



2020-2021 PARENT BACK-TO-SCHOOL GUIDE

→ *For children in pre-K-2* ←

The Department is focused on ensuring school systems are prepared for a **strong start to the 2020-2021 academic year**. A new school year means new experiences, new teachers, and new learning goals for your child. For some, your child may be experiencing school for the first time. This guide provides you with a quick overview of what you can expect your child to learn this year, how you can engage with your child's 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 future success. 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 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 through read alouds and discussions of rich, meaningful texts
- ✔ Use evidence to support opinions orally and in writing
- ✔ Develop deep understanding, skill, and fluency in math
- ✔ Think critically in math through speaking, writing, and solving problems
- ✔ Apply math, science, and social studies content knowledge to real-world problems and tasks
- ✔ Investigate, evaluate, and use scientific reasoning

ASSESSMENTS/SCREENERS

To support learning in the early grades, school systems may:

- ✔ Screen children to quickly identify who may need additional support;
- ✔ Monitor learning to ensure children are making adequate progress; and
- ✔ Diagnose and evaluate 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.

Teachers will analyze student results and communicate each student's readiness with parents.

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

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 this school year.

CHILD CONVERSATIONS

Take the time each week to talk with your child about what they are learning.

ASK YOUR CHILD QUESTIONS:

What are you learning?
How did you learn it?

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

Is there any schoolwork 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 your child may need this year to ensure their success.

ASK THE TEACHER QUESTIONS:

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

What can be done to help
my child improve?

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

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.

STRONG START 2020 LIBRARY

Resources and guidance dedicated to ensuring that school systems are prepared for a strong start to the 2020-2021 academic year.

LOUISIANA'S FAMILY SUPPORT TOOLBOX LIBRARY

Information on standards, family engagement resources, and other assessment resources

PBS EDUCATION

Online tools from PBS to support ELA, math, science, music, and the arts

CDC'S DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

Reference guides for ages birth to 5.

PTA FAMILY GUIDES

Tips for helping your child succeed in key learning areas

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING & KNOWLEDGE CENTER, TRANSITIONS

Tips, calendars, and videos to support early childhood transitions

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 the school year?*

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, IF POSSIBLE.

Help your child become familiar with the school before they actually start 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.

4. INTRODUCE NEW FRIENDS.

Set up playdates virtually and in-person with kids your child's age. Try to branch out beyond kids they already know.

5. TALK ABOUT FEELINGS.

Talk to your child about any questions or worries they have about starting school. Ask 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 their own personal feelings or expectations of their first day.

7. PREPARE FOR THE FIRST DAY.

Let your child know what to expect.

8. ASK ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S DAY.

Talk to your child about their day, but resist the urge to bombard them with questions. If they say that they don't like school, reassure them 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 at home.. Consider how your home routines can support your child in school.

10. STAY IN THE LOOP.

Starting school is a huge step, and your child will appreciate your support.
