Welcome to Essex Elementary School's Kindergarten Family Information Night

https://www.ewsd.org/o/ees



Growing hearts and minds for a better today and tomorrow: every day, every way, every one!

Tonight's Agenda

- Welcome/Overview; Ashley Gray, Principal
- Day in the Life of Kindergarten; Beth Thayer, Kindergarten Teacher
- School Safety
- Unified Arts, School Counselors, ELL, Special Education
- Food Services
- Registration Process; Niquette Bergeron, School Registrar
- Transportation; Ashley Gray, Principal
- Health Services; Katie Darak, School Nurse
- Community Partners; Four Winds, PTO, EJRP
- Closing & Questions



In kindergarten, children will work on...

- Making friends and being a helpful member of a community
- Following directions and routines
- Solving social challenges with peers
- Expressing feelings and ideas
- Listening to and talking about books
- Learning letters, sounds & high frequency words
- Learning to read and write
- Counting to 100, counting objects, and identifying shapes
- Adding and subtracting
- And so much more!



I am ready for kindergarten!

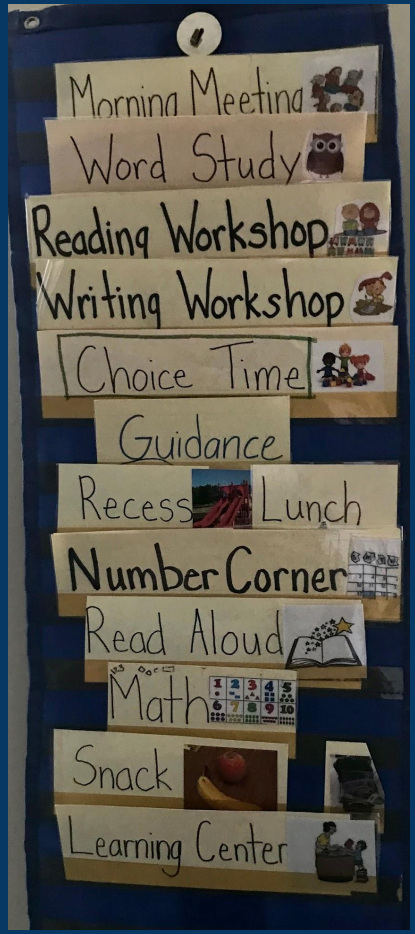
The truth is: kindergarten readiness isn't as *academic* as you might think....



- Independence and Self-Care
  - Lunch and snack containers - Practice opening and closing
  - Toileting (work towards wiping themselves)
  - Dressing/undressing (jackets/shoes/socks/clothing, etc.)
  - Packing/unpacking backpack
- Backpack size - please no mini backpacks
- Responding to their name and following adult/teacher directions
- Welcome letter from the K teachers with details about what to bring, etc will be sent prior to the start of the year.
- Kindergarten Readiness article

A typical Kindergarten day

- **Morning Meeting**
  - Time for community building and fun
- **Math experiences**
  - Partner games, whole group lessons, independent work
- **Literacy experiences**
  - Read Alouds
  - Whole group instruction
  - Drawing and Writing
  - Games and independent work
- **Science/Global Studies**
- **Social Emotional Learning (SEL)**
- **Choice Time**
  - Play experiences
- **Recess/Snack/Lunch**
- **Unified Arts** (Art, Music, P.E., Library)



Kindergarten Screening

Wednesday, May 27th
2 - 3:35pm
Sign Up



Alternate Date - Wednesday, June 10th

School Safety

We take the safety of our students and staff very seriously. We have a very active school safety committee as well as our EWSD safety committee; both of which meet regularly to stay updated on the latest best practices.

- **Routinely practice safety procedures in developmentally ap**

  ways.
- **Every visitor to the school is required to sign in and out**
- **Our school building is locked**



Unified Arts (Specials)

Art:

Suzanne Blain



Physical Education (PE):

Peter Picard
Lauren Leblanc





Learning Center:

Meg Hershman



Music:

Ms. Heather



School Counselors

Sarah Buhl
Email: sbuhl@ewsd.org
Brea Heaslip
Email: bheaslip@ewsd.org





School Counselors support the social and emotional development and well being of all EES students!

Counselors are assigned to each classroom and offer:

- Lessons in each classroom,
- Small group counseling
- Short-term individual counseling
- Support to families



ELL Program for Multilingual Kindergarteners

Greetings! My name is Diana Ballinger and I'm the ELL Teacher here at Essex Elementary School. I support our school's multilingual students academically, socially, & culturally.

I also support their families and their teachers to ensure our multilingual students' success.

I look forward to meeting you and your children!



Email: dballinger@ewsd.org
Phone: 802-857-2169

Special Education



Essex Elementary School's team members

8 Learning Specialists K-2

2 Speech Language Pathologists K-2

Services provided in and out of class (based on student need)

Interventions are also provided outside of special education when needed through our Response to Intervention (RTI) system.

Child Nutrition

- Menus
  - Our monthly breakfast and lunch menus featuring a variety of local products can be found on the Child Nutrition Website at https://www.ewsd.org/o/ewsd/page/child-nutrition
- Universal School Meals
  - Vermont's Universal School Meals Act, all students will be provided access to breakfast and lunch each day at no cost to the student.
- Allergies
  - Our EES kitchen is always peanut free and we work closely with the nurse's office to accommodate other allergies in our menu offerings



Whole Grain Pasta and Meat Sauce featuring VT Beef from LaPlatte River Angus Farm

For further questions contact:
EES Cafeteria Coordinator
Sara Lavallee
Email: slavallee@ewsd.org
Phone: 802-857-2107

Kindergarten Registration Online through PowerSchool

-Act 166 and EWSD preschool families already exist in PowerSchool and should log into their accounts to complete all forms.

-New families can pre-register and an email with login instructions for PowerSchool will be sent.

-We are asking families to fill out all forms by May 1.

-More information about using PowerSchool is available on our website: https://www.ewsd.org/page/powerschool-parent-portal

-You will hear from the school over the summer if we are missing any information in order to complete the enrollment.

- Please make sure to add three local emergency contacts to the Student Contacts form, these are in addition to the parents/guardians.

Reporting an Absence and Dismissal Changes

Pick Up Patrol will send out email invites to families later in August. Families will need to set up a default dismissal plan initially.

If your child is going to be absent from school please report this through Pick Up Patrol by providing an absence reason or by calling our main phone line to access our attendance line.

If your child's afternoon plans change (in advance) please use Pick Up Patrol, which will notify the front office and your child's teacher will be made aware of the change. If the plan changes after the cut off time for Pick Up Patrol, *please contact Niquette or Lindsey by phone* in the front office. Please *do not* leave this information on a teacher's voice mail or email. We will be certain to notify both the child and the teacher of any changes.

Transportation

https://www.ewsd.org/transportation



Transportation

School buses for the EWSD 2025-2026 year

Information on EWSD's transportation system can be found at EWSD.org and click the Transportation link.

In the Transportation link you will find:

- How to Ride information,
- EWSD Transportation Policy and Procedures,
- Contact numbers,
- Bus Safety Information,
- Eligibility Information,
- EWSD Transportation Behavior Support Protocol,
- EWSD Rides Safe: Partnering for Safe Transportation Video Resource!
- The updated Bus routes and other information.

- Please be sure to read the Bus information before riding.





Transportation

School buses for the EWSD 2026-2027 year

Information for the 2026-2027 school year bus routes will be posted by late July. Families will be notified via email.

When the District does their annual rollover of grades and students, transportation will send out a transportation signup form to all Kindergarten students that have said “Yes” to Transportation. You must complete the Transportation form to be eligible to ride.

- The form will:
- Ask if you want transportation this year, confirm student’s name, address information and some contact information
- Ask if your student needs AM and PM transportation or just AM or just PM transportation
- Ask if you would like an “alternate address stop” which is a stop that is not your normal stop and to what address and on which days of the week this stop will be used as well as the caregiver’s name responsible for your child

If you do not need an alternate stop you can just skip these questions.

If you have issues with filling out your form or information is incorrect please contact the Transportation department at: transportation@ewsd.org

Families will receive a confirmation email with route and stop details after the August 1st cutoff date. Transportation will be sending Communication out as to when schedules will be sent out.

Families can continue to sign up for transportation all year or if your transportation needs change you can contact the transportation department at transportation@ewsd.org. Email is preferred.

Transportation

School buses for the EWSD 2026-2027 year

- In 2026-2027, K-5 EES students will be on separate buses from grade 6-12 students.
- Kindergarten students must have a parent or other person (authorized in writing) at the bus stop for both pickup and drop-off. Families may authorize an older sibling at their own discretion.
- Each student may have 1 primary bus stop, and up to 1 additional “alternate stop”.
- Please note there will not be information available about 2026-2027 bus routes before they are posted online, and your children can only be registered via the transportation form, not via phone or email.

ESSEX WESTFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT



Transportation

- For general information, contact the transportation department at 802-857-7077 or via email at transportation@ewsd.org.

ESSEX WESTFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Nurse - Katie Darak, DNP, RN

- **Hours -** RN on site during school hours 7:15-2:45.
- **Forms -** Parent/guardian should complete the Health Information Form in PowerSchool.
- **Immunizations** - should be up-to-date 'kindergarten ready' *before* the start of school.
- **Health Concerns -** Care planning for Diabetes, Life Threatening Allergies with Epi-pens, Asthma/inhalers, etc. Contact me with history and for case management.
  - **kdarak@ewsd.org**
  - **802-857-2104**-Health Office
- **Health Screenings -** vision and hearing screening per state regulations - all pre-K, K, and Grade 1, occur prior to Winter Break .
- **Medications at School-** The form in PowerSchool covers permission for OTC medications (e.g. Tylenol, Ibuprofen). If medication is prescribed and needs to be given at school, contact the school nurse with medical order. This includes scheduled and rescue medications.
- **When to Stay Home** - fever of 100.4 (or greater), vomiting/diarrhea, and if fatigued and unable to participate in learning. Students should not return until feeling better and more than 24 hours fever-free (without medication) and no vomiting or diarrhea.
- **Allergies** - EES is an allergy aware school. Allergen free lunch tables available in the cafeteria. In severe life-threatening cases, please contact me.

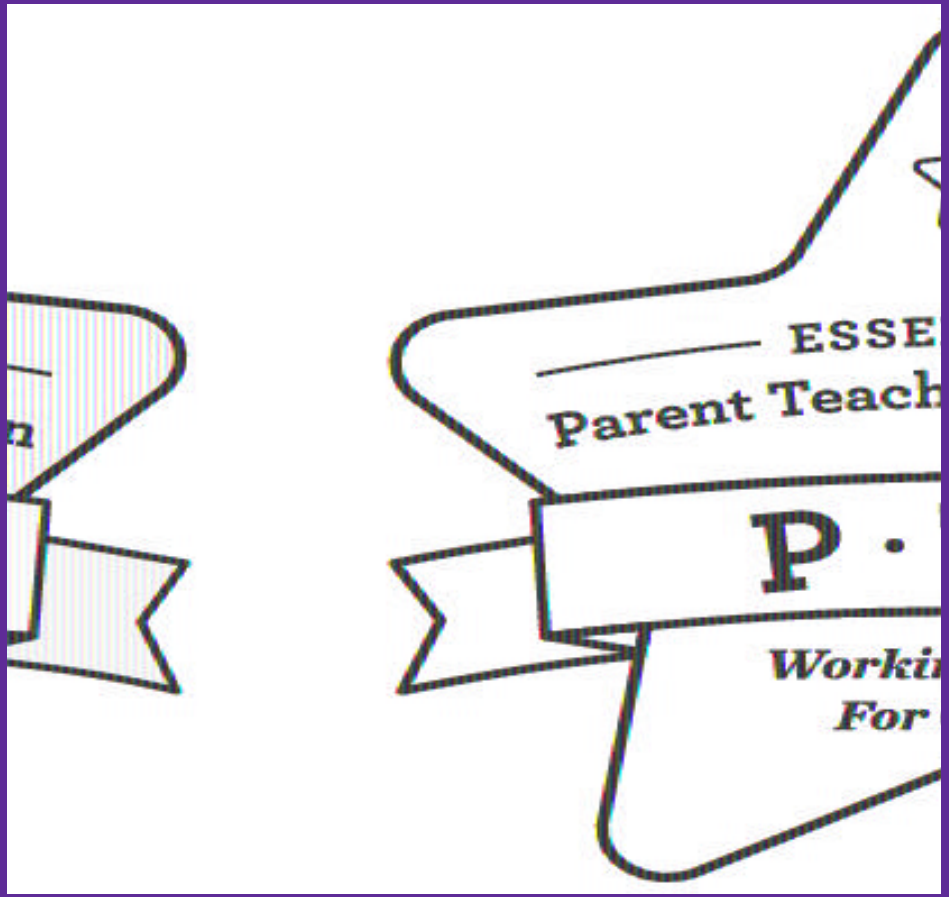




Visit our website to learn more:
https://eesfourwinds.wordpress.com/

Four Winds at EES

- A hands-on, outdoor nature program, run by parent volunteers
- We need 2-4 volunteers per class
- 4 sessions per year, about 1-1.5 hours each
- Flexible scheduling
- All materials and training are provided
- You will learn about nature along with the class
- It's fun!
- The kids love it!


ESSE
Parent Teach
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For

Who are we?



- The Essex Town Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is a nonprofit organization that represents Essex Elementary School, Founders Memorial School, and Essex Middle School.
- The Essex Town PTO is dedicated to:
  - Encouraging parent, community, and public involvement in our schools
  - Facilitating communication between teachers, parents, and students
  - Engaging in fundraising and educational activities
  - Assisting in making our schools an excellent learning environment
  - Fostering a sense of community among the Essex Town Schools
- All parents, teachers, staff, and administrators of the Essex Town Schools are automatically members of the PTO!
- We need parent involvement to make every event successful and fun!

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What do we do?



- ★ Connect parents/community to the schools
- ★ Fall Fun Run for PK-5
- ★ Spirit Wear Partnership with EES and FMS (EMS has spirit wear through athletics)
- ★ Teacher & Staff Appreciation Events
- ★ Kindergarten Playdate
- ★ Support School Events
  - ○ Conference night dinners
  - ○ Field Days
- ★ Community Building Events

How can you help?

- ★ We are always looking for volunteers! You can serve on the PTO Board or volunteer for individual events
- ★ The PTO is reshaping itself to fit the needs of our schools today
  - Do you have a great idea? We'd love to hear it!
- ★ The best way to reach the PTO is by email pto@ewsd.org

Connect with us!
linktr.ee/essextownpto

Kindergarten Rec Kids Afterschool at Essex Elementary



Benefits of a Kindergarten-only afterschool program:

- Specific and age-appropriate programming and introduction to afterschool
- Ability to meet social emotional needs at Kindergarten level
- Staff with specific skills, knowledge, and experience with Kindergarten students
- Smaller program

EJRP Staff meets students outside of their classrooms at the end of the day and walks them to the Rec Kids space in the preschool wing.

Sample Daily Schedule



Dismissal - Pick-up in Kindergarten Pod

2:25-3:00 - Check-In and Outside Time

3:00-3:45- Snack/Group Meeting and Read Aloud

3:45-4:30- Kids Choice (Active and Art activities)

4:30-5:30- Classroom Play

- Active
- Art/STEAM
- Specialty

5:30-6:00 - Wrap-Up, Quiet Choice

Calendar and Fees

DATE: Monday–Friday, 2026-2027 EWSD School Year Calendar
We offer a Vacation Camp for most school vacation days. This requires separate registration and opens once school starts.

TIME: School Dismissal–6pm

Rec Kids 2026-2027 Fees	
Days Per Week	**Monthly Rate**
2	$188
3	$252
4	$302
5	$338
Sibling Discount: 10%	

NOTE: There is a $50 per child, non-refundable registration fee required at the time of registration.

This is a STARS accredited, State of Vermont Licensed Childcare Program.
Financial assistance is available to those who qualify through Childcare Resource, 802-863-3367

Registration Information



WHEN: April 29th starting at 9am. Please make sure you have an active account.

WHERE: Online only – link to Request for Registration form located on www.ejrp.org
If you need assistance with online registration, please call 802-878-1375 in advance of the registration day so we can assist you.

PLEASE NOTE: Submitting the form will automatically put you on the waitlist and DOES NOT guarantee registration

A representative from EJRP will follow-up via email to inform you of your registration status. If we are able to enroll your child, the $50 non-refundable registration fee will be due right away to secure placement and and will be charged using the payment method on file. This fee is not applicable to families who receive subsidy through Childcare Resource. You will indicate if you receive this benefit on the registration form. If we are unable to register your child due to a lack of availability, we will not take the $50 payment to be put on a waitlist.

**Children who attend fewer than 5-days per week must maintain a consistent schedule for the days of the week that they participate, and must attend at least two days per week.

Contact Information

EMAIL: reckids@ejrp.org

PHONE: 802-878-1375

WEBSITE: ejrp.org









Questions?

