

Freetown Elementary School

Mission Statement

It is the intent of Freetown Elementary School to foster and enhance the development of the whole child and potential lifelong learner by creating a responsible citizen who is capable of utilizing creative, critical, and problem solving skills.

Our Mission Statement is achieved by:

- Engaging students, teachers, parents, and citizens of Freetown to work in a collaborative manner to build pride, respect and accountability for the learning students.*
- Assisting all students to achieve their maximum potential.*
- Utilizing current materials, technology, and research.*
- Encouraging all staff to attend professional development seminars, programs, workshops or courses to enhance their skills and to be aware of current educational practices.*
- Encouraging the district administration to provide training in current educational practices utilized in our system.*
- Providing for the diversity of students' learning styles.*
- Focusing on intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development through the curriculum.*
- Maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment.*
- Aligning our curriculum to the standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.*

By placing a strong emphasis on responsibility, accountability, and mutual respect, we will shape a confident and contributing member of society.

Dear Parents:

We are happy to welcome your child to our school. Each youngster is a most important individual . . . the most precious asset of this community.

Your child is now on the threshold of experience in education that can be expected to continue for years to come. Entering Kindergarten is a turning point in the growth and development of your child, who now leaves the familiar surroundings of the home environment for part of each day and embarks on the path to enriching experiences in what can be considered a world of new enjoyments. She/he will find interesting activities, make new friends, participate in a variety of learning opportunities, and take the first important steps in educational preparedness.

This booklet is designed to answer many of the questions that arise concerning the Kindergarten and its routine, and to help you and the school work together to make your child's initial contact a happy, satisfying, and valuable one.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stephen J. Furtado
Superintendent of Schools

Robert L. Frizelle
Principal

IS MY CHILD READY FOR KINDERGARTEN?

It is a known fact that children grow and mature at different rates. Occasionally, children start school before they are actually ready. Often placing children in a situation where they experience failure in their first school year negatively affects their later attitude toward school. For some children, delayed entrance is recommended.

The following list of developmental skills gives an indication of a child's readiness for Kindergarten.

Is your child able to:

- Pay attention to a short story
- Speak so that an unfamiliar person can understand
- Color with a crayon within reasonable outlines
- Take care of toilet needs by herself/himself
- Be away from mother for up to three hours without being upset
- Zip or button his/her coat
- Tie a simple knot
- Get through the day without a nap
- Follow simple directions
- Work and play cooperatively with other children.

All incoming Kindergarten children are screened with the Pre-Literacy Skills Screening. They also receive sight and hearing screening.

Remember these basic points:

1. Learning occurs most effectively when the child has reached a psychological and physical stage of readiness to learn.
2. Most of the effort directed toward learning before readiness occurs is lost, and is often detrimental to later effective learning.
3. The stage of readiness cannot be predicted effectively by the child's chronological age or intelligence. The rate at which each child grows and develops is unique for each individual.

HOW OLD MUST MY CHILD BE TO ENTER KINDERGARTEN?

The General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts state:

“Every child who has attained or will have attained five years of age on or before August 31st of said school year, shall be eligible to attend Kindergarten during all the days that the Kindergartens are in session during said school year.”

HOW DO I REGISTER HIM OR HER?

Registration takes place in the spring on a date announced in advance in the newspaper and through the various news media:

You will need:

- 1. Birth certificate with embossed seal**
- 2. Vaccination and immunization certificates**
- 3. Health history**
- 4. Proof of Residency**

HOW CAN I PREPARE MY CHILD FOR KINDERGARTEN?

You can help in the following way:

See that your child knows:

1. His/her full name
2. His/her address
3. How to be independent in toilet habits
4. How to use a tissue
5. How to follow simple directions
6. How to put on and remove a coat with little help
7. How to use a coat hanger
8. How to use upper and lower case letters in writing his/her name; i.e., Robert.

Suggestions about clothing:

1. Mark all garments and boots with the child's name
2. Clothing should be the correct size and easy to put on and remove.

Before your child starts school:

1. See that he/she has a chance to play with other children.
2. Emphasize that school is a happy place so he/she will look forward to coming.
3. Plan trips to parks, farms, airports, etc.
4. Read stories aloud to him/her and let him/her handle picture books.
5. Select good television programs for him/her to view.
6. Provide experiences with crayons and paints.

WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL HOURS?

Kindergarten hours may vary somewhat each year due to bus transportation. The normal Kindergarten day is two and a half hours long.

Kindergarten Sessions:

Morning	9:15 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.
Afternoon	12:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Kindergarten students who attend the morning session for the first half of the school year will attend the afternoon session for the second half of the school year. Conversely, students attending in the afternoon for the first half of the school year will attend the morning session for the second half of the school year.

September Orientation

We would like the children to know that Kindergarten is a fun and exciting place to be. A September orientation program helps further the child's successful and happy first days in Kindergarten. The children are asked to attend a one-hour session with their parents. In this way, the number of children visiting the classroom is limited, which proves beneficial to teacher, child and parents. The values of an orientation program are:

1. It enables the teacher to meet children and parents in a small-group setting.
2. It gives the children an opportunity to explore their new classroom freely. This will help erase any tension associated with first-day experiences.
3. It allows the teacher time to speak with parents about school policies, classroom routine, and bus schedules.
4. It gives parents an opportunity to address concerns they may have about the first day of school.
5. It provides an opportunity for the children to participate in a bus program before attending class, which enables parents and children to become familiar with the bus route and timing.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF KINDERGARTEN?

1. To develop security in the transition from home life to school
2. To meet the present individual needs of the child and to develop readiness for his/her future needs
3. To provide opportunities for physical, sensory, social and mental growth
4. To help the child discover his/her place in the group and to work and play cooperatively with others
5. To encourage self-reliance, self-control, responsibility, initiative, and independent thinking
6. To stimulate self-expression and creativity.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM:

The Kindergarten program and curriculum are aligned with the standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The new curriculum is theme oriented and focuses on hands-on activities. The program includes but is not limited to the following activities:

Story Time

During story time your child will have the opportunity

- to listen to well-selected poems and stories
- to use imagination to make up his/her own rhymes and stories
- to develop an interest in books
- to learn to tell stories
- to repeat favorite stories
- to visit the Library.

Conversation and Sharing

Through conversation and sharing time your child will learn . . .

- to listen attentively when others are speaking
- to improve and increase his/her vocabulary
- to speak distinctly and clearly
- to express his/her own ideas
- to share.

Activity Period

In the activity period a child learns . . .

- to be responsible for putting away toys and materials
- to develop leadership and respect for leadership
- to develop skills in handling materials
- to express herself/himself creatively
- to work and play with others
- to follow directions.

Art

During the art activities your child will have the opportunity . . .

- to use many materials for art expression (paint, crayons, chalk, paper, glue, and scissors)
- to be responsible for completing work and putting away materials
- to find satisfaction in personal achievements
- to develop originality and initiative
- to express herself/himself creatively.

Music

In music your child will have the opportunity . . .

- to enjoy singing with other children
- to enjoy listening to good music
- to learn to carry a simple tune
- to develop a feeling of rhythm
- to interpret moods of music.

Library

In Library your child will have the opportunity . . .

- to learn how to care for a book and carry it properly
- to be responsible for locating books and returning books to their proper place in the Library
- to borrow books from Library
- to enjoy listening to a variety of literature
- to participate in plays and story telling.

World Language – French

During world language class your child will have the opportunity . . .

- to learn the numbers 1-10
- to learn the words to name colors
- to reinforce skills through participating in songs and games in French
- to explore Cajun Folktales and French poems.

Physical Education

Your child will enjoy space and time . . .

- to use apparatus in the gym and yard for muscular development and coordination
- to release his/her tensions and to find the change and relief he/she desires
- to learn to enjoy games.

The school provides experiences for the child to become more aware of the many ways in which he/she can use his/her own arms, legs, head, feet, fingers, toes, trunk, and knees.

Health and Safety

Safe and healthful living is important to the child when he/she is four or five. He/she has the opportunity . . .

- to participate in the school department's health program
- to learn to play safely in the school yard
- to learn to practice good health rules
- to learn to obey traffic rules.

Academic Readiness

Through participating in informal learning experiences, the child . . .

- acquires background of experiences upon which to relate new learnings
- grows in self-confidence and self-reliance
- acquires necessary oral language skills
- establishes left-to-right eye motion
- establishes eye-hand coordination
- improves his/her muscular control
- notices likes and differences
- develops interest in books.

Mathematics

In Kindergarten, a child has many opportunities to use numerals and develop simple understandings of quantity.

While working with numbers a child learns . . .

- the need for enumerating real objects to give meaning to number order
- measurement (length, time, weight, money)
- number position (first, second, third)
- numeral symbols
- math vocabulary
- recognition of sets of things from 0-12.

Reading

Reading readiness is divided into three states:

1. Extended readiness, which develops the understanding that reading is printed talk
2. Pre-reading, which develops proficiency in certain skills that prepare the child for his/her first reading book
3. Information reading, which is the level at which a child experiences the pleasure of reading a book.

Handwriting

Many Kindergarten children are not ready for writing that requires coordination of small muscles. However, children participate in many experiences which contribute to their readiness for writing. Through writing readiness activities the child . . .

- learns to write capital and lower-case letters based on level of maturity
- begins to understand the need for writing
- develops a desire to learn to write
- develops eye-hand coordination
- learns how to use upper and lower-case letters in writing his/her name; i.e., Robert.

WHAT HEALTH SERVICES DOES THE SCHOOL OFFER?

The following health services for Kindergarten pupils are provided under the supervision of the School Nurse.

Vision Screening

Every student will be given a MASS VAT vision screening once a year. If a child fails this screening, the parent and/or guardian will be notified by letter.

Hearing Screening

All children in Grades PreK-4 will be given a hearing screening annually. A child who fails this screening will be re-screened in approximately one month. The parent and/or guardian will be notified by letter if the student fails the second screening.

Height and Weight Screening

All children in Grades PreK-4 will have their height and weight done annually.

Immunizations

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health mandates that all children are fully immunized and that the documentation is on file at the school prior to the child's entrance. The official school policy for acceptable evidence of immunization is written documentation by the health care provider that consists of the date, including month, day and year, of administration of the following:

- 1. Five (5) doses of Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus (DTP). If the 4th dose is given after the 4th birthday, then four (4) doses are acceptable.**
- 2. Four (4) doses of Polio vaccine (OPV or IPV). If the 3rd dose is given after the 4th birthday, then three (3) doses are acceptable.**
- 3. Two (2) doses of the Measles vaccine (MMR) – these are often given together
One (1) dose of the Mumps vaccine
One (1) dose of the Rubella vaccine**

4. **Three (3) doses of the Hepatitis B vaccine**
5. **One (1) dose of the Varicella vaccine, or proof of chicken pox from the physician**
6. **Four (4) doses of the Hib vaccine**
7. **Lead test, date and results**

All students registering for Kindergarten in the spring must have proof of immunization before the 1st day of school or they will not be allowed to attend school.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

Physical examinations are required by Massachusetts State Law and school policy upon entrance and in third grade. The school physician in Kindergarten and third grade will screen any student who does not return a physical form by their private physician in the spring.

SCHOOL NURSE

A School Nurse is on duty at Freetown Elementary School from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. every day that school is in session.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The Freetown Public School System provides special instructional programs to children with specific needs. Evaluative, remedial and supportive assistance is extended to all children between the age of three and twenty-one. Further information is available through the Office of the Director of Special Education.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED ABOUT MY CHILD'S PROGRESS?

1. A parent-teacher conference is the most effective way of keeping parents informed of the child's growth in school.
 - At least one conference is scheduled with each parent during the year – more if necessary.

2. Two Progress Reports are sent to parents annually; one at the close of the first semester in January and the other at the close of school in June. The reports indicate to parents the development of the child according to the educational goals of the Kindergarten program.

DIRECTORY OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Joseph Shaw, Chairperson
Robert W. Clark
Sandra Souza
Alex Magalhaes
TBA

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Stephen J. Furtado

PRINCIPAL

Robert L. Frizelle

DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Anne St. Pierre

DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

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