

Ready for Prekindergarten

SY 2021-2022 Guide for Parents



I'm Freddy
and I'm
Ready!
Are you?





Parents:

The educational experience that your child is about to begin in Worcester County Public Schools will be one of the most exciting and rewarding times of his or her life. The school system prides itself on excellence in its educational programs and staff and has committed itself to continued improvements to meet the challenges ahead.

We are particularly happy to welcome you to the Worcester County Public School System as partners in this educational process. The learning that takes place in the classroom must be supported and reinforced by your efforts at home. We will be glad to provide assistance in any way we can throughout your child's years in the school system.

This booklet is intended to prepare you to help your child get ready for the first day of prekindergarten and to answer some of the questions that inevitably arise. Should you have other questions, please feel free to contact either the school your child will attend or the Worcester County Board of Education. We look forward to a happy and productive relationship with you and your child.

Requirements for Registration

Prekindergarten is a state-funded program for four-year-old children who are from families that are economically disadvantaged or homeless. The overall goal of prekindergarten is to provide learning experiences to help children develop and maintain the basic skills necessary to be successful in school. The Prekindergarten program provides appropriate experiences that address the literacy, cognitive, social, emotional, and physical needs of young children.

A child admitted to the prekindergarten program in the public schools must be four years-old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.

Eligibility for enrollment is extended to four-year-old children who come from families with economically disadvantaged backgrounds or who are homeless. The Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act requires local school systems to enroll all income eligible four-year-old children whose parents or guardians seek to enroll them. After the initial enrollment of these children, local school systems may fill any remaining vacancies by enrolling children who exhibit a lack of readiness in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts, or physical development and health.

Requirements at registration: please bring with you.

- Student registration by custodial parent as defined in Worcester County Public School System Policy IV.A.9.
- Parent picture ID
- Live in the School's attendance area
- Child's Social Security Card
- Child's Birth Certificate
- Proof of Residence (utility bill w/service address or rental agreement, current deed or lease with required signature and address on it)
- Record of your child's immunization and blood lead level test: Have all immunizations current
- Proof of income (previous year's W-2's or last 3 paystubs)

Immunization Form – Immunizations safeguard the health of your child and the other children attending school. Maryland State immunization regulations require all students to have completed their immunizations in order to attend school. Proof of the completed immunization series must be provided. Required shots include 4 DPT, 3 polio, 2 measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella, 3 hepatitis B, and 1 varicella (chicken pox). The Maryland Immunization Certificate should be completed with the dates of all vaccines by the health care provider or the health department; a parent's signature is not permitted. Maryland State law, enacted in 2000, targets areas considered at risk for childhood lead poisoning by zip codes. All children in prekindergarten who live or have ever lived in the targeted zip codes must show evidence of blood lead testing.

There are rare exceptions to the Maryland State immunization law. For more details, visit "immunization exceptions" at <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/nr/rdonlyres/0700b064-c2b3-41fc-a6cf-d3dae4969707/10546/technicalassistanceguide.pdf>.

Physical Examination Form – State law requires a physical examination for all students who are new to the public school system. The form should be completed by parents and the physician.

Dental Form – This form should be completed by the student’s dentist.

Registration Form – The official registration form for the Worcester County Public School System should be completed during registration.

How You Can Help Your Child

- Encourage a positive attitude toward school, the teacher, and learning.
- Encourage creative abilities by letting your child use scissors, play dough, crayons, blocks and glue.
- Give many opportunities to follow directions.
- Take trips to zoos, parks, museums, airports, libraries, farms, and other places of interest, and talk about these experiences.
- Provide opportunities to play with other children and to spend some time away from you to develop independence.
- Encourage independence in dressing (tying shoelaces, zipping and buttoning clothes), personal habits, and care of possessions.
- Label all belongings – sweaters, coats, caps, mittens, boots, school boxes, backpacks, etc. with child’s first and last name.
- Play board games or use a computer with your child to encourage the use of thinking skills and cooperation.
- Encourage your child to practice printing his or her name using upper and lower case letters appropriately.
- Visit the library regularly and have your child use his or her own library card.
- Teach your child his or her home address and telephone number.
- Play rhyming games and sing songs with your child.
- Read to your child daily (stories, magazines, poems, signs, etc.).
- Encourage imaginative play.

**Help me get Ready,
please!**



The Prekindergarten Program

Worcester County elementary schools provide a half-day prekindergarten program at SHES, OCES, and BES. PES and SES offer full day programs. The prekindergarten curriculum contains the Maryland State College and Career Readiness Standards for reading, writing, mathematics, physical education, science, social studies, and technology. The curriculum integrates all areas of learning as well as emphasizing the thinking skills to enhance learning. After assessing previous knowledge and skills, teachers prepare their units and lessons to meet the children's needs.

All children enter prekindergarten with:

- A system of attitudes, knowledge, and skills.
- Family cultures.
- Varied interests and experiences.
- Personal strengths.
- A desire to understand their world.
- A need to communicate and interact with others.

The prekindergarten classroom provides an atmosphere that appreciates diversity and accepts individual contributions. All children can learn and will learn when they see themselves in the curriculum. The prekindergarten program welcomes each child and the child's family with enthusiasm and respect. Learning requires commitment and creates change. To design activities that encourage each child to experience success, teachers work with students in a variety of ways. Through flexible grouping and differentiated instruction, teachers address the strengths and needs of each child.

Prekindergarten children are eager learners who learn best through experience. A developmentally appropriate prekindergarten program develops curiosity, competence, independence, and excitement toward future education. The prekindergarten year represents the beginning of formal public education. As the children learn, they see themselves as productive contributors to their world.



**Thanks for your
help!**

The Health of Your Child

Your young child setting off for school should:

- Get enough rest every night (10-12 hours of sleep).
- Eat a balanced diet, taking time for a complete breakfast – the most important meal of the day.
- Have ample time to dress, eat, and get to school in a relaxed and happy frame of mind.
- Avoid overly stimulating or violent movies, music, video games and television programs, especially prior to bedtime.
- Establish regular toilet habits and know how to use the bathroom properly and independently.
- Know that only food goes into the mouth.
- Learn to wash hands frequently.
- Keeps hands away from eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.
- Play outdoors every day that the weather permits.
- Learn to cover mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, or cough or sneeze into an upper sleeve, not his/her hands.
- Carry and use clean tissues when coughing and sneezing and use and dispose of tissues correctly.
- Wear clothes suitable to the weather.
- Have a physical examination including eyes and ears at regular intervals. (The Worcester County Health Department can help families to find care.)
- Have regular dental checkups. (If you need a dentist or financial assistance, the school nurse or the Worcester County Health Department may be able to help you.)
- Know the safety cautions for strangers, strange places, strange situations, and strange animals.

Medications

All medications should be taken by students at home whenever possible. If it is necessary for medications to be taken by your child in a school, a **medication order form completed and signed by the physician and written parent or guardian permission are required.** The school nurse can provide you with the proper form.

Medications must be in a clearly labeled container. The original prescription container should accompany all prescription medication to be administered at school. Label information must include the student's name, date of order, medication name, dose, expiration date, directions for administration (time, frequency, route, etc.), and doctor's name. Baggies and unlabeled containers cannot be accepted. Parent or legal guardian must bring the medication to the school and give to the school nurse. Do not send medications to school with your child.

When to Keep Your Child Home

- chills
- fever*
- runny nose
- sore throat
- earache
- rash
- severe coughing
- vomiting
- **Children must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school.**

The following health chart gives information about some childhood diseases that may occur during the school year.

| Disease | Incubation | Action |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Chickenpox Pimples, blisters, and/or crusts in different stages | 2-3 weeks | Excluded from school until lesions are scabbed over |
| Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye) Contagious condition, redness and watering of eyes; pus may be present | Acute | Student is excluded until the eye is clear or until released by a physician to return to school |
| Fifth Disease Bright red cheeks, rash on body, mild cold symptoms | 4-20 days | Permitted to return to school after diagnosis by a physician |
| Head Lice Tiny insects in hair, egg cases (nits) on hair shaft | 7-10 days | Permitted to attend school after proper treatment for lice |
| Measles (Rubeola) Cough, runny eyes and nose, high fever, and extensive rash occurring on the face and body | 10-14 days | Permitted to return to school 5 days after disappearance of rash |
| Ringworm of Scalp Areas of scaly patches of baldness; may begin as small pimples | 10-14 days | Excluded from school until under treatment by physician |
| Staphylococcal Infection (Staph) including Methicillin resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) skin and soft tissue infections such as impetigo, boils, skin abscesses, occasional invasive disease | Variable and indefinite | May attend school with lesions covered |
| Streptococcal Infection (Scarlet Fever or Scarletina, Strep Throat) Sore throat, fever, rash on body or extremities | 1-3 days | Excluded until released by physician to return to school |

These diseases should be reported to the school nurse.



School Personnel

Your relationship with the school will be more effective if you become acquainted with the people who are responsible for your child's welfare.

Teachers – Teachers are interested in understanding and helping your child. If you work together, you can help your child embark upon a successful educational experience.

Principal – The principal is in charge of your child's school and is responsible for the school's program. The principal (and assistant principal) will get to know your child and are always ready and willing to help you.

The Superintendent and Department of Education Staff – They are concerned with students at all the schools and work closely with the school to provide well-trained teachers, suitable materials, and a program of instruction that meets the needs, interests, and abilities of children of different age levels.

Student Services Specialist – If your child is frequently absent or late to school or experiences serious problems adjusting to school, the pupil personnel worker will work with you and your child to help solve the problem. These workers also help families find community resources to lend assistance when it is needed.

School Nurse – A school nurse is assigned to your school to provide emergency and health care to your child. The nurse is available to you and your child to assess health care needs and problems and develop health care plans for management of the health concern at school.

School Secretary – The school secretary is eager to help you when you call or visit the school. He/she will probably be the first to greet you and will help you find the answers to your questions.

School Psychologist – A school psychologist is available at each school to consult with parents and teachers regarding child development, behavioral interactions, and individualized instructional strategies. In collaboration with others, school psychologists identify learning strengths and needs of individual children and design specific plans to promote school success. School psychologists also participate on a variety of school-based teams to support the academic and behavioral progress of all students.

School Counselor – An elementary school counselor is assigned to your school to serve all students. Working with individual students, small groups of students, whole classes, staff, and parents, counselors help to improve student academic performance and social/emotional development.

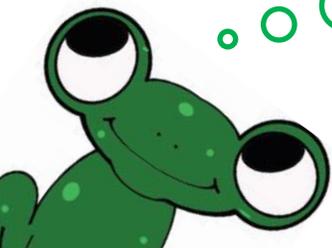
Speech-Language Pathologist – The speech-language pathologist helps some children develop skills to be successful listeners and speakers.

ELL Teacher –The English Language Learners (ELL) teacher is available to consult with parents and teachers about language development and educational needs of children whose primary language is not English.

Special Education Teacher – The special education teacher helps children with disabilities be successful learners using specialized teaching strategies.

| Personnel | Buckingham | Ocean City | Pocomoke | Showell | Snow Hill |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Principal | Chris Welch | Julie Smith | Michael Browne | Diane Shorts | Karen Marx |
| Assistant Principal | Deshon Purnell | Jane Chisholm | Faye Williams | Wynnette Hansen | Erica Matlock |
| Superintendent | Mr. Louis Taylor | | | | |
| Assistant Superintendent | Ms. Denise Shorts | | | | |
| Assistant Superintendent | Dr. Annette Wallace | | | | |
| Early Childhood Education Specialist | Mr. Todd Hall | | | | |
| Student Services Specialist | Stephen Boyd | Darrell Birckett | Kennis Austin | Darrell Birckett | Stephen Boyd |
| School Nurse | Angela Lathroum | Allyson McCabe | Kasey Hickman | Amanda Shump-Underkoffler | Susan Smith |
| School Secretary | Ellen Blice | Lisa Brown | Latoya Purnell | Sharon Bowers | Kimberly Richardson |
| School Psychologist | John Stidman | Kim Fleming | Jill Dillon | Melissa Shriver | Kim Fleming |
| School Counselor | Staci Aperance | Linda McGean | Robyn Donoway | Ed Reid | LaVerne Cray |
| Speech/Language | Kimberly Mourlas | Carol Chrysanthis | Shannon Phillips | Jamie Kelly | Jennifer Baker |
| ELL | -Kelly Gee -Barbara Porter -Karen Conner | -Alicia Wallace -Shannon Hourihan -Kelly Gee | Theresa Olenchick | Tara Ball | Kateryna Mogan |

I'm ready to meet my
new friends!
Are you?



General Information

Emergency School Closings

On school days when schools are delayed or closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies, information is disseminated to parents over local radio and television stations, and the school system's website, www.worcesterk12.org. You may also sign up through SchoolMessenger (this form can be obtained from your child's school) to receive telephone and text message notifications of school delays/closings.

School Schedules and Parent Conferences

Parent conferences and professional work days for staff are scheduled during the year. During those times, schools may be closed to students for half days or full days. Your school will provide you with detailed conference and schedule information. General school information is also included in newsletters that are sent home regularly. Holidays and days off are noted in the school calendar, which you should receive at the beginning of the school year. The calendar is also available at www.worcesterk12.org.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is provided for prekindergarteners who live more than one mile from their assigned school. Bus schedules are posted the week before school begins at schools. The Pupil Transportation Office encourages parents of prekindergarten students to review the information contained in the brochure, Bus Regulations, which should be received during prekindergarten registration. For more information, call Pupil Transportation at 410-632-5009.

School Insurance

Accident insurance is available each year. This insures your child if injured on the way to and from school and while attending school. Information will be sent to you in September.

Tardiness

A student is tardy if he or she is not in the school/classroom when the day begins.

Notes for Absence

Worcester County Public Board of Education believes it is very important to insist on good attendance. Poor attendance hinders the learning process and poor attendance habits learned in school stay with children as they grow and enter the work force. **A note** from home to school stating the reason for the child's absence is required to determine whether the absence is "excused" or "unexcused." Any absence without a note of explanation or a telephone communication is considered "unexcused." In case of a contagious disease, a doctor's certificate may be requested.

We are looking forward to having your child in prekindergarten and hope that he or she will have a healthful, happy, and productive school year. You are welcome to visit the school, consult with the staff, and participate in a variety of activities.

Elementary Schools

| School | Address | Telephone |
|------------|---|--------------|
| Buckingham | 100 Buckingham Rd., Berlin, 21811 | 410-632-5300 |
| Ocean City | 12828 Center Dr., Ocean City, 21842 | 410-632-5370 |
| Pocomoke | 2119 Pocomoke Beltway, Pocomoke, 21851 | 410-632-5130 |
| Showell | 11318 Showell School Rd., Berlin, 21811 | 410-632-5350 |
| Snow Hill | 515 Coulbourne Ln., Snow Hill, 21863 | 410-632-5210 |

The Worcester County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, physical or mental disability, age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. For more information, contact the Public Relations Office of the Worcester County Public School System at 6270 Worcester Highway, Newark, MD 21841 for call 410-632-5000.

WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

6270 Worcester Highway • Newark, MD 21841 • 410-632-5000 • www.worcesterk12.org

