



**Get Ready for
Kindergarten!**

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Welcome to Kindergarten

Kindergarten is an exciting time for both children and parents. We look forward to enhancing your child's learning through our partnership with you. Studies have shown that a strong family and school partnership will lead to a successful experience not only in kindergarten, but throughout your child's educational career.

This handbook includes important information, helpful hints and answers to commonly asked questions. It is designed to help with this important transition into Kindergarten.

After reviewing the handbook, if you have any questions, please contact us.



Registration

To enter Kindergarten, a child must be at least age five (5) on or before September 1 of the current year.

The child must reside with a parent or guardian within the boundaries of Skokie School District 73½.*

Pre-Registration is to be completed online at the www.sd735.org/registration/ece.

A parent or guardian must come to Meyer School and provide the following:

- Student's Original Birth Certificate
- Parent/Guardian Driver's License or State ID with current address
- Current Mortgage Statement or Lease‡

Some forms require original signatures, so a parent or guardian will need to complete them in person.

E-Registration is finalized by parents through the PowerSchool Parent Portal (PSPP). Instructions are communicated well in advance of the deadline. This is required before student can start school.

Once initial residency has been proven at registration, annual verification is required in the form of two (2) current utility bills, dated in the summer.

*If child resides with only one parent or a guardian, additional documentation related to child custody and parental educational rights may be required.

‡ If residence is not directly owned or rented by parent/guardian (sharing home), a *Special Affidavit of Residency* must be executed. Residency must be approved by the District Office.

Birth Certificate

The Birth Certificate must be an original certified copy. Baptismal or hospital certificates cannot be accepted.

If you do not have an original Birth Certificate and your child was born in Cook County, you can obtain an original at the Cook County Second Municipal Court House, 5600 Old Orchard Road in Skokie (telephone 847-470-7500, press 2) or at participating currency exchanges.

Original birth records can also be obtained from most municipal health departments. For example the *Village of Skokie Department of Health* can provide an original birth certificate if your child was born in Skokie.

If your child was born outside Cook County, you will need to contact the state, county or municipality of his or her birth for information on how to obtain an original birth certificate.

If the birth certificate is in a language other than English, you will be asked to provide an official translation.

In some cases, a valid U.S. or foreign passport will be accepted.

Residency Defined

Residency is defined as that place where parents or legal guardians eat, sleep, and store their belongings; furthermore, it is that place in which their child resides with them for four or more days per week. **A student's residence is the same as the person who has legal custody of the student.** Refer to Board Policy 7.60.

To be a **legal resident** of Skokie School District 73½, a child **must**

Reside within the school district with his or her natural parents

OR

Reside within the school district with his or her custodial parent if parents are divorced or otherwise not living in the same household

OR

Reside within the school district with a person to whom custody and control have been legally transferred by the courts. The intent of such transfer cannot have been solely to enable the student to attend school in this district.

Documentation of Residency

Homeowners must provide:

- Current mortgage statement or
- Real estate tax bill

Renters must provide:

- Original current lease or renewal rider with current date
- *Landlord Affidavit* (available in the office) needs to be completed by property owner and notarized

Sharing with a homeowner or renter:

Special Affidavit of Residency needs to be completed by the parent or guardian and resident, notarized. This must be reviewed at the district level and residency must be approved before child may begin classes.

Annual Re-Verification of Residency

Residency Verification and Fee Payment Days are held every July/August at McCracken School. All families must renew proof of residency in the form of two (2) current utility bills. Renters and sharers must also provide the appropriate updated affidavits. School fees may be paid and online registration support is provided.

Health Requirements



We provide a packet of Health Forms to be completed and returned to school before the start of the school year.

Certificate of Child Health Examination*

- Must be completed and signed by the child's physician
- All exam and immunization records must be complete
- Back of the form includes Health History, to be completed and signed by a parent

Proof of School Dental Examination Form*

- Must be completed and signed by the child's dentist

Eye Examination Report*

- Must be completed and signed by your optometrist or ophthalmologist
- Parent signature is needed (back of form).

Authorization to Administer Medication

- Required for students who may need medication administered by school personnel during the school day (for example, asthma or severe allergies requiring Epi-Pen).
- Prescription required

*Required for all Kindergarten Students



Fees

Fee amounts are available and can be paid at *Residency Verification*, *E-Registration*, and *Fee Payment Days*. Fees are discounted if paid before August 1. All fees are to be paid by August 10.

Kindergarten Fees:

- **Instructional (Required)**

Textbooks, some consumable supplies, some art supplies and technology supplies

- **Bus Fees (Optional)**

Bus transportation to and from school

Fee assistance may be available to low-income families. The *Application for Waiver of Fees* form can be obtained from the school office or the Business Office. Income proof is required.



Absence & Tardy

Absence: If a student will not be at school, please call the absence line at 847.673.1223, press 2, and leave the child's name, your name, reason for the absence and the date of the absence. Please call EVERY day your child will be absent. *It's okay to tell your child's teacher, but you still need to call the absence line.*

Illness policy: Following an absence, a child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

At school, a child registering a temperature of 99.6°F, or higher, will be sent home.

In the case of vomiting in school, the child will be sent home.

Tardy: If you arrive after the student arrival doors have closed, please accompany your child to the office and come inside. You'll need to sign in and provide the specific reason you are late.

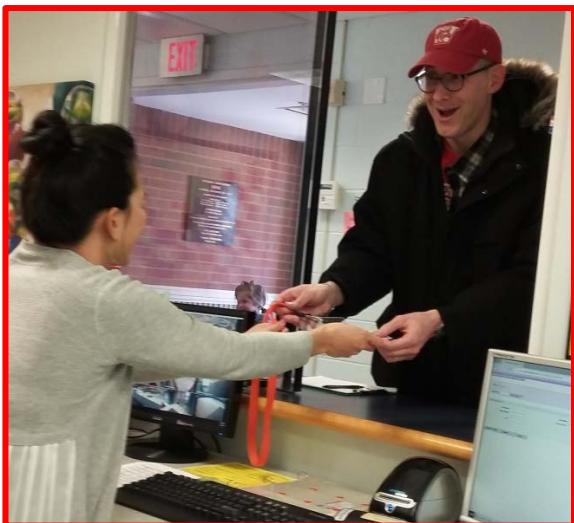
It's important to begin the habit of arriving to school on time at the start of the school year. Students who arrive late miss morning routines and lessons.

Safety First!

Skokie School District 73½ has procedures in place to help ensure safety and security.

Parents and Visitors to school: ALWAYS enter the school through the front door. Please do not enter the building through the doors that are opened for student arrival.

- Always carry your picture ID, preferably a current drivers' license – to gain entry.
- Your license will be scanned and kept in the office until you leave the building.
- A special visitor lanyard and ID will be issued.
- You are required to wear your visitor lanyard while inside the school.
- Be sure to stop at the office to return your lanyard and retrieve your ID.



Student Records: E-Registration (E-REG)

Information about each student is obtained and maintained on the secure PowerSchool student information system. Parents have access to this information through the PowerSchool Parent Portal (PSPP). Access is easy and one password allows parents/guardians the ability to update data, correct errors, add emergency contact information and choose communication preferences. All students in a single family are linked, so all information can be accessed through one portal.

E-REG is required before a student begins school.

The first year a student attends a district school, all data entry must be reviewed and approved by parent/guardian.

Ongoing, parents/guardians are asked to review all PSPP data **annually** to make updates/ corrections.

A student directory is issued at the beginning of each school year.

Student/Parent Handbook

Each year, the Student/Parent Handbook is updated and issued to each family within our school district. Please be sure to review and keep your Handbook handy for reference.

Drills & Authorized Contacts

Drills: Evacuation, tornado and lock-down drills are conducted several times each school year. Students are instructed about procedures and practice them before drills occur.

Contact Information: In case of emergency, parents/guardians and/or authorized emergency contacts will be notified and alternate pick up arrangements will be explained.

All parent and emergency contact information is maintained through the PowerSchool Parent Portal (PSPP). All phone number changes, additions or deletions should be made by parents directly through the PSPP.

To ensure the safety of every student, NO STUDENT will be released to anyone who has not been listed as an authorized contact by a parent/guardian on the PSPP.

(Emergency contacts must be age 18 or older)



Kindergarten Hours

8:40 a.m. to 2:25 p.m.

(Every Tuesday dismissal is at 2:00 p.m.)

Getting to School

Drop-Off: Students may be dropped off starting at 8:30 a.m. each day. Please do not leave a child unattended before a teacher is present at 8:30 a.m.

Kindergarten students line up and enter the school between 8:35 and 8:40 a.m. The door closes at 8:40 a.m.

Arrival after the doors close must be through the front office. Classroom instruction begins promptly at 8:45 a.m. Punctuality is important!

Bus transportation is available for kindergarten students. A bus contract and fee payment must be completed before a student may ride the school bus. Kindergarten students are picked up and dropped off at corners along a fixed route. A parent or parent-authorized adult, age 18 or older, must be at the bus corner with the student at the designated time in order to ride the bus.

Early Bird Extended A.M. Care students join the students who have been dropped off for line-up at 8:30 a.m.

Getting Home from School

School is dismissed at 2:25 p.m. every day except Tuesday.

Tuesday dismissal is at 2:00 p.m.

Pick-Up: Parents are to line up outside the designated exterior door. “Pick-up” students are released as their parent or parent-designated authorized adult, age 18 or older, comes to the front of the line.

NOTE: Parent or other authorized adult may be asked to present a photo ID in order to pick up the child.

Please remember to be on time for pick-up as students can become anxious and teachers and office staff often have meetings or other commitments after school.

Bus: A parent or parent-authorized adult, age 18 or older, must be at the bus corner at the designated time to receive the student. If no parent or authorized adult is present, the child will be returned to Meyer for pick up from the office.



School Calendar

The Board of Education approves the school calendar for each year. First and last days of school, school holidays and breaks are designated there, as well as potential extra days that could be added at the end of the school year if emergency days (i.e. for inclement weather) are used. The school calendar is available on the website, and in the school office.

School Supplies

Kindergarten teachers determine the school supply lists. Each student is required to bring all the items on the list to school at the start of the school year.

Each year, the PTA offers the option of ordering a school supply kit which complies with the grade level list. The supply kit can be ordered online and arrives before the first day of school.

If financial assistance is needed please contact the school secretary or principal.



Support Services

Meyer School offers support services for eligible students in the following areas:

- Speech/Language and Occupational Therapy
- Special Education
- Social Work
- English Language instruction and support
- Vision and hearing

If you have concerns, questions and/or want to request services, please contact the school principal.

Staff

All Meyer teachers and specialists are certified and licensed and have years of experience in early childhood education. Additionally, many teachers have expertise in teaching students who are English learners and who have special education needs. More than half of our teachers have advanced degrees and endorsements. We are fortunate at Meyer to have instructional assistants who are certified paraprofessionals and credentialed teachers.

Extended Care Options

Before the Regular school day:

The *Early Bird AM Extended Care* program is staffed and administered by Elizabeth Meyer School.

Early Bird hours: 7:00 to 8:30 a.m.

Skokie's Place for All Children in Extended Care (SPACE) offers care for students after the school day ends. SPACE is administered and staffed by the Skokie Park District. Separate registration is required.

After the regular school day:

SPACE: From the end of the school day until 6:00 p.m.



School Lunch

Students may bring lunch from home or order a school lunch each day.

Every student – even if they plan to bring lunch from home – receives an individualized lunch card.

The lunch card works like a debit card: you put money in the lunch account and the balance decreases with each purchase.

When the account balance gets to \$6.00 or less you will be notified to add money to the account.

How to put money on the account:

- Send cash or a check in an envelope with your child's FULL name and teacher's name on it.
- Stop at the office to pay in person (cash or check only).
- Go online to sd735.org and click on "Pay Lunch." You can pay with a credit/debit card. You will need your child's Student ID number.

Lunch costs \$2.85 every day. This includes:

- One of two hot entrées (one without meat), OR a cold cheese or turkey sandwich.
- Fruits and vegetables are offered each day.
- Beverage: milk (1% or skim), or 100% fruit juice (apple, grape, orange or fruit punch).

A menu for the month will be sent home with your child. The daily lunch selections are also on the school website.

Specialized Instruction

Project LEAP

(Language Experience Achievement Program)

Some of our incoming Kindergarten students qualify for Meyer's Project LEAP classroom.

This classroom serves children who are not yet proficient in the English Language. With a smaller class size, a full-time teacher and full-time assistant, students' needs are more individually met. There is a focus in the classroom on experiential learning to help develop oral language vocabulary and use. The pace and methodology of instruction is adapted to the specific needs of the students. And, parent education is an important component of this program.

Instructional Kindergarten

Our Instructional Kindergarten classroom is taught by a full-time special education teacher and full-time assistant and serves students with IEPs (Individual Education Plans) who will benefit from a smaller class size and customized instruction. The school's speech/language therapist, social worker and occupational therapist work closely with the classroom teacher to meet the needs of these students.

Library



Meyer's spacious and beautiful new library includes a vast collection of children's literature and non-fiction books, a SMART TV, a state-of-the-art sound system, a Collaboratory, including a collection of Dash robots, for engaged group hands-on activities, and many comfortable nooks and crannies to relax and enjoy learning. The Meyer School library empowers students and staff to think critically, solve problems creatively, appreciate books, and make meaningful connections to their own community and the world. Our library promotes inclusion, engagement, collaboration, self-discovery, and curiosity. Please contact Mrs. Amy Kelley, if you are interested in being a library volunteer!

Specials Classes

Physical Education

Kindergarten students enjoy Physical Education for 30 minutes every day. The students engage in a variety of skill-building activities and exercises that promote physical development and social skills, such as cooperation and taking turns. The children play games and learn about the importance of exercise and fitness.

All lessons and activities are designed so that students achieve the Kindergarten Common Core standards for physical education.



Music

Kindergartners gather for music class once each week to learn and sing songs and acquire basic music education skills, appropriate for Kindergarten age students. The curriculum includes movement so that students gain an understanding of rhythm and beat, while enjoying songs representative of our many cultures from around the world.



Art

Every class has an art period each week in our well-equipped and fully stocked art room. The children create original two and three dimensional art projects that correlate to the time of year and the core curriculum. Students develop their skills, artistic sense and creativity.

Curriculum, Technology & Assessment

Curriculum

The teachers prepare units and lessons in all content areas based on the *Common Core State Standards* (corestandards.org), *Next Generation Science Standards* and *Rigorous Curriculum Design*. The Kindergarten team utilizes a variety of English/Language Arts programs and the *Eureka Math* program.

Technology

Every classroom is equipped with SMART Board technology, computers with internet accessibility and tablets. Our Instructional Coach works closely with our teachers to enhance and optimize learning.

Assessment

Kindergartners are assessed formally three times a year: fall, winter and spring. In the fall, baseline achievement data is gathered; progress is measured in winter and spring to ensure progress and learning. *ISEL* (Illinois Snapshot of Early Literacy), *Fountas & Pinnell* and *AIMSweb* assessments are administered. Data is analyzed regularly so that instruction can be differentiated and program changes can be made. Additionally, teachers give formative assessments to ensure adequate student growth and learning.

Communication & Parent Involvement

Communication

The school district maintains a website that is updated regularly to keep you well informed. All staff members' email addresses and phone numbers can be found on the website: sd735.org.

There is a link to each classroom and resource teacher which includes information pertinent to that classroom or program. Additionally, every week, the Meyer Weekly is available online and via email subscription to keep you current on Meyer's events of the week.

Report cards are issued three times a year and parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year.

Parent Involvement

The research is clear that the greater the parent involvement, the greater the student achievement. Parents are encouraged to become involved as a classroom or school volunteer. Many opportunities exist at the school or from your own home. In addition, the school has a Parent Mentor Program, in which one parent mentor is assigned to work in each classroom, for two hours, four mornings a week, from October through February of the school year. Contact the principal if you are interested in learning more about this program.

Enrichment

After-School Enrichment Classes

Enrichment at Elizabeth Meyer School offers Kindergarten students the opportunity to add to the school day with fun learning options.

All classes take place at Meyer after school and last 45-60 minutes. Enrichment classes are offered during fall, winter and spring sessions. Each class has its own registration and separate fees which vary, depending on the class. Classes are offered on different days, so your child can take more than one class. Examples of enrichment classes are: *Young Rembrandts* and Martial Arts and Zumba dance.

Students who don't participate in the SPACE Program must be picked up by parent or authorized adult after class. There is no bus service home after enrichment classes.

Field Trips

Field trips related to educational goals occur each year. Teachers will send home permission slips and requests for volunteers.

Play



Meyer's brand new playground is a centerpiece for our school. The children love the variety of play equipment and enjoy every aspect of the space. All Kindergartens enjoy 30 minutes of unstructured play time in the middle of each school day, either before or after their lunch period. Supervision is provided by an experienced Meyer staff member.

Additionally, in nice weather, students can play on the playground from 8:30-8:40 a.m. each day. The playground is open to neighborhood children after school hours during the week and on the weekends.

Kindergarten Readiness

Readiness is a combination of age, individual growth and experience. This checklist is designed to consider a child's development in the areas that contribute to success in Kindergarten. An asterisk (*) indicates a skill or behavior that is expected when a child enters our Kindergarten program. Mastery of the other items on the checklist is a goal, but not expected.

Social and Emotional Development

- *Use restroom independently
- *Dress self
- *Put on coat and shoes
- *Interact with other children and adults
- *Exhibit self-control
- *Ask questions and seek out adult help when necessary
- *Play cooperatively with other children, take turns and share
- *Clean up after self
- Initiate his/her own leisure-time activities
- Finish one activity before starting another
- Work independently
- Try new tasks
- Listen when others talk
- Separate from parents without undue anxiety
- Show empathy to others
- Care for belongings
- Recognize and respond appropriately to authority
- Use words to solve problems
- Use words such as please, thank you and you're welcome
- Comply with rules, guidance, limitations and routines
- Respect rights, property and feelings of others
- Form relationships with adults
- Show flexibility
- Expresses needs and feelings appropriately

Language Development

- *Recognize written first name by sight
- *Listen with interest to a short story (seven to ten minutes)
- *Orally identify and recognize letters in name
- *Tell first and last name when asked
- Speak in complete sentences
- Speak clearly enough to be understood by unfamiliar adults
- Communicate needs and express feelings appropriately
- Understand and follow directions with at least two steps
- Use descriptive language (i.e., the big purple book)
- Use sentences that include two or more ideas
- Recite or participate in familiar song, finger play, poem or nursery rhyme
- Tell or retell a simple story
- Identify some upper and lower case letters
- Understand vocabulary related to portion, direction, size and comparison (i.e.: front/back, over/under, first/last, alike/different, on/off, in/out, big/little, top/bottom, up/down)

Reading Development

- *Orient a book correctly
- *Distinguish between front and back of book
- *Differentiate between pictures and words
- *Recognize print in everyday situations
- *Pretend to read books by looking at the pictures
- Make simple predictions and comments about a story being read to him/her
- Try to read along with you on favorite parts of stories that are repetitive
- Identify picture likenesses and differences

Writing Development

*Hold pencil or crayon correctly

*Attempt to write his/her first name

*Write using drawings and made-up or real letters

Draw and color beyond simple scribble

Trace or draw a line with control

Copy or draw circle, cross, square, X, triangle, rectangle

Writes letters and numbers

Math Development

*Rote count to at least 10

*Identify numerals 0-10

*Correctly count at least 5 objects

*Identify shapes:    

Sort items in groups according to size, shape or color

Demonstrate understanding of positional words (in, out, on, off, around)

Make comparisons using words such as smaller/larger, heavier/lighter

Arrange objects in size order (from smallest to biggest)

Physical Development

*Cut with scissors on straight line

Cut with scissors on curved lines and circles

Catch a medium-sized ball

Bounce, throw and kick a ball

Walk on a straight line forward and backward

Skip

Hop on one foot

Try to tie shoes



Please contact Dr. Gordon, Meyer's Principal at agordon@sd735.org, or Mrs. Eisenstein, school secretary, at either 847.676.8357 or jeisenstein@sd735.org if you have any questions or need more information.

If you have questions or concerns in any of these areas, please contact:

- Health or medical: Mrs. Orleans, School Nurse, at 847.676.8360.
- Communication skills, speech or language development: Ms. Marvinac, Speech/Language Pathologist at 847.676.8321.
- Social skills or emotional wellbeing: Ms. Newman, Social Worker at 847.676.8353.



**Elizabeth Meyer School
8100 Tripp Avenue
Skokie, Illinois 60076**

“Home of the Shining Stars”



847.673.1223

sd735.org

Follow Dr. Gordon on Twitter!

[@me_alisongordon](https://twitter.com/me_alisongordon)

Like us on Facebook!



Skokie School District 73½

