



Frequently Asked Questions about Applying to Obama Magnet Elementary School

CAN I TOUR THE SCHOOL?

School tours are offered in September, October, and November. Please contact Beth Roach (bwest@jackson.k12.ms.us; 601-960-5333) for tour availability. Tour reservations are required.

WHERE CAN I GET AN APPLICATION?

Elementary magnet applications are available for download online. The application and recommendation form are found on the [Obama Magnet website](#) or the [website for the Office of Advanced Learning Programs and Services](#).

You may also pick up an application at Obama Magnet Elementary School. Our address is 750 N. Congress Street, Jackson, MS 39202.

WHAT IS THE DUE DATE FOR MY APPLICATION?

Applications are due on **Wednesday, December 12, 2018 by noon**. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Applications turned in after December 12, 2018 will be marked late. Late applications will be considered after all other applications. Students with applications submitted after the January/February entrance assessment window will not be tested unless the waiting pool of tested applicants has been exhausted.

WHAT DO I INCLUDE WITH MY CHILD'S APPLICATION?

Please review the application for the list of required documents.

WHAT CAN I USE TO SHOW PROOF OF RESIDENCE?

Proof of residence documents are a required part of application package. The documents must be in the name of parent or parents listed on the student's application. Examples of acceptable documents are included below. Only **ONE** document from each group will be accepted.

- Group 1 – Acceptable documents include mortgage documents or property deed; Apartment or home lease; Filed homestead exemption application form
- Group 2 – Acceptable documents include utility bills (water, gas, or electricity) and cable bills dated within the last month (30 days) or utility deposit receipt or cable bill connection receipt. Cell phone bills cannot be accepted.
- Group 3 – Acceptable documents include automobile registration or automobile insurance; driver's license; voter registration card; IRS documents from the most recent tax year, etc.



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HOW DO I TURN IN MY APPLICATION?

All parents are strongly encouraged to submit a paper application directly to the office staff at Obama Magnet School.

If your child attends a JPS school, you may submit an application to the counselor at his/her current JPS school. The counselor will forward your child's application to Obama Magnet. Please follow up with the office staff at Obama Magnet to ensure that your child's application has been received.

Applications for students attending an out-of-district school, a private school, a daycare, or a HeadStart program must be submitted directly to the office staff at Obama Magnet School. We have no connection with counselors or other staff working at schools outside of JPS.

CAN I MAIL, EMAIL, OR FAX MY APPLICATION?

Applications sent by email or fax **WILL NOT** be accepted.

You **CAN MAIL** your child's application to Obama Magnet School. The school's mailing address is listed below.

Obama Magnet School
750 N. Congress Street
Jackson, MS 39202.

Mailed applications must be received at the school by Wednesday, December 12, 2018. If you choose to mail your child's application, please call the school to make sure it has been received. Please do not mail original social security cards or birth certificates; the school is not able to return these items by mail. Incomplete applications cannot be accepted. The school is not able to return incomplete applications received in the mail.

WHO DO I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT THE APPLICATION OR APPLICATION PROCESS?

For questions about the application process or the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program, please contact Beth Roach, IB PYP coordinator (bwest@jackson.k12.ms.us, 601-960-5333).

For questions about proofs of residency or proof of immunization, please contact Sheila Woodruff, office assistant, or Ora Dixon, office manager, at 601-960-5333.

WHEN IS THE REQUIRED PROGRAM ORIENTATION SESSION?

January 15, 2019
11:00AM – 12:00PM **OR** 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Please choose **ONE** presentation to attend; two presentation times are offered for parent convenience. **You will schedule your child's entrance assessment at the orientation session that you attend.**



WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

1. Complete an application and turn in the application with all the required documents to Obama Magnet at 750 N. Congress Street, Jackson, MS 39110. Applications are available for [download](#) and for pick up at the school. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. You may also turn in the completed application packet to your child's counselor if he/she currently attends a JPS school.
2. Attend the required program orientation session on Tuesday, January 15 at either 11:00AM – 12:00PM **OR** 6:00PM – 7:00PM. **You will schedule your child's entrance assessment at the orientation session that you attend.**
3. Bring your child to Obama Magnet for his/her scheduled entrance assessment appointment. Parents are required to wait at the school in the designated waiting area while students complete the entrance assessment. Entrance assessments are given **by appointment only**. A completed application on file at Obama Magnet is required to schedule an entrance assessment. Children who do not complete an entrance assessment do not continue in the application process.
4. The entrance assessment window closes mid-February 2019. Student entrance assessment scores and other documents from the application packet will be reviewed by the principal to determine eligibility for acceptance to Obama Magnet.
5. Acceptance and wait pool letters will be mailed by the end of March 2019. The waiting pool will remain active until October 2019. If a spot becomes available in one of the grade levels, the next child in the grade level wait pool will be contacted. *Students are rarely accepted once school begins in August.*

WHAT IS THE CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE AT OBAMA MAGNET?

Student eligibility for acceptance at Obama Magnet is based on:

- The results of an entrance assessment; the minimum required scores on the entrance assessments are:
 - **For entering kindergarten students**, a score in the transitional to probable reader range (approximately 675 or higher) on STAR Early Literacy; the minimum score may vary depending on the applicant pool
 - **For entering 1st-5th grade students**, a score at the 75th percentile on STAR Early Literacy/STAR Reading and STAR Math
- Recommendations submitted with application
- Review of previous report cards, progress reports, behavior records, and test scores.

Unfortunately, the school does not have enough student spots to accept all students who are eligible for the program. When making admissions decisions, the school ranks the student scores from high to low. A student is accepted in the program based on whether he/she meets the minimum eligibility criteria, his/her rank in the applicant pool, and the number of student spots available in his/her grade level.

The school can accept a maximum of 50 entering kindergarten students. The number of students accepted at other grade levels depends on the current enrollment at each grade.



HOW DO I GET MY CHILD TESTED FOR THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM AT OBAMA MAGNET?

Entrance assessments are given to students in January and February by appointment only. Entrance assessment appointments are scheduled during the required program orientation session on January 15, 2019 (11:00AM – 12:00PM **OR** 6:00PM – 7:00PM). A completed application on file at Obama Magnet is required to schedule an entrance assessment.

WHAT IS THE ENTRANCE ASSESSMENT?

The entrance assessment is a test of academic skills based on your child's current grade level. For all grade levels, it takes approximately 45 minutes to one hour to complete the entrance assessment. Parents are required to wait at the school in the designated waiting area while students complete the entrance assessment.

For students applying to kindergarten, the entrance assessment includes:

- STAR Early Literacy (a computer based test of reading readiness skills; multiple choice questions are read aloud and the student selects his/her answers)
- A math test (a paper and pencil test given by an adult in a one-to-one setting, questions are read aloud and the student writes his/her answer)
- A letter, sound, and sight word identification test (questions are read aloud and the student answers aloud)
- It is strongly encouraged that your child practices using a computer with a mouse. Touch screen devices **ARE NOT** used during the entrance assessment.

For students applying to 1st grade, the entrance assessment includes:

- STAR Early Literacy (a computer based test of reading readiness skills; multiple choice questions are read aloud and the student selects his/her answer)
- STAR Math (a computer based test of math skills; the student independently reads multiple choice questions and selects his/her answers)

For students applying to 2nd-5th grades, the entrance assessment includes:

- STAR Reading (a computer based test of reading skills; the student independently reads multiple choice questions and selects his/her answers)
- STAR Math (a computer based test of math skills; the student independently reads multiple choice questions and selects his/her answers)

HOW DO I PREPARE MY CHILD FOR THE ENTRANCE ASSESSMENT?

The entrance assessment measures a student's reading and math skills at his/her current grade level. Typically, students who are mastering the skills and performing above their age/grade level in their current education program are prepared for the entrance assessment. The information below details the expectations for incoming students.



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Entering kindergarten students should have mastered the following skills.

Reading

- Read and write the letters of the alphabet
- Identify the sound of each letter of the alphabet
- Write first and last name
- Read and write pre-primer and primer sight words
- Recognize rhyming words
- Listen to and retell stories
- Understand and follow simple three step directions.

Math

- Identify shapes
- Count forward from 0 to 20 and backward from 10 to 0
- Read and write numbers 0 to 20
- Recognize and extend patterns
- Sort objects based on similarities
- Use pictures to add and subtract numbers up to 5

Students entering grades 1-5 should:

- Master all Mississippi Department of Education standards at his/her current grade level
- Read at or above grade level
- Be ready for a rapid academic pace
- Be motivated to learn, question, and explore
- Exhibit positive behavior

HOW DID MY CHILD DO ON THE TEST?

Staff members giving the entrance assessment do not have access to your child's scores. They are also not allowed to comment on your child's performance on the test. Entrance assessments scores will be available to parents by request after acceptance and waiting pool letters have been mailed. Parents requesting scores will have to pick them up at the school.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF MY CHILD HAS BEEN ACCEPTED?

Parents receive an acceptance or a waiting pool letter by the end of March 2019. Letters are mailed to the address listed on the application. Please update the school with any changes to your mailing address, phone number, or email address.

WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM?

Information on the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program at Obama Magnet can be found on the [school's website](#). Beth Roach, the IB PYP coordinator, (bwest@jackson.k12.ms.us, 601-960-5333) is also happy to answer questions about the program.

The following information from the [International Baccalaureate Organization](#) is recommended to learn more about the Primary Years Program.

[Primary Years Program](#)

[What is the PYP?](#)

[The IB learner profile](#)