

Kindergarten Guide



Preparing your student for
a brighter tomorrow



<https://www.adams12.org/enroll/kindergarten>

Adams12
Five Star Schools



Welcome

We are excited to welcome new kindergarten students and their families into our district community. The beginning of kindergarten is a major time of transition for both children and their families. The information provided here was compiled by parents for parents in the hopes that it will answer your questions and help you and your child feel prepared and excited to begin the school journey.

All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten.

It's true! Kindergarten provides all students the first experience of their academic career. While there is still a strong emphasis on your student's social-emotional development, the kindergarten experience in Adams 12 Five Star Schools provides every student with rigorous academic programs necessary to develop a strong foundation that will help them succeed as they progress through their elementary and secondary school career.

General Information

HOW OLD DOES MY CHILD NEED TO BE TO START KINDERGARTEN?

Your child must be 5 years old on or before Oct. 1 of the school year he/she will start school.

<https://www.adams12.org/enroll/kindergarten>



SCHOOL BOUNDARY

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT SCHOOL MY CHILD SHOULD ATTEND?

The district has school boundaries based on geography. To find what elementary school your child should attend, please visit <https://www.adams12.org/enroll/school-finder>.



CHOICE

WHAT IF I WANT TO CHOOSE MY CHILD'S SCHOOL?

You can check for information on the district's website regarding which schools are open for Choice. The district has magnet programs that focus on particular areas of interest and some neighborhood schools are also open for Choice. Please read the district's policy on school Choice for the most complete information. For information on schools open to Choice, application information and deadlines visit <https://www.adams12.org/enroll/schools-of-choice-program>.



TIME

WILL MY CHILD GO TO SCHOOL ALL DAY?

The Five Star District exclusively offers full-day kindergarten - at no cost to families - at all district elementary and K-8 schools. All half-day kindergarten sessions are now expanded to full-day programs.

Enrollment Information



RECORDS

To enroll your child in Kindergarten, you will need to bring the following information to your school:

- PARENT/GUARDIAN PHOTO I.D.: Guardians must have proper guardianship forms signed and notarized or a copy of court authorization and, if applicable, custody documentation.
- BIRTH CERTIFICATE: Your child must be 5 years old on or before Oct. 1.
- CHILD'S IMMUNIZATION RECORDS: Please visit the district website to learn about the immunization policy, <https://www.adams12.org/resources/health-services/immunizations>.
- ONE PROOF OF RESIDENCY DOCUMENT: Any utility bill, signed rental agreement, signed sales contract, warranty deed or deed of trust can be used to prove residency. You must live in the boundary area of the school in which you are enrolling unless you are registering for kindergarten at a school outside your boundary school or are enrolling at a magnet school.

Choosing the Right Program

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL

What makes kindergarten special at your neighborhood school? Every school in our district offers quality programs which include developmentally appropriate instruction in reading, writing, math, science and social studies. All students attend P.E., art and music classes, go on field trips and participate in special learning opportunities like guest authors. In addition, they can take part in exciting activities like school carnivals, book fairs, movie nights and other fun events. Every neighborhood school is unique and special. Learn more about your neighborhood school by attending kindergarten information event(s), or call the school to arrange a tour.

MAGNET SCHOOLS

Magnet schools are designed to serve students with special interests or needs. Magnet schools have a particular focus (e.g., arts, technology) or serve special needs such as gifted and talented students. There are also charter schools available that may have special programs. Charter schools are overseen by the district but do not follow district policies or district curricula. The magnet programs offered by the district include:

- Advanced Academics:
Hulstrom (K-8)
- Arts-Integrated:
The Studio School (K-5)
- STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (K-8):
*This program is offered at STEM Lab and STEM Launch K-8 schools.
This program offers special emphasis on science, technology, engineering and math through a problem-based learning approach.*



Parents must apply for entry into kindergarten at these magnet programs through the Choice application process. If there are more applicants than space available at the school, a lottery will be held to select students. For in-depth information on the learning philosophies, programs and application processes for these schools visit www.adams12.org.

KINDERGARTEN BY THE NUMBERS

5
YEARS

Your child must be 5 years old by Oct. 1.

18-26

is the average number of kindergarten students in each classroom.

100
PERCENT

of your child's instructional day is impacted by highly qualified teachers licensed through the Colorado Department of Education.

Readiness and Learning Expectations

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS READY TO START KINDERGARTEN?

There are no set rules about what kids should know and be able to do before starting kindergarten. Children mature at vastly different rates and their skills change very quickly. To help assess readiness, consider your child's ability in these areas:

- Can get through the day without a nap
- Manage bathroom needs
- Dress, zip and/or button clothing
- Hold a pencil with a three-finger grip
- Cut with scissors
- Listen, understand and follow two-step directions
- Listen to stories without interrupting
- Hold books upright and right side up, turn pages in order
- Recognize common words seen everyday (e.g., stop)
- Draw pictures to express ideas or share information
- Put together a puzzle
- Build with blocks

Your child will learn these and other skills as part of their kindergarten experience, so don't worry if they haven't mastered them all. The above list provides touchstones to get you thinking about what will prepare them best for their first year of school.



STATE STANDARDS

Math Skills

Below are selected standards-based skills for math that your child will be working to accomplish in kindergarten. Your child may have already mastered some of these and will be challenged to further their learning or may need the entire year to work towards these goals.

- Understand number words, the symbol for the number and the quantity it represents
- Count objects in a set (e.g., "How many apples are in the bag?")
- Count out a given number of objects (e.g., "Show me three spoons.")
- Write the number when shown a number of objects (e.g., show three spoons and the student writes the number 3)
- Use objects to do simple addition and simple subtraction
- Count in various ways (e.g., forward and backwards, starting with different numbers)
- Count objects with one-to-one correspondence
- Explore part-whole relationships (for example, 5 is made of 2 and 3)
- Solve simple problems using story addition and subtraction
- Explore, build and extend repeating patterns
- Sequence familiar events in time

Reading and Writing Skills

Below are selected standards-based skills for reading and writing that your child will be working to accomplish in kindergarten. Your child may have already mastered some of these and will be challenged to further their learning or may need the entire year to work towards these goals.

- Take part in discussions on age-related topics and books with other students and adults in large and small groups
- Use new words learned through reading books and classroom conversations
- Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information or clarify something that is not understood
- Know letter names and sounds
- Blend sounds orally to make one-syllable words (eg. /c/-/a/-/t/= cat)
- Read common, high-frequency words by sight (e.g., the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does)
- Identify how texts on the same topic are the same and different (e.g., in pictures, wording, etc.)



STATE STANDARDS

If you are interested in detailed information, the State of Colorado has standards for what students should know and be able to do in kindergarten content areas like math, reading, dance, health, science and others.



ASSESSMENTS

HOW WILL YOU KNOW IF MY CHILD IS LEARNING WHAT THEY SHOULD?

You will have parent/teacher conferences and report cards as forms of communication about your child's progress. Assessments are also done at the beginning, middle and end of the year. During these assessments, teachers check students' knowledge and skills in specific areas to see if they are on track to know and be able to do all that is expected by the end of the year.



HOMEWORK

WILL MY KINDERGARTNER HAVE HOMEWORK?

You can expect your child to have some homework. The amount and type will vary by teacher. Your child's teacher should make you aware of their homework policies at the beginning of the year. If you find that the homework is too much for your child, please let the teacher know so they can address the issue.

Behavioral Expectations

Kindergarten is a major time of growth for your child in both learning and maturity. Your child will practice skills like:

- Taking turns
- Listening
- Following directions
- Showing respect to teachers, self and others
- Practicing self-control

Each kindergarten classroom generally has its own set of rules and each school has its own code of conduct. You will learn more from your child's classroom teacher and through the school's handbook when you begin the school year.

Special Learning Needs

The Five Star District strives to serve children with all different abilities and learning needs. The following links can help you learn about district services offered for these groups:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL) <https://www.adams12.org/academics/culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-education>

GIFTED AND TALENTED (GT) <https://www.adams12.org/academics/culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-education>

SPECIAL NEEDS (SPED) <https://www.adams12.org/academics/special-education>

If you have concerns or questions about whether your child needs services in any of these areas, please call the district's Early Childhood Education office at (720) 972-8761.

Childcare Options



BASE

BASE (BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM)

Adams 12 Five Star Schools Before and After School Enrichment (BASE) Programs are extracurricular, optional, fee-based programs offered on-site at most elementary schools. BASE Programs serve elementary students beginning at 5 years of age. Space is limited and BASE Programs frequently have a list of families waiting for an opportunity to enroll.

Students in BASE engage in a wide variety of activities and choices providing students with opportunities to create, learn and grow through arts, physical activity and academic enrichment activities outside the standard school day. All BASE activities provide students opportunities critical to their social-emotional development. For more information on BASE, visit <https://www.adams12.org/resources/before-after-school-care>.

CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE

The Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) provides child care assistance to families needing child care services to support their efforts toward self-sufficiency. CCCAP provides families access to reduced cost child care at licensed child care facilities or qualified (unlicensed) providers. Families must meet income guidelines. Please contact the Adams County Child Care Assistance Program for more information (720)523-2201.

School Meal Information

A student who is well-nourished is more attentive, better behaved and attends school more regularly leading to increased academic success. Nutrition Services is committed to providing nutritionally balanced meals for students each and every day at the lowest possible price.



MENU

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT IS BEING SERVED FOR MEALS?

Menus are provided online through Nutrislice where you can easily view and print information about daily breakfast and lunch menus. Descriptions for food items include nutrition, allergen information and even pictures.

Browse menus or download the Nutrislice application for your smart phone online:

<https://www.adams12.org/resources/nutrition/menus>

Breakfast options are only available at select schools. Please contact your child's school kitchen for more information:

<https://www.adams12.org/resources/nutrition>

Menus are subject to change based on seasonality and food availability.



PAY SCHOOL LUNCH

PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES

Prepayment of meals is encouraged via:

- Cash or check
- Online at www.payforit.net. To create an online account you'll need a valid email address and your child's student ID, which can be obtained from your kitchen manager, school office, or your child's Infinite Campus account.



FREE/REDUCED LUNCH

WHAT ARE OPTIONS FOR FREE-AND-REDUCED LUNCH AND BREAKFAST?

The Five Star District offers free-and-reduced breakfast and lunches to those families who qualify based on need. For more information, visit <https://www.adams12.org/resources/nutrition/free-and-reduced-meals>.



DIETARY NEEDS

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS?

We have a variety of menu choices to accommodate allergies. With our "offer versus serve" concept, students can decline a certain number of food items in a meal based on their needs. For more information, visit <https://www.adams12.org/resources/nutrition/special-dietary-needs>.

School Calendar and Policy Information



SCHOOL CALENDAR: VACATIONS, HOLIDAYS AND SCHEDULED DAYS OFF

The calendar for the district is posted on the district's website: <https://www.adams12.org/our-district/calendar>.

TIP:

Each school has their own website that features their school calendar which will show dates for school-specific events like parent-teacher conferences, concerts and family nights: www.adams12.org/schools.



SCHOOL POLICIES

Each school has a student/parent handbook that you should receive at the beginning of the school year. The handbook outlines policies related to discipline, attendance, behavior and many other issues. You should receive a hard copy from the school, but also check the school's website to see if there is a link to the handbook. For district policies, please visit <https://www.adams12.org/our-district/search-policies>.

Parent Role in Education

As parents, we play a critical role in our child's education. Not only are we our child's first educator, we guide and support them actively throughout their K-12 academic journey. There are many ways we can make a difference. One of the easiest and most important ways is simply getting our children to school every day, ready to learn! Most of us remember kindergarten as a time of recess and naps and don't realize how kindergarten can have lasting effects on our children's academic success.

Parents often wonder what they can do to support their children as they go to school. These tips, courtesy of Coronado Hills Elementary, seem basic but are very important and make a difference:

- Make sure your child is healthy, well rested and eats a good breakfast.
- Have your child at school every day and on time.
- Spend time with your child discussing what is being learned at school and completing homework.
- Attend school functions and parent teacher conferences.
- Make time regularly for family activities and just to talk.
- If possible, volunteer in the classroom or at schoolwide events.
- Read with your child each night according to the grade level expectation.
- Provide a consistent time and location free of distractions for your child to complete their homework. Review the homework with them upon completion.
- Check your child's backpack each evening to check on school information and to ensure they are ready for the next day.
- Limit your child's screen time (TV, video games, computers, etc.) to less than two hours each day.

GET INVOLVED

There are lots of ways to get involved with your child's education in the Five Star District. Classroom teachers use volunteers in a variety of ways, schools and the district have parent groups that meet regularly. Whatever amount of time you have to give is greatly welcomed, encouraged and appreciated. The success of our kids, schools and the district depends on a strong partnership between parents and schools. For more information, visit <https://www.adams12.org/resources/get-involved>.

School Visit Checklist

School Name: _____ Phone: _____

AS AN ACTIVE OBSERVER, LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING INDICATORS DURING YOUR SCHOOL VISIT:

YES	NO	
		Each classroom looks cheerful and students are focused on their work.
		Student work is displayed and is appropriate for each grade level.
		Teachers seem enthusiastic and knowledgeable.
		The principal is confident and interested in interacting with children, teachers and parents.
		Students behave in a respectful manner toward one another in class, during transition and at lunchtime.
		There is a gym, playground or field.
		There is an art room, music room, science room and/or computer lab.
		Facilities are well maintained, the bathrooms are clean and well supplied, and the grounds look safe and inviting.

OTHER INFORMATION

Transportation options: _____

School start and end times: _____

Before-and-after school programming: _____

Extracurricular activities: _____

Homework practices: _____

Technology use: _____

Discipline and safety policies: _____

Philosophy or mission: _____

School communications: _____

Special Thanks

Thanks to all of the parent and teacher volunteers who contributed to the creation of this document. Parents serving on a special committee and teacher members of District Twelve Educators' Association (DTEA) graciously gave their time and expertise to create this guide to welcome new parents and students to the district.

The subcommittee met over a year to compile, research and answer commonly asked questions from parents sending their children to kindergarten for the first time. Teachers contributed learning materials and insight on what happens in the classroom on a daily basis. We hope you find this guide to be practical, useful and a good introduction to what's ahead for the coming year!