

Contact the Early Childhood Office at your local Board of Education.

Allegany County	301-759-2012
Anne Arundel County	410-222-5441
Baltimore City	410-396-6602
Baltimore County	410-887-4313
Calvert County	410-535-7264
Caroline County	410-479-2896
Carroll County	410-751-3048
Cecil County	410-996-5424
Charles County	301-934-7380
Dorchester County	410-221-1111
Frederick County	301-696-6864
Garrett County	301-334-7645
Harford County	410-588-5252
Howard County	410-313-5659
Kent County	410-810-3903
Montgomery County	301-230-0691
Prince George's County	301-808-2723
Queen Anne's County	410-758-2403
St. Mary's County	301-475-5511
Somerset County	410-621-6243
Talbot County	410-822-0330
Washington County	301-766-2955
Wicomico County	410-677-4523
Worcester County	410-632-5042

Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

Dunbar Brooks
President
Maryland State Board of Education

Martin O'Malley
Governor



For more information, contact:

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Early Childhood Development
200 W. Baltimore Street, 10th floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
MarylandPublicSchools.org

Phone: 410-767-0602
Fax: 410-333-6226
Email: mcockey@msde.state.md.us

Public Prekindergarten in Maryland

A Parent's Guide



What is Public Prekindergarten?

Prekindergarten in the public schools is a state-funded program for 4-year-olds. The main goal of prekindergarten in the public schools is to provide learning experiences to help young children build their skills in many areas so that they are more likely to do well in school. High-quality prekindergarten experiences support children so that they may be fully ready to learn when they enter kindergarten. These experiences focus on personal and social development, language and literacy, scientific thinking, mathematical thinking, social studies, fine arts, physical development, and health education.



How are Public Prekindergarten Programs Operated?

Public school systems must develop policies for prekindergarten programs that follow state regulations. A prekindergarten program is usually a half-day morning or half-day afternoon program. The class is 2½ hours long and operates five days a week during the school year. Each class has an average of 20 children. One state-certified early childhood teacher and one qualified full-time assistant are assigned to each class. Prekindergarten programs must meet state curriculum standards. Parents and teachers communicate regularly about each child's progress. School systems are also encouraged to develop partnerships with community child care providers. For more information about the prekindergarten program in your community, call your local public school system's Early Childhood Office (see the back of this brochure).

Who is Eligible for Prekindergarten?

To be eligible for public school prekindergarten, children must be 4 years old on or before September 1 of the school year when their families want them to begin. They also must be from families that are economically disadvantaged or homeless. All economically disadvantaged children who apply must be enrolled first; however, if there are spaces left, public school systems may enroll children who are not economically disadvantaged but who have school readiness needs.

