

**Junior Kindergarten Standards**

**Overview**

**Turtle Lake Junior Kindergarten Overview:**Junior Kindergarten in Turtle Lake provides a safe, play based, developmentally appropriate learning environment. Curriculum is developed in response to the needs and interests of the children, with the teacher serving as a guide and a facilitator. Children are given opportunities to explore and manipulate the world around them as they develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. In this process, parents are viewed as equal partners.

**Enduring Understandings:**

1. All children are capable and competent.  Development and learning begins at birth for all children in all settings. Turtle Lake Junior Kindergarten Curriculum supports practices that promote development and protect young children from the harm that results from inappropriate expectations. In this they are aligned with ethical principles of the early childhood profession.
2. Early relationships matter.  Positive relationships are essential for the development of personal responsibility, capacity for self-regulation, for constructive interactions with others, and for fostering academic functioning and mastery. Warm, sensitive, and responsive interactions help children develop a secure, positive sense of self and encourage them to respect and cooperate with others.
3. A child’s early learning and development is multidimensional.  Developmental domains are highly interrelated. The Turtle Lake Junior Kindergarten Curriculum reflects the interconnectedness of the domains of children’s development; social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language development and communication, health and physical development, and cognition and general knowledge.
4. Expectations for children must be guided by knowledge of child growth and development.  The Turtle Lake Junior. Kindergarten Curriculum is based on research about the processes and sequences of young children’s learning and development, and the conditions under which children develop to their fullest potential.
5. Children are individuals who develop at various rates.  The Turtle Lake Junior Kindergarten Curriculum recognizes that there are individual rates of development and learning across any age range. Inclusion of children with special needs fosters caring attitudes and teaches children about acceptance of differences in each other. Inclusion is simply an example of best practice in meeting the individual needs of each child and their family. Children with diagnosed disabilities may have an Individual Education Program (IEP).  Teachers consult Special Education personnel regarding specific adaptations and goals for children who have an IEP. (Early Childhood Special Education and Speech).
6. Children are members of cultural groups that share developmental patterns.  The Turtle Lake Junior Kindergarten Curriculum acknowledges that children’s development and learning opportunities reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of children, families and environments.
7. Children exhibit a range of skills and competencies within any domain of development.  The Turtle Lake Junior Kindergarten Curriculum supports the development of optimal learning experiences that can be adapted for individual developmental patterns.
8. Children learn through play and the active exploration of their environment.  The Turtle Lake Junior Kindergarten Curriculum reflects the belief that children should be provided with opportunities to explore and, apply new skills through child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities, and through interactions with peers, adults, and materials.  Teachers and families can best guide learning by providing these opportunities in natural, authentic contexts. Positive relationships help children gain the benefits of instructional experiences and resources.
9. Parents are children’s primary and most important caregivers and educators.  Families, communities, and schools all have significant roles to play in terms of what opportunities are available to children, and how well a child is able to take advantage of those learning opportunities.  Children who see themselves as highly valued are more likely to feel secure, thrive physically, get along with others, learn well, and feel part of a community.