Welcome to Four-Year-Old Kindergarten
Oconomowoc Area School District

A Parent Preview of what you and your child can expect in Four-Year-Old Kindergarten

A Word About Four-Year-Old Kindergarten
What will your child be learning this year? How can you help your child be successful in school? These are important family questions! This brochure was created to explain the major academic expectations held by our District for students in four-year-old Kindergarten. You’ll also learn more about homework, how our teachers measure learning progress, home/school communications, common behaviors for 4- and 5-year-olds and much more.

Welcome to Four-Year-Old Kindergarten. Together, we can help your child reach their full potential and get the most out of their Four-Year-Old Kindergarten experience.

Academic Expectations
As you review this brochure, please note that we can’t include everything your child will be learning due to space limitations. Please contact your child’s teacher at any time during the school year for more information.

Measuring your Child’s Learning Progress
• Teacher observations
• Daily classroom activities
• Report cards
• Individual student portfolios

Ways You Can Get Involved
• Volunteer in your child’s classroom and take part in class field trips
• Participate in classroom parties and in home projects
• Share information about your career or hobbies with your child’s classroom
• Attend school-sponsored programs
• Join the Parent Teacher Organization or Association

Support Your Child’s Learning:
1. See that your child comes to school rested, well fed and ready to learn
2. Talk with your child about the day’s activities
3. Take an interest in what your child is learning; recognize your child’s achievement and progress
4. Read to your child daily
5. Engage your child in learning games and conversations
6. Reinforce classroom and school rules
7. Work in cooperation with school and your child’s teachers
8. Review classroom and school communications

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Some developmental characteristics displayed by many 4-year-olds

- Build complex block structures
- Dress and undress without assistance; brush teeth and comb hair; spills rarely with cup or spoon
- Lace shoes, but cannot yet tie
- Enjoy manipulating play objects that have fine parts
- Draw combinations of simple shapes; draw persons with at least four parts and objects that are recognizable to adults
- Express emotions through facial gestures, and can read others for body cues; copy behaviors of older children or adults
- Learn new vocabulary quickly if related to own experience
- Usually speak in five to six word sentences
- Like to sing simple songs: know many rhymes and finger plays
- Begin cooperative play
- Show great ability to control intense feelings like fear or anger
- Show pleasure in having and being with friends

Some developmental characteristics displayed by many 5-year-olds

- Manage a toothbrush, complete some picture puzzles (small motor control)
- Ride a two-wheeler and learn simple dance steps (large motor control)
- Display independence skills, such as dressing and feeding themselves
- Move toward the self-direction and self-control required of school-age children
- Persist longer at tasks and work until they complete project
- Talk meaningfully about tomorrow and yesterday
- Talk about distant places like a farm or fire station
- Ask questions for practical reasons: What is this? What do I do with this?
- Enjoy friends and may have one or more close friends
- Have defined preferences, such as choice of toys, clothes, and television programs
- Enjoy the kindergarten setting and is able to do manipulative learning activities that will foster math, language, science, and artistic skills

These excerpts from Understanding Your Child Birth to Sixteen by David Elkind and Your Five Year Old: Sunny and Serene by L. Bates Ames and Francie L. Ilg

When students complete Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, they should be able to:

Communication Arts and Reading
- Enjoy stories
- Explore books beginning to end
- Participate in large group activities
- Follow directions
- Demonstrate proper book care and library checkout

Writing
- Include details in drawing
- Identify letters in their name
- Print name

Mathematics
- Recognize colors
- Rote count accurately
- Recognize the four basic shapes: square, circle, triangle and rectangle
- Count objects with a 1-to-1 correspondence
- Explore geometry
- Explore measurement
- Recognize numbers 0 to 10
- Recognize, copy and extend patterns
- Use math vocabulary: more/less, heavier/lighter, next to/behind
Social Studies
- Explore social studies concepts
- Contribute to discussion and activities
- Follow school and classroom rules and routines

Science and Health
- Explore science concepts
- Demonstrate self-help skills

Motor Skills
- Throw and catch a playground ball
- Kick a stationary playground ball
- Use a tripod pencil grip
- Use scissors appropriately

Social and Emotional Development
- Work cooperatively with others
- Demonstrate self control
- Respect self, others and property
- Enjoy friends

Does 4K Positively Impact Children’s Development?
(from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction)

Presently, Wisconsin does not have the data to correlate student performance on statewide tests with past 4K participation. We can, however, explore the impact of 4K participation in this state by reviewing data from one national study that included Wisconsin and from several Wisconsin school districts that conducted their own studies.

Key findings are summarized below:

The National Center for Early Development and Learning study of State-Wide Early Education Programs conducted a study that examined variations among prekindergarten programs in five states (Massachusetts, New Jersey, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin). The study also related program variations to child outcomes at the end of prekindergarten and in kindergarten.

In Wisconsin, one classroom in each of 100 4K sites was randomly selected to participate in the study during the fall of 2003. Within each classroom, four children (two boys and two girls) were randomly selected, pending parental consent, resulting in a sample of 400 Wisconsin 4K students. Data collection, including direct assessment of children’s early academic skills, took place in fall 2003 and spring 2004. Key findings are summarized below:

- In the spring of the 4K year, Wisconsin 4K students were above the national average on three of the four academic skills assessments having standardized national averages of 100, and scored particularly high on a letter-word identification subtest.

- Wisconsin students showed growth on all ten academic skills assessments between the pre-test and the post-test administrations. Gains were particularly noteworthy in students’ ability to write their names and identify letters.

- Academic assessment information categorized by students’ economic status showed that the performance of both poor and non-poor students improved between the fall 2003 pre-test and the spring 2004 post-test on all measures.

- Wisconsin 4K students improved on all nine dimensions in language and literacy. Pre-test ratings on the 1-5 scale ranged from a low of 1.53 to a high of 2.90, and post-test ratings ranged from a low of 2.22 to a high of 3.75.
Ways we keep in touch

- District Web site—www.oasd.k12.wi.us
- Open House in September
- Field trip notices/permission forms
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Parent/Teacher notes, calls and e-mails
- Classroom newsletters
- Monthly on-line school newsletter
- District school calendar

Home/School Communications

We welcome your partnership in helping your child achieve success in school. By working and talking together, we can create a very positive learning environment. Each staff member has mail and e-mail. Please feel free to contact your child’s teacher or the office with any questions or concerns.