



2019-2020 PARENT BACK-TO-SCHOOL GUIDE

→ *For children in pre-K-2* ←

A new school year means a new classroom, new teachers, and new learning goals for your child. For some, your child may be transitioning to school for the first time. This guide provides you with a quick overview of what you can expect to see in your child's classroom this year, how you can engage with his or her teacher(s) to ensure your child is on track throughout the school year, and what resources are available to support learning at home.

WHAT ARE *Educational Standards?* WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

- Set clear and consistent learning expectations
- Define what children should know and be able to do at each age or grade level
- Help set high goals for learning and development

LOUISIANA'S BIRTH TO FIVE EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

serve as a guide for high-quality, developmentally appropriate early childhood programs. They include skills on various topics, such as foundations of learning and social and emotional development.

THE K-2 LOUISIANA STUDENT STANDARDS

ensure that all students, regardless of their address, background, or ability, have a clear roadmap to success in college or a career. Clearly defined goals help families and teachers work together to ensure that students succeed, have access to extra assistance when they need it, and are challenged appropriately.

WHAT WILL *learning* LOOK LIKE IN THE *classroom this year?*

CHILD LEARNING

- ✔ Develop and maintain positive relationships with peers and adults
- ✔ Demonstrate cooperation with peers by sharing, taking turns, and interacting cooperatively
- ✔ Develop a strong foundation for literacy by engaging in language and literacy activities
- ✔ Use new vocabulary for social and academic purposes.
- ✔ Build knowledge, discuss, and write about topics, themes, and ideas in rich read alouds and meaningful texts
- ✔ Support thoughts and opinions about meaningful texts using evidence
- ✔ Develop deep understanding, skill, and fluency in math
- ✔ Think critically in math through speaking, writing, and solving problems
- ✔ Apply math and science content knowledge to real-world problems and tasks
- ✔ Investigate, evaluate, and use scientific reason

ASSESSMENTS

A strong assessment plan in the early grades includes:

- Screening to quickly identify which children may need additional support;
- Progress monitoring to ensure children are making adequate progress; and
- Diagnostic evaluation to target specific needs of children who are not making progress.
- ✔ Teaching Strategies GOLD® is an ongoing observational assessment tool used in Louisiana pre-K classrooms to monitor children's development and learning.
- ✔ The Kindergarten Entry Assessment evaluates kindergarten readiness of individual children to identify where a child may need additional instructional supports.
- ✔ K-3 Literacy Screening Assessments identify which children may be at risk for experiencing reading difficulties in order to provide timely and effective support.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT *my child's learning at home (pre-K-2)?*

Learning should not end in the classroom. At home, you can play an important role in setting high expectations for learning and supporting your child. Building this understanding of what your child knows and should be able to do begins with meaningful conversations with your child and your child's teacher. By taking these small steps, you will be helping your child become successful both in and outside of the classroom.

CHILD CONVERSATIONS

Take the time each week to talk with your child about what he or she is learning.

ASK YOUR CHILD QUESTIONS:

What are you learning in school?
How did you learn it?

Do you want to learn more
about something you are learning
in class?

Is there anything in school that you
don't understand and need more
help with?



TEACHER CONVERSATIONS

Start off the school year by having a conversation with your child's teacher about what supports or challenges they may need this year to ensure their success.

ASK THE TEACHER QUESTIONS:

Where did my child do well and where
does he or she need improvement?

What can be done in the classroom
to help my child improve?

What can be done to appropriately
challenge my child in areas where he
or she exceeded the expectations?

How can I help support my
child's development and
learning at home?

Tools and Resources TO SUPPORT PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Below are additional resources that you can access to further support your child's learning at home.

LOUISIANA'S FAMILY SUPPORT TOOLBOX LIBRARY

Information on standards, test results, and other assessment resources: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/family-support-toolbox-library>

VROOM

Tips and activities for parents to boost child learning ages birth through 5: <https://www.vroom.org/>

PBS EDUCATION

Online tools from PBS to support ELA, math, science, music and arts: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/>

GREAT KIDS MILESTONES

Free, online collection of videos showing what success looks like in reading, writing, and math in grades K-12: <http://www.greatschools.org/gk/milestones/>

PTA FAMILY GUIDES

Tips for helping your child succeed in key learning areas: <https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/family-guides>

BED TIME MATH

Free daily activities encouraging families with kids ages 3-9 to have fun with math together: <http://bedtimemath.org/>

WHOM DO I CONTACT *with questions?*

Please call or email your child's teacher with questions about their learning. Additional questions that can't be addressed by their teacher, should be directed to the school principal.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT *my child as they first begin school?*

A smooth transition into the school setting can make a big difference for children's early education experiences. Successful transitions require more than just ensuring that children have the necessary academic and social skills. They depend on connections made between children, teachers, and families through continued communication, collaboration, and cooperation.

Steps for Helping Your Child **START SCHOOL SUCCESSFULLY**

1. VISIT THE SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD.

Help your child become familiar with the school before he actually starts school. If the school has a welcome session, attend with your child. You can both meet the principal, teachers, and other families.

2. TALK TO THE TEACHER.

A child is best served when parents and teachers work as a team. Set up a meeting so you both can share relevant information to support your child's success in school.

3. WORK ON EVERYDAY SKILLS.

Work on following directions and self-care skills. For example, being able to use the bathroom independently, tying shoelaces, and zipping up a jacket increases your child's self-esteem and independence. If your child's classroom includes nap time, prepare her for how she will sleep in a different environment.

4. INTRODUCE NEW FRIENDS.

Set up playdates with kids your child's age. Try to branch out beyond kids he already knows.

5. TALK ABOUT FEELINGS.

Talk to your child about any questions or worries she has about starting school. Ask her, How do you feel about starting school? Is there anything that makes you nervous? What are you most excited about?

6. MANAGE YOUR OWN EMOTIONS.

You may have concerns, but try not to let your own feelings about your child starting school affect his own personal feelings or expectations of his first day.

7. PREPARE FOR THE FIRST DAY.

Let your child know what to expect. Talk to her about how she will get to and from school, and whether you'll walk her to her classroom.

8. ASK ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S DAY.

Talk to your child about his day, but resist the urge to bombard him with questions. If he says that he doesn't like school, reassure him that it will become more familiar soon.

9. EXPECT YOUR CHILD TO BE TIRED.

Help your child re-energize with a healthy snack and some down time when she comes home. Consider how your home routines can support your child in school.

10. STAY IN THE LOOP.

Check your child's backpack daily for information on classroom routines and events. Talk about them together. Starting school is a huge step, and he'll appreciate your support.

Tools and Resources **TO SUPPORT PARENTS AND CHILDREN**

Below are additional resources that you can access to further support your child's transition into school.

LOUISIANA'S FAMILY SUPPORT TOOLBOX LIBRARY

Information on standards, test results, and other assessment resources: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/family-support-toolbox-library>

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING & KNOWLEDGE CENTER, TRANSITIONS

Tips, calendars, and videos to support early childhood transitions: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/transitions>
