**"Top 10" list of skills that will help your child transition to elementary school**

(These skills will continue to be learned and practiced during kindergarten):

1. **Takes care of personal needs**: ability to go to the bathroom by self including wiping self as needed, wipe and blow nose, wash and dry hands, fasten/unfasten clothing as needed including buttons, snaps, buckles, zippers, laces.
2. **Has a 15-minute attention span**: ability to stay on task listening to a story, coloring, puzzles, etc. Does NOT include watching TV or videos, playing computer or video games.
3. **Listens while making eye contact**and verbally responds when appropriate.
4. **Follows multi-step directions upon first request**: example, “Pick up the toy and put it in the box.”
5. **Understands the concept of a story**: answer simple questions about a story, look at pictures and tell stories.
6. **Fine motor skills**: Holds pencil correctly, looks at a shape and is able to reproduce it, draws a picture, cuts around a simple shape, uses glue and glue sticks.
7. **Knows personal information**: recognize their written name, write first name beginning with a capital letter and the rest lower case, verbally say first and last name, age, date of birth, parent’s name, learning address and phone number.
8. **Recognizes basic colors and shapes**: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown, black, circle, square, triangle, rectangle, hexagon.
9. **Says ABCs**: recognize upper and lower case letters, recognize at least letters in name.
10. **Counts**: Rote counts to 30 (minimum of 10), counts 12 items, recognizes numbers 1-10

**10 Ways to Get Ready for Kindergarten:**

1. Create a routine over the summer. Give your child a bedtime (8 p.m. is great!) and stick to it.
2. Have your child practice writing their first name. If your child can do this, try the last name or practice lower case letters.
3. Use counting in your daily activities. Count how many steps it takes to get to the mailbox or the park. Count out fruit, placemats, napkins, and so forth.
4. Take your child with you to the grocery store, post office, library, and other errands. Talk with them about what they're seeing, hearing, and touching.  *It's all part of learning!*
5. Visit your local library and help your child get a free library card. Then use the card to visit the library each week and borrow a book. Talk about the books you read. Ask questions like: What was your favorite part of the story? Which part did you like the least? Halfway through, ask your child what they think will happen at the end.
6. Let your child practice their independence by allowing them to make certain choices ("Do you want an apple or a banana?") and by encouraging them to try new things and to problem solve.
7. Set a limit to the amount of TV your child watches (1-2 hours should be the maximum). When possible, watch TV with them and talk about what you see.
8. Prepare a "study spot" for your child and supply it with crayons, paper, scissors, and other kindergarten "tools." Set aside a time each day for your child to draw there. Once school starts, this can become the time and place where your child does their homework.
9. Help your child know or be able to do the following before they enter kindergarten: Their name, address, and telephone number; to use the bathroom on their own and button and zip their clothes; to share and play with other children. This will help them adjust to their new kindergarten classroom.
10. Read, read read!

                       \*This list was modified from one at www.countdowntokindergarten.org

**Books about Kindergarten:**

There are a large number of different books available about going to school! Here is a partial list of ones that it may be helpful to read and discuss with your child as they prepare to start elementary school:

*The Berenstain Bears Go to School* by Stan & Jan Berenstain

*Countdown to Kindergarten* by Alison McGhee

*How Do Dinosaurs Go to School?* by Jane Yolen & Mark Teague

*If You Take a Mouse to School* by Laura Numeroff

*Kindergarten Rocks!* by Katie Davis

*The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn

*Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!* by Nancy Carlson

*Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten* by Joseph Slate

*The Night Before Kindergarten* by Natasha Wing

*Tiptoe Into Kindergarten* by Jacqueline Rogers

*Welcome to Kindergarten* by Anne Rockwell

*Wemberly Worried* by Kevin Henkes

*We Share Everything!* by Robert Munsch