Kindergarten Readiness Guide!

Ready... Set... Go!

Natrona County Schools

The Natrona County School District empowers every learner to grow, excel and be successful contributors to the local/global community.
DEAR FAMILIES:

Welcome to kindergarten in the Natrona County School District! Expectations for our kindergarten staff and students are high, and we do our very best to help each child realize his or her full potential.

We are committed to providing quality educational experiences for each student enrolled in our schools. This handbook provides some suggestions to help you with this important foundational school year.

We hope you will feel free to contact us with any questions, comments, suggestions or concerns you may have. The enrollment office number is (307) 253-5450. We believe we have outstanding educational programs in every one of our elementary schools and deeply appreciate your insights, suggestions and feedback to improve them.

Our doors are always open to you. Let’s work together to help your child flourish and grow.

The Natrona County School District No. 1 does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability in employment, treatment, admission or access to educational programs and activities.
School Contacts

Alcova .................. 472-2079
22000 Reclamation Dr.,
P.O. Box 106, Alcova
Bar Nunn ........... 253-4000
2050 Siebke Dr., Bar Nunn
Cottonwood ........... 253-4700
1230 W. 15th St.
Crest Hill .......... 253-4200
4445 S. Poplar St.
Evansville ............ 253-6400
452 S. Texas, Evansville
Fort Caspar .......... 253-3400
4100 W. 38th St.
Journey .............. 253-3700
2401 Hickory St.
Lincoln .............. 253-6100
945 N. Jane St.
Manor Heights ...... 253-1800
3201 E. 15th St.
Midwest .............. 253-3500
256 Lewis, Midwest
Oregon Trail ........ 253-6200
6332 Buckboard
Paradise Valley ...... 253-1200
22 Magnolia
Park .................. 253-3200
140 W. 9th St.
Pineview .......... 253-6000
639 Payne
Poison Spider ...... 253-6900
6150 Raderville Rt.
Powder River ....... 472-3939
35348 Hwy. 20/26
Red Creek .......... 473-1224
5818 Bates Creek
Sagewood .......... 253-3300
2451 Shattuck
Southridge .......... 253-1900
1600 W. 29th St.
Summit .............. 253-3000
2210 S. Waterford
Verda James ...... 253-1100
701 Carriage Lane
Woods ............... 253-3900
500 S. Walsh

Central Services
Switchboard ....... 253-5200
Curriculum ........ 253-5253
Enrollment ......... 253-5450
Español ............. 251-8802
Special Ed .......... 253-5480
970 N Glenn Rd.
Natrona County
Health Dept. ...... 235-9340
475 S. Spruce St.
Age

According to Wyoming state law, students must turn 5 years old by Sept. 15 in order to be enrolled in public kindergarten. The Natrona County School District cannot make exceptions to this law.

If your child will not be 5 years old by Sept. 15, you may consider a preschool program. Several NCSD schools offer preschool programs, as do private agencies throughout the county.

If your child will be 5 by Sept. 15 you may enroll in kindergarten. However, kindergarten is not mandatory. Please consult this book to help determine if your child is ready for kindergarten. If you are in doubt, please complete the online school enrollment process in January — it is easier to remove your child from the district’s roster than to enroll late.

Immunizations

The Immunizations State Law (W.W. 21-4-309) requires that kindergarten students have the following immunizations by 30 days after the start of school in the fall:

* 5 doses of DTP/TD, which protects students from diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (one dose must be administered at age 4 before starting kindergarten)
* 2 doses of MMR, which protects students from measles, mumps and rubella
* 4 doses of polio vaccine (minimum)
* 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
* 2 doses of varicella vaccine, which protects students from chickenpox

Immunizations are available with an appointment at the Natrona County Public Health Department, 475 S. Spruce St., for a small fee; however, no child will be denied immunization due to an inability to pay.

Nurses will be at schools to conduct immunization checks. Immunization waivers may be obtained only from the State or County Health Officer upon submission of written evidence of religious objection or medical contraindication to the administration of any vaccine.

Nurses also will be at schools in the fall to conduct visual, dental and other physical screenings for children.

Birth certificate

The original of your child’s legal birth certificate must be provided to the NCSD Enrollment Office. Parents can upload this online, or bring it to NCSD Enrollment at 970 N Glenn Rd. Baptism or hospital certificates cannot be accepted.

To learn where and how to request a legal birth certificate from another state, please visit http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm.
Get Your Child Ready for School

Develop learning skills
* Talk with your child in a positive way. Answer questions, name things, talk about pictures. Talk about what you are doing, and encourage your child to talk about what he or she is doing.
* Encourage your child to remember things seen on a walk or during visits to a new place.
* Have your child close his or her eyes and talk about the different sounds he or she can identify, such as water running, a door closing, a clock ticking.
* In a positive way, teach your child to follow simple directions, such as picking up a glass and putting it in the sink.
* Have your child close his or her eyes and identify objects by touch. Help him or her use descriptive words, such as soft pillow, smooth table, short pencil, small book.

Show your child a group of objects, then cover the objects and remove one. Show your child the group again and have him or her guess what’s missing.
* Say, “I see something ...” then describe the object by color, shape, size, texture and use. Take turns with your child describing and guessing the objects.
* Read to your child as often as possible. Ask your child what happened first, etc. Before the end of the story, ask your child what he or she thinks will happen next. Have your child recount particular details of the story.
* Discuss TV programs that you watch together. Ask your child what happened first, etc. Ask your child to predict the end of the story.

What is Kindergarten?
Kindergarten is a place for children to learn and feel successful in school. They learn to work and play together; to assume responsibility and respect each other; to develop early reading skills called ‘phonemic awareness,’ as well as letters and sounds; to write, draw and sing; to develop basic number skills, basic foreign language phrases, basic health, early science, and school and family activities.

Wyoming state law does not require kindergarten as part of its educational requirement. However, enrollment is highly recommended. Every child who is 5 years old on or before Sept. 15 of the current year may enroll. This is a state law, and the district cannot make any exceptions. A test is not given prior to enrollment.

Parents are welcome to visit the classroom at any time. Parent-teacher conferences are held in the fall and in the spring. Parents also may volunteer in classrooms.
**Establish a positive home**
Whenever possible, try to:
* Set work and play schedules.
* Share duties and household chores.
* Set aside a quiet place and time for studying and reading.
* Share family reading time, visits to libraries and museums.
* Emphasize good speech habits.
* Be patient and allow time for learning.
* Avoid sibling comparisons.
* Accept and treasure your child as a unique individual.
* Respect your child by listening to what he or she has to say and encouraging positive behavior.
* Model reading for pleasure, as well as for information.
* Read to your child every night.
* Talk with your child.
* Encourage respectful interactions between family members.

**Start learning at home**
Learning about colors, time, shapes and sizes lays the foundation for later experiences in reading and math. Parents can help children build these skills in many ways.

**Colors**: Name colors while giving directions. Choose a daily color. Identify colors during meals. Identify colors when looking at pictures. Play touch-that-color.

**Time**: Help children understand time, starting with the sequence of events as it relates to their daily life. “First I had breakfast, then I got dressed.” “Yesterday we went shopping, but today we’re staying at home.” “Today is Wednesday, and it is a school day.” “The first thing we did was eat, then we took a nap.”

**Shapes**: Identify triangles, rectangles, squares and circles by cutting sandwiches into various shapes with cookie cutters or cutting out shapes in cardboard for your child to trace. Have your child identify the shapes they come in contact with daily, such as signs shaped like triangles, boxes shaped as squares, rectangular tables or circular wheels.

**Sizes**: Talk about things that are tall, taller, tallest; short, shorter, shortest; small, smaller, smallest; and big, bigger, biggest. Ask your child who is taller or shorter than he or she is. Ask your child what things are bigger than an apple but smaller than a cereal box. Talk about dimensions, such as what items will fit in a cup and why.

**Spoken and written language**: Most children learn language best by talking about what they are physically doing. Encourage your child to describe things. How does it feel? How does it sound? How does it taste? How does it smell? How does it look? How do you feel?

**Read together at least 20 minutes a day.**
Foundation skills
* Matches objects by color, shape, taste, size, smell, texture; rhymes words.
* Labels names of objects, colors, shapes.
* Sorts by color, shape, characteristics.
* Sequences objects by size.
* Knows that words are made of letters and words are thought, written and spoken.
* Understands setting, characters and details of a story.
* Knows how to use a book, turn pages, follow print left to right.
* Understands spatial relationships (up, down) and opposites.
* Likes to scribble write.
* Tries to write name.
* Matches sets with the same number of objects.
* Identifies the larger of two groups of objects.
* Sequences with first, middle and last, or repeats numbers 1-10.

Motor skills
* Runs lightly on toes.
* Walks forward or sideways on a line.
* Can hop for 6 feet.
* Skips, alternating feet.
* Jumps rope.
* Skates.
* Cuts out simple shapes.
* Copies triangles.
* Traces diamonds.
* Copies first name.
* Prints numbers 1-5.
* Colors within lines.
* Holds pencil properly.
* Hand dominance usually established.
* Pastes and glues.
* Awareness of own right and left sides emerging.
Communication skills
* Understands pairs, few and many.
* Understands verb agreement: is vs. are.
* Occasional grammar errors.
* Language essentially complete in structure and form.
* Can take turns in conversation.
* Communicates with family, friends or strangers.
* Reads with pictures.
* Answers questions directly.
* Relates fanciful tales in own words.

Cognitive skills
* Retells story from picture book.
* May name some letters and numbers.
* Counts 10 objects.
* Sorts objects by size, color, shape.
* Uses time concepts of yesterday, today and tomorrow.
* Begins to relate clock time to daily schedule.
* Attention span increases noticeably.

Personal-social skills
* Is Potty Trained
* Dresses self.
* Crosses street safely.
* Makes simple sandwich.
* Prepares cereal.
* Brushes teeth.
* Waters plants.
* Can make simple purchases.
* Can help make bed, set table, sweep.
* Chooses own friends.
* Plays simple games.
* May be afraid of dogs, the dark or that mother will not return.
* Self-centered, with own interests and actions taking precedence.
* Enjoys make-believe play.
* Learns by instruction, as well as exploration.
* Completes a puzzle.
* Imitates 2-step triangle fold.
* Completes sequential patterns.