The ABC’s of Kindergarten

Attendance
We keep an accurate record of each child’s attendance. Students who are absent or tardy are required to bring a note of explanation when they return to school. Absences and tardies will be recorded on the report card. Please call the office everyday of your child’s absence. Please send a written note in your child’s daily folder when he/she returns to school and a doctor’s note, if applicable. Excessive absences and tardies hinder a child’s progress, so please make every effort to have your child at school everyday.

Assessment
We use several instruments to assess students in Kindergarten. Throughout the year your child will be informally assessed during the regular school day in all academic areas. We will use the iStation assessment tool as a formal reading assessment. This assessment helps identify student needs and helps set learning objectives and develop instructional plans on an individual basis. Report card assessment is done every nine weeks.

Backpacks
Each child will need to bring a backpack to school DAILY. Much of his/her work is sent home each day and it is important for you to take the time to check the backpack for work or information.

Belongings
Please label all of your child’s belongings with a permanent marker.

Binders
Your child will be bringing home a binder daily. The binder will contain a mail folder, star behavior folder and homework. Please make sure you check it each day to remove your child’s work and for important information. Returning the binder DAILY is part of your child’s homework and developmental skill of responsibility.

Birthdays
Birthday parties are not permitted at school, but you may send a treat to be passed out to the class. Cookies, small cupcakes or individually wrapped snacks are great birthday treats. Please do not send treats with peanuts or tree nuts. Birthday invitations are not to be passed out at school unless EVERYONE in the class receives one. We are not permitted to give out phone numbers or addresses, but by joining the PTA, you will receive a school-wide directory. It is important to return the directory information form back to school if you would like to be included in the directory.

Book Orders
Throughout the year you will receive an order form from a book club. These book clubs offer quality books at a reasonable cost. Each order enables the teacher to order additional books for the classroom. You are under no obligation to participate, but even one new book per month sends the message to your child that books are important and reading is fun! We cannot accept cash for book orders, but paying online is an easy and convenient way to purchase books. By paying online you can order from ANY book club, not just the one sent home and you will receive special incentives such as coupons and free books at times. If you prefer not to pay online, please send a check made payable to the book club named on the order form and staple it to the book order or place them together in a sealed envelope with your child’s name on the front. Orders usually arrive in two to three weeks.

Change of Address or Phone Number
It is very important that the information we have on file is current. If your address, phone number, or place of employment changes throughout the year, please send a note to school notifying us of the change.

Clothing
All students are to dress according to the Dress Code guidelines outlined in the District Student Handbook. It is important to practice tying, buttoning, snapping and zipping. This makes restroom time much smoother! Make sure they always have a change of clothing in their backpacks for accidents, spills, etc.
Communication Between Home and School
Communication between home and school is very important. If you have any notes, or questions, please put them in your child's daily folder. Also, feel free to call or email if you have questions or concerns. The number at school is 817-251-5735. Kindergarten conference time is 11:55-12:45. You may also email your child's teacher using firstname.lastname@gcisd.net.

Closed Campus
All GCISD campuses will have the outside doors locked for the safety of all of our students. When you come to the school, you will ring the bell at the front entrance and the office will let you in. When you come to school you will be asked to present your Driver's License, so please be sure you have it with you each time you visit the school.

Dismissal
Dismissal is at 2:45 P.M. For the safety of all children, your child will be dismissed by the teacher and will go to the designated pick up locations with a teacher. Children who ride in a car will go to the front circle and line up alphabetically by last name. Children who go to KidzU will be dismissed into the cafeteria. Children who ride a bus or daycare van will be dismissed to the front of the school. Walkers will be dismissed at the picnic tables under the awning. If you are picking up your child in a car, please use your car sign and follow the pick-up procedures given to you on Meet the Teacher night.

Early Arrival
School begins at 7:35 a.m. If your child arrives before this time (no earlier than 7:15 a.m.), he/she will need to go to the school cafeteria. Breakfast may be purchased at this time.

Early Pickup
If you need to pick up your child prior to 2:45, please report to the office. Teachers cannot release a child without permission from the office. It is helpful to send a note in your child's folder if he/she will be leaving school early. The office will not be releasing students between 2:30 and 2:45, so if you have an appointment, you must pick up your child prior to 2:30.

Field Trips
We will take educational field trips during the year. A permission slip will be required anytime we go on a field trip. If we do not receive a permission slip, your child will not be allowed to go with the class.

Fire/Tornado/Lockdown Drills
We will be practicing fire, tornado and lockdown drills periodically throughout the year, so we will be prepared in case of an emergency. Please discuss the importance of performing these drills quickly and quietly with your child to ensure the safety of each child.

Fundraisers
Grapevine Elementary participates in fundraisers throughout the year to raise money for our school. We hope that everyone can participate, but it is not required.

Guidance
Our school counselor will conduct classroom guidance lessons once a month and is available for individual guidance as needed. You can contact our counselor, Angela Horn, at angel.horn@gcisd.net

Handwriting
We use the Zaner-Bloser handwriting style at Grapevine Elementary. You will receive a handout of Zaner-Bloser handwriting strokes in the homework folder. Please practice the correct strokes with your child.

Headphones
Every child will need a set of headphones to use with their iPad. Earbuds do not work well in little ears. These do not need to be expensive as they do tend to break. Please label them and ask your child regularly if they are still working.

Homework
Your child will have homework in Kindergarten. Homework will go home on Monday and needs to be returned on Friday. Occasionally your child may have a special project for homework which will be explained in a separate note sent home. Your child will also be taking home a reading folder regularly with books to be read at home and returned to school.
Illness
Please do not send your child to school if he/she has a temperature. Students may not attend school within 24 hours of running a fever. If your child becomes ill at school, you will be called to come and get your child. We need at least two working phone numbers at all times in order to contact you in case of illness or emergency.

Journal/Notebook Writing
We will keep interactive journals this year in Kindergarten. We will use these journals to record our learning and refer back to them when needed.

Key Words
This year we will teach your children specific "key words" which will help trigger their memories when recalling letters and letter sounds when reading and writing. We will use these at school on a daily basis and you may request a copy to keep at home, as well.

Kelso
Kelso is our mascot for conflict resolution. We teach children to try two ways to resolve a small conflict with a friend before coming to the teacher for help. We also teach students if they are ever hurt, feel threatened or frightened, they should tell an adult IMMEDIATELY. You will be receiving these strategies to work on at home too.

Library
We will go to the library as a class every week to check out books and listen to a story or have a digital lesson with the Librarian. Kindergartners will be allowed to check out one book at a time. Please help your child learn responsibility by taking care of the books checked out and returning them to school on time. Our school librarian will also have a reading program throughout the year in which we hope everyone will participate.

Lunch
Each child should bring a lunch from home or purchase a lunch at school. The cost of school lunch is $2.60. If you would like to see if your child is eligible for reduced-price or free lunch, be sure to fill out the paperwork and return it to school. Your child may pay for lunch daily, but to avoid confusion or lost money, we suggest you pay for several meals at a time. The amount you pay will be kept on the computer in your child’s account. Each child will be issued a 4-digit code to purchase lunch. We will help your child to punch in this code on a keypad by the register. You may put money in your child’s account before the school day begins, send a check in your child’s folder, or pay online. When your account is running low, your child’s hand will be stamped to notify you. Milk is included with lunch; however, it can be purchased for .65 for students bringing lunch from home who need to buy a drink. Additional drinks, chips, ice cream and other snacks can also be purchased and range from .40-$1.00. This is in addition to the regular lunch price. If you want restrictions on these items (no snacks, or snacks only on certain days) you will need to complete the form in the back of the lunch menu calendar or online. myschoolbucks

Medication
All medication including cough drops, eye drops, topical skin treatments, Tylenol, etc. must be taken directly to the school nurse with a note. Only the nurse can administer Rx medicine in the original, labeled container. A new note must be sent for each new illness or medication. Please NEVER send medication in lunch boxes.

Newsletters
A monthly newsletter will be sent by email to inform you of upcoming events, units of study and reminders. Please make a note of special events at the beginning of each month. We will also send emails with additional information as needed.

Nurse
We have a school nurse on campus each day. Her job is primarily to dispense doctor-prescribed medication, take care of minor injuries, and take care of children who are too sick to return to class until a parent can pick him/her up.

Outside Recess
Kindergartners need to run and play. We will be going to recess everyday unless it is raining, below 36 degrees, or above 100 degrees. If the temperature is very cold or hot (below 40 or above 90), or an ozone alert day, recess will be shortened. Please check the weather daily so your child is wearing the appropriate clothing for playing outside. If your child is unable to participate in recess, please send a note. If your child is unable to participate for an extended time period, please provide a doctor’s note.
Parties
There will be two parties during the year. A Winter Holiday Party and a Valentine Party will be planned and hosted by the homeroom parents. Your child is proud of your help and participation in these parties, so any time or supplies you can offer are greatly appreciated!

PTA
Our PTA does wonderful things for our school! Our goal is to have 100% membership this year. Please consider joining at the low cost of $10. The PTA works extremely hard to make Grapevine a great place for your child to learn, so we hope you can support them in their efforts.

Questions
Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's education. She will make every effort to meet with you and discuss your concerns.

Reporting to Parents
A report card will accessible online at the end of each nine week reporting period. Grades are given based on teacher observation and assessment. It will be reported whether your child has "Mastery of the Standards," is "Approaching the Standards," or is performing "Below Expectations of the Standards." You may contact your child’s teacher at any time to schedule a conference regarding your child’s progress.

Restrooms
We have a restroom in our classroom or in close proximity to our classroom. Your child is allowed to go when needed. We will also make several trips a day to the restroom as a class. Unfortunately, accidents will happen and we will make sure that your child is sent to the nurse’s office for a change of clothes. Please be sure to wash any clothing borrowed from the nurse and return it to school as soon as possible.

School Supplies
Our school supplies are well-used in Kindergarten. Sometimes we run out of certain items and we may ask you to replace supplies during the year.

Shoes
It is very important to wear comfortable shoes. Your children will be going to recess and PE everyday and they are required to wear tennis shoes.

Snack
Please send a small, dry snack with your child daily. Kindergarten has the first lunch time each day (10:20) and the children will need some extra fuel to finish the day.

Tardies
Please make sure your child is at school on time. Good habits begin early! When your child is late, he/she must go to the office before coming to class to receive a tardy slip. The first bell rings at 7:35. Your child is tardy after the 7:45 bell.

Toys
Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school. Occasionally we will have special days when your child may bring a toy. You will be notified in writing of these days.

Transportation
If there is any change in the way your child is getting home from school, you must send a note with your child or call the school. This protects your child and the school. It puts the teacher in a very difficult position when a child insists he/she has different transportation arrangements when the teacher has no notification from an adult. Please DO NOT send a transportation change in an email. Often we are not able to check emails in enough time to receive the message before school is over.

Units and Themes
We will be studying various topics throughout the year. Refer to our newsletter or Kindergarten website to see what we are studying.

Volunteers and Visitors
Anytime you are visiting or volunteering in our school, you MUST sign in at the office and receive a visitor sticker. We will be looking for this sticker when you come to the classroom. You must also fill out a Volunteer Background Check on the district’s website. This will keep our school as safe as possible.

Words of the Week
Each week your child will learn new high frequency words. He/she will practice learning to read and spell these words at school. Please make flash card of these cards at home to reinforce your child’s hard work at school.
Website
We have a Kindergarten website for you to access from home. You will find lots of information there and we hope you find it useful. The address is www.gcisd-k12.org. Click on 'Select a school' in the upper left-hand corner, then 'Grapevine', 'Directory' and the teacher's name.

eXciting
Kindergarten is an exciting and special time for you and your child. We will make every effort to make this a fantastic year for your child!

Yearbook
You will have a chance to purchase a yearbook in the Spring. What a great way to capture precious memories of your child's first year in school!

Zzzzzzz
Your child should get plenty of rest each night. Kindergarten students require 10-12 hours of sleep a day. It is so important for your child to be alert and ready to learn each day. Set a bedtime and be consistent.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year with your children!