



Winter, 2025

Dear Family,

Children born in 2021 will begin kindergarten in fall 2026. According to our records, your child was born in 2021 and receives preschool special education services or is being evaluated for them. We know that moving on to kindergarten will mark an important new chapter in your child's life, and we look forward to partnering with you as you apply to kindergarten and plan for your child's transition to school-age instruction and services. Beginning in early winter, you will be contacted by a New York City Public Schools representative who will guide you through this transition. I am writing now to share some information about how you can prepare for the months ahead.

Attend a Kindergarten Orientation Meeting and receive a copy of our Kindergarten Orientation Guide

Please join us at a Kindergarten Orientation Meeting this November, December, or January to learn about the Kindergarten Admissions process (Applying to Kindergarten) and the Kindergarten IEP Process (KIP) process (Determining Special Education Services and Supports). During our live webinar, you will also receive an online copy of the Kindergarten Orientation Guide, which provides detailed information about the transition to kindergarten. Please see the enclosed schedule for more information on our Kindergarten Orientation Meetings.

Apply to Kindergarten

All families, including families of students with disabilities, should apply to kindergarten. Families can apply online at myschools.nyc.gov, over the phone at 718-935-2009, or by contacting a Family Welcome Center (schools.nyc.gov/welcomecenters). Use MySchools.nyc, our online directory and application tool, to learn about your zoned school(s) and other schools of interest. To identify your zoned school, visit online at schools.nyc.gov/Find-a-school and enter your address, or call 311. To learn about open houses and school tours, visit our website at schools.nyc.gov/Kindergarten, or contact the school for tour dates and times. Please share it with family and friends with children born in 2021.

Read the enclosed information about Preparing for Kindergarten: Two Processes, Special Education in New York City schools, and your rights as a parent.

We are committed to working with families to ensure that preschool students move on to kindergarten with services that will enable them to flourish. We look forward to working with you to make the transition to kindergarten as seamless as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Jessica Wallenstein'.

Jessica Wallenstein
Senior Executive Director
Committees on Special Education

Apply to Kindergarten

All New York City families with children born in 2021 can apply to kindergarten programs this school year. All children are guaranteed a kindergarten seat in a public school for Fall 2026.

List as many program choices on your application as you like, in your true preference order. If you are interested in Gifted and Talented (G&T) programs, be sure to list those programs on your application. If you list a G&T program on your kindergarten application, your child will then be evaluated for eligibility to those programs.

Current pre-k students at New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) district schools, Pre-K Centers, NYC Early Education Centers, or charter schools will be evaluated by their current pre-k teachers.

Current pre-k students at private school programs, or children who are not yet in school will be contacted by the NYCPS Division of Early Childhood Education to set up interviews.

Important dates to remember:

- **Tuesday, December 9, 2025**
Kindergarten Application Opens
- **Friday, January 23, 2026**
Kindergarten Application Closes
- **Tuesday, March 31, 2026**
Kindergarten Offer Release



Office of Student
Enrollment

NYC Public
Schools



Admissions Checklist

Explore and Learn

- ☐ Log in to [MySchools.nyc](https://www.myschools.nyc.gov) to explore your kindergarten options, including Dual Language, G&T, and District 24 STEM programs.
- ☐ Attend one of our virtual Elementary School admissions information sessions. Information on how to join will be posted on our events page: schools.nyc.gov/ESevents.
- ☐ Attend open houses or tours! Check the MySchools event calendar ([MySchools.nyc/calendar](https://www.myschools.nyc.gov/calendar)) for dates, times, and locations, or visit schools' websites directly for the latest event updates, resources, and contact information.

Apply

- ☐ Apply to kindergarten by the deadline listed on schools.nyc.gov/K. You can do so in one of three ways:
 - Online at [MySchools.nyc](https://www.myschools.nyc.gov)
 - By phone at **718-935-2009**
 - Through a Family Welcome Center — learn how at schools.nyc.gov/FWC

Get Your Offer

- ☐ Accept your child's offer by the deadline provided in their offer letter. This secures your child's kindergarten seat at their school. You can accept your offer online through [MySchools.nyc](https://www.myschools.nyc.gov) or by contacting the school directly. Accepting this offer will not affect your child's chances of receiving a waitlist offer later!
- ☐ Add your child to additional waitlists (optional). If they get a waitlist offer, the school will contact you.

How Offers Are Made

Learn about these factors to better know your child's chances of getting an offer to each program of interest.

Children receive kindergarten offers based on four key factors:

Your Application Choices

The kindergarten programs you choose for your child's application AND the order in which you place them matter! Add your choices on the application in your true order of preference, with your favorite at the top as #1. Your child will get an offer to your highest possible choice considering the three other factors listed below. List as many choices you like and that work for your family. In some cases, your child may receive an offer to a school that you did not list on their application.

Each Program's Seat Availability

Some schools may offer more than one kindergarten program, like a general kindergarten program and a Gifted and Talented program. You can list as many programs as you're interested in your child attending. Kindergarten programs vary in size and demand. Each kindergarten program has a certain number of available seats. If a program has more applicants than seats, we will not be able to make offers to every applicant. Offers will then be made based on admissions priorities and randomly assigned numbers.

Each Program's Admissions Priorities

Your child has a better chance of getting an offer from some kindergarten programs than others. Kindergarten programs give admissions priorities to specific groups of applicants before others, such as to applicants who have siblings at the school. A program's admissions priorities determine the order it considers specific groups of applicants for offers. All applicants in a program's priority group 1 will be considered first for offers. Then, if seats are still available, students in that program's priority group 2 will be considered next, and so on. For zoned schools, highest priority is given to zoned students and most children do attend their zoned school for Kindergarten.

Randomly Assigned Numbers

Each kindergarten applicant is assigned a random number. If a program has more applicants than seats within a priority group, these random numbers determine the order in which students get offers. You will be able to view your child's random number after the application closes.

Stay in the loop

Sign up for our kindergarten email list at schools.nyc.gov/SignUp. We'll send you updates and reminders throughout the process.





Preparing for Kindergarten: *Two Processes*

Families of all New York City children who turn five this year should apply to kindergarten to receive a school offer. The “Kindergarten Admissions” process is your chance to express your preferences for which school(s) in the 32 NYC school districts you would like your child to attend (keeping in mind that most children attend a school within a zone in their home district).

As the family of a new kindergartner who may need special education services, you will also participate in the “KIP” process. Through this process, your child’s IEP team will determine if they need special education services in kindergarten, and if so, what those services will be. Many kindergartners who need special education services receive these services in the school that was offered through the Kindergarten Admissions process.

Kindergarten Admissions (Applying to Kindergarten)

Step 1: From mid-fall through early winter, you should *explore your options* for kindergarten. Use MySchools.nyc to explore your options.

Step 2: In winter, you can *begin applying* to kindergarten. Be sure to submit an application by the deadline.

Step 3: If you have applied to kindergarten and submitted your application before the deadline, you will receive an *Offer Letter* in the spring.

Step 4: Once you have received an Offer Letter, you can *register* your child at the school (early through late spring).

KIP (Determining Special Education Services and Supports)

Step 1: The KIP process begins when you receive a *Notice of Referral* in the mail. You may receive this notice in early winter through the summer.

Step 2: If necessary, your child will be reevaluated.

Step 3: If your child has certain health needs, you should submit any necessary medical forms to your DOE representative as soon as they are completed. Do not wait until your IEP meeting.

Step 4: You will attend a kindergarten IEP meeting. Meetings will take place from March through the end of August. The timing of your meeting will depend on when you started the KIP process.

Step 5: If your child needs special education services in kindergarten, you will receive a green School Location Letter. You will receive this letter toward the end of the school year through the end of August, depending on when you began the KIP process.

If you apply to kindergarten, the placement you receive on the green *School Location Letter* will be the same school that was listed in your *Offer Letter* (unless your child is recommended for a NYC Public Schools Specialized (District 75) placement on his/her IEP or was accepted into a specialized program). If you do not apply to kindergarten, you will not receive an *Offer Letter*, but your child will still receive a school placement following your child’s IEP meeting.

Kindergarten Orientation Meetings

for Families of Students with Disabilities Born in 2021

LIVE WEBINAR (Online)

Please register in advance by using the registration link for the day you would like to attend.

NOV 13

THURSDAY

6:00pm—7:30pm

Meeting ID:

280 804 861 892 7

Passcode: VX9Tu9ft

Registration Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/Nov13KOM>

DEC 2

TUESDAY

9:30am—11:00am

Meeting ID:

244 006 133 324 5

Passcode: kr98rf2s

Registration Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/Dec02KOM>

DEC 4

THURSDAY

6:00pm—7:30pm

Meeting ID:

284 984 923 539 3

Passcode: z8xA9Gg9

Registration Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/Dec04KOM>

SPANISH ONLY

JAN 8

THURSDAY

9:30am—11:00am

Meeting ID:

266 501 423 274 7

Passcode: Uz9Va72b

Registration Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/Jan08KOM>

SPANISH ONLY

JAN 27

TUESDAY

9:30am—11:00am

Meeting ID:

222 695 244 182 3

Passcode: c8br7YM2

Registration Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/Jan27KOM>

To join the webinar using the Meeting ID and Passcode, scan the QR code or visit:

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting>



Please join us to learn more about a Kindergarten Individualized Education Program (IEP), special education services for school-age students, and applying to Kindergarten!

- All meetings cover the **same** information. Families are welcome to attend any meeting that is convenient for them. **We encourage you to register in advance.**
- Meetings will begin promptly. Please log in 15 minutes early prior to start time.
- If you need interpretation for Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, or Urdu, please visit schools.nyc.gov/KindergartenSpecialEducation to view our webinar with provided closed captioning.



NYC
Public
Schools



Special Education in New York City Public Schools

We are dedicated to ensuring that all students with disabilities:

- have access to challenging classes and are held to appropriately high academic standards
- are taught in classes with students without disabilities as much as possible
- are able to attend either their zoned school or their school of interest whenever possible, while receiving the support they need to succeed

All students with disabilities who require special education services have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The IEP is created by a team that includes you, the caregiver. It contains information about your child's interests, strengths, and needs. The IEP also identifies goals for the school year, and it describes the special education programs and related services that will be provided to help your child meet these goals.

Special education is not a “class” or a “place.” Special education describes a wide range of supports and services:

- An IEP may include different types of classes and services for different parts of the school day.
 - For example, a student who needs extra support in reading might receive reading instruction in a small-class setting and spend the rest of the day in a general education class.
- An IEP may include services to be provided in the classroom.
 - For example, a speech therapist might work with a student during a classroom lesson.
- An IEP may include services to be provided in a different location.
 - For example, a guidance counselor might work with a student in their office.

With plans designed to meet each child’s specific needs, schools can provide students with disabilities have as much access as possible to the general education school curriculum.



Parents' Rights During the Transition from Preschool

As the parent of a student entering Kindergarten, you have numerous rights:

- The right to consent or to withhold your consent to any new assessments that the IEP team determines are required.
 - Note: If your child has a preschool IEP and the IEP team makes efforts to obtain your consent and you do not respond, the assessments may be conducted without your consent.
- The right to request that specific assessments be conducted by writing to your NYC Public Schools representative.
- The right to provide the IEP team with copies of privately conducted assessment reports and to have the IEP team review and consider these reports.
- The right to be an equal member of your child's IEP team and to participate meaningfully in decision-making through attendance at all IEP meetings.
- The right to invite other individuals with knowledge or special expertise about your child to attend IEP meetings, to help in the decision-making process.
- The right to receive copies of your child's assessments and progress reports before IEP meetings and receive copies of your child's IEP within two weeks of your child's IEP meeting.
- The right to request another IEP meeting, mediation, or an impartial hearing, or file a complaint with New York State, if you disagree with decisions made about your child by visiting <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/due-process-impartial-hearings-and-mediation>
- The right to revoke (withdraw) your consent for all special education programs and related services at any time by writing a letter to the IEP team. If you do, your child's educational record will indicate that your child received preschool special education services.

You have the right to interpretation at special education meetings, and translation of IEPs, assessments and notices. You can request language access services by speaking with a member of your child's IEP team. You can also request a translation of your child's IEP by visiting schools.nyc.gov/IEPHello or by calling 718-935-2013. If you have concerns regarding language access services, please follow the escalation process described on the NYC Public School's website (at schools.nyc.gov/connect-with-us). If your concern is not resolved at the school or district level, you may file a complaint. Details on how to file a complaint are explained on the NYC Public School's website (at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/school-environment/get-help/parent-complaints-and-appeals>).

You have the right to receive notification about special education placement and services within specific timeframes. For a student who will turn 5 years old this calendar year and who will enter kindergarten in the Fall:

If a referral is received...	...placement must be offered by:
From September 2 nd through March 3 rd	June 15
From March 4 th through April 1 st	July 15
From April 2 nd through May 12 th	August 17
From May 13 th through August 31 st	60 school days from the date of the referral

This means that if your child had a preschool IEP before March, or if you refer your child for special education evaluation before March, the NYC Public Schools must notify you about services and placement for September by June 15. The NYC Public Schools will specify the services that will be provided to your child and will name the school where your child will receive these services.



- Please call 311 or email T5Placement@schools.nyc.gov if you have not received a placement offer by mail within a few days of the deadlines listed above. If the IEP recommends a special class and the NYC Public Schools does not offer the recommended placement within the timeframes in the chart above, you may have the right to place your child in an appropriate program in a New York State Education Department-approved non-public school, at no expense to you. You have the right to request an independent assessment paid for by the NYC Public Schools if you do not agree with an evaluation conducted by the NYC Public Schools. You must notify the NYC Public Schools of this request in writing. The NYC Public Schools will either agree to pay for an independent assessment or will file for an impartial hearing to show that its evaluation is sufficient.
- You have the right to an independent assessment paid for by the NYC Public Schools, if the NYC Public Schools did not complete the assessment(s) within the timeline in the table below (unless the NYC Public Schools was not responsible for the delay).

If a request for a reevaluation is received...	...the evaluation must be completed by:
From September 2 nd through March 3 rd	June 1
From March 4 th through April 1 st	July 1
From April 2 nd through May 12 th	August 3
From May 13 th through August 31 st	60 school days from the date of the referral

For more information about the rights of parents of students with disabilities, see our *Family Guide to Special Education School-Age Services* available [online](https://schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/contacts-and-resources) at <https://schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/contacts-and-resources> and the New York State Education Department's *Procedural Safeguards Notice: Rights for Parents of Children with Disabilities, Ages 3-21* (Statement of Family's Rights) available [online](https://schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/your-rights) at <https://schools.nyc.gov/special-education/help/your-rights>. Both documents are also available in schools.