



ECEC Integrated Preschool FAQ

How old must a child be to be enrolled in an ECEC preschool program?

For the ECEC three-year-old program, a child must be three years old on or before September 1 of the intended school year. Similarly, for the four-year-old program, a child must be four years old on or before September 1 of the targeted school year. Typically developing students also must be toilet-trained in order to be considered.

What is the process for applying for preschool admission at the ECEC?

Applications will be posted to the ECEC website on November 1st. Applicants may download the application, complete it and return it to the ECEC by the stated application deadline date of November 30th. Essentially the entire month of November is a month of application receipt. The annual ECEC preschool lottery is held during the first week of December.

Is there an advantage to submitting an application early?

There is absolutely no advantage to getting an application in early. We would much prefer that you take time and carefully complete the application thoughtfully and thoroughly. You have essentially the entire month of November to do just that.

Could you please provide a brief overview of the preschool program?

The preschool program at the Curran Early Childhood Education Center is designed under an integrated model, which means that all of our classes are planned - first and foremost - to meet the identified special needs of our very youngest learners. Once the process of meeting all of the identified special needs of these students is accomplished, we complement the pre-kindergarten class rosters with typically-developing students under a lottery system and with a tuition schedule. Because of the integrated preschool model, ALL of the preschool teachers at the ECEC must hold dual state teaching certification and have earned licenses in both early childhood education and special education.

Could you briefly identify the current ECEC preschool sections?

Because of our responsibility to specifically address the special needs of pre-K students, our preschool programming is subject to change on an annual basis. However, the current ECEC preschool session structure is as follows:

3 year olds:

2 full days

3 full days

3 half days, AM & PM

5 half days, AM & PM

4 year olds:

3 full days

5 full days

3 half days, AM & PM

5 half days, AM & PM

Full-day sessions begin daily at 8:45 am and end at 3 pm. Half-day morning sessions begin at 8:45 am and end at 11:15 am. Half-day afternoon sessions begin at 12:30 pm and end at 3 pm.

Is before/after care available to students in ECEC preschool programs?

Yes, but only for those children who have turned four years of age on or before September 1 of the applicable school year.

Why do you need to conduct a preschool lottery?

Due to the structure of the ECEC integrated model described above, there are ALWAYS significantly more typically-developing students applying for admission than there are available seats. A lottery is the simplest and most equitable way to allocate those limited seats.

Could you please briefly describe the lottery process?

Actually, there are two lotteries conducted on the lottery date. One is restricted to applicants for upcoming three-year-old programming and the other is for those seeking admittance to the program as four-year-olds.

The lottery is actually a digital, randomized, sequenced list of the names of all children who have applied for admission as of the lottery's deadline date.

If I "win" the lottery, do I automatically get my choice of preschool program for my child?

No. On the preschool application form you will be asked to select and rank your top three preferences for preschool programs. Because of our integrated preschool model, it is impossible for us to pinpoint at lottery time the specific configurations of our classes heading into the following year. That information will not become evident until sometime in the spring once programmatic needs become more apparent for those preschool children with Individualized Educational Programs. A favorable draw in the lottery, therefore, assures a seat but not necessarily your most desired one.

What happens if my child's name is NOT selected in the lottery?

Since all of the names are sequenced, a waiting list can be immediately constructed. If your child's name misses the lottery threshold, you will be immediately advised of your child's relative position on our wait list.

If a child is accepted through the lottery as a three-year-old, must that same child re-apply through the lottery system for the following year?

No, any three-year-old who continues in the ECEC preschool program will have a guaranteed spot for the following year.

If you have so many applicants for your programs, why wouldn't you just create more preschool sections to accommodate them?

This is a very common question and there are a couple of answers. First, space is a consideration. We only have a designated number of preschool classrooms to house the students. Second, and more important, if we were to devise a PreK section or sections with strictly typically developing children, we would have built a *de facto* private entity within the public school. Preschool programming for typically-developing children is not specifically funded through the district's educational budget. ECEC preschool programming is underwritten by the tuition paid by the families of typically-developing students.

How can I obtain more information about your preschool programs?

Please call us anytime at 781-310-8000 or email ECEC Principal Kimberly Taylor at ktaylor@dedham.k12.ma.us.