

Welcome to Kindergarten: Principal Planning Guide



Preparing for Kindergarten Registration Month

Registration for all TDSB Kindergarten programs begins in February. Parents/guardians will have the option of registering their child in-person at school or beginning the registration process via online registration (OLR) at www.tdsb.on.ca/kindergarten. Regardless of which process caregivers select, they will be required to visit the local school to validate registration information. See the attached outline of materials available to Principals to prepare for Kindergarten Registration. All Kindergarten registration materials and advertising will be posted on the Principal website.

To support families if they opt for the OLR, Principals are asked to coordinate with their Community Support Workers, Settlement Workers and EarlyON Parent Workers, as these staff members have been trained in the OLR and can support families. It is highly recommended that Principals set up a kiosk in their EarlyON Centre or in an alternate space to encourage families who may want to access the OLR during Kindergarten Registration.



Admission Eligibility Requirements

As you are aware, if a child will be four by December 31, 2020, he or she can start Junior Kindergarten in September 2020. If a child will be five by December 31, 2020, he or she can start Senior Kindergarten in September 2020.

Please Note: the age at which a child is eligible to attend and/or must attend school depends on whether their date of birth falls on/before or after the first day of school (September 8, 2020). Should you receive any questions from parents/guardians, the following chart may be of assistance in determining the grade a child is eligible to attend for the 2020-21 school year and what the options are for children born between the first day of school and December 31.

For more information regarding Admission Eligibility Requirements (PR518), please refer to: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Detail/docId/1635>

	Birth Date: January 1 – September 7	Birth Date: September 8- December 31
Age 4 (born 2016)	Junior Kindergarten	Junior Kindergarten
Age 5 (born 2015)	Senior Kindergarten	Options: Junior Kindergarten (delaying senior kindergarten until the next school year) OR Senior Kindergarten
Age 6 (born 2014)	Grade 1 (attendance is mandatory)	Options: Senior Kindergarten (delaying Grade 1 until the next school year) OR Grade 1

Please note: There is a separate process to apply for [optional attendance](#). If parents/guardians wish to register their child at an [elementary alternative school](#) or [elementary academy](#), they are advised to contact the school directly for more information about requirements and the registration process.

News You Can Use (School Newsletter and Websites) - Kindergarten Registration 2020

February is Kindergarten Registration Month

Registration for all TDSB Kindergarten programs begins in February. We look forward to welcoming you and your child at our school in September!

To attend Junior Kindergarten in September, children must turn four years old by December 31. To register for Senior Kindergarten, children must be five years old by December 31. You may choose to register in person at the school or begin this process online.

For more information about the Kindergarten program and registration requirements, please visit:
www.tdsb.on.ca/kindergarten

(Principals: Insert school-specific registration information-e.g., dates, times, school phone numbers etc.)

**Training will be offered to all office staff, including Office Administrators, secretaries, Vice-Principals and Principals on how to use the Online Registration System as well as how to support the Developmental History Form via Permission Click that will be made available for families to complete online as part of the Kindergarten Registration Process. This training will be made available by the SIS team on December 6, 2019 and January 17, 2020.*

EYE@K Reporting Initiative

The Ministry of Education will continue to collect information about Junior Kindergarten (JK) and Senior Kindergarten (SK) students' early years experiences through a series of voluntary questions for parents/guardians to answer during registration. These questions will be available online or in paper format for families to complete, based on their registration preference. The questionnaire has been translated into 8 languages from the Ministry which should also be made available for families should they wish to complete the questionnaire. The answers will be shared with schools to help educators support student transitions to full-day Kindergarten. The information will also be shared with child care system planners in the school community to help them plan, coordinate, and improve the programs and services for families and young children in their community. The personal information is collected under the legal authority of the Education Act R.S.O.1980, s.8.1

Staggered Entry Protocol

The Toronto District School Board recognizes that the first day of Kindergarten is an important milestone for all children and their parents/guardians. Every child has different needs. Often these needs are identified during transition to Kindergarten activities. Some children in Junior Kindergarten (JK) may benefit from a more gradual entry into school and staggering entry into school may create a more positive and nurturing first experience in a Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) classroom. A plan for staggered entry for children in JK is permitted when the circumstances and plan are approved by the Superintendent of



Education (SOE) in advance of any communication with families.

Staggered entry must follow the following principles:

- All children in JK and SK enrolled in FDK Before-and After-School Programs (located in the school or community) must start school on the first day.
- All children in SK are expected to begin school on the first day. Parents/guardians must agree to a delayed start to the school year for their child.
- Children will start school on the day they arrive regardless of the plan for staggered entry.
- All JK children must start school by Friday of the first week.



Transitions

Transitions should not be seen as a one-time event. Effective transitions involve an ongoing process of planning and collaboration between a number of partners including, children, families, educators, community members, child care, professional organizations and community support groups. As children transition to school it is understood that schools must be ready for children, rather than children being ready for school. In consideration of the various transitions children experience in the early years, educators must put children's needs first and be thoughtful in planning and implementing more seamless transitions. Planning for transitions allows schools to be proactive and to help bridge and overcome potential challenges.

When working together to develop a plan of action, we can help provide children and families with the knowledge and skills to manage transitions successfully. Below are some helpful transition strategies for the school and for the class.

School-Wide Strategies:

- Compose a team to support transitions throughout Kindergarten.
- Communicate important information about the dates and what families need to bring for registration at least one month before kindergarten registration (Kindergarten banner, letters home, posters and partnering with Early Years centres or other organizations).
- Provide families with the TDSB Developmental History Form, Kindergarten Registration booklet and Kindergarten FAQ (available online in multiple languages).
- Share information with families, encouraging them to utilize free family support programs and family resource centres.
- Plan a kindergarten orientation event (s) prior to school entry.
- Provide opportunity for families to give suggestions or feedback regarding the Kindergarten entry process.

Classroom Focused Strategies:

- Attempt to minimize transitions within the classroom.
- Build a sense of community and belonging with each Kindergarten space, spend time speaking to and getting to know each student.
- Consider the age and attention span of Kindergarten students and minimize the amount of time spent on whole group instruction at the carpet.

- Consider a “less is more” approach at the start of the year with regards to learning materials.
- Spend time modelling strategies for self-regulation and identify “calmness.”
- Consider creating a Kindergarten welcome bag including materials used in the classroom and provide ideas to families on how the materials are used (see example below)
- Offer opportunities for families/caregivers to take part in the program and engage in learning experiences together.
- Be flexible and responsive to children’s social/emotional needs.
- Prepare students and families for “first day” experiences (e.g. creating a social story package or a [“Welcome to our Class” booklet](#)).
- Where possible, offer opportunities for educators, lunchroom supervisors, school support/prep teachers to meet and engage with students and families.
- Consider one-on-one time for families to go over the TDSB Developmental History Form.
- Provide a welcome letter from each educating team/class.
- Suggest informal times of the year where families and children entering Kindergarten can meet with each other to discuss questions they may have about the program (e.g. meeting at the local park or library).
- Provide families with information on how to become a school volunteer or how to join the school council.
- Include families in the classroom inquiries and ensure there is opportunity for children to involve community members, parents/guardians and other family members.
- Use social media to engage and communicate with families during Kindergarten transition.

Connections and Partnerships with Child Cares to Support the Transition to Kindergarten

- Provide child care staff with information about where to find information about the school (including the registration process, orientation events, Optional Attendance) and ask them to share this with families in their programs.
- Invite child care staff to visit the Kindergarten program to observe and ask whether school staff may visit and observe the child care program.
- Invite child care staff to bring children who will be beginning school to visit the Kindergarten program for a tour.
- Plan joint activities (e.g., registration, trips, special events).
- Request that child care staff share information about children where the TDSB Consent to Share Information Form has been signed to support children’s individual needs and effective transitions. Discuss the transfer of records if appropriate and consent has been obtained.
- Extend the offer for Kindergarten educators to come to a parent meeting in the child care setting to talk about Kindergarten.

Principal's Checklist for Kindergarten Registration

	To Do	Timeline	Responsibility	Completed
1	<p>Meet with O.A. and Early Years Staff team to discuss Kindergarten Registration: Process Roles and Responsibilities Space Requirements</p> <p><i>Note: Early Years staff team may include Kindergarten teachers, Early Childhood Educators, Before –and- After-School Program staff and Parent Worker staff, Community Support Workers (if applicable)</i></p>	January		
2	Confirm dates for February Kindergarten Registration	January		
3	Meet with School Council to discuss their participation in the Kindergarten Registration process (could be an agenda item at December Parent Council meeting)	January		
4	Check System Leaders' Bulletin Message	December and January		
5	Make decisions about material available to parents at registration (e.g. Welcome to Kindergarten booklet, TDSB materials, Public Health materials and other agency and/or before- and after-school program materials)	December		
6	Purchase supplies for registering students, as required	December and January		
7	Receive copies of Board materials and Public Health materials to distribute to registering parents	January		
8	<p>Put notice of registration dates in school newsletter and other places in the community as required</p> <p><i>*see News You Can Use item above</i></p>	December and January		
9	Communicate with area child cares and Early ONs regarding enrolment of kindergarten-aged children to ascertain potential numbers	January		
10	Communicate with Special Education Consultant about registering of kindergarten children with special needs	January		
11	Arrange for School Council parents, present JK parents/guardians, volunteers and/or students to act as hosts for registration	January		
12	Arrange to display TDSB Kindergarten Registration Banner	January		
13	Arrange with Community Support Worker, Parent Worker, Settlement Worker to coordinate times to support families who would like to visit the school and use the Online Registration Option	January		

Principal's Checklist for Kindergarten Registration Continued

14	Arrange kiosk/computer in EarlyON or an alternate space during registration week, if applicable	2 weeks ahead of time		
15	Arrange for translators, as required	2-3 weeks ahead of time		
16	Send home confirmation of registration appointment (if school practice)	2-3 weeks ahead of time		
17	Arrange for parent volunteers to take photos (if appropriate)	2-3 weeks ahead of time		
18	Arrange for someone to purchase refreshments (if appropriate)	1 week ahead		
19	Copy for Face to Face Registration: Registration Forms Attestation Forms Developmental History Forms EYE@K Ministry Questionnaire	1 week ahead		
20	Discuss and arrange registration area set up and furniture/equipment needs with Caretaker, O.A. and Early Years Staff team Remember to use EarlyON centre for children to play during registration process	1 week ahead		
21	Arrange for occasional teacher coverage for the JK teacher(s) and/or Early Childhood Educator (ECE) if educators are participating	1 week ahead		
22	Arrange for office coverage to ensure that there is someone in the office while OA is registering	1 week ahead		
23	Display welcome signs and directions to registration area	Day before		
24	Double check everything is ready	Day before		



After Kindergarten Registration

	To Do	Timeline	Responsibility	Completed
1	<p>Educators meet with families to discuss the Developmental History Form</p> <p>If the Online Registration system is used, families will receive an email with a link to access the Developmental History Form online. Educators can then get a printed copy through the office staff.</p>	Before September		
2	Transition planning meetings are held for any children with special education needs	Spring		
3	<p>Plan and hold Kindergarten orientation events to welcome families and continue to build relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite families to visit the school for a classroom tour with their children • Invite families to attend a Kindergarten Orientation event at the school • Invite educators and community agencies to hold workshops for new families based on interests and needs of the community • Invite families to attend whole-school events • Consider planning a family BBQ or Lemonade Day to welcome families 	Spring		

Creating a Kindergarten Package to Support the Transition to School

Schools may choose to create a Kindergarten Package for families to take home when they attend the Kindergarten Orientation. As schools create their Kindergarten packages, they are encouraged to consider selecting appropriate materials that are culturally relevant and reflect the identities, strengths and needs of the community. Below, you will find a list of resources and materials that you may wish to include in your Kindergarten Package.

- Information about the Kindergarten Program
- Information about the School
- Information from Community Partners

Additional Resources for Students

Schools are not limited to the following list of materials:

- A Read Aloud (see below for sample titles)
- TDSB Kraft Bag (TDSB DC Item #: 8841)
- Small bag with a variety of loose parts (e.g., Beechwood rings, shells, rocks/stones, buttons, pipe cleaners, natural materials, etc.)
- Multicultural Crayons (TDSB DC Item #: 323)
- Crayons (TDSB DC Item #: 31)
- Watercolour paint with brush (TDSB DC Item #: 450)
- Scissors (TDSB DC Item #: 119)
- Left-handed scissors (TDSB DC Item #: 121)
- Playdough (TDSB DC Item #: 9322)
- Magnetic letters (lowercase)
- Magnetic letters (uppercase)
- Assortment of paper (e.g., construction paper, white paper, watercolour paper, etc.)



Read Alouds to Support the Transition to Kindergarten

Book Cover	Book Title	Author/Illustrator	ISBN
	All Are Welcome	Written by Alexandra Penfold Illustrated by Suzanne Kaufman	978-0525579649
	What's My Superpower?	Written by Aviaq Johnston Illustrated by Tim Mack	78-1772271409
	The Day You Begin	Written by Jacqueline Woodson Illustrated by Rafael Lopez	978-0399246531
	Little You	Written by Richard Van Camp Illustrated by Julie Flett	978-1459802483
	Lola Goes to School	Written by Anna McQuinn Illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw	978-1580899383

Book Cover	Book Title	Author/Illustrator	ISBN
	Nimoshom and His Bus	Written by Penny M. Thomas Illustrated by Karen Hibbard	978-1553797081
	Say Something	Written by Peter H. Reynolds Illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds	978-0545865036
	Siku and Kamik Go to School	Written by Neil Christopher and Andrew Trabbold	978-1772660814
	Ruby's Worry	Written by Tom Percival	978-1408892152
	I Walk with Vanessa	Written by Kerascoët	978-1524769550
	You Hold Me Up, Ki Kihcêyimin Mâna	Written by Monique Gray Smith Illustrated by Danielle Daniel	978-1459814479

Additional Resources:

[Edugains: Early Primary Central : Parent Resources](#)

[Ontario ministry of Education: Planning Entry to School: A Resource Guide](#)

[PR 696: Kindergarten Registration](#)

[TDSB Print Resources Available Online – Principals' Site](#)

www.settlement.org/edguide

www.toronto.ca/health/a_healthy_start_to_school/index.htm