

Longfellow Kindergarten 101 Tips from the PTO

General

- Everyday the first bell rings at 7:58 am, students should be lining up when this bell rings. Their teacher will meet their line and walk them into the building at that time.
- Students should be in the classroom by 8 am. Students arriving after 8 am are marked tardy and have to report to the office to sign in, report their lunch choice, and get a tardy pass. Most families arrive on the playground between 7:45-7:50 to give students ample time to socialize and get ready for 7:58 bell.
- On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, school ends at 2:55. Every Wednesday, school ends at 1:55.
- Start going to bed earlier and earlier each night several weeks before school begins
- Children will come home tired the first few weeks, avoid after school activities for the first month or until your child has adjusted
- Dress in clothing children can easily manage, that can get messy and that is comfortable (layers are always a good idea)
- No-scuff gym shoes are a must for gym class and short sleeves are suggested

Weekly schedule (curriculum details will be covered on curriculum night)

- In addition to the District reading curriculum, students take part in the following:
 - Passport – 4 days a week / 30 minutes per day
 - Children break into small groups and work with a teacher (re-evaluated every 4 weeks and groups change accordingly)
 - Lexia – 2 days a week / 1 hour per week
 - An on-line system children work on within the computer lab and at home if desired
 - Repeats sections based on errors and/or time, each level has several sections your child needs to complete
- Spanish – 3 days / 90 minutes per week
- Gym – 2 days / 60 minutes per week
- Art – 1 day / 60 minutes per week
- Music – 2 days / 60 minutes per week
- Library Check-Out – 1 day (2 books) / 20 minutes per week
- Recess – at least 25 minute lunch recess and a teacher directed PE on days when students do not have Gym

First Day

- School starts at 8am (First bell rings at 7:58) and ends at 1:55 PM on Wednesday, August 23rd.
- PTO hosts a parents' welcome on the playground with coffee on the first day
- YES parents may come into the classroom on the first day, they are welcome to stay until students leave for a general assembly (roughly 10-15 minutes)

Pickup and Drop-off

- All children are dropped off and picked up on the playground except for Ms. Dabney's class, Ms. Tatro's class, and our PKP students who use the front door (**Staff members will be outside to direct families during the first week of school**)
- If you are dropping off and not walking your child to the playground, it is best to drop off on the Cuyler cul-de-sac – pull ALL the way forward, if you can, and resist getting out of the car if possible as it blocks the movement of other vehicles
- In the case of inclement weather, drop off is inside the building. Kindergarten lines up in the PKP hallway. There will be a sign on the front of the building indicating if drop off is inside or outside.
- Teachers will tell you which door to pick up your child(ren)
- Be on time! If you arrive after 8 am, the doors back doors will close and you will need to report to the office to sign in, report lunch, and your child will be considered tardy.

Transportation – Safe Walking Routes, Parking & Bus

- More information can be found at on the school website under “Transportation” or by clicking [here](#).
- Park anywhere legal near the school and walk your child to drop off location– popular locations are on Cuyler and on Highland
- Kindergarten bus students meet in the office at the end of school and a staff member walks them out to the buses
- Kindergarten students often sit in the front of the bus
- Bus schedule/route can be found on-line

School Supplies

- School Supply Lists can be found on the school website or by clicking [here](#).
- With a few exceptions (pencil box, folder, headphones), school supplies are a shared resource
- Label non-shared resources with your child's name (pencil box, folder and headphones)

- Bring your school supplies to school during the Kindergarten Meet and Greet (Tuesday, 8/22 at 5:30pm) or the first day of school
- Students are encouraged to bring water bottles to stay hydrated (you may want one for the cubby and one for the lunch bag)

Communications

- District and School weekly emails
- What's Happening at Longfellow (WHAL) weekly PTO emails
- Longfellow School Website has a ton of information <http://www.op97.org/longfellow/>
 - Digital Back Pack (lists all the upcoming events)
 - PTO Website link
 - Bus Schedules
 - Lunch Menus (and on-line payment option for lunches)
- Links to the teacher websites can be found under the directory on the Longfellow site
- If you did not include your email address when completing all registration paperwork, let your teacher know the address in order to receive weekly emails noted above
- Some teachers will also request your contact information in order to compile a contact list within the classroom
- Look for a Longfellow Kindergarten Class Facebook Page to network with other parents
- Report absences via Attendance: 708-665-3068 or longfellowattendance@op97.org

Classroom Policies

- Each teacher has his/her own classroom discipline and reward procedures, be sure to listen to them at Curriculum Night
- PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports – www.pbis.org/school) is the overall school policy, and students should receive Bear Necessities as positive reinforcement for good behavior. Your teacher will give examples of when he/she likes to give out Bear Necessities
- Teachers will share with you their preferred means of communication (notes in the folder, email, phone calls); be sure to let them know your preferred means as well.
- Teachers will communicate how often and/or what types of updates they typically share about their students
- Teachers typically have a folder policy (i.e. Does it come home each night or only as needed)

Lunch

- KG and 4th grade students eat for 30 minutes and then go out side for 25 minutes of recess.
- Students may bring a lunch or purchase one of three options for lunch – hot lunch, sandwich/wrap or salad
- Milk (skim, 1% or chocolate) is provided with purchased lunches; milk can be purchased for sack lunches
- Parents are always welcome to volunteer in the cafeteria – open milk cartons, etc.
- Children may bring peanut butter sandwiches for lunch only (not snack), Longfellow has a “safe” table in the lunchroom for those children with allergies (IF you volunteer in the lunchroom, remember that only staff should assist the “safe” table. Please let a staff member know if a child at this table needs assistance).

Allergies

- All classrooms at Longfellow are “Nut Free Rooms”. This means no child is allowed to have a nut product in the classroom for snack or classroom celebrations.
- There is a “Safe” table in the lunch cafeteria for students with any type of allergy.
- Children are allowed to bring a friend to sit with them to the table
- More information on D97 Food Allergy Management Program can be found at <http://www.op97.org/digital-backpack/documents/FoodAllergyProtocols.pdf>

PTO

- The PTO offers multiple ways to be involved – executive board positions, committee leads, committee members and event/activity volunteers
- High Five (volunteer 5 hours/year)
- BoxTops – start collecting them now

Parents' Recommended Books to help kids adjust/prepare for Kindergarten:

- The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn
- Ms. Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten by Joseph Slate
- Pete the Cat Rockin' in My School Shoes by James Dean and Erik Litwin
- Wemberly Worried by Kevin Henkes
- Little Rabbit Goes to School by Harry Horse
- The Night Before Kindergarten by Natasha Wing