

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Joe A. Hairston ♦ Superintendent ♦ 6901 Charles Street ♦ Towson, MD ♦ 21204

Prekindergarten Fact Sheet for Parents

What is the prekindergarten program?

The Baltimore County Public Schools' prekindergarten program provides learning experiences that address the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical needs of young children. All sessions are half-day and follow the same school year calendar as other grades.

How old must a child be to attend prekindergarten?

For the **2011-2012** school year, **and each school year thereafter**, a child must be four (4) years old on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance. For the **2011-2012** school year, the child's birth date must fall between 9/2/2006 and 9/1/2007.

Who is eligible for prekindergarten?

Automatic eligibility for a prekindergarten program will occur **when a child meets the age of entry guidelines and is at least** one of the following:

- Is from an economically disadvantaged background (i.e., eligible for free or reduced-price meal program as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture).
- Is homeless.
- Has been identified through the IEP team process with the development of an IEP as necessitating special education classroom instruction within a general education setting.

Children who do not meet the automatic criteria for eligibility will be considered for enrollment based upon availability of space and prioritized criteria. **As with automatic eligibility, children must first meet the age of entry guidelines.** If space is available, parent/guardian letters for acceptance of students not meeting automatic criteria will be mailed beginning August 1, 2011.

When do schools screen for prekindergarten eligibility?

Each school selects a date in the spring of each school year to conduct a prekindergarten screening. Additional screenings are held as needed.

How many children are served and what is the staffing in prekindergarten?

Twenty (20) children are accepted for each session. Each session is staffed by a certified classroom teacher and a paid classroom assistant.

If my neighborhood school does not have a program, can my child still attend prekindergarten?

Call or visit your neighborhood school to determine if your child is automatically eligible for attendance. All students **automatically eligible** for prekindergarten will be provided access to a program.

Where can I get more information about prekindergarten programs?

Additional information can be obtained from your local elementary school, from the Baltimore County Public Schools' website at http://www.bcps.org/offices/early_childhood/, or from the Baltimore County Public Schools', Office of Language Arts, Elementary at 410-887-4313.