

## **Kindergarten Curriculum Summary**

These curriculum summaries have been developed by teachers and administrators to serve as another way of communicating with parents. They highlight the core curriculum and expectations for student learning at each grade level.

The curriculum summaries describe what most students at a grade level are expected to know and be able to do by the end of the school year. They also reflect the goals of the various Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. It is important to note that although children may learn and grow at different rates and through varied styles, all should make regular progress.

While we have high expectations for all students and encourage each student to work to their capacity, parents and teachers recognize that some students have more difficulty in school. Others will progress more rapidly and move well beyond these core expectations. It is the joint responsibility of school and home to provide support, challenge, and encouragement for all students.

### **Kindergarten: A Philosophical Statement**

In the Hingham Public Schools, kindergarten philosophy places importance in the success and well-being of each child; intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically. The curriculum addresses both the cognitive and affective domains. Children are exposed to a wide variety and high frequency of learning opportunities in all modalities. Children and teachers work together from the very first day to promote a solid reading and writing foundation. Our kindergarten curriculum is aligned to the standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The Hingham Public Schools has updated the social studies, reading, writing and math materials to correspond to our new higher standards. Early intervention strategies are an important tool in kindergarten. Teachers and support staff carefully analyze any learning difficulties that may surface and provide differentiated instruction. A concluding goal of kindergarten in Hingham is that each child will be engaged in the joy of learning and equipped with the confidence, enthusiasm and skills needed for a positive school experience.

### **Supplementary Information**

Kindergarten children need:

- a large, labeled backpack (without wheels).
- a snack they can manage by themselves. Lunch may be purchased.
- outerwear appropriate to the weather.

School to home communication is typically via the child's backpack. It is important to check daily for notes, notices, or other information. Parent to teacher contact is most easily handled by a note in the backpack.

## **Parent Conferences**

Parent conferences are held on specific early release days which are indicated on the [school calendar](#). Parents may schedule individual appointments to learn about their child's progress. Conferences may be initiated by the teacher or the parent.

## **Kindergarten Timeline**

Spring:

- official registration packets picked up and returned to schools (March)
- evening parent orientation night at each school (May)
- sneak-a-peek short student visit

Summer:

- parent letter indicating teacher assignment and "meet and greet" day/time
- bus routes posted in local press

September:

- school begins for all students
- kindergarten bus orientation/"meet and greet" prior to the start of the kindergarten year
- kindergarten screening conducted during the first month of school

January/February:

- kindergarten progress reports sent home with students

## **Assessment**

Kindergarten student progress reports are issued twice per year. Students are assessed using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) in order to identify necessary and appropriate intervention techniques to help children achieve given benchmarks. Literacy portfolios and math folders contain samples of classroom assessments and other student work.

## **Health/Social/Emotional Development**

The elementary health curriculum is designed to promote an understanding and awareness of sound health and safety practices and development of independence, responsibility, and social skills. Study focuses on the individual, the family, and the community. Major themes are: common health habits; safety; nutrition; social/emotional development. Kindergarten students will participate in the Second Step program which includes lessons on empathy, emotion management and problem solving. Typical learning opportunities are: socio-dramatic play; snack preparation and cooking; teacher modeling of respectful interactions; conflict resolution; sharing and getting along with others; self-concept development; daily hygiene reminders; and classroom safety and physical fitness practices. Special presentations by other specialists complement classroom teacher instruction in health.

## **Mathematics**

The curriculum of the Hingham Public Schools is aligned with and based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Mathematics. Mathematics learning activities for kindergarten are often integrated into the children's daily routine. An activity-based approach where children begin to recognize the role of mathematics in their daily lives is stressed. Specific content objectives are taught using a variety of manipulatives and a sensory approach based on Everyday Mathematics (Wright Group). Students completing kindergarten are in the process of acquiring the following skills and concepts at a concrete level: one-to-one counting; measuring, estimating, and comparing size and number; classifying, sorting, and graphing using a variety of characteristics (size, shape, color, etc.); building or completing sequences and patterns; developing number sense and relationships; discussing and recognizing geometry, practicing with geometric shapes, symbols, time, calendar, and money applications; exploring numeral writing; recognizing parts of a whole (fraction); and engaging in problem solving activities.

## **Literacy (Reading and Writing)**

Kindergarten provides the foundation for students to become successful and enthusiastic readers. The kindergarten literacy program stresses a continuum of skills and strategies necessary for emergent reading and writing. Core instruction is delivered through the 2017 Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Journeys Reading Program, key components of which include instruction in print awareness, phonological awareness, phonics and decoding, comprehension, vocabulary, and writing. Beginning reading concepts are enhanced by attention to skills in listening, speaking, viewing and representing. "Big books" for shared reading lessons emphasize concepts about print as well as enjoyment of literature while "little books" are used for differentiated instruction. Instruction is also supported by numerous print and digital resources. Built into the program are interactive writing and cross-curricular activities. Key concepts are presented to students in whole-class format while Response to Intervention (RTI) practices allow individual needs to be met in small skill-based groups and through

learning center activities. Students are assessed using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) in order to identify necessary and appropriate intervention techniques. In addition, a district-wide digital assessment system for literacy (ESGI) evaluates student progress in skills targeted by both the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the core reading program. Students are introduced to the primary forms of writing in the expository, opinion, and narrative modes. Kindergarten students are taught a handwriting program that features a vertical manuscript alphabet made from four simple, continuous strokes.

### **Science**

The kindergarten science program includes formal hands-on science units as well as informally taught concepts and information that reflects the interests and ideas generated by the child's natural curiosity. Science at this level is often integrated with literature and social studies. Using the natural curiosity that young children have about the world around them, kindergartners conduct investigations that relate to themes of weather and climate, including measuring temperature and observing its effects on different materials. Children investigate forces and motion of objects by changing the strength and direction of pushes & pulls. Throughout the seasons, they explore how plants and animals grow and change. Specific objectives include: fostering of curiosity, interest, and enthusiasm for science; observing and comparing various characteristics; making quantitative observations that help them identify why changes occur; and using evidence to support a claim.

### **Social Studies**

The social studies curriculum in kindergarten incorporates the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for History/Social Science, as well as English Language Arts and Literacy.

It begins with focusing on a young child's emerging self-identity at home and school.

The kindergarten program revolves around four central themes:

- 1) All about me;
- 2) The best I can be;
- 3) Living, learning and working together; and
- 4) Where I am.

The above themes stress interpersonal relationships and the importance of cooperation at home, school, and in the community. Children explore the traditions of various holidays and how they are celebrated today. They identify national symbols and songs that promote a common national pride. Individuals who changed our country in significant ways are introduced, as well as our national heritage. Children will begin to understand that it is everyone's responsibility to protect the Earth and recognize that the world is a large place where people must communicate to work for a common good. Instead of relying on a standard kindergarten kit or textbook, teachers identify resources from a wide range of sources. Key themes are integrated through our literacy program and other disciplines, as social studies is taught through a multidisciplinary approach.

### **Foreign Language**

The objective of the elementary Spanish program is to create a foundation from which students can develop basic communicative competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as an appreciation for the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Students will acquire vocabulary that is useful in their everyday world, learn conversational phrases and expressions in context, develop an understanding of the Spanish alphabet and phonetic system, and be well-prepared to study Spanish or French at the middle school.

In Kindergarten, our students will learn to:

- greet others, respond to greetings, and say goodbye
- identify colors in Spanish
- count from 1-10 in Spanish
- identify the days of the week, months of the year, and seasons
- identify common shapes
- sing the alphabet and connect letters to sounds

If you would like to support your child in practicing Spanish, please check out our website at [hpselementaryspanish.weebly.com](http://hpselementaryspanish.weebly.com) for videos, games, reading suggestions, and information about the countries we focus on as part of our elementary curriculum.

### **Art**

Kindergarten children are classified as explorers in art and learn through daily hands-on experiences. They make discoveries, practice choices, meet problems, and draw conclusions. Growth comes through manipulation of materials and exposure to art created by others. Students improve in their motor coordination and their ability to express ideas visually. The art experience also fosters self-esteem and allows the child to develop a sense of self in relation to the world. Students completing kindergarten are in the process of acquiring or practicing the following skills and concepts: drawing lines

and objects; using color names and appreciating relationships in nature; painting; and exploring multimedia craft projects.

### **Physical Education**

The physical education curriculum is designed to promote the skills and attitudes that are associated with sport, recreation, and good health. The curriculum is presented through individual, partner, group, and team experiences. Major themes for study include: movement; ball skills; games; recreational or leisure time activities; sports; and physical fitness. Subjects for study include: locomotor skills (run, skip, hop, etc.); ball skills (throw, catch, kick, etc.); low organization games such as tag and parachute play; lead-up sports such as tumbling, bowling, and gym hockey; and fitness, health, and sportsmanship.

### **Music**

The music program provides kindergarten children with an opportunity to develop their aesthetic sensitivities. Basic music cognitive skills, gross motor skills, and attitudes are reinforced and extended throughout the program. Stories and literature which can be sung and dramatized are used, especially songs which are integrated with seasonal or project themes to establish connections between music and other core curriculum disciplines.

### **Computer Science**

The kindergarten computer science curriculum is intended to explore concepts and skills that enable the students to use available hardware and applications. Instruction is integrated using online resources as well as computer-based applications to support literacy and mathematical development.

### **Library/Media**

Kindergarten students visit the library regularly for formal instruction and book selection. Students will learn about the organization of the library and book care and will be introduced to how books are shelved. Students will also participate in story telling, discussion sessions, and peer sharing opportunities.

### **Additional information**

Questions about grade level curriculum should be directed first to your child's teacher. The principal or assistant principal may provide additional information.

### **Kindergarten**

East Elementary

Foster Elementary

Plymouth River Elementary

South Elementary

Superintendent's Office

Comments about this information may be directed to your child's building principal or the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Dr. James M. LaBillois at [jlabillois@hinghamschools.org](mailto:jlabillois@hinghamschools.org) or 781-741-1500.