

REVISED MARCH 30, 2021



# ST. JOSEPH

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SCHOOL DISTRICT

## KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

## **SECTION 1: HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction/Purpose**

This Kindergarten Handbook was prepared to assist you in finding the answers to many questions that you may have regarding your child's Kindergarten experience with the St. Joseph School District. We do not expect that this handbook will answer all of your questions. Administrators and the Board of Education have worked together to establish board policies that will also be major sources of information. All policies can be found on the district website at <http://www.sjsd.k12.mo.us> under the About tab, followed by the Board of Education tab.

### **Message from the Superintendent**

Welcome to the St. Joseph School District.

The St. Joseph community has a deep and rich history of supporting education. Since the District's formation in 1860 to today the community and school district have strived to provide quality educational opportunities for all our children. The recent passage of a tax levy shows that commitment is as strong as ever. There is still a substantial need for us to work in partnership with our community and parents to ensure the success and safety of all our students.

I invite you, as parents, to get involved in your child's education and to work in partnership with us. We want you to be involved in your child's learning. There are numerous opportunities to engage in our schools, everything from volunteering at a school and attending conferences to serving on the PTA or booster clubs. Your support at home and in encouraging regular attendance play huge roles in your child's belief in the importance of school and in their future academic and life success. I encourage you to explore the many options available to you and your child in the St. Joseph School District.

We are excited about the opportunities we can provide our students and the great things happening in our schools every day. I am confident your sons and daughters will find their place in our schools, and as they graduate, they will be prepared to succeed in the world of higher education and professional employment. I am thankful for the opportunity to work in a district that is striving to meet the needs of all its students and to live in a community that holds education in such high regard.

Have a wonderful school year!

Dr. Doug Van Zyl  
SJSD Superintendent

## **About the St. Joseph School District**

In 1860, a group of concerned citizens were successful in obtaining a charter from the Missouri General Assembly that incorporated the “St. Joseph Board of Public Schools”. Today, the St. Joseph School District (SJSD) is the third largest employer in the city of St. Joseph, Missouri and educates nearly 11,000 students annually from preschool to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. In addition, the SJSD provides an adult education program and a technical school (Hillyard Technical Center) which provides programs for high school students and adults from the region. The SJSD currently employs over 2,000 individuals including certified teaching staff, professional and support staff and substitute teachers.

## **Vision, Mission & Values**

### **Vision**

- Create a climate of achievement in partnership with an engaged community.

### **Mission Statement**

- Preparing students for success in a complex and changing world.

### **Core Values**

- **Learning** – We believe that students should be engaged in rigorous learning every day, in every classroom, where curiosity is encouraged and critical thinking is cultivated in innovative classrooms.
- **Community** – We believe that a culture of collaboration and community is key to the success of the St. Joseph School District and that community is built in the classroom, in each school, in the district, and through meaningful partnerships and respectful relationships across our city.
- **Equity** – We believe that our district should invest in resources that maximize the potential of all students, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, language, or income.

## SECTION 2: ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR KINDERGARTEN

### Entrance Requirements for Kindergarten

- Children must be five (5) years of age before August 1<sup>st</sup>.
- A birth certificate or other approved legal document, giving proof of the child's birthdate, must be presented at registration.
- Children must be immunized according to state regulations before the FIRST DAY of school or enrollment will not be permitted.

### School Immunizations

- **Diphtheria, Pertussis & Tetanus (DPT)** - Four (4) doses of diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus toxoid. The last dose must have been received at age four (4) or older.
- **Polio** - If a combination of IPV and/or OPV is given, four (4) doses are required, otherwise, 3 doses. The last dose must have been received at age four (4) or older. (Maximum of 4 doses are required.)
- **Rubella** - Two (2) doses of rubella vaccine received by injection at age twelve (12) months or greater.
- **Measles** - Two (2) doses of measles vaccine received by injection on or after the first birthday and before entering kindergarten.
- **Mumps** - Two (2) doses of live mumps vaccine received by injection on or after the first birthday and before entering kindergarten.
- **Hepatitis 'B'** - Three (3) doses of Hepatitis 'B' vaccine for all students entering kindergarten. Spacing between the second and third dose must be 56 days or greater. The last dose must have been received at six (6) months of age or older.
- **Varicella** - Two (2) doses of vaccine or proof of disease (chicken pox). As satisfactory evidence of disease, an MD or DO must sign and place on file with the school a written statement documenting the month and year of previous varicella (chickenpox) disease.

## SECTION 3: WHEN CHILDREN ENTER KINDERGARTEN

### Most Can:

- Take care of toilet needs without help.
- Avoid toilet accidents.
- Hang up sweater, coat or jacket without help.
- Be away from parents for a few hours without obvious fear.
- Be understood by strangers.
- Name most of the parts of the body (arm, legs, feet, etc.).
- Count to ten.
- Enter a new activity without fear.

### Many Can:

- Sing some songs.
- Put together a simple nine-piece puzzle.
- Listen quietly while the teacher reads.
- Tell the teacher his/her last name.
- Pick out the primary colors.
- State his/her own age (not hold up fingers).
- Start his/her own play activity.
- Talk in sentences with more than two words.
- Handle books right side up, turning one page at a time.
- Use words to describe objects.
- Hop on either foot.

### Half Can:

- Take care of personal belongings.
- Play cooperatively with others.
- Use scissors effectively.
- Clap or otherwise keep time to music.
- Clean up after self (with reminders).
- Show understanding of up, down, back, front, high, low, over and under.
- Catch a ball when bounced.
- Hold a pencil correctly.
- Remember facts of a simple story.
- Color and stay within lines.

### Very Few Can:

- State his/her address.
- Tell his/her telephone number.
- Indicate which is his/her left or right hand.
- Tell birthday.
- Tie shoes.
- Jump rope.

## **SECTION 4: SCHOOL ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL TIMES**

### **School Arrival & Dismissal Times**

School arrival and dismissal times are to be determined. This information will be communicated by your student's school prior to the first day.

## **SECTION 5: EDUCATION**

Your child will learn many things in Kindergarten. Below you will find some of the highlights of what they will be experiencing during their Kindergarten year.

### **Reading, Listening & Speaking**

- Develop letter and sound recognition.
- Demonstrate their understanding during reading.
- Begin to choose "just right" books with assistance.
- Respond to a variety of text in their Reader's Notebook.
- Participate in the components and procedures of the Reader's Workshop.
- Develop vocabulary through listening to text.
- Read simple text.
- Demonstrate listening and speaking behaviors by following written and oral directions.
- Use details from text.
- Demonstrate basic concepts of print.
- Participate in read aloud experiences.
- Develop the ability to recognize sounds in words.
- Use details from text to identify story elements.
- Develop and apply post-reading skills to respond to text.

### **Writing**

- Write and/or draw in their Writer's Notebook.
- Write letters using correct letter formation.
- Connect letters to make words.
- Practice the components and procedures of the Writer's Workshop.
- Compose text with assistance using pictures and words related to the topic.
- Demonstrate the use of a writing process by composing text using pictures and words related to a topic.
- Compose text using narrative features.
- Compose text using expository features.
- Compose text using descriptive features.
- Use formal and informal spelling.

### **Math**

- Count by 1's to 100.
- Identify, write and count numerals 0 to 30.
- Count backward from any given number between 10 and 1.
- Sort and classify objects by attributes.
- Identify 2 and 3 dimensional shapes.
- Identify penny, nickel, dime and quarter.
- Name the days of the week.
- Represent and solve addition and subtraction within 10.
- Demonstrate fluency for addition and subtraction within 5.
- Compare sets of objects to identify equal to, more than, less than.
- Measure objects by comparison of lengths.
- Compare and order objects according to their size or weight.

- Describe passage of time using terms such as today yesterday, tomorrow, morning, afternoon, evening and year
- Explore and use concepts of all, some, left, right, top, bottom, first, last and middle.

### **Science**

- Make observations to determine effect of sunlight on Earth's surface.
- Ask questions and make observations about the world around them.
- Compare the effects of different strengths or different directions of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object.
- Describe ways to change the motion of an object.
- Use and share observations of local weather conditions to describe patterns over time.
- Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals need to survive.
- Use a model to represent the relationship between the needs of different plants or animals and the places they live.

### **Social Studies**

- Recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Demonstrate good citizenship.
- Identify why laws and rules are made.
- Explain how to resolve disputes peacefully.
- Describe how groups need to make decisions.
- Identify basic needs and how they can be met.
- Identify family structures/members and their roles.
- Connect ideas and make meanings from themes and issues.

### **After completing Kindergarten, students should know and be able to:**

- Demonstrate gross motor skills - skip, hop, gallop, catch.
- Demonstrate fine motor skills - use scissors, crayons, pencils, handle blocks, puzzles.
- Express self through pretend play, art and construction.
- Listen and follow directions.
- Interact cooperatively with others.
- Participate in class activities and discussions.
- Pay attention and stay on task.
- Observe school expectations outside the classroom.
- Demonstrate self-confidence, initiative and independence.



## **SECTION 6: FAQ ABOUT KINDERGARTEN**

### **1. What can I do to make the first day of school go smoothly?**

Make good-byes loving but firm. If you accompany your child to school, don't linger after saying good-bye. Your child will make the transition easier if you appear confident that he will do just fine. Prepare your child for any after school arrangements.

### **2. What do they do all day?**

Each classroom will have a different schedule. Please check with your child's Kindergarten teacher to ask about specific activities.

### **3. At the end of the year, will all the children be on the same level?**

Each child grows, develops and learns at an individual rate. Each child enters Kindergarten at a different level and each will master Kindergarten tasks differently.

## **SECTION 7: RULES TO BE OBSERVED**

**1.** The arrival and dismissal times at each school vary. Always confirm the daily schedule with your school. Do not send the child before the requested arrival time to ensure proper adult supervision. Please pick up your child promptly at dismissal time.

**2.** We strive for perfect attendance, but children who show evidence of illness should be kept at home. Report the reason for absence to the secretary at the school every day the child is absent.

**3.** We require a written explanation each time your child is absent, tardy, or is to be dismissed early for any reason.

**4.** Accompany your child to school the first day if possible. Meet the teacher, leave the supplies, and check registration. Send the child to school the next day with a cheerful, but firm farewell.

**5.** If you would like to visit the school, you must first make an appointment in the school office.

**6.** Do not send money to school with your child unless it is requested. If you do give your child money for lunch or any other reason, put it in an envelope and write your child's name and the purpose for which the money is intended.

## **SECTION 8: VALUE OF PLAY IN KINDERGARTEN**

### **Play promotes-**

#### **Literacy and language development as children:**

- Use communication for taking turns, negotiating and planning their play.
- Reconstruct events and sequences in events and stories leading to increased story comprehension.
- Increase speech fluency.
- Practice new vocabulary.

#### **Physical development as children:**

- Coordinate their actions with objects and other people.
- Engage in activities that develop stamina, flexibility, strength, coordination and fitness.
- Practice gross and fine motor skills.

#### **Cognitive development as children:**

- Pretend to be some object or person.
- Learn new ideas from peers.
- Solve problems and think abstractly about their world.

#### **Social growth as children:**

- Learn to consider the perspective of others.
- Participate in turn taking, cooperating and sharing.
- Experiment with leadership skills.
- Learn to tolerate delays.
- Work out stress.
- Increase goal-directed behavior and persistence.
- Use creative imagination.
- Pursue their own ideas.
- Develop friendships.
- Work through conflict.
- Experience sheer fun -- the positive aspect of fun is that it is essential to growth and a strong motivation for every kind of learning.

Observation of children at play guides teachers in planning curriculum to meet the developmental needs of students. Play is a wonderful opportunity for teachers to help students develop their vocabulary and language skills in Kindergarten.

## SECTION 9: SAFETY EDUCATION IN KINDERGARTEN

### Your child should know:

- Their first and last name, street address, parents' names and telephone number.
- The safest and most direct route to school if he/she walks to school.
- About traffic lights, policemen and school patrols.
- The correct way to cross the street. Talk with your child about only crossing the street and corners and to obey safety patrols.
- Not to accept rides with strangers.
- That he/she should come directly home after school unless you give written permission to do otherwise.
- The number of the bus and the route to the bus stop. He or she should obey the bus driver and behave properly.
- What to do if school dismisses early due to bad weather or special events.

## SECTION 10: KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Category	Score
Language	/28
Early Literacy	/28
Motor Skills	/12
Math	/20
Total Score	

**Above Level: 70-88 points**  
**On Target: 50-69 points**  
**Approaching: 35-49 points**  
**Needs Support: 0-34 points**

Category	Score
Behavior	/28

**Above and On Target Level:** Read together at home. Have conversations to discuss characters and order of events. Give your child small, independent jobs at home to develop confidence, independence and responsibility. Practice letters. If they are known, use first letter sound in writing. Count objects for real purposes.

**Approaching and Needs Support:** Read plenty of books together. Have conversations throughout. Focus on identifying name and letters. Practice first and last name. Have child practice writing their name. Use a variety of writing tools and paper. Draw pictures to show happenings at home. Tell stories in order. Practice counting. Use play-doh and scissors to work on motor skills. Have your child sort objects into groups and discuss how they are grouped. Drawing and writing in a journal is helpful.

**Behavior:** Have your child listen to a story, follow simple directions and to use words when frustrated. Your child needs to practice cleaning up and playing with others. Have your child make decisions based on choices given. Work on having your child follow a different adult's directions.