

12/6/22 NPS Kinder Info Night Questions + Answers

Is there flexibility around drop off time in the morning?

All four Northampton Public Elementary Schools begin their day sharply at 8 am. If students arrive after 8am they are marked as tardy.

We would love to see a daily schedule!

Daily schedules vary slightly by school and classroom (due to building-wide lunch, recess, and specials schedules), although educators in each kindergarten classroom throughout the district weave the same curriculum and instructional practices, focused on play and exploration, into their instruction and routines. Once placed in a classroom, individual kindergarten educators can provide a more specific explanation of their daily schedule.

Here are components of the day you will find in every kindergarten classroom:

- Morning Meeting
- Breakfast/Snack Time
- Free Choice Time
- Recess
- Lunch
- Literacy - Phonics, Phonemic awareness, Reading and Writing
- Math
- Specials - Library, Music, Art, Physical Education

Could you speak a bit more about the Early Bird/Late Bird options for Leeds Elementary School?

The Early Bird/Late Bird program at Leeds Elementary is an “in-house” before and after school program supervised by Leeds School staff. This is a similar program contracted to YMCA at other school locations. Early Bird runs from 7:00-7:45 am. Late Bird runs from 2:10-5:15 pm.

How does the relationship between Ryan Road school and the shooting range across the street work? What safety precautions are in place at Ryan Road considering the school is across from an active gun club? Also, have there been any incidents/lockdowns in reference to the gun club?

The relationship between RK Finn Ryan Road Elementary School and the Northampton Revolver Club across the street has been one of a long standing respect and communication around the safety of our community, including all those who attend and work at the school. In line with this commitment, The Northampton Revolver is not open during school hours during the school year and there has not been any incidents or lockdowns related to the club.

Is there an opportunity to request your child be put in the same classroom as a friend from preschool?

Families are given a chance to share information about their child through the Developmental Questionnaire (part of K registration forms). While formal requests are not taken, much thought and care goes into the classroom placement for each child every year. For incoming kindergarten students placement is determined by observations of children in their current preschool setting, balancing children's learning needs, feedback from caregivers, and with intent to give each child a familiar face in their classroom.

Can the five year old screening take place in the spring?

Kindergarten screenings will begin in late January. We'll share a link to sign up with you and will hold some screenings at Northampton based childcare centers. Our hope is that you will take the first available appointment for screening. If a date later in the spring is all you can do, then yes, we'll do it in the spring.

Are there plans for a Bridge Street School playground upgrade?

Not at the moment! The soft surface and equipment of the large playground is relatively new. There is also a Preschool and Kindergarten specific playground separate from the larger playground that is developmentally appropriate for the 3-6 year olds.

I'm curious about the phrase "Kindergarten readiness" — what should caregivers have in mind when thinking about preparing children for kindergarten?

We believe that most kids who are kindergarten-age are ready for kindergarten. We are ready for them, no matter what they need. If, as a caregiver, you think your child might benefit from an extra year before starting kindergarten, we would be glad to think that decision through with you, but we are ready for your five year old no matter what they need. There are some helpful guides at the bottom of our kindergarten webpage that you may find helpful.

There are some at home strategies that can help with kindergarten readiness which include but are not limited to:

- **Read together** - need books? <https://forbeslibrary.org/kids/> and <https://lillylibrary.org/about/location-and-hours/>
- **Count together** - counting quickly is not the goal here, help your child slow down in counting so they really connect the number to the amount of something. You can invite them to bring 3 forks and 3 knives to the table, invite them to count how many cans of tuna you have in the pantry, how many shoes do they have in the closet - lining them up then counting by touching each one is important
- **Providing opportunities for your child to do things themselves** -
 - let them practice packing up their lunchbox even if you make all the items, they will need to be able to open & close containers, take everything out and put it all back into their lunchbox
 - practice all the kinds of clothing closures - zipping, tying,

- *practice having them put their mittens in their hat then into the coat sleeve before hanging up their own coat*

- **Waiting** - *yes, waiting! Teachers and Paraeducators are amazing people and your child will be in a class with 16-22 other children, perhaps you have 2-4 at home? You can help them stretch their ability to wait by alternating how quickly you offer to help them. This may sound peculiar but slowly increasing their tolerance of wait times for their needs to be met is truly a big “kindergarten readiness” item.*

Are there programs available at particular schools and not others? Are there major differences in the different schools?

Generally speaking, our schools are very similar. Kindergarten teachers from all four schools meet regularly to work towards the same goals, we use the same curriculum, and we share values and a vision for elementary education. There are some differences in before and after school care, in which grants are active in our buildings, and each school has a different personality, but we are still very much on the same page.