

Staff of St. James' Nursery School completes 54 hours of Maryland Model for School Training!!

What is the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) and why is it important?

Children who succeed in school do well in life. It is a shared responsibility of parents and providers to furnish optimal care for children so they will grow to be happy and healthy adults. The care and nurturing given children before they enter elementary school is critical to their development. The Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) is an assessment and instructional system designed to provide parents, teachers, and early childhood providers with a common understanding of what children know and are able to do upon entering school.

The MMSR is important because it provides a common goal and language of how parents, teachers, and providers can support young children's learning. MMSR incorporates research-based instruction, age-appropriate assessment of children's learning, and effective communication among teachers, parents, and early childhood providers. Teachers and providers receive on-going staff development to implement these practices.

What is "school readiness?"

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) defines "school readiness" as the stage of human development that enables a child to engage in, and benefit from, primary learning experiences. As a result of family support and relationships with friends and members of the community, a young child who has reached certain levels of physical well-being and motor development; acquired social and emotional capabilities; and attained language and comprehension skills, coupled with general knowledge. Such attributes help children enter a classroom ready to work.

What skills do children need in order to succeed in school?

For those of us who are concerned about the school readiness of children, it is important they be:

- Socially adjusted, emotionally secure, and physically strong and coordinated.
- Able to communicate with adults and other children including awareness of print and letter-sound relationship, understanding stories, and love for books.
- Able to recognize and understand basic mathematical concepts including the ability to identify patterns and shapes and how to place items in a certain order.
- Aware of their environment, animal and plant life, as well as the roles of people in their families and communities.
- Comfortable with their creativity and appreciation for expressing themselves through the arts

These skills, behaviors, and knowledge prepare children to become successful learners. However, too many children come to school lacking many of these skills and behaviors. For this reason, the Maryland General Assembly placed into law a requirement that all Maryland kindergarten children are evaluated each fall to determine the levels of school readiness

The MMSR provides a framework for best practices in early care and education programs. Through the MMSR, teachers gain an in-depth understanding of children's learning styles and capabilities, allowing them to probe more deeply into their students' learning potential. Children and their families benefit from the clear communication about what children need to learn and be successful in school.