

Dear Half-Day Kindergarten Teacher,

The work you do laying the foundation for children to be successful in school cannot be overestimated. It is inspiring to see all you and the children accomplish during a half-day kindergarten program. Thank you for your dedication to this important work.

In an effort to clarify the district's curriculum expectations for half-day kindergarten, the attached *sample* schedule reflects components of the district's ECE-grade 5 literacy continuum, components of the district's mathematics initiative to implement *Everyday Mathematics*, and best practices for young children. If your school has not yet adopted *Everyday Mathematics*, please substitute your mathematics curriculum for *Everyday Mathematics* on the schedule.

Please notice the strong emphasis on oral language throughout the schedule: children should be talking, talking, talking—with adults and other children about books, their drawing and writing, and mathematics, and in play and problem solving with materials at centers. Teachers and paraprofessionals should listen and extend children's talk with concept-rich vocabulary. This rich oral language builds the knowledge and tools for literacy achievement. Please study the *New Standards: Speaking & Listening: Preschool-Third Grade* book and CD to guide your planning for effective conversations for language and literacy development in your classroom.

Children enter kindergarten with widely varied experiences with language, literacy, and mathematics. Teachers must know each child's needs to differentiate instruction that will support each child's growth. The actual activities and processes in which a child is engaged during various components of the program may vary drastically. For example, activities during Readers Workshop for a child with limited oral language and few concepts about print would be different than those planned for a student with strong oral language and solid understanding of concepts of print.

In a half-day program, teachers must be particularly strategic to integrate all curricular areas. You can select Shared Reading texts to represent mathematics, social studies, and science content. You can provide materials and tools for problem solving in centers in mathematics, art, science, and social studies. Gross motor, mathematics, and language activities are effective during transitions, including when the children have to go as a class for bathroom breaks.

The attached schedule can be rearranged in any order to meet your classroom's specific needs: when you have paraprofessionals, when you have specials, your children's language needs, how many differentiated groups you see each day, etc. Please use your professional judgment in ordering your day. In addition, if your half-day program is different from the 2 hour, 40 minute-day described on the *sample* schedule, you will need to make the time adjustment on the schedule.

All of us have so much new learning to implement the district's literacy and mathematics programs well. Please use this schedule as a tool to identify your strengths and areas in which you need support.

Sincerely,
The Central Literacy Team
Area Specialists
The Early Education Department