



Kindergarten Readiness Information Meeting

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AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
- The Westwood Kindergarten Day
- To Send or Not to Send
- Preparing for Kindergarten
- Kindergarten Registration
- Your Questions

What Does the Kindergarten Day Look Like?

- Morning arrival time
- Class meeting
- Small group ELA
- Snack/Motor Break
- Small group Math
- Special
- Lunch/recess
- Read aloud/share
- Whole class Science/Social Studies
- Clean-up
- Dismissal

Teachers typically present a mini-lesson to the class

Students move through a series of stations and work with teachers/assistants

Differentiated instruction, frequent formative assessment

Students learn responsibility and develop independence

What Do Kindergarteners Learn?

Subjects

- Literacy
 - Foundational reading and writing
- Numeracy
 - Foundational number understanding
- Science
- Social Studies
- Social Competency

Specials

Art
Library
Music
Physical Education
Lunch
Recess

Question: To Send or Not to Send?

Common Reasons to Send

- Age appropriate
- Friends are going
- Siblings are at school
- Day care is expensive
- Will have an advantage by starting formal education
- Ready for the challenge
- Other reasons?

Common Reasons Not to Send

- Summer birthday/June, July, August
- Small in size
- Will have an advantage by being older than peers
- Emotionally/socially immature
- Not ready for the bus or “big kids”
- Current preschool teacher recommends an additional year
- Other reasons?

What The Research Says about Educational **Redshirting** Young Children

Redshirting borrows its name from sports. The youngster sits out a year and prolongs their eligibility so that they will be larger, stronger and older when they finally take the field.



Academic RedShirt

Patterns and Prevalence

Current Research

1. Changes school entry laws
2. Parental beliefs
3. Strategic parental desires

In the Past

Nearly all children entered kindergarten at the age of five.

Patterns & Prevalence

Approximately 4 to 5.5 percent of children delay kindergarten

Family finances play a role as many families view redshirting as prohibitively expensive

1. Highest for those with birthdays before cutoff
2. Varies for gender, race and SES

Patterns & Prevalence

Twice as likely to be boys than girls

More likely to be white

Children who come from families with more resources

(Datar, 2006b, Dobkin & Ferreira 2010)

Patterns/Prevalence

Implications

Parents may desire to give their child an “edge” in what they perceive as a competitive environment.

Parents may feel pressured because redshirting impacts the child’s initial standing within the kindergarten cohort

How are school-level redshirting norms communicated to parents through professional advice-e.g. Preschool teachers, pediatricians , neighborhood ?

Linking School Readiness and Social Development

Learning is a social process.

(Zins et al, 2004)

Academic achievement in the first few years of schooling appears to be built on a foundation of children's emotional and social skills.

(Raver, 2002)

Important Social Skills

- getting along with others
- following directions
- identifying and regulating one's emotions and behavior
- thinking of appropriate solutions to conflict
- persisting on a task
- engaging in social conversation and cooperative play
- correctly interpreting others' behaviors and emotions
- feeling good about oneself and others

How Can I Help My Child Prepare for Kindergarten?

- **Promoting self-awareness**
 - Learning address and phone number
- **Encouraging self-help skills**
 - Asking questions
 - Organizing belongings
 - Paying attention
- **Promoting school skills**
 - Taking turns
 - Following directions
 - Raising hand
 - Sharing
 - Listening
 - Cooperating

- **Preparing social skills**
 - Making play dates with students entering kindergarten
 - Participating in sports, dance, and other activities
- **Preparing Academics**
 - Reading to your child daily
 - Practicing the alphabet
 - Counting together
 - Work on fine motor skills (coloring, using child-friendly scissors, etc.)

To send or not to send?

Answer: It is the parents' choice

- Westwood public schools are prepared to teach all age-appropriate kindergartners
- Frequent ongoing assessment guides instruction
- Differentiated approaches to teaching ensure that students leave kindergarten prepared for 1st grade



Kindergarten Registration

- Parents of age-appropriate children (age 5 by Sept. 1st) will receive a letter from Westwood Public Schools outlining the registration process
- Required documents:
 - Your child's birth certificate or passport
 - Proof of residency
 - Your child's immunization record
 - Proof of physical examination
 - Proof of lead screening
 - Tuberculosis test results
- Massachusetts homeless families can register their children for school even if they do not have the required documents.
- There is on-line registration.
<http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/district/information-for-new-families/Kindergarten/>

What questions can we answer for you?

Resources:

- Westwood Public Schools Kindergarten website
<http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/district/information-for-new-families/Kindergarten/>
- Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/>
- Youngest Kid, Smartest Kid?
<http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/youngest-kid-smartest-kid>