

# WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN



## 2024-2025

MOUNT BAKER SCHOOL DISTRICT

KINDERGARTEN  
INFORMATION BOOKLET



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# WHAT IS KINDERGARTEN?

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Kindergarten is a very important part of our early learning program. Activities are carefully planned and developmentally appropriate for five- and six-year-old children.

It is important for us to remember that play, under proper guidance, produces important learning.

Kindergarten is a time to...

- Explore the school environment and practice safety.
- Create with words, blocks, crayons, movement, and music.
- Practice sharing and getting along with others.
- Listen to and talk about stories.
- Participate in academic activities.
- Practice independent school and self-care skills.
- Observe differences and similarities in size, shape, and sounds.
- Write and draw shapes, letters, numerals, and designs.



# LETTER TO PARENTS

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Welcome to Kindergarten! We encourage you to participate in your student's learning. Please ask your student's teacher for ideas when you attend your "Family Connection" appointment during the first week of school (see page 8 of this booklet).

This booklet provides information to help form and strengthen a partnership between parents, staff, and students in our schools. If you have any questions or concerns about this information or issues that come up during the year, please feel free to contact us and arrange a personal appointment.

Every student matters to us, and we look forward to working together to provide a positive learning experience for your student.

Sincerely,

*Kindergarten Teachers*

Mount Baker School District





# READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

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## Skills that will help your student be ready for success in kindergarten:

- Play cooperatively with others; take turns and share materials.
- Practice managing rules, routines, emotions, and transitions.
- Take care of personal needs without help:
  - Use the bathroom, wash their hands, and use a towel to dry them.
  - Hang up their coat and backpack.
- Follow directions and accept redirection from adults.
- Carry on conversations, ask and answer questions, and speak clearly.
- Listen to and retell stories.
- Stay with a task for more than five (5) minutes.
- Try to solve problems.

## Five questions to reflect on...

1. What has your student done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your student go about trying something new?
3. What does your student really enjoy doing?
4. How does your student respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your student enjoy spending time with?  
What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your student?

*Adopted from the WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines.*



# READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

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## Ideas to try with your student at home:

- Read and sing stories, poems, and nursery rhymes!
- Visit the public library, build read-aloud time into your family's daily routine, and let your student see you reading every day.
- Play games to learn about letters, sounds, and words.
- Play outside and listen to the sounds in nature.
- Talk about and use comparison words, such as big and little, high and low, long and short, etc.
- Organize and sort household items, such as laundry, socks, food, toys, and more.
- Count together; count steps as you walk, or just count for fun!
- Take time to listen to what your student has to say.

To help your student learn to read, they need to see, hear, and talk about many different things. Life experiences such as trips to the zoo, library, museum, beach, mountains, and the park will give you and your student lots to see, hear, and talk about.

You can also use the [Kindergarten Readiness Guidelines Checklist](#) to help you work with your student to help them get ready for school.



# SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

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Please visit the [Online Enrollment page](#) on our website to get started.

If you do not have access to a computer, you can call your neighboring school for a registration packet to be mailed home. [Printable registration packets](#) are also available on our website.

## Documents you will need for enrollment:

- ☐ Your student's birth certificate (to verify date of birth and legal name)
- ☐ Medically verified immunization records
- ☐ Proof of residency

## Age Requirement for Kindergarten entry:

- A child must be 5 years of age as of midnight on August 31 of the year of entry to attend Kindergarten, WAC 392-335-010.

## Elementary website links:

- [Acme Elementary](#)
- [Harmony Elementary](#)
- [Kendall Elementary](#)



# FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL

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## **“Family Connection” Days**

The first days of school are a little different in kindergarten! Kindergarten orientation takes place during the first week of school so all students have an opportunity to visit the classroom with their parents and get comfortable before coming for their first full day.

You will receive an email and/or a letter with your appointed date and time in August for you and your student to visit school together.

**During this first day at school together, you will:**

- **Meet the teacher.**
- **See the classroom.**
- **Learn and share important details about starting the year in kindergarten.**

*Note: It’s important to let your student know that they will NOT be riding the bus until the first full day of kindergarten. Please see page 14 of this booklet for the District Bus Garage phone number and staff names.*



# IMPORTANT SCHOOL INFORMATION

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## Attendance

Mount Baker Elementary Schools are making a special effort to ensure that students fully benefit from their education by attending school regularly.

***Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school - and themselves.*** You can help your student start building this habit in kindergarten so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Consistent attendance helps children do well in school, college, and at work.

## School Meals

You can view your school's breakfast and lunch menus online at [My School Menus](#).

The Mount Baker School District will offer **FREE** breakfast and lunch to all students at each school during the 2024-25 school year.\* We encourage all families to fill out the [Family Income Survey](#), which helps schools learn how to best serve students and families, and secure grants and funding for programs.

You may choose to set up a [My MealTime™](#) account for your student to use to purchase meals, if needed in the future. With this account, you can add money and monitor your student's meal account using your student's student ID number (including the leading 0). All information is confidential and held in our central office. For any questions, please call Shannon Richardson, Child Nutrition Director, at (360) 383-2024.



*\*Excluding a la carte options at the Junior/Senior High School.*

# IMPORTANT SCHOOL INFORMATION

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## **Bus Transportation: Bussing, Name Tags, and After-School Care**

Bus route information is available on the [Transportation](#) page on our website, or from the District Bus Garage at (360) 383-2060. During the first few weeks of school, please make sure your student wears the bus tag provided by the teacher. This helps the teacher and bus driver get your student on the correct bus.



**\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE: Bus drivers are instructed NOT TO LET A CHILD OFF AT A PLACE OTHER THAN THEIR HOME OR DESIGNATED BUS STOP unless the parent/guardian sends a written request to the teacher or to the school office.**

If your student has an after-school childcare address, please inform the teacher before school begins, so the appropriate after school address is on your student's bus tag.

## **"Focus Folder" for School and Home**

Every kindergartner will have a 2-pocket school/home "Focus Folder" that they take to school and home each day in their backpacks.

**Please check the folder *every day*! It will include:**

- **Work from the classroom.**
- **Important notes and newsletters to help you stay informed about school and classroom events.**



When reviewing work in your student's daily folder, focus on the things your student does well. Encourage conversations at home with open-ended statements and questions like "tell me more about what you're learning," "what do you think about this?" or "if you did it again would you change anything?" Learning how to do new things - and making mistakes along the way - builds self-confidence!



# IMPORTANT SCHOOL INFORMATION

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## **Visitors**

We are currently asking families to follow district protocol for classroom visits. Additional information will be available on your "Family Connection" day (see page 8 of this booklet).

Please remember that during the school day, teachers need to focus on students!

Arranging a day and time works best so that you both know what to expect during your visit. After your visit, let your student's teacher know if you have questions, need time for a follow-up, or if you are interested in volunteering on a regular basis!



## **Volunteering**

Volunteers help children receive individual attention! Washington State Patrol background checks are required for all adults working with our students, including helpers on field trips. There is no charge and no fingerprinting. Background checks are good for two years and then must be renewed.

Please check at the school or district office for volunteer registration information and Washington State Patrol (WSP) background check forms, or you may get the [Mount Baker School District Volunteer Packet](#) on our website. All visitors and volunteers in our schools need to sign in at the office and wear a visitor badge.





# IMPORTANT SCHOOL INFORMATION

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## **Student Services (Special Programs)**

Mount Baker School District provides additional services for students based on identified needs. Visit the [Student Services](#) page on our website for more information.

If you have questions or concerns about your student's developmental progress, please call the Special Programs office at (360) 383-2012.



## **Developmental Preschool at the Educational Resource Center (ERC)**

The Developmental Preschool program at the Educational Resource Center provides services for children between the ages of 3 and 5 years, based on delays in cognitive, communications, physical, adaptive behavior, motor, and social/emotional areas.



The district can also assist with screening and referrals for children below the age of three with suspected developmental delays.

Visit the [Educational Resources Center](#) website or call the Student Services office at (360) 383-2012 for more information.

# HEALTH RELATED INFORMATION

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## **District Health Team**

Our district health team will visit all kindergarten classrooms the first month of school to conduct vision, hearing and speech screenings. Please contact your student's teacher if you have concerns. View the [Health Services](#) page on our website for more information.



## **Sick Children**

If your student is sick, please do not send them to school. If children are too sick to go out for recess, they are too sick to come to school. We are not equipped to provide in-room supervision for sick children.

If your student misses school because of illness, please call the school or send a note to report the absence. Our school is required to document all school absences. Absences not reported that day will receive an automated phone call that evening. Please contact the school office in case of a long-term or communicable illness.

## **Immunizations & Vaccinations**

Washington State law requires the following:

1. You must show proof that your student is five years of age prior to September first of the current school year. A birth certificate is proof of age to register your student.
2. You must show proof of immunization for the required vaccines. Detailed information is located in the kindergarten registration packet and on the [Immunizations Forms](#) page on our website.

In addition to these requirements, it is recommended that your student have a physical exam prior to the start of kindergarten. Exam forms are available at the time of registration, or at the school office.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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## **Acme Elementary**

**Phone: (360) 383-2045**

Fax: (360) 383-2049

5200 Turkington Road/PO Box 9  
Acme, WA 98220

*Erica Rasmussen, Principal*  
*Michelle Anderson, Attendance/Registrar*  
*Secretary*

## **Harmony Elementary**

**Phone: (360) 383-2050**

Fax: (360) 383-2054

5060 Sand Road  
Bellingham, WA 98226

*Todd Mathews, Principal*  
*Karen Brown, Registrar Secretary*  
*Colleen Seutz, Attendance Secretary*

## **Kendall Elementary**

**Phone: (360) 383-2055**

Fax: (360) 383-2059

7547 Kendall Road  
Maple Falls, WA 98266

*Andy Remien, Principal*  
*Haley Straka, Registrar Secretary*  
*Lindy Jewell, Attendance Secretary*

## **Bus Garage / Transportation**

**Phone: (360) 383-2060**

*Suzanne Woodin, Transportation Director*  
*Holly Peterson, Secretary/Dispatch*  
*Kristi Ehlers, Secretary/Dispatch*

## **District Nurse**

**Phone: (360) 617-4607**

Fax: (360) 383-2009

*Susan Windnagel, RN*

## **Student Services / ERC Preschool**

**Phone: (360) 383-2012**

Fax: (360) 383-2014

*Ian Linterman, Dir. of Special Programs*  
*Becky Phillips, Admin. Assistant*

## **Inclement Weather Information**

**Phone: (360) 383-2070**

**Website:** [School Closures](#) - Get  
information on bus route changes,  
school closures and delays, and other  
weather-related updates.



# STUDENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

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## **Family Service Coordinators (FSC)**

Create partnerships between families, school and the community; provide support which enables children to do their best in school.

Location	Contact	Phone Number
All Locations	FSC Confidential Phone	(360) 617-4511
Acme Elementary	Christina Ortiz	(360) 617-4104
Harmony Elementary	Kate Davies	(360) 617-4303
Kendall Elementary	Cynthia Flores	(360) 617-4406

## **School Counselors**

Implement comprehensive school counseling programs to support student's academic, career and social/emotional development. School counselors provide brief check-ins for students. These are short-term and solution-focused.

Location	Contact	Phone Number
Acme Elementary	Jessica Keskey	(360) 383-2045
Harmony Elementary	Jane Beckel	(360) 383-2050
Kendall Elementary	Laura Cichowski	(360) 383-2055

