



Merrick School District Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) 2022-2023

The cut-off date for submitting applications for the 2022-2023 Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program is Wednesday, May 11, 2022. No applications will be accepted after this date.

If your child will be four years old by December 1, 2022 and will be eligible to enter Kindergarten in September 2023, you may participate in the lottery for the Merrick Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is the UPK program free?

Yes, this program is funded by the NYS Education Department through a UPK grant. The grant provides funding for pre-K students to attend a full day program for 5 hours each day, five days per week for the school year.

2. What days are the children off from school?

The program follows the Merrick School District calendar.

3. Is the program run by the Merrick School District?

The program is *administered* by the Merrick School District; however, we issued an RFP and are looking to work with a community-based organization to run it. More details will be forthcoming.

4. Who is eligible to participate?

Children who turn 4 years of age by ***December 1, 2022*** and are ***residents of the Merrick School District*** are eligible to participate. (***There are no exceptions to the December 1st cutoff date.***)

5. Can all district 4-year-olds attend?

No. New York State allocates funds for a certain number of children to attend. We received enough funding for 115 students, to make six classes of 18 students each. The remaining 7 students may be placed at partnering local childcare centers. Since there are typically more applicants than placements, the grant regulations stipulate that a random

selection method be used. Therefore, a lottery will be held on May 18, 2022. We will select names to fill the funded spaces and continue to select names which will be placed on a waiting list. If placements are refused or vacancies occur during the year, they will be filled from the waiting list until it is exhausted.

6. How will I find out if my child is selected?

All children selected for placement will receive notification by mail/email. This notification will include the program placement and program hours, along with information about the required registration documentation. Failure to complete registration materials by the date listed on the form will eliminate your child from the program, and the next child on the wait list will be offered this placement. ***Information regarding children chosen for placements through the lottery will not be given out by telephone. Parents will be notified by mail/email and must wait for their letter to arrive.***

7. I have twins. How are they handled when you select children for the program through the lottery?

You should put both children on the same application form. When we select children through the lottery, we will treat twins on the same form as two spaces. Both children will be given a spot in the program.

8. My child was selected for the UPK program. Can I send him or her three days a week instead of five?

No. Partial participation is prohibited. Children must attend five days a week.

9. Can we choose the location we want our child to attend?

No. Children's names are randomly drawn during the lottery for placements at the locations available. ***Parents may not select a school.*** However, parents may refuse the placement, in which case this child will be eliminated from the program and the next child on the wait list will be offered that spot.

10. What curriculum is utilized in the UPK program?

All UPK providers must utilize curriculum aligned to New York State Education Next Generation Standards for PreK.

11. Is transportation provided?

No, transportation is not provided. Families must transport their child to and from the program each day.