

Preschool Enrollment

If you are standing in line during the summer months to hopefully receive preschool for your child, chances are you may be too late.

Preschool enrollment for the next school year begins as early as April. In order for preschool agencies and school districts to know that you want your child to attend preschool next school year, you will need to be on the Centralized Eligibility List also known as CEL no later than March 30th.

The CEL is the County list that the school districts and preschool agencies use to pull children from for potential enrollment for preschool. Being on the County list does not guarantee you enrollment.

In San Joaquin County there are preschool programs that offer part day or full day programs. Below describes the two types of programs:

Part-day preschool is not child care; the program typically operates five days per week (Monday through Friday), only three to four hours per day (a morning class or an afternoon class) and follows the school calendar where the program runs nine months out of the year (school vacations and summer vacation child care would need to be arranged by the parent/guardian as this is typically not included in the part day preschool program). The program offers developmentally appropriate educational experiences for children three and four years of age, with four year olds being the first priority. Families seeking the part-day educational preschool program do not have to have a “need for services”; the family may have a monthly income 15% over the state monthly income guidelines. Note: All 3 and 4 year olds that are within the state monthly income guidelines have first priority, if vacancies are still available families at 15% over the monthly income guidelines may be selected.

Full-day preschool has a component of child care within the day; the program typically operates five days per week (Monday through Friday) for approximately six to eight hours per day and follows the school calendar where the program runs nine months out of the year (school vacations and summer vacation child care would need to be arranged by the parent/guardian as this is typically not included in the full day preschool program). The program offers developmentally appropriate educational experiences for children three and four years of age, with four year olds being the first priority. Families seeking the full-day preschool program MUST have a “need for services” (see below).

Need for services: In order to be eligible for full day preschool a family must have at least one of the needs below.

- Parent/guardian is working

- Parent/guardian is in an educational training/schooling
- Parent/guardian is incapacitated
- Parent/guardian seeking employment
- Parent/guardian is seeking permanent housing
- Or child is receiving Child Protective Services (CPS) and part of the case plan is for the child to have child care or educational services

You will be asked to provide documentation to prove you have one of the needs above to be eligible for full day preschool. If you are seeking Part day preschool for your child, you do not have to have one of the needs listed above.

Your child must be three or four years old on or before December 2nd of the current school year in order to be eligible for preschool.