
- Follows words from top to bottom on a printed page
- Reads/writes own name



In addition, kindergarten readers and writers will:

- Develop/continue to grow a passion for reading, writing and learning

- Be inquisitive learners who ask questions, make connections, and seek answers
- Use creativity, imagination, play, reading, writing, etc. as avenues for making meaning in their lives
- Develop confidence in their abilities as learners
- Build their independence and take responsibility for their own learning
- Take risks in their learning
- Communicate their thoughts and opinions to others
- Listen and respond to others in their conversations
- Build stamina for reading and writing
- Use various strategies when reading and writing in order to problem solve
- Interact with text by making connections, asking questions and responding to others questions
- Set goals for their reading and writing

### ***MATHEMATICS***

- Count to 100 by ones and by tens.
- Write numbers from 0 to 20.
- Represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0-20
- Compares sets of up to ten objects and determines if they are equivalent
- Solves simple story problems
- Compares sets of up to ten objects and identifies which is more than or less than the other
- Identifies the set described with the larger number as the set with more objects
- Recognizes, represents, and names a number of objects up to 10
- Uses the concepts of more and less
- Uses the concepts of all, some, and none
- Uses the concepts of most and least
- Models addition situations by joining sets of objects (for any two sets with fewer than 10 objects when joined)

- Models subtraction by removing objects from sets from numbers less than 10
- Sorts and classifies objects and shapes
- Identifies objects that do not belong in a particular group
- Copies and makes simple patterns with numbers and shapes
- Creates simple patterns
- Identify and describe shapes (**squares, circles, triangles, rectangles, hexagons, cubes, cones, cylinders, and spheres**)
- Analyze, compare, create and compose shapes
- Uses inside and outside to describe position
- Uses above (over), below (under), and between to describe position
- Makes direct comparisons of length
- Recognizes which object is shorter/longer/taller

In addition, kindergarten mathematicians will practice:

- Making sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Using precision
- Reasoning and explaining
- Modeling and using tools
- Seeing structure and generalizing





## GET INVOLVED IN EDUCATION

Parental involvement is the key to any child's education. Anything you do in or outside of a Pike classroom will greatly benefit the children. Consider the following options:

- Assisting in the classroom
- Working with small groups or individual students
- Speaking to classes about your area of expertise
- Chaperoning field trips
- Performing clerical tasks
- Preparing teaching aids/classroom materials
- Reading to students
- Sponsoring/chairing extra-curricular activities
- Helping with special projects
- Acting as interpreter for non-English speaking students and their families
- Donating materials
- Serving on a school or district committee
- Checking teacher voicemail for updates or information
- Reading newsletters



# INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## K-1 Sample Texts

*This list of books is designed to provide a wide range of texts that illustrate the level of complexity of the suggested reading materials for students in Grades K-1. This list is not required reading nor is it meant to be all-inclusive. Teachers and parents are encouraged to review the selections to ensure suitability for the individual student and to select readings from a wide variety of genres including on-line texts, magazines, newspapers, and other media sources.*

### **FICTION: Classic and Contemporary**

*Caps for Sale* – Slobodkina, Esphyr  
*Corduroy* – Freeman, Don (Read Aloud)  
*Goodnight Moon* – Brown, Margaret Wise  
*If You Give a Mouse a Cookie (series)* – Numeroff, Laura  
*Little Bear* by Minarik, Else Holmelund  
*The Little Engine That Could* – Piper, Watty  
*Make Way for Ducklings* – McCloskey, Robert  
*The Mitten* – Brett, Jan (Read Aloud)  
*The Snowy Day* by Keats, Ezra Jack  
*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* – Carle, Eric



### **POETRY**

*Chicken Soup with Rice* – Sendak, Maurice  
*I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly* – Rounds, Glen  
*Owl Moon* – Yolen, Jan (Read Aloud)  
*You Read to Me, I'll Read to You* – Ciardi, John (Read Aloud)

### **FOLKLORE/FAIRY TALES**

*Goldilocks and the Three Bears* by Brett, Jan  
*Lon Po Po: A Red Riding Hood Story from China* by Young, Ed  
*Paul Bunyan* by Kellogg, Steven  
*Pecos Bill* by Kellogg, Steven  
*The Story of Johnny Appleseed* by Alike

### **BIOGRAPHY/AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

*George Washington's Teeth* by Chandra, Deborah, and Comora, Madeleine  
*Honest Abe* by Kunhardt, Edith

*If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks* by Ringgold, Faith  
*If Only I had a Horn: Young Louis Armstrong* by Jenkins, Leonard

## **NONFICTION**

*Anno's Math Games* by Anno, Mitsumasa

*A Child's Book of Art: Discover Great Paintings* by Micklethwait, Lucy

*Corn is Maize: The Gift of the Indians* by Aliko

*Digging Up Dinosaurs* by Aliko

*My Five Senses* by Aliko

*Sharks* by Gibbons, Gail

*What Comes in 2's, 3's, and 4's?* by Aker, Suzanne

For more recommendations on supporting your kindergarten student, visit the Indiana Department of Education website at:

<http://www.doe.in.gov/idoe/information-parents-and-students>



# **Griffith Public Schools**

**Home of the Panthers!**

## **GRIFFITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATION CENTER**

**Michele Riise, Superintendent of Schools**    [mriise@griffith.k12.in.us](mailto:mriise@griffith.k12.in.us)  
602 North Raymond    #219-924-4250    Fax 219-922-5933

## **WADSWORTH ELEMENTARY K-2 BUILDING**

**Ann Marie Jaros, Building Principal**    [ajaros@griffith.k12.in.us](mailto:ajaros@griffith.k12.in.us)  
600 N. Jay Avenue    #219-923-4488    Fax 219-838-6770

## **BEIRIGER ELEMENTARY 3-5 BUILDING**

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## **GRIFFITH MS/HS 6-12 BUILDINGS**

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