Back to School Checklist

Back to School · PreK–12

A complete start-of-year plan covering your room, first lessons, expectations, family outreach, and final readiness checks.

Classroom Environment & Organization

- [ ] Arrange student seating to support visibility, accessibility, and instruction.
- [ ] Organize and label supplies so students can find and return them independently.
- [ ] Set up learning centers or work stations with clear directions.
- [ ] Check that pathways, exits, and accessible routes are clear.
- [ ] Prepare a welcoming entry area with name tags or a seating guide.

Instructional Preparation

- [ ] Review curriculum maps, pacing guides, and first-unit materials.
- [ ] Plan the first two weeks of lessons, including time to teach routines.
- [ ] Prepare beginning-of-year student assessments or screeners.
- [ ] Set up your gradebook, learning platform, and class rosters.
- [ ] Gather materials and make copies for the first week.
- [ ] Plan getting-to-know-you activities that build classroom community.

Classroom Expectations & Procedures

- [ ] Establish three to five positively stated classroom expectations.
- [ ] Write step-by-step procedures for entering, transitions, and dismissal.
- [ ] Plan how you will teach, model, and practice routines in the first weeks.
- [ ] Decide how you will recognize and reinforce expected behavior.
- [ ] Prepare visual schedules and posted reminders of key routines.

Student Relationships & Family Communication

- [ ] Prepare a welcome letter or message introducing yourself to families.
- [ ] Create a student interest survey to learn about strengths and preferences.
- [ ] Set up a family contact log that records preferred communication methods.
- [ ] Review student accommodations and support requirements with authorized personnel.
- [ ] Arrange interpreters or translated materials for families who need them.

Final Readiness Checks

- [ ] Confirm emergency procedures, evacuation routes, and class lists for drills.

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- [ ] Review student health plans and allergies with the school nurse.
- [ ] Confirm arrival and dismissal plans, including bus and pickup lists.
- [ ] Prepare emergency substitute plans in case of an unexpected absence.
- [ ] Complete a final classroom walkthrough before students arrive.

Notes