

File R: JCA-B - PRESCHOOL ASSIGNMENT POLICY¹

Preschool Programs

Lowell Public Schools offers full-day and half-day Preschool Programs to children four years old by September 1st.

Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs):

Three and four-year-old students with IEPs are assigned to preschool based on IEP, required services, residency, and available space. Children with IEPs are not included in the lottery. Preschool programming will begin on their third birthday in accordance with Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Pre-Registration Period for Preschool Lottery:

Lowell Public Schools holds a registration period for preschool lottery during the months of February through April each year. At the time of registration, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to indicate three (3) different school choices. A student's preschool placement is for one year and has no bearing on a student's kindergarten placement. There are a limited number of full-day preschool placements in select schools (Bartlett Community Partnership, Cardinal O'Connell Early Learning Center, Frederic T. Greenhalge Elementary and Murkland Elementary).

Families must register on-line or at the Family Resource Center. Families can access computers and support to submit the on-line application, as needed.

To be included in the **preschool lottery**, families must register by completing on-line application and provide the following documentation (unless the student qualifies for McKinney-Vento services) at the time of registration:

- proof of residency,
- child's birth certificate,
- current immunization/health records, and
- photo ID of parent/guardian(s) registering the child.

Given the fact that transportation is not provided to preschoolers, we strongly encourage families to consider selecting schools where the family can ensure on-time, regular attendance by the student. Regular attendance is required and children missing more than 10% of total days of attendance may be unenrolled in the program given the scarcity of preschool seats in the community.

Preschool Lottery:

Families registering before the deadline are entered into the preschool lottery.

¹ Draft First Reading

A random and blindly generated five-digit number is assigned to each student at the conclusion of the registration period (no later than May 3rd), and recorded against their registration number.

Any family registering **after the lottery pre-registration** deadline will automatically be placed on the preschool waitlist by date of registration. The Early Childhood Department will maintain the preschool waitlist.

Pre-registered families will receive written notification (an Email) providing the student's lottery number and their **proposed school assignment before May 31st**.

Families **must** respond in writing to the **email**, selecting from one of the following options upon receiving notification of preschool assignment:

- Accept placement
- Accept placement and remain on waitlist at preferred school until October 15.
- Reject placement and remain on waitlist at preferred school until October 15.
- Reject placement and seek alternative preschool programming.

Families **must** return the proposed placement offer response via email within 7 business days to the Early Childhood Department indicating one of the selections above. Families not responding to the preregistration placement offer within 7 days will be placed on the waitlist in the order of their lottery numbers. Upon receipt of acceptance of the proposed placement offer, the Early Childhood Department will generate an official assignment letter by June 30th.

Students accepting and receiving assignments must attend school or contact their child's assigned school within five days from the start of preschool to maintain enrollment. After five school days, if the family has not contacted the school or the child has not attended, the child will be unenrolled and their seat will be filled by a student on the waitlist. Students with IEPs in foster care or covered under McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act are exempt from this policy.

Attendance:

It is the parent(s)/guardian(s)' responsibility to ensure regular attendance.

Regular attendance matters. Given that there are limited seats in preschool classrooms available in Lowell Public Schools for preschool-age children and high demand, the district has established an attendance policy.

Children with unexcused absences of more than 10% of the total number of days of school will be provided written notice of attendance concerns. Families not meeting the conditions of the written attendance notice may be unenrolled by the school. Schools must notify the Early Childhood Department about any child that is unenrolled.