

Learning Guide for Families

A summary of what children should know and be able to do and ways for families to increase learning at home.



*"We believe families are our partners.
They are the first and most powerful
educators of children. Together we will
ensure success for all students."*

- Superintendent Emmanuel Caulk,
Fayette County Public Schools

About our learning guides:

This guide represents some of the most essential things your child should know and be able to do by the END of the school year in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. Learning goals help families and teachers know when students may need extra support and when they need to be challenged even more.

What can families do?

There is a lot you can do to support your child's learning and help prepare them for their future. Here are a few things that will help students succeed:

1. Share with your child how important education is to you. Tell them education matters, that it's the foundation for success.
2. Make school a priority by getting your child to school on time every day.
3. Attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events whenever possible.
4. Work collaboratively with the school to build mutual respect.
5. Encourage independence; allow your children to make mistakes and accept responsibility for their choices.
6. Discuss with your child about what is happening in school.
7. Communicate consistently with your child's teacher to make sure your child is making progress throughout the year.
8. You have a right to know how your child is doing; don't hesitate to contact his/her teacher if you have questions.
9. Build your child's vocabulary. By following the suggestions in this learning guide and having meaningful and intentional conversations with your child daily, you can build their vocabulary. Knowing lots of words and their meanings is a strong indicator of school success.

Talking with your child's teacher

It's important to communicate with your child's teacher and school regularly about your student's progress toward learning goals. Here are some sample questions to ask:

- Where is my child strong and where does he/she need to improve?
- How is my child's progress being measured throughout the year?
- Can I see examples of my child's work? How do they meet or do not meet learning goals?
- Is my child on track to meet grade-level learning goals? If not, what supports will the school offer? What can I do at home?
- Is my child at or above learning expectations? If so, what else does the school offer? What can I do at home?
- Have you read my child's IEP? What accommodations are being made for my child?
- My child is an English language learner. How is my child's language development supported at school?

Talking with your child

Does this sound familiar?

“How was school today?”

“Fine”

“What did you do?”

“Nothing”

That’s okay, keep asking!

Students whose parents talk with them about school do better academically in school. Here are some ways you can engage with your child and support their success:

- Designate a time of day every day to talk with your child about school.
- Ask your child to tell you one thing they learned today. What does your child think is most interesting? What seems hard?
- Review papers and projects your child brings home from school. Ask your child: How do you know that? What do you think? What do you notice? Why did you do it that way? Is there another way to find that answer?
- Praise your child for hard work and effort, not just “right answers”.
- Ask questions about what your child is thinking: How do you know that? What do you think? What do you notice? Why did you do it that way? Is there another way to find that answer?

Supporting learning away from school

Learning doesn’t stop when students leave school. Here are some ways you can support learning outside of the classroom:

- Read to your child, read with your child, and encourage family reading time—in the language you are most comfortable.
- Set up a quiet and comfortable place and establish a regular schedule for your student to do homework or other learning activities.
- Be sure you and your child have a library card and participate in reading activities for the whole family.
- Try to establish a regular schedule for doing homework or other learning activities.
- Use this guide to focus on a few learning goals, try some of the suggestions for learning at home.

What your student should know and be able to do in English Language Arts (ELA)

Speaking and Listening (communication process)

- Ability to talk with others including expressing feelings and asking questions in a simple conversation.
- Use of simple sentences to express themselves.
- Ability to follow simple directions.
- Ability to watch the speaker, listen and understand what is being said.
- Retell a recent event or a familiar story and discuss what happened.

Reading and Literature

- Read familiar words at home, in the neighborhood, or elsewhere in your child's environment. For example: common signs, such as EXIT, and frequently used words, such as "the".
- Recite the A-B-C's.
- Read a book designed for early readers, such as "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?" by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle, or "Mrs. WishyWashy", by Joy Cowley.
- Identify the main theme, characters, and events in a book that your child reads or that is read to them.
- Hold a book properly (know front and back of the book) and turns pages.
- Know about and be able to identify some letters of the alphabet, especially those letters in his/her name.

Writing

- Use a combination of drawing, talking, and writing to convey messages to others.
- Children begin writing with "scribbles" and then move to writing letters and words as they have more and more practice with writing eventually leading to writing letters and names.
- Draw shapes when given a model.



Ways to encourage ELA learning at home

- Have conversations with your child throughout the day. Be sure to listen and respond to your child's statements and questions. Introduce new words when appropriate.
- Patiently answer your child's questions even if you have answered them many times before.
- Ask your child about their feelings. Provide them words if they do not have the vocabulary needed to express their emotions. In addition to words like "happy" and "sad", use words like "frustrated", "relieved", and "angry."
- Ask your child questions about their environment ("Why do you think that happened?") or ("What do you think will happen next?"). These types of questions provide an opportunity for your child to add new thoughts and to lengthen conversations. Questions such as these do not have just one right answer so your child can really explore their own ideas
- Provide new experiences for your child to observe and learn new words, like taking a trip to the airport or to the children's museum.
- Let your child help with simple chores. Your child can help put their toys in a basket, put their shoes in the closet and help put the towels in the cabinet.
- While reading to your child, ask your child questions about the story, the pictures, and what he/she thinks will happen next. Talk about the events in the story. If there are people, places or events in the story that relate to your everyday experiences, talk about these connections. For example, when reading "The Very Hungry Caterpillar", talk about the story as well as those times that you have seen caterpillars outside or have eaten similar foods.
- Encourage your child to read to you. Ask your child to look at the pictures and tell you the story.
- Read yourself. Children are more likely to read if they see their family members and caregivers reading the newspaper, magazines and books.
- Talk to your child about the letters of the alphabet but make it fun! Use alphabet books, puzzles or just the letters in your child's name. Talk about the letters that you see in your environment – on signs, books and notes that you write.
- Have fun rhyming with your child. Sing rhyming songs and read rhyming books together.
- Encourage your child to write. Provide many different types of writing supplies to make writing interesting, such as different types of paper, markers, pencils and crayons. Do not worry if your child is not writing all the letters right yet. Those scribbles are good practice for all of the writing he/she will be doing later on in school.
- Ask your child to tell you about their writing. Often times children will tell you what they wanted to say and then you can write their words next to their writing.
- Give your child something to write about. Making a birthday card for Grandmother or writing a note for the teacher are meaningful experiences.
- Encourage and praise your child for their writing efforts. Be sure to display his/her work.
- Comment on the writing and print that you see in your home on cereal boxes, recipes and on the computer. Point out and read this print to your child as you are going throughout your day.
- Encourage your child to write his/her name. Help with the spelling as needed, and you can write it out as well.

Please also connect with your child's teacher and ask about home learning resources associated with your school's specific reading and writing programs.

What your student should know and be able to do in Math:

- Count at least to 10 and up to 30.
- Recognize and write numbers up to 20.
- Identify printed numbers.
- Identify, describe, extend, and create simple patterns. For example: ABABABA or red, blue, red, blue, red, blue, red, blue.
- Identify and describe two-dimensional shapes based on their attributes. For example: a square has four corners or angles.
- Recognize and match small quantities to number words like “one”, “two”, and “three”.
- Use size words such as “many”.
- Use words such as “same as” to make comparisons.
- Classify or sort objects into simple groups (such as by color and size).
- Understand the order of the day and begin to use some time words such as “morning” and “night”.



What your student should know and be able to do in Arts & Humanities

- Participate and show an interest in a variety of art, dance, music, and drama experiences.
- At home, provide your child with many different art opportunities that include painting, playdough, and drawing. Provide your child with a variety of art materials (markers, paint, glue, blank paper, etc.) and a space to engage in “messy art”.

Health Education

- Demonstrate health/mental wellness in individual and cooperative social environments. Examples include being able to wash hands independently and eat healthy foods; play together with other children.
- At home, assist your child with hand washing and tooth brushing as needed. Talk to your child about their friends and what it means to play together cooperatively. Play together with your child. Encourage your child to be helpful and assist others.

Physical Education/Gross (large muscles) and Fine Motor (small muscles) Skills

- Demonstrates coordination skills that help your child run, jump, and skip.
- Demonstrate using hands and fingers to button, grasp, zip, or write.
- At home, provide daily opportunities for your child to play outside (with a variety of materials that include balls, trikes/bikes, and games such as hopscotch that encourage skipping and jumping) and participate in activities such as playdough, Legos, and scissors and paper.

Science

- Demonstrates scientific ways of thinking and working that fosters an understanding of the world around them, encourages problem solving skills, and supports the curiosity of how things work.
- At home, visit a garden, grocery store, or go on a walk with your child and talk about the experience. Ask your child how things taste, smell, and feel when touched. Research answers to your child’s questions of how things work (“What’s thunder?”) by investigating the answer together using dictionaries, the internet, or books.





FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1126 Russell Cave Road
Lexington, KY 40505

859-381-4100
www.fcps.net

This brochure was published by the Fayette County Public Schools. Content based on Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards and Parent Guides.

Created Fall 2016

