



Melrose Public Schools Administrative Offices

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Dear Incoming Kindergarten Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Melrose Public Schools. Soon your child will be registering for kindergarten in one of our five elementary schools. For some of you, this is your first exposure to the Melrose Public Schools, while for others it continues your child's educational experience. We look forward to working with you and your son/daughter to make the years ahead rich and rewarding ones. Our talented and committed staff, teachers and administrators stand ready to help your child discover the joy of learning in the classroom, on the playground and with you in your homes. Melrose is about community and we now invite you to join the other parents, families and students that make up the Melrose Public School educational community. Welcome home!

Your child's first year in our school will be an exciting one. It is not unusual for parents of a young child about to enter school for the first time to wonder, "Is my child ready for the experiences of school? Will my child be able to engage with the program? Have I done all that I can to prepare my child for what is ahead?" Our teachers think a lot about these issues, too, because their thinking is guided by the concepts of readiness and developmental appropriateness. Observations in their own classrooms demonstrate that students come to kindergarten with different knowledge and abilities, varying greatly from child to child. These observations lead to a picture of progress in kindergarten that is uniquely different for each child who enters the classroom.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), as well as the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) has articulated expectations for young learners entering kindergarten. Our kindergarten teachers have realigned curriculum to match the new state documents. In addition, Melrose curriculum benchmarks in the areas of Mathematics, English/Language Arts, Science and Technology/Engineering, and History and Social Science are available for you to view by following the Curriculum Department link on the melroseschools.com website.

What is the difference then between the full and half-day programs? Both programs provide teachers and students with opportunities to address the early learning standards of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Both programs support the integration of concepts and skills as well as the ever-important social development of children. The additional time in the full-day program allows teachers and students to further explore concepts previously taught and to create additional connections between and among subject areas. However, the goal of any kindergarten program remains constant – to prepare our young students for entry into the formal life of schooling.

As parents, you are making decisions about which program you feel is best for your child based on a wide variety of issues. The amount of time your child spends in kindergarten is an important family consideration based on your child's stamina, previous learning experiences and your family needs. You know your child, your family schedules, and your own unique circumstances best. Only you can make the final decision on which program to enroll your child in. The Melrose Public School System continues to offer both full and half-day programs in an effort to meet the needs of all of our students and their families. Again, welcome to our schools.

Sincerely,

Joseph F. Casey

Joseph F. Casey
Superintendent of Schools