



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PRE-KINDERGARTEN APPLICATIONS

HOW DO I ENROLL MY CHILD IN AN HISD PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM?

Pre-kindergarten programs in Houston ISD are not zoned to your neighborhood address. Prospective parents and caregivers can visit HoustonISD.org/SchoolChoice to apply online. A paper application can also be requested from any HISD school, as well as the Parent Center located at the Hattie Mae White Education Support Center (4400 West 18th Street | Houston, TX 77092).

TO HOW MANY PRE-K PROGRAMS CAN I APPLY?

You can apply to a **maximum of 10 programs**. Once you have selected the Pre-K programs of your choice, you will rank your applications in priority order from most desired school to least desired. You will be able to adjust the order of your choices through **February 2, 2023**. **After February 2, 2023, choices will be locked.**

WHAT ARE PRE-K APPLICATION PHASES?

The application timeline for School Choice Pre-K programs is split into two (2) phases. Depending on the phase, different rules apply as to how applications are processed.

- **PHASE 1**
Qualified in-district TEA-eligible Pre-K 4 applications received during this phase will be entered into lotteries.
- **PHASE 2**
Qualified in-district TEA-eligible Pre-K 4, Pre-K 4 Tuition-Based and TEA-eligible Pre-K 3 applications received during this phase will be qualified on space-available basis and first come first serve. All TEA-eligible Pre-K 4 applicants must be offered a seat prior to offering seats to any Pre-K 4 Tuition-Based and TEA-eligible Pre-K 3 applicants.

CAN I CHANGE THE ORDER OF MY RANKING?

You will be able to adjust the order of your choices through **February 2, 2023**. **After February 2, 2023 choices will be locked into place.**

WHO CAN ATTEND PRE-K IN HISD?

To be eligible, a child must meet the following two criteria:

- Be at least three years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year (if a three-year-old program is available) or four years of age on or before **September 1** of the current school year (if a four-year-old program is available).
- Live within the boundaries of the Houston Independent School District.



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Meet at least one of the criteria listed below:

- Child is homeless.
- Child unable to speak or understand English as determined by the Home Language Survey.
- Child is economically-disadvantaged.
- Child of an active-duty member of the U.S. military or one who has been killed, injured or missing in action while on active duty.
- Child is or has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing held as provided by Section 262.201, Family Code.
- Child meets any eligibility criteria for Head Start.
- Child of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award as a peace officer as defined in Section 3106.002, a firefighter as defined in Section 3106.003, or an emergency medical first responder as defined in Section 3106.004.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS NOT ELIGIBLE?

Tuition-based Pre-k 4 and TEA-eligible Pre-K 3 applications will be considered after the school has exhausted its TEA-eligible Pre-K 4 waitlist.

Campuses must enroll all TEA-eligible Pre-K 4 students first.

WHAT IS TUITION-BASED PREK?

HISD offers Pre-K on a tuition basis to students who do not meet the eligibility requirements to attend **Pre-K for free**. The current tuition rate for Pre-K is \$6,428 (nine payments of \$714.23 per month)*. For a comprehensive overview of tuition-based pre-k, visit HoustonISD.org/TuitionPreK.

**Cost is reflective of the 2022 - 2023 school year; cost update for 2023 - 2024 will be available May 2023.*

WHAT DOCUMENTATION DO I NEED TO PROVIDE?

- Proof of address (utility bill such as light, gas, water, or lease)
- Child's original birth certificate or other document establishing student identity
- Child's immunization records
- Parent identification

Additional documentation used to determine a student's eligibility for tuition-free Pre-K include:

- Home language survey
- Income verification
- Student Assistance Questionnaire
- Military Identification Number



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WHY CAN'T ALL STUDENTS ATTEND HISD PRE-K?

The Texas Legislature determines eligibility requirements for free, public Pre-K in Texas. The eligibility is therefore limited.

DOES HISD ENROLL THREE-YEAR-OLD STUDENTS IN PRE-K?

Campuses must enroll all TEA-eligible Pre-K 4 students first. If there are additional spots in Pre-K after all eligible and tuition-paying four-year-old students have been enrolled, applicants will be contacted by campus designated personnel for enrollment instructions.

HOW WILL TUITION-BASED APPLICANTS BE CONTACTED FOR ENROLLMENT?

Applicants will be **contacted by a campus designated personnel** after all TEA-eligible Pre-K 4 students have enrolled. Campuses may offer seats to tuition-based applicants and TEA-eligible Pre-K 3 on a space-available basis.

WHAT PRE-K OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE IN HISD?

Prospective Pre-K students can be enrolled in the following programs:

DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM: The dual language program provides instruction in English and Spanish. **Magnet Programs:** Wharton & Helms

LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM: Language Immersion programs are taught with a minimum of 50% to a maximum of 80% of daily instruction in the non-English language. **Magnet Programs:** Arabic Immersion & Mandarin Immersion.

MONTESSORI PROGRAM: The Montessori program emphasizes highly-personalized learning for each child to develop his/her own interests and full potential.

Magnet Programs: Blackshear, Garden Oaks Montessori, and Baker Montessori.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM: The ESL program offers English language instruction for students with a home language other than English. Teachers in an ESL classroom have specific state certification and training to work with students learning English. ESL is also offered to (a) Spanish-speaking students whose parents have declined the transitional bilingual program and (b) English Learner (EL) students who have been pre-exited from the transitional bilingual program.

ENGLISH PROGRAM: The English program is provided to students whose primary language is English. All instruction in academic subjects and non-academic subjects is delivered in English.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER: Early Childhood Centers specialize in early learning and education, offering Pre-K and Kindergarten classes exclusively. Because of their focus, ECCs are uniquely-positioned to support students with their early learning and developmental needs.



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WHAT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OFFER A PRE-K MAGNET PROGRAM?

Arabic Immersion Magnet School
Baker Montessori
Blackshear Elementary
Garden Oaks Montessori
Helms Elementary
Mandarin Immersion Magnet School
Wharton K-8 Dual Language

HOW MANY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OFFER PRE-K?

HISD has **eight early childhood centers** and **155 elementary schools** that offer **full-day Pre-K** programs for three- and four-year-olds.



For more information about Pre-kindergarten in Houston ISD, please visit HoustonISD.org/PreK