Arrival and dismissal—students should plan to arrive between 7:55 and 8:20 a.m. Students should not arrive before 7:55 a.m. since supervision is not available, unless they are enrolled in Adventure Club. School begins at 8:20 a.m. and dismissal is at 3:20 p.m.

Art—the kindergartners will have a special art teacher with whom they meet (on "C" days). Art is also a part of our classroom curriculum.

Attendance—a successful school experience is the responsibility of the child, the parent, and the school. Your child's progress, both academically and socially, is influenced by daily participation. Regular attendance without tardiness is key. If your child is absent for any reason, please notify the school early that morning.

Backpack—each child will need some sort of bag or backpack to bring home folders, papers, books, art work, etc. each day. Please have your child share the contents of the backpack with you daily, and please value the importance of your child's work and school communications. Bring the backpack empty to school each day. Make sure the backpack will fit in our kindergarten lockers and easily hold an 8 ½ x 11 folder (no wheels please).

Barnes and Noble—one of our Partners in Education.

Birthdays—it is a school policy that birthday treats will not be brought to school as they take too much time away from daily instruction. However, we will celebrate and acknowledge each child's birthday in several ways in our classroom and school. On your child's birthday, he/she gets to choose his/her area first and he/she gets to pick birthday read alouds for the class to hear. Additionally, we will complete birthday writing on each child's birthday and he/she gets to sit in the rocking chair and listen to the stories being read to him/her. We will celebrate summer birthdays at the end of the school year.

Book Orders—I will send home book order forms monthly from Scholastic Books. This is a great opportunity for you to buy books for your child at a reduced rate. For each book you buy, we get free books for our classroom. Please pay by check, made payable to Scholastic. Send your payment, order form(s) in a sealed envelope with your child's name on the front. Directions will also come home for ordering online. Remember, this is purely optional!
Centers—the best way for kindergarten children to learn is through active play. Our classroom is set up with both developmental and learning centers. We carefully plan the activities in each center to develop skills and meet the needs of all the students in the class. You will often hear your child refer to this as either “literacy work stations” or “areas.”

Clinic—our clinic, or health room, is available for students who are injured during the school day or feel ill. Be sure to fill out your white card so the office staff will know how to reach you, or a contact person, at all times.

Contact—the best way to contact me is through email at msherbo@cpsk12.org. I do NOT check voicemail so please leave messages with the office or send me an email asking that I call you. Always leave important messages (i.e. transportation changes) with the office.

Counselor—our school counselor is Mrs. Sadewhite and Mrs. Davison.

Dress—please be certain to check the weather forecast and dress your child appropriately, especially in winter. Please be sure to put your child's name on sweaters, hats, coats, mittens or anything that he/she may take off. Please also have your child wear tennis shoes for PE (on “A” days).

Emergencies—you will be contacted if your child is seriously injured. We also have a school plan in case of fires, tornadoes or intruders. It is very important to give the office (on the white emergency card) a complete list of phone numbers where you can be reached, and the names and numbers of others who can pick up your child.

E-mail—you can also contact me by email at msherbo@cpsk12.org. Please do not email important information I need to know that day (i.e. transportation changes). Sometimes I do not have time to check email until after school, or at other times (as we all know too well) technology can be unreliable and our email may be down for some reason. If I do not respond to your email within 1 day (excluding weekends), please check with me (in the past a few emails have been sent to my "junk" folder without my knowledge).

Field Trips—you will receive more information on this if, and when, a field trip is planned and arranged.

Fire Drills—fire drills are held periodically throughout the year. All students and faculty participate.

Friday Folders—each Friday your child will bring home a Friday Folder with important notes and papers. It will also contain a newsletter most weeks. Please return the folder the following Monday.

Guided Reading—provides an opportunity to teach a variety of reading strategies needed to become fluent, independent readers. During guided reading, the teacher monitors and evaluates each child. The children work in flexible small groups and learn skills and strategies together.
**Handwriting**—we have a time set aside daily to practice handwriting skills in isolation. Our focus is on using the correct strokes and verbal prompts to make a letter. We talk about how our letters should look the “school way.”

**Help at home**—periodically you may be asked to work with your child at home. He/she may need extra practice on a particular skill. Always, your work as a parent is to be supportive and encouraging. Looking at your child’s work helps instill a value for education and learning.

**High Five**—this is a universal hand signal used by all teachers at Paxton Keeley. It is a hand raised with 5 outstretched fingers. The children know that this means 5 important things: eyes on speaker, quiet, face front, hands empty, and ears listening. We use this signal when we need to get the children’s attention.

**Homework**—homework opportunities will be discussed in the Friday newsletter. Starting in January, books your child has read in reading groups will come home in a plastic bag. Please take time to enjoy this special reading time with your child. Please return the books promptly in the bag.

**Hy-Vee**—one of our Partners in Education.

**Illness**—it is important to keep your child home if he/she is ill. This helps to make him/her more comfortable and prevents others from becoming ill.

**Independent Reading**—because children learn to read by reading, they need plenty of opportunities to read independently. Sufficient time and appropriate materials are necessary to develop and strengthen reading abilities. By giving the children the time to read, both at school and at home, we can work together to provide a literature-rich environment and a life-long love of reading.

**Interactive Writing**—this is a time where the class and I work together to compose a piece of writing. Each time we work there is a different focus of instruction. We might focus on letter formation, word spacing, beginning letter sounds, or recording the beginning, middle and ending sounds in a long word. These pieces of writing usually take more than one day. This is a guided practice to help teach the children the foundations of writing, while providing “conventional” examples of spelling and punctuation.

**Jewelry**—it is best to not allow your kindergartner to wear jewelry to school. They often play with it and it causes a distraction.

**Jobs**—every child will have a classroom job for a week. On Mondays the children get their new jobs. It is their responsibility to remember their “duties” that go with their jobs. Everyone will get the opportunity to have every job, although it will take almost the whole year to make a full rotation. “Star of the Week” is an assigned job as well.

**Journals**—the children in the class will have several different journals that they will use during the year, like a handwriting and writing journal.
Keep-Up—please keep up with your child's work. Help him/her get books, notes, etc. returned promptly.

Kindergarten—this is a very important year for your child. Please do not take kindergarten lightly. Did you know that research shows that if a child is a poor reader in first grade, he/she is likely to be a poor reader in fourth grade? Likewise, if a child is a good reader in first grade, he/she is 88% likely to be a good reader in fourth grade. Kindergarten and first grade and crucial grades in determining reading success and overall school success. Please encourage your child and show him/her that you value education.

Kindness—students in our classroom are encouraged and expected to treat all members of our class, as well as others, with kindness and respect. Hitting, fighting, name-calling, bullying, and making fun of others will not be permitted.

Library—we will visit the library (or media center) at least once a week. Library books need to be returned on the "B" days when we visit the library/media center.

Literacy Work Stations—during literacy work stations, the children practice reading and writing skills while I work with small guided reading groups. The work station activities are designed to strengthen letter/sound knowledge, listening skills, oral language expression, rhyme, letter formation, cooperation, etc.

Lost and Found—we have a school lost and found area. We encourage the children to check the lost and found collection for any missing items. We ask that you label clothing items worn to school. This will help us return a lost article to its owner.

Math—the kindergarten mathematics curriculum provides students with mathematical experiences that help them develop number sense and a positive attitude towards mathematics that will continue through their school careers and their lives. We use a series called "Everyday Math."

Music—our class will go to music (on "D" days).

Newsletters—a weekly newsletter will be sent home in the Friday Folder. It will contain curriculum activities for the week, snack dates and important notes.

Nurse—we have a nurse on staff at school. When the nurse is not here, the office staff will run the health room.

Open House—there will be a Holiday Open House in December. Mark your calendars now for Dec. 20! More details will be sent home when the date approaches.
Parent Conferences—there are two scheduled times in the school year for parent conferences. On these days the children are off school. Between conferences, midsemester reports will be sent home to keep you informed of any concerns.

Parties—there will be parties given by room parents. They are Fall and Valentine's Day. Let the room parents know if you would like to help.

Personal Information—please help your child practice his/her address, phone number and birthday at home. Addresses and phone numbers are important in the case of an emergency.

Physical Education—our class will have P.E. (on “A” days). Tennis shoes need to be worn on those days.

Paxton Keeley Get the Scoop Night—we will have a curriculum night where I will share more about our classroom routines and our curriculum (August 27th at 6:30 pm).

Quick Good-byes—“Quick good-byes leave dry eyes.” This is a good motto for you to remember when dropping off your child, especially at the beginning of the year. If you linger or act too anxious yourself, your child may pick up on your behavior and act accordingly.

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Recess—our scheduled recess is before lunch at 10:05.

Report Cards—the children will receive report cards three times during the year. We also report academic successes or concerns in the Friday Folder twice a trimester.

Star of the Week—Star of the Week letters will be sent home in the Friday Folder the week before your child is the star. It is assigned as a class job. They can bring in pictures and 2 special things to share. More details will be in the letter.

Science—the focus of the kindergarten science curriculum is on developing awareness of the world in which we live. Through scientific inquiry, concepts will be presented in the life and earth sciences, including the study of animals and plants, the five senses, general health and the four seasons. These areas will be explored utilizing a literacy based, hands-on approach. Each child will also have a science log for recording his/her work and observations.

Shared Reading—shared reading is an interactive process used with the whole class. As the teacher reads a story, children join in on phrases or words that they know. During subsequent re-readings, children read more and more of the text, until they can read the story independently. Shared reading is an opportunity for the teacher to model conventions of print and the use of reading strategies.
Snacks—the children get a quick break for snack. Snack letters are sent home in the Friday Folder for the following week. A snack bag should come home with your child the night before his/her snack day. Your child will then pass out his/her snack to the class on his/her day, so please make sure the snack is prepared and ready to pass out. As per the district’s Wellness Policy, the snack should be healthy.

Social Studies—the kindergarten social studies curriculum focuses on the students and how they relate to others in their families, classroom, school and community. Activities will help the children focus their natural curiosity for the world around them.

Storytelling Sets—storytelling sets will come home for a week at a time. A parent permission form will be in the Paxton Keeley Get the Scoop Night packet, which also provides more information about this optional activity. Please make sure these sets are returned in a timely manner so that other children can enjoy them.

Toys—children are asked not to bring toys to school. They are very distracting and we cannot be responsible for broken toys or hurt feelings caused by them.

Transportation—if your child is to go home a different way than usual, please send a note or call the office. Kindergartners are not allowed to verbally share transportation changes; changes must come from an adult either by note or a call to the office.

Units of Study—we study different units or themes throughout each month. We may make special projects and learn facts based on our unit.

Volunteering—this is a great way to get to know our school and feel a part of our school community. Please join PTA and inquire about volunteer opportunities.

We Are a Team—please feel free to talk to me at any time when you have comments, concerns, or questions regarding your child.

Writing—our writing program builds on what each child already knows. Writing begins with scribbles and proceeds to lines and circles, random strings of letters, words and spaces and eventually sentences. Your children will be encouraged and praised for all attempts and accomplishments in writing. Providing a risk-free environment is paramount to your child’s progress in writing. If possible, provide your child with writing utensils, such as pencils, crayons, markers and paper at home.

Experiences—we will participate in some fun and exciting experiences this year. From pumpkin carving to researching gingerbread houses, we are bound to have new experiences for everyone.
**Yawn**—kindergarten, especially at the beginning of the year, can be taxing on the children. Please help in making sure your child gets enough rest. Setting and keeping a set bedtime is a wonderful gift you can give your child. It will help them be alert and ready to learn each day.

**Zipping**—zipping, buttoning, snapping, and tying are all good things to work on at home. It is very hard for one teacher to fasten 20 or more coats at recess time in cold weather!