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# CLOVER SCHOOL DISTRICT PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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The information below provides answers to the most frequently asked questions about the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program. If you have further questions about the program, please contact Dr. Amy Bowles, Early Childhood Instructional Supervisor at 803-810-8009 or amy.bowles@clover.k12.sc.us.

1. What is the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?

The pre-kindergarten program within Clover School District is designed to provide high-quality educational experiences for eligible four-year-old children that enhance their readiness for kindergarten. The learning environments and experiences are designed around the South Carolina Early Learning Standards that support the six developmental domains that are critical for a child's overall well-being and success in school. Those domains are: Approaches to Play and Learning, Emotional and Social Development, Health and Physical Development, Language Development and Communication, Mathematical Thinking and Expression, and Cognitive Development.

2. Where is the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program located?

Each elementary school within Clover School District houses at least one pre-kindergarten classroom. There are a total of fifteen classes across the district.

3. What is the age requirement to register for pre-kindergarten in South Carolina?

South Carolina law states, students may enter pre-kindergarten in the public schools if they will attain the age of four on or before September 1st of the applicable school year.

4. How do I register my child for the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?

Pre-kindergarten registration begins late February/early March (dates vary based on annual calendar). There are two major placement periods prior to the start of the school year. The first is held in the spring (late March/early April). The second is held in the summer (July). You can still register for pre-kindergarten once the school year has begun (through December). Anyone that registers after the summer placement period will be added to the program waiting list for any available openings that may occur through January.

Parents/Guardians register their age-eligible child through the online registration system on the Clover School District website for the applicable school year. As part of the online registration form, you will be required to provide the child's proof of birth, current immunization records, and two proofs of residency. Once all of these items have been completed and submitted, your child will be considered eligible to proceed with the placement process (see details for the student placement process below). **Submitting all required registration documents does not guarantee placement into the pre-kindergarten program.**

5. Can I register my child for pre-kindergarten prior to establishing official residence?

Due to the placement process and waiting list, you must have established residency prior to registering your child for pre-kindergarten. Established residency means that you have officially closed, rented, or moved into a place of residence with your child, and can provide proof of that residency (see the Clover School District website for specific documents that qualify as proof of residency.).

6. How are students selected for the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?

The fifteen pre-kindergarten classrooms within Clover School District house three hundred students (twenty students per classroom). Due to high interest from the community, we have procedures in place to determine student placement into the program.

Registration for the pre-kindergarten program begins in late February/early March. During this time parents/guardians register online through the Clover School District website. If student registration is submitted by the deadline for the spring or summer placement periods (see question above for details), an individual student screening will be scheduled. The screenings are brief assessments that evaluate a child's developmental level in the areas of motor skills, literacy

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skills, and mathematical concepts as compared to national norms of same-age peers. Anyone that registers after the summer placement period will be added to the program waiting list for any available openings that may occur through January. These students will be screened throughout the year.

Placement is determined by an overall rubric score that is rank-ordered from those that indicate the highest need for pre-kindergarten to those that indicate the lowest need. The rubric score consists of the screening results and “at-risk” factors determined from the registration form. Children with scores that indicate the highest need for pre-kindergarten are placed first. Every effort is made to place children in their zoned elementary school, but occasionally that school reaches capacity. In this situation, families are given the option of remaining on the waiting list or accepting assignment to another school in the district that has a vacancy. Parents/Guardians will be notified of their placement status by mail, or through a phone call, after the screenings. Those students on the waiting list will be notified by phone when openings become available.

7. What should I expect at the district student screening appointment?  
When a screening appointment is established, the parent/guardian will bring the child to the identified location. The child will meet one-on-one with a district early childhood specialist/teacher, and work through a series of activities laid out in the district selected developmental screener (approved by the South Carolina State Department of Education). The activities are in the areas of motor skills, literacy skills, and mathematical concepts. Each area has a series of activities that take 2-5 minutes each. The total amount of time for the appointment is child-dependent, but usually ranges from 40 minutes to one hour. The assessment is scored by a district early childhood specialist according to the screener guidelines and procedures, and the scores are transferred to the placement rubric.
8. What happens if my child is placed in the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?  
After the placement procedures are complete, parents/guardians will be notified by mail or through a phone call with the placement status of their child. If the child has been placed into the program, the school will provide further school-specific information to begin the year. If your child is placed prior to the start of the school year, your family will meet with the assigned classroom teacher the first week of school as indicated by the Clover School District calendar. You will also participate in the school’s summer registration days by providing one updated proof of residency. If your child is placed from the waiting list after the school year has begun, the school will identify school-specific information you will need to get started and establish your child’s start date.
9. What happens if my child is placed on the waiting list?  
When all pre-kindergarten program vacancies are full, the remaining students are added to the waiting list in rank-order by school. As openings occur, the district will contact the parents/guardians of the next student on the list. If the family is still interested in placement, the student’s information will be sent to the school, and the school will follow up with details and establish a start date.
10. If my child is selected, will they attend the elementary school they are zoned for by residence?  
Every effort is made to place children in their zoned elementary school, but occasionally their school has already reached capacity when their name is next on the placement rank order list. If vacancies in the program still exist, the parents/guardians are contacted by phone and given the option of waiting list or placement in another school that still has openings. If a different school is chosen, this placement is only for the pre-kindergarten school year. The child will return to their zoned elementary school for kindergarten. Also, bus transportation is not provided outside of residency school zones, and parents/guardians would be responsible for providing transportation to and from school.
11. Can I submit a hardship/transfer request for my pre-kindergarten child?  
Hardship request are not permitted within the pre-kindergarten program due to the placement process. Parents/guardians can make requests, but they are only considered once all students have been placed and a vacancy still exists at the requested school.

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12. What immunizations are required for my child to attend?

Please refer to link below for the guidelines established by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Clover School District requests that vaccination records be provided on the South Carolina Certificate of Immunization form.

<https://bit.ly/2SmyPBT>

13. Are there state standards and a specific curriculum used in the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?

The pre-kindergarten classroom teachers utilize the South Carolina Early Learning Standards and several developmentally appropriate pre-kindergarten curriculum resources geared to prepare each child for kindergarten.

14. Is there a cost associated with the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?

The only district cost associated with attending the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program is a healthy snack fee. These funds provide your child with one healthy snack a day. This fee is subject to change each school year, but generally ranges from \$87.00-\$89.00 for the year. If your child has specific dietary needs, communicate those details to your child's classroom teacher.

15. Is there a student attendance policy in Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?

Clover School District pre-kindergarten is a full-day, full school year program. We believe that your child's daily attendance is vital to their success and achievement in the program. However, we recognize that some absences are unavoidable. Therefore, we have the following attendance policy in place for our pre-kindergarten classrooms.

A pre-kindergarten student is allowed only ten unlawful absences before they will be dropped from the program. An unlawful absence is any absence that does not meet the following criteria and does not coincide with a written excuse:

- A student is considered to be lawfully absent under the following circumstances.
  - He is ill and his attendance at school would endanger his health or the health of others.
  - There is a death or serious illness in the immediate family.
  - There is a recognized religious holiday of their faith.
  - Prearranged absences for other reasons and/or extreme hardships at the discretion of the school principal.
- Any student who is absent from school must present a written excuse, signed by his/her parent/guardian. The excuse should contain information as directed by the school principal. If a student fails to bring a valid excuse to school, he/she will automatically receive an unlawful absence.
- Two unexcused school tardies/early leaves are considered equal to one unlawful absence.

16. Can my child still attend the pre-kindergarten program if we move during the school year?

If the child moves out of the Clover School District attendance zones, the child will no longer qualify to attend and will be withdrawn from the program. Parents are asked to notify the school within three days, if there is a change in their home address. If the child moves to a different attendance area within the district, the child can continue to attend the pre-kindergarten program at his/her current assigned school; however, the parents will be responsible for transportation.

17. Can my child transfer schools within the pre-kindergarten program if we move during the school year?

Due to the placement process and waiting list, we do not transfer students within the pre-kindergarten program once they have been placed. If the child moves to a different attendance area within the district, the child can continue to attend the program at his/her current assigned school for the remainder of the school year; however, the parents will be responsible for transportation. If the child moves out of the Clover School District attendance zones, the child will no longer qualify to attend and will be withdrawn from the program.

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18. What are the requirements for my child to attend the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?

In order to qualify to register for the pre-kindergarten program your child must live (established residency) within the Clover School District attendance zones, and be age four on or before September 1 of the applicable school year.

If your child qualifies to register, their placement in the program will be determined through the pre-kindergarten placement process.

If your child is placed in the program, your family must adhere to the following policies:

- The pre-kindergarten program attendance policy provided above.
- The child must be independently toilet trained. For our purposes, independently toilet trained means the child can go throughout the day including naptime without having a wetting/bowel movement incident. Also, children cannot wear pull-ups for any reason and must be able to clean themselves without assistance after a bowel movement. If a child does have a bowel incident and cannot clean him/herself, the parent is responsible for coming to the school to change the child's clothes. After five (5) wetting/bowel incidents, the child will be dismissed from the program.
- The parents/guardians are responsible for paying the district snack fee.
- If the child moves out of the Clover School District attendance zones, the child will no longer qualify to attend and will be withdrawn from the program. Parents are asked to notify the school within three days if there is a change in their home address. If the child moves to a different attendance area within the district, the child can continue to attend the Pre-K program at his/her current assigned school; however, the parents will be responsible for transportation.

19. How many students are in each class? How many teachers?

Each Clover School District pre-kindergarten classroom has up to twenty students, along with one certified early childhood teacher and teacher assistant.

20. Is bus transportation provided for pre-kindergarten students?

Bus transportation is only provided for pre-kindergarten students who are placed at the elementary school within their zone of residence. If a parent/guardian agrees to a placement outside their zone of residence, they will be expected to provide their own school transportation.

21. What does a typical day look like in the Clover School District Pre-Kindergarten program?

In the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program, each day is customized to the needs of the students and classroom learning goals. However, there are basic components that fill the students' day. Students participate in instructional activities for all content areas (literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies), as well as, activities that help to develop social-emotional and physical health skills. Students learn these skills through independent, partner, small group, and whole group activities throughout the day. There are times of the day they learn as a whole group on the carpet, work in cooperative groups through centers, work in small groups with the teacher or teacher assistant, and work independently on specific skill-based activities. Our pre-kindergarten students participate in school special area activities such as art, music, physical education, and media. They eat lunch in the cafeteria, and attend age-appropriate school assemblies. These students work and play really hard during the day, and are provided a brief rest time in the afternoons. A lot of age-appropriate learning and play fill each day to help prepare each child to be successful kindergarten students.

22. Are there after-school care programs associated with the Clover School District pre-kindergarten program?

There are after-school care programs within the community that transport pre-kindergarten students from our schools to their facility, however, this is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange independent of the school district.