

JK JOURNAL

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JK Expectations

I believe all children are capable of great things and will work with students to ensure they are kind, respectful and safe each day. We will learn how to use school materials and how to follow procedures through repeated instruction and practice. Our mission is not to master kindergarten standards, but to leave Junior Kindergarten with a solid foundation for the future.

Arrival & Dismissal

- Children should be dropped off at the Avon gate between 8:15 and 8:30 each morning. Students arriving after 8:30 must enter through the school's main office.
- Pick up is at noon each day at the Avon gate. If no one is present to pick up a child at noon, they will be brought to the school office.

What to Wear & Bring

Students need to have:

- Backpack large enough to fit a folder and lunchbox
- Standard-size two-pocket folder
- Lunchbox

Children should wear clothing that they can pull up, snap, button or zip on their own. Shoes must be closed-toe and worn with socks. All personal belongings should be labeled with permanent marker.



Welcome to Junior Kindergarten

I am thrilled to be your child's Junior Kindergarten teacher! It is going to be a wonderful semester of growth and learning.

A little about me

During my years as a teacher, I have taught junior kindergarten through fifth grade and ninth through twelfth, and have loved them all. I have a multiple-subject credential, a single-subject health science credential and seven California Technical Education teaching credentials in subjects including education, child development, & family services and health science and medical technology. I have three children attending Burbank USD schools. I have coached soccer through AYSO for five years, and I am involved with Burbank Parks and Rec baseball. I am proud to be a Burbank resident and to teach in the community I love. In addition to teaching, I spent many years of my career focusing on pediatric development, health and wellness working in the health care industry and as a newspaper and magazine columnist.

In my spare time, you can find me watching Gilmore Girls (on a loop), spending time with my family at Disneyland, and shuttling my kids around Burbank to their extracurricular activities.

Potty Time

For many children, JK may be the first time they will use a public restroom on their own. Over the holiday break, work with your child to make sure they know how to:

- Enter a public bathroom and find an empty stall. They need to know how to open the door and latch it once inside. Students also need to know how to unlatch the door and open the door once they are finished.
- Flush a public toilet and to make sure all of their clothing is in the right place before exiting the stall. Try not to dress your child in pants or shorts he or she cannot button or fasten after using the restroom.
- Wash their hands using the soap and towel dispensers.

Also keep in mind that teachers and school staff cannot assist your child with their restroom hygiene, so they need to be able to tend to their own needs before leaving the stall.

Preparing for Junior Kinder

Heading to Junior Kindergarten (JK) is a new beginning and big step for your child, even if they've attended daycare or preschool. For some, this change may be overwhelming. There are, however, a lot of things families can do to provide children with the practical skills and emotional courage they need to make a successful, less stressful transition.

Minimize changes and stress: Change can be stressful for people of all ages, but making sure that the entire family has reliable schedules and routines in place can help children feel safe and secure. To help reduce stress for kiddos, families should attempt to minimize the number of other big life changes while their student is adapting to JK life.

Give the child control: With all of the big and small changes that come with starting school, many experts recommend providing kids as many "choices" as possible when it comes to planning their day. Things like choosing their backpack, snack items, after-school activities or clothing (even if the clothes don't match) allows them to feel like they still have control over their day while learning to adapt to the rules and rituals they cannot control.

Practice new routines: In advance of starting a new school, it is important for children to adjust to the new time they may need to wake up and how the trip to school will work each day. This preparation should include adjusting to a bedtime that provides the child sufficient sleep to be successful at school and practicing the daily trip to school, whether it is by foot or car. The first day of school should not be the first time a child has experienced the routine for getting ready for school.

Practice school skills: Although most children can successfully eat and use the restroom independently before entering JK, it is important that they can tend to personal needs that mom and dad often help with. (Read more below and in the sidebar about snacks and using the restroom.)

Talk, Read, Play: Talk to your child about their feelings and emotions about JK so that they feel valued, loved and safe. Conversations should be kept light and should follow your child's lead. If your child doesn't seem worried, don't force the issue. Answer questions honestly and even incorporate the "expertise" of older siblings for reassurance. I also recommend reading books about starting school and encouraging kids to "play school" with siblings and friends.

Get Snack Savvy

Children should be able to open their own snack items, juice boxes and water bottles without the help of an adult. Time is precious, and with so many students, it would take our entire snack time to open each child's item.

Encourage your kiddo to "practice" school snack time at home by "packing" mock snacks just how they will be packed for school. To reduce your child's frustration, I don't recommend packing snacks they cannot open independently.

Snack Recommendations

Snack is not time for a full lunch, so don't feel the need to over pack each day. I recommend water or a juice box and a piece of fruit, crackers, or half a sandwich. This is not a large meal. I kindly ask that students not bring products containing nuts or peanuts. If your child can't live without peanut butter, I recommend giving sunflower seed butter a try over the winter break.