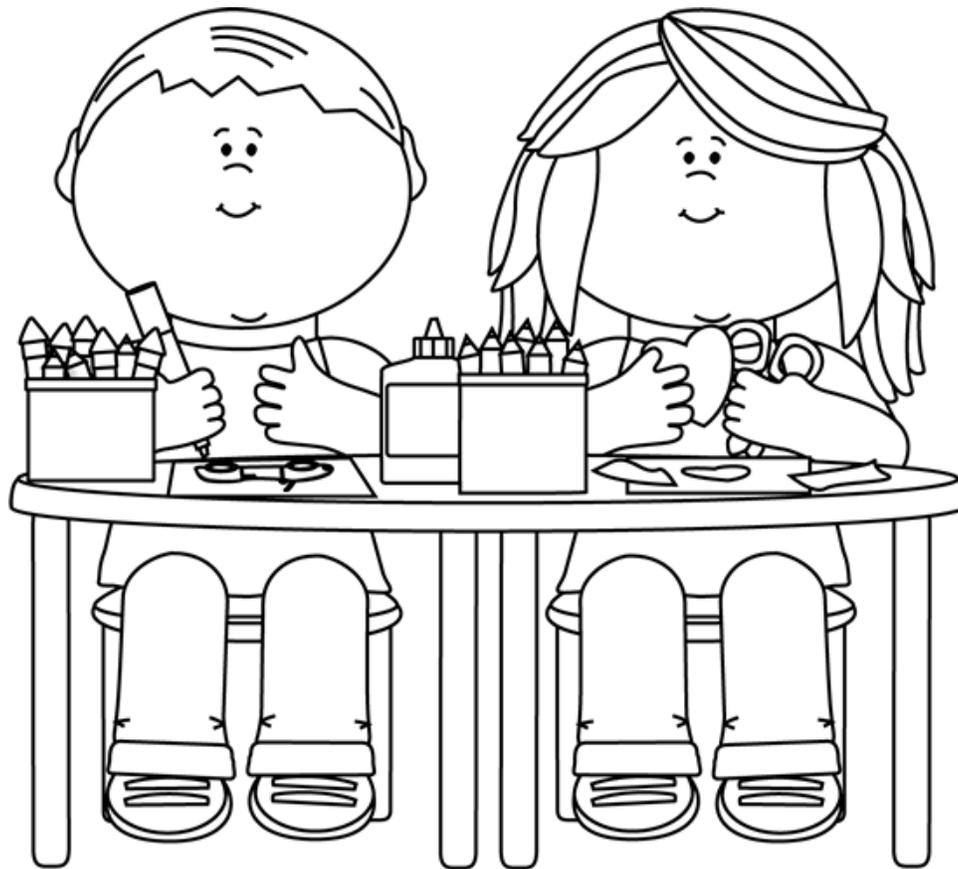


David C. Abbott Early Learning Center



Orientation Handbook
2019-2020

Starting school is such an exciting time! We are looking forward to getting to know you and your child! This handbook will answer many of the questions you may have about our school.

Communication is Key!

Parents are a child's first and most important influence. Communication between parents and teachers is essential for the success of every child. If you have a question or concern, please feel free to put a note in your child's folder or email the teacher directly. All envelopes should be labeled with your child's name on it as well as the teacher's name.

Take a Moment to Imagine their World!

Words, numbers, stories, sharing, playing and painting - imagination and creativity is everywhere! Throughout the year, celebrate your child's best effort on the work he or she does, remembering that in school, process is just as important as product. Learning is accomplished by doing, observing and experiencing. Children may meet and talk with the principal, teachers, school nurse, and other students' parents. Social development is enhanced through this broad interaction between adults and children in the school.

Arrival/Departure

Since children are new to the school environment, extra care is taken to ensure their safety. There will be staff members in the hallways during arrival and departure, directing children to proceed calmly and quietly to their buses or classrooms. Parents should advise the school in writing of special circumstances or changes in regular routines.

Absences

If your child will be absent due to illness or personal circumstances, please call the attendance line at 732-972-7100 and select 2 when prompted. Please give the name of your child, the teacher's name and the reason for the absence. If you need to have your child miss an extended period of time from school, it is helpful for all concerned to send in a note to the teacher explaining the circumstances.

Birthdays

Your child's birthday will be a special day in the classroom! Each child will wear a birthday crown to celebrate and, of course, we will sing Happy Birthday! Treats or goodie bags of any kind are not permitted. We also ask that you refrain from sending in party invitations or thank you cards, as we will not be able to distribute these in the classroom. Please see district policy regarding birthday celebrations on the district website www.mtps.org.

Back-to-School-Night

Orientation is only one of the times when you will have an opportunity to communicate with the school staff. Back-To-School-Night, which is held later in September, will be an opportunity to meet your child's teacher and learn about the curriculum. That evening is reserved for learning more about your child's school routine and what is expected in school.

Champions Before/After Care

Available to students in both kindergarten and preschool is a before and after school enrichment program. It is offered through Champions and is a fee based program. For information contact Champion's Area Manager Thea Pace at 732-407-3662 or visit the website www.discoverchampions.com.

Dress Code

School is a busy place, so dress your child ready for action! Sneakers are the recommended footwear for the playground and bus safety. When cold weather arrives, we will still be going outside to play unless there is inclement weather. A hat, scarf, and gloves are recommended. In warmer weather, shorts and t-shirts are appropriate for the playground. Please refrain from sending your child to school with flip flops. Save dress clothes for special events, i.e., concerts, picture days, and end of year activities.

First Day of School Paperwork

On the first day of school, you will receive a package of information, including permission slips. Please commit some time to read through all the papers and return all the information that requires your signature as soon as possible.

Folders

Each child will receive a folder from the PTO. It is recommended that the folder come to school every day with your child to bring important papers back and forth from school to home. Teachers will use it for homework, notes, etc., and will check it every day.

Friendships/Class Lists

Friendships made at school have been known to last a lifetime. To honor this, the PTO will create a class contact list should you wish to contact other parents for a playdate.

Independence

Here are just a few of the ways that parents can encourage independence and support their child's school experience:

- Listen to your child and encourage him or her to talk about everyday activities.
- Encourage your child to make decisions by offering choices.
- Practice tying shoelaces, zipping and buttoning, doing puzzles, drawing, and cutting with safety scissors.
- Display your child's school work at home.
- Read stories aloud at bedtime.

Journals

Kindergarten students will draw or write in weekly journals. At Back-to-School Night, your child's teacher will explain the developmental writing process to parents. At home, you can assist by:

- Helping your child to print his/her name (upper and lower case letters).
- Being a reader and writer, in order to provide a role model for your child.
- Encouraging and celebrating your child's early attempts to communicate through writing and reading.

Kindness

Social skill building is such an important part of the school day. In the coming school year, students will be learning about such themes as being a good listener, being kind, being a friend, being respectful and being in control. We will also be sending home engaging and fun activities that you can use to reinforce these concepts.

Lunch Program

Lunch will be available for kindergarten children to purchase if you so choose. You can find the weekly lunch menu on the school district website, www.mtps.org, under the Chartwells tab. You can process online payments for lunch thru www.payschoolscentral.com.

Parent Portal

The Genesis Parent Portal is an online student information system. It affords parents access to grades, attendance and parental permissions. To obtain login information for the Genesis Parent Portal, please go to the following website to request an account for your student or add a student to your existing account: <https://parents.marlboro.k12.nj.us>.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are held every year. A letter will be sent home indicating the time (afternoon or evening) and the date scheduled. Although conferences are formally held in the fall, you may request a conference with your child's teacher at any point in the school year.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

Our Parent Teacher Organization is a very active one. The PTO provides a variety of special events for students throughout the year. You will receive a monthly electronic newsletter that keeps parents informed about school events and anticipated fundraisers. Annual membership dues are only \$5.00. Monthly meetings are held at 9:30 am in our Student Commons area. You are encouraged to join the PTO and be a part of the excitement!

Religious Holidays

State law mandates any student's absence from school due to religious observance be recorded as an "excused absence". Consult the district website www.mtps.org under Attendance Explanation for a list of approved religious holidays. Parents must call the attendance line to let the school know they are observing a religious holiday.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Kindergarten:

Report cards for kindergarteners will be made available three times per year. Report cards will be accessed via the Parent Portal. Instructions for accessing the Parent Portal will be sent home in August. Your child's teacher will have a sample of the report card available for you to see at Back-to-School Night.

Our report card is based on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLs). The learning goals of the Kindergarten NJSLs identify what students should know and be able to do by the end of kindergarten.

Preschool:

Progress reports for preschoolers will be sent home two times per year. Your child's teacher will have a sample of the progress report available for you to see at Back-to-School Night.

Our progress report is based on the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards (NJPTLS). The learning goals of the NJPTLS identify what students should know and be able to do by the end of preschool.

School Assemblies

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of our PTO, the school will have several wonderful assemblies to enrich our curriculum this year. Some of our annual assemblies include the chick hatching assembly, the fire safety visit, Author Day visit, dance-a-thon assembly and more. You can also look forward to Field Day, the Halloween Parade, Read Across America Day, and our annual end of year Kindergarten Concerts.

Security

If you are visiting the school you must sign in with proper identification (i.e., driver's license, passport) at the Lobby Guard located at the visitor entrance. There is also a sign in/out book for student late arrival or early pick up.

Snacks

All children have a designated snack time every day. For classes where food allergies are a concern, please consult the Food Allergy Guidelines located on the district website www.mtps.org.

Transportation

Children who are assigned a bus will use an animal naming system to identify their bus. For example, your child may ride the 'horse' bus. Using this system helps students quickly and easily identify their bus upon dismissal. On the district website, there is a list of bus behaviors and rules that you can review with your child over the summer.

Uniqueness

“There are millions of people all over the place, but no one else has exactly my face”. Every child is entitled to bring their special qualities and strengths to school. Teachers take a personal interest in each student, learning their likes, dislikes, and how they learn best. Throughout the year we will also provide opportunities for students to share their unique culture and heritage.

Volunteers

We value parents as partners in a child’s education. Throughout the school year there will be various opportunities for you to volunteer for student functions and activities. Remember that you need to be a member of the PTO to participate in PTO sponsored activities.

Website/Social Media

Every DAELC teacher maintains a teacher webpage on the district website www.mtps.org. The website also includes classroom resources and a principal’s message. Consult the website for district wide announcements, the school calendar and weather related school closings.

You can connect with the David Abbott Early Learning Center Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/AbbottELC/>. You can also connect with the Marlboro Township School District on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) - @MTPSNJ, and the ParentLink App on Google Play or the App store by searching Marlboro Township PS.

Younger/Older Siblings

Siblings are welcome to join us for school concerts. For other events, especially those which are in the actual classrooms, we ask parents to make other arrangements for siblings, so that their full attention can be focused on their child in the classroom.

Notes from the School Nurse

- Health Room Visit
 - Height & weight, blood pressure, vision & hearing screening will be done annually
- Medications During School
 - Contact the nurse if your child requires medication in school
 - All medications must be brought to school by the child's parent or guardian
 - All medications must have an order from your child's doctor
- Emergency Information
 - Designate emergency contacts that would be able to pick up your child in your absence in the parent portal
 - List any medical considerations we should know about to ensure the welfare of your child
 - Keep this information up to date
- Help your child by developing healthy eating habits and getting plenty of sleep each night so he/she comes to school rested and ready to learn.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will I get my teacher assignment?

Teacher assignments will be sent home at the end of August.

If my child is taking a bus, does he/she need to know bus information on the 1st day of school?

Your child will receive a ID/bus tag in August with the teacher assignment. It contains basic information: child's name, teacher name, room number, and bus in/out information if they are provided busing. Your child is to wear the tag for the first two weeks. Staff will escort your child in and out of school. We encourage you to have your child learn his/her bus assignment.

What does a typical day look like in kindergarten?

Components of a typical day include group time/direct instruction, center/small group time, shared Reading/Writing, and Math. Science/Social Studies are taught thematically and integrated with the Reading/Writing curriculum. We also offer Art, Music and Gym on a weekly basis.

What does a typical day look like in preschool?

A typical day in preschool consists of morning meeting/circle time, thematic centers, storytime, arts & crafts, and free play. Annually a year-long theme is chosen that serves as the basis for in-depth study. The curriculum is taught through this theme. Examples of annual themes include 'Healthy Eating', 'A Trip Around the World', and 'Authors'.

What are the hours of the school day?

The hours for the full day kindergarten program are 9:00 am arrival and 3:30 pm dismissal. There are two sessions for the preschool program. AM classes are 9:30 am arrival and 12:00 noon dismissal. PM classes are 1:00 pm arrival and 3:30 pm dismissal.

Do you need parent volunteers? How can I get involved?

Sign up for PTO membership! There are many committees for you to join. You can also volunteer to be a class parent. Class parents will be chosen following "Back to School Night" in September.

How do I know what time the bus will pick up/drop off my child?

The transportation assignment you received includes a pick-up time. Parents are required to be home at the time your child's session dismisses.

My child goes to a private half day pre-school program. Can the public school provide transportation to/from DAELC?

The district cannot provide transportation to a private school program. Transportation must be privately arranged.

What if my child does not speak English? What service can the school district provide?

Our school has an ELL Program (English Language Learners) for kindergarten students. Screening will be done in September. If your child qualifies, ELL instruction will be provided daily.

What other educational support services are available at DAELC?

We have speech therapists, occupational therapists and physical therapists on staff. We also have a Child Study Team which consists of a learning disabilities teacher consultant, social worker and school psychologist. If you believe your kindergarten child may need educational support services please contact your child's teacher.

Is there a kindergarten readiness screening?

There will be a kindergarten screening to be conducted during the first two weeks of school. Results provide valuable information to teachers about a student's readiness and allows the teacher to differentiate instruction accordingly.

How can I prepare my child for the 1st day of school?

The most important thing you can do to support your child is to read together every day! Provide experiences within your community where your child can play with peers and develop social skills. Prepare your child for separation by allowing him/her to spend time with family and trusted friends.

Does my child need to bring a snack to school?

Yes, students in both preschool and kindergarten have a designated snack time. It is encouraged that you provide a healthy snack.

Where can I find the school supply list?

If you have not purchased a “toolbox kit” from the PTO, our school supply list is on our website: [Student Supply Lists](#).

Does my child need to bring a backpack to school?

Yes, backpacks are a convenient way for students to carry their belongings. Please try to purchase a regular size backpack that will fit your child and avoid rolling backpacks as they are difficult for students to carry on the bus.