

BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2024-25

PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT GUIDE



**ROCK &
ENROLL**

www.baltimorecityschools.org

ROCK & ENROLL IN CITY SCHOOLS' PRE-K/K!



City Schools' Blueprint for Success

Every day, children walk through the doors of Baltimore's schools filled with talent, dreams, and enormous potential. It is City Schools' responsibility to make sure that **ALL children**, including yours, have a safe place to go every day, where they can learn about the world around them with adults who will engage, enrich, and inspire their experiences and passions. Enrollment in Pre-K/K is the foundation towards ensuring that your child is prepared for success!

To inspire our next generation of leaders, City Schools' strategic plan is prioritizing three areas:

- ▶ **ACADEMICS** – continuous, proactive investments in curricular materials across all academic disciplines and through reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- ▶ **WHOLENESS** – providing supportive, nurturing school environments that meet the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students to thrive and learn effectively.
- ▶ **LEADERSHIP** – identifying, hiring, and developing innovative and inspirational leaders that are changing the trajectory of youth in Baltimore City; as well as honoring the voices of students by actively engaging them in meaningful conversations about issues that matter most to them at the school and district levels.

 To find out more about City Schools Pre-K/K, visit www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/pre-k-and-kindergarten-registration



DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ In pre-K and kindergarten, children learn the basic skills they need to succeed in school – like how to read, write, work together, and more.
- ▶ Social-emotional skills are just as important too. Pre-K and Kindergarten children will also learn how to work with their peers, understand and express their feelings, think creatively, and discover what they love to do!
- ▶ Schools can help children whose primary language is not English with the support to learn how to read, write, and speak English.
- ▶ City Schools' pre-K and kindergarten programs are free, full-day, and available to all families.

One of the many benefits at Commodore John Rodgers that I love about my son being in pre-K is the amount of hands-on educational learning activities that he is able to participate in every day. My son has been able to also adapt to the routines in place at school and use them here at home. –A. Alvarado

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Introducing City Schools' NEW Centralized Enrollment Processes for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten.

Congratulations! It's time to enroll your children for pre-K or kindergarten! Children who turn four (4) or five (5) by September 1, 2024 are eligible to apply for schools. This year, families will be required to apply online for up to five (5) schools and receive their placement offer via email. Families will also be able to view and manage their waitlist offers online as well.

What are the benefits of this new centralized process?

- ▶ By applying online, families will save time by not having to visit multiple schools.
- ▶ Families do not need to rush to schools on the first day to register their children out of fear that a preferred school will fill up.
- ▶ All families are able to apply and receive their offers at the same time, regardless of priority group status.
- ▶ Offers will still be made based upon MSDE and Board-approved criteria.
- ▶ The process will use a trusted algorithm to make placement decisions— removing any user error that may happen.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED — ONLINE AND AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

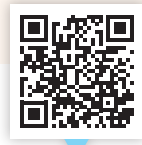
Search for schools › www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/schools

Every school in the district has an online school profile that includes contact information, programs, achievement data, pictures, and more. Families can search for schools by location or program availability.

Student Enrollment Management System (SEMS) Parent Portal

Parents and guardians can access the online pre-K and Kindergarten application by visiting www.baltimorecityschools.org/SEMS to set up your Parent Portal Account – this process is quick and easy but will require a valid email address.

Note: Families that participated in this year's middle or high school choice process can use their existing accounts when applying for pre-K or kindergarten.



Completing the Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten Application

Parents and guardians can complete the application through the SEMS Parent Portal by following these steps:



- 1 Create an account.
- 2 Add your students: **a)** Families of current City Schools students will need to link to their children by clicking on the “Link to my child” button. Note: If you have more than one child enrolled in a City School, you will only need to complete the process once to link to all children. Linking is necessary to ensure your student receives sibling priority, while also minimizing the data entry needed. **b)** Families of students not currently enrolled in a City School can add a child to their dashboard by clicking on the “Add a child” button.
- 3 If your pre-K or kindergarten applicant does not show up on your dashboard, you will need to add them using the “Add a Child” button.
- 4 Beside your students that are eligible to apply, you will see a link that says, “Apply for Pre-Kindergarten” or “Apply for Kindergarten.”
- 5 Enter the necessary information.
- 6 Review your information and submit.

! No internet access at home? Here are some ways to complete the pre-K and kindergarten application.

Local Library

Visit your local Enoch Pratt Free Library location to access the internet and free Wi-Fi.

School Community

Families are encouraged to visit their neighborhood school communities to utilize school-provided Chromebooks and laptops to complete the pre-K and kindergarten application. Contact the school's enrollment official to learn more about accessibility opportunities for their school's computers.

District Office

Families are encouraged to visit the Office of Enrollment, Choice, and Transfers to complete the pre-K and kindergarten application. Please feel free to visit the Enrollment Team at 200 E. North Avenue, Room 106, Baltimore, MD 21202 or contact the team at 410.396.8600 | Enrollment@bcps.k12.md.us.



Documents Required for Enrollment

- ▶ Student's birth certificate or another government-issued document (i.e., passport, military ID, birth registration) verifying your child's identity and birth date)
- ▶ Photo ID of the parent or legal guardian (i.e., passport, driver's license, military ID)
- ▶ Two proofs of primary residency within Baltimore City dated within 60 days (water, gas/electric, or telephone bill; verifiable lease agreement, rent receipt, or mortgage statement; bank statement)
- ▶ Two forms of income dated within 30 days (paycheck stub, letter from employer, tax return, pension, or child support award)
- ▶ Your child's immunization record
- ▶ Your child's lead test certificate
- ▶ Proof of your child's most recent physical examination
- ▶ If applicable, proof of custody/guardianship
- ▶ If applicable, your child's Individualized Education Program

Understanding Eligibility for Pre-Kindergarten

When placing students in pre-K at neighborhood schools, City Schools uses priority groups to enroll children. Although families with age-eligible students are able to submit their applications at the same time, regardless of priority status, a computerized algorithm will make the offer with priority grouping as a consideration factor, in addition to MSDE and Board-approved criteria. Space in pre-K is limited - all families are encouraged to participate in Round 1 and to select up to five schools to increase the chances of your child being placed in one of your desired schools.

PRIORITY 1 CHILDREN

- Are four years old by September 1 –AND–
- Are considered income eligible OR experiencing homelessness OR receive special education services, OR eligible for English language services

PRIORITY 2 CHILDREN

- Are four years old by September 1 –BUT–
- Are NOT considered income eligible, NOT experiencing homelessness, NOT receiving special education services, and NOT eligible for English language services

Understanding Income Eligibility

Income eligibility is based upon family size (number of primary household members, including children) and household income. To be eligible for Priority 1 pre-K enrollment, the total annual household income must be less than 300% of the Federal poverty Guidelines. Income includes monthly earnings, Federal Income Tax Return (1040 statement), Current Award letter for Temporary Cash Assistance (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, child support, alimony, Current Approval Letter for W.I.C or Medical Assistance, food stamps, benefits for immigrants, retirement, Social Security, Proof of Unemployment benefits within last 30 days, Two consecutive pay stubs within the last 30 days and foster care. **Two (2) proofs of income are required for all pre-kindergarten enrollments, regardless of priority status.** For more information, please visit www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/pre-k-and-kindergarten-registration.

Understanding Pre-K Waivers

A Pre-K Waiver is for children who turn 4 years old between September 2 and October 15 and who are considered income eligible, experiencing homelessness, learning English, or receiving special education services. Beginning August 1, 2024, families will be able to download and complete the Pre-K Waiver application form from the website at www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/pre-k-and-kindergarten-registration. Completed applications should be immediately emailed to EarlyAdmission@bcps.k12.md.us along with any supporting documentation. The submission deadline for the Pre-K Waiver application form will be August 16, 2024. For more information, please call 443.642.3039.

Understanding Early Admission Testing

Children who turn 5 or 6 between September 2 and October 15 may apply for early admission to kindergarten or first grade. Beginning April 2, 2024, families will be able to download and complete the Early Admission Testing application form from the website at www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/pre-k-and-kindergarten-registration. Completed applications should be immediately emailed to EarlyAdmission@bcps.k12.md.us along with any supporting documentation. The submission deadline for the Early Admission Testing application form will be May 15, 2024. Please note that testing will not take place until after the 2023–24 school year concludes. For more information, please call 443.642.3039.

Enoch Pratt Free Library: Your Child’s First Card

The Enoch Pratt Free Library is a great place to visit with your young child. The library has many programs, services, and resources for families. And, of course, there are lots of books to read together with your child!

When you enroll your child in pre-K or kindergarten, you have the chance to automatically receive a library card, known as the First Card, for your child. This special library card is for children under the age of 6, that can be used to check out children’s books from any Enoch Pratt Free Library, and never gets charged late fees.

To receive your child’s First Card, make sure to check the “Yes, please give my child a First Card” box on the last page of your Student Enrollment Form. To find your local library branch, visit www.prattlibrary.org/locations or call 410.396.5430.



Immunizations

All children who attend school must show proof that they have received all state-required immunizations. To find out what immunizations are required to attend pre-k or kindergarten, visit www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/immunizations, or contact your neighborhood school.

The Baltimore City Health Department offers free immunizations for children in Baltimore City. For more information, and to schedule an appointment, please call 410.396.4454 (Note: Walk-in visits are not accepted).

Judith P. Hoyer Early Learning Hubs (Judy Centers)

Judy Centers provide a central location for early childhood education and family support services for children from birth to kindergarten. They promote school readiness through collaboration with community-based agencies, organizations, and businesses. Most services or assistance a family may need can be provided directly or arranged by the Judy Center on site or nearby, including health care, adult education, identification of special needs and early intervention, childcare, parenting classes, and family literacy.

City Schools has 14 schools with Judy Centers:

- Abbottston #50
- Arlington #234
- Arundel #164
- Billie Holiday #144
- Commodore
- John Rodgers #27
- Curtis Bay #207
- Dorothy I. Height #61
- Harford Heights #37
- Holabird #229
- John Ruhrah #228
- Lakeland #12
- Lakewood #86
- Liberty #64
- Moravia #105



I am truly grateful for the pre-K teachers at Gardenville Elementary school for teaching our future generation. Gardenville teachers bring so much joy, life, happiness, and structure to our children while they are in school. –A. Ali

GETTING READY

FOR PRE-K OR KINDERGARTEN



Get Excited

- Get familiar with your child's bell schedule, uniform colors, and set up a school tour!
- Find other children in your neighborhood and plan playdates.
- Read books about going to school and talk about what makes your child excited.
- Encourage a positive attitude about school.
- Learn about and join your school's parent organization.

Set Routines

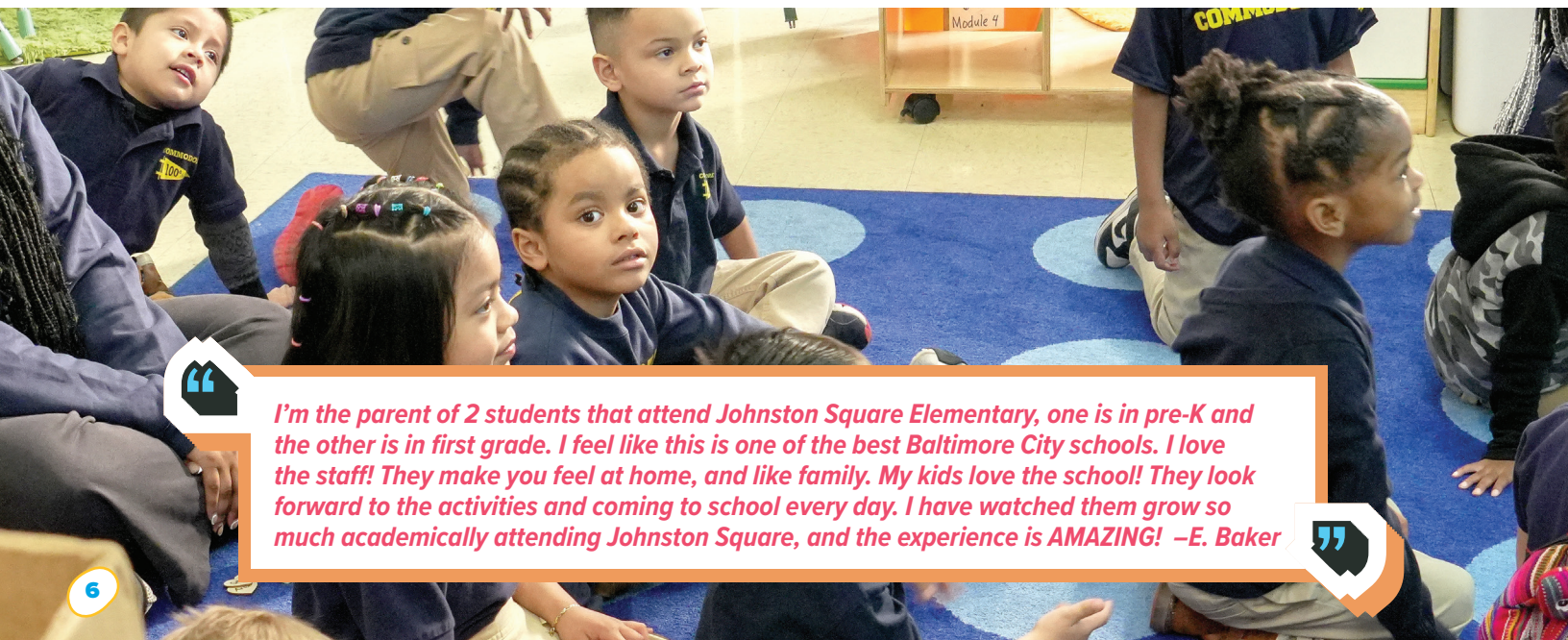
- Follow a bedtime routine to ensure your child is getting enough sleep.
 - Children aged 3 to 5 should be getting 11 to 13 hours of sleep every night!
- Aim to wake up at the same time every day.
- Make sure your morning routine includes time for getting dressed, eating breakfast, and brushing teeth.
- Be sure to leave home early enough to travel to school and arrive on time.
 - You don't want to miss any learning!

Before the First Day

- Ask the front office about school drop-off and pick-up.
- Share any medical concerns with the school leader and school nurse.
- Talk with your child about their feelings about school.
- Make sure your child knows his or her teacher's name.
 - Use the teacher's name when you are talking with your child at home, so he or she becomes familiar with it.
- Visit your child's school a few times during the summer so that he or she is familiar with the building.
- Say goodbye with a smile before you leave your child. He or she will "read" your emotions. Leave after you say goodbye.

Develop Independence

- Be sure your child can dress, zip, button, and snap clothing by him or herself.
- Have your child practice packing and unpacking a backpack and opening containers such as yogurt, juice boxes, and other lunch items.
- Be sure your child knows his or her first and last name.
- Practice goodbyes by role-playing drop-off.



I'm the parent of 2 students that attend Johnston Square Elementary, one is in pre-K and the other is in first grade. I feel like this is one of the best Baltimore City schools. I love the staff! They make you feel at home, and like family. My kids love the school! They look forward to the activities and coming to school every day. I have watched them grow so much academically attending Johnston Square, and the experience is AMAZING! –E. Baker

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

It's cool to always come to school!

Be on time!

Stay all day!

Come ready to explore!

Come excited to read!

Come excited to learn new things!

Come ready to learn through play!

HAVE YOU HEARD THE FACTS?

— FACT 1 —

Having 100% attendance increases a student's academic success

— FACT 2 —

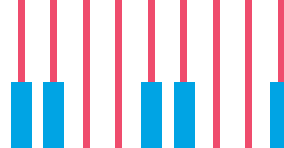
Having 100% attendance increases great academic success in the next grade

— FACT 3 —

Having 100% attendance means your child will never miss a lesson

— FACT 4 —

Students who attend school daily are better at reading



I was nervous to send my son to Commodore John Rodgers because he has type 1 diabetes. The school nurse and staff are extremely supportive and knowledgeable about diabetes. I feel safe when my son goes to school because I know he is well taken care of! —P. Martin



SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

New to the country?

District staff from the Multilingual Enrollment and Support Center (MESC) are available to provide support to students and families. Please connect with the team via email at MESC@bcps.k12.md.us or by phone at 443.642.4481.

Experiencing homelessness?

District staff from the Enrollment, Choice, and Transfer (ECT) team are available to assist families in finding and applying to a convenient school location with available seats. Please connect with the team via email at Enrollment@bcps.k12.md.us or by phone at 410.396.8600. District staff are also available to provide in-person support to families.

Need additional time?

Parents/guardians that feel their child is not ready to begin Kindergarten may request a Kindergarten Maturity Waiver to delay Kindergarten registration for up to one year. The waiver application can be accessed by visiting www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/pre-k-and-kindergarten-registration. Once completed, applications should be immediately emailed to EarlyAdmission@bcps.k12.md.us along with any supporting documentation.

Other Situations?

Enrollment Officials are available at every neighborhood school throughout the district to support families in navigating the registration process. Additionally, staff from Early Learning (EarlyAdmission@bcps.k12.md.us), Enrollment, Choice, and Transfers (Enrollment@bcps.k12.md.us) and the Multilingual Enrollment and Support Center (MESC@bcps.k12.md.us) are also available to answer questions about pre-K and kindergarten programs, the enrollment process, and district programs and services. Please do not hesitate to email staff or call (443.984.2000) regarding any questions/concerns.



The pre-K/K teachers at Gardenville have not only taught my children the important building blocks for learning but have also become an integral part in their social development. The school and teachers offer so much of themselves. My sons are thriving at Gardenville, and I look forward to the many more years of education. –S. Ford



KEY DATES*

APPLICATION DATES

APRIL 2 – MAY 15

Round 1 application window for pre-K and kindergarten families

MAY 31

All families who applied in round 1 will begin receiving placement offers

JUNE 3 – JULY 15

Round 2 application window for pre-K and kindergarten families

AUGUST 2

All families who applied in round 2 will begin receiving placement offers

AUGUST 2 – SEPTEMBER 13

Waitlist offer period. Families on waitlists will begin receiving offers. Waiver-eligible students may apply for placement or to be added to a waitlist.

RELATED DATES

APRIL 2 – MAY 15

Application window for early admission into kindergarten and 1st grade

JUNE 17 – AUGUST 2

Summer enrollment/transfer window for new and current families (Grades 1–12)

AUGUST 1 – AUGUST 16

Application window for families seeking a pre-K waiver

AUGUST 26

First day of the 2024–25 school year!

*All dates are subject to change. Continue to monitor City Schools' website for updates at www.baltimorecityschools.org

Great Futures Start Early

BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Contact Us

Sonja Brookins Santelises, Ed.D
CEO, Baltimore City Public Schools

Ronald S. McFadden
Chair, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners

Find contact information for individual schools at
www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/schools

Departments at the district office › 200 E. North Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21202

**Enrollment, Choice,
and Transfers**
Room 106 • 410.396.8600

Early Learning Programs
Room 308 • 443.642.3039

Special Education
Room 205 • 410.396.8900

**Multilingual Enrollment
and Support Center**
Room 320 • 443.642.4481

General Information
443.984.2000

Baltimore City Public Schools' Notice of Nondiscrimination

Baltimore City Public Schools ("City Schools") does not discriminate in its employment, programs, and activities based on race, ethnicity, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, pregnancy/parenting status, disability, veteran status, genetic information, age, or other legally or constitutionally protected attributes or affiliations. Discrimination undermines our community's long-standing efforts to create, foster, and promote equity and inclusion for all. Some examples of discrimination include acts of hate, violence, harassment, bullying, or retaliation.

For more information, see Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners Policies JBA (Nondiscrimination – Students), JBB (Sex-Based Discrimination – Students), JICK (Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation of Students), ACA (Nondiscrimination – Employees), ACB (Sexual Harassment – Employees), and ACD (ADA Reasonable Accommodations), and the accompanying City Schools Administrative Regulations.

City Schools also provides equal access to the Boy and Girl Scouts and other designated youth groups.

For inquiries about these nondiscrimination policies, please contact:

Equal Opportunity Manager, Title IX Coordinator
Equal Employment Opportunity and Title IX Compliance
200 E. North Avenue, Room 208 • Baltimore, MD 21202

Phone: 410.396.8542
Fax: 410.396.2955
Email: eeo-titleixcompliance@bcps.k12.md.us

