



## Four-Year-Old Kindergarten (4K)

The Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) offers 4K programming in schools and participating Early Care and Education (ECE) centers. For a listing of sites, please visit <https://earlyed.madison.k12.wi.us>.

### Frequently Asked Questions 2017-18

#### **ENROLLMENT**

- 1. How will parents be informed about the details of 4K?** There is an annual communication plan to share information with the Madison community, including information on how to enroll in 4K. This includes disseminating informational fliers throughout the city, as well as providing information through district and school newsletters, websites, and public service announcements.
- 2. Is there an age cutoff for 4K?** There is an age cut off for children to attend 4K. They must be 4 years old on or before September 1. At this time MMSD does not have a process in place for early entrance to 4K.
- 3. If a child is age eligible for 5K, but parents plan to delay their kindergarten enrollment, can the child attend 4K?** MMSD supports having students progress with same-age peers. However, in unique situations, parents may decide enrollment in 4K is best for their child. Students may not repeat 4K.
- 4. When can families enroll?** A specific date is set during the school year for 4K and 5K enrollment. For the 2017-18 school year, online enrollment starts February 27, 2017. Onsite enrollment day is March 6, 2017, at all K-5 elementary schools. We encourage families to complete enrollment on this date.

Families also have the option to enroll in 4K at any time, both during the school year and in the summer months.

Please note: When an MMSD school based 4K program reaches enrollment capacity, a student may be assigned to a different nearby MMSD school.

- 5. Where/how will enrollment occur?** Families can enroll online at [mmsd.org/enroll](https://mmsd.org/enroll), and then follow up to complete the enrollment process at any K-5 elementary school by printing off their enrollment, and bringing a copy of their child's birth certificate and proof of address to the school. Those who are not able to enroll online may choose to complete the entire enrollment process at any K-5 elementary school.

- 6. When will families be notified of the child's placement?** Parents will receive an email or letter of their child's placement within six weeks of enrollment. For families applying closer to the start of the school year in September, notifications will be sent within a two-week timeframe.
- 7. How can parents make changes to online enrollment?** Parents who have not submitted the 4K application can login and make changes. Once an application has been submitted, it cannot be changed; however, parents can contact the Enrollment Office to assist with change requests.
- 8. Do partnering Early Care and Education (ECE) centers have to accept any family that wishes to enroll for 4K?** Acceptance at any site will be contingent upon space parameters and enrollment requirements set by individual Early Care and Education (ECE) centers. However, partnering ECE centers may not discriminate based upon sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

**9. Will families have a choice of where their child attends 4K?**

Option 1: Based on the student's primary address, a student will be placed in an MMSD school serving that 4K attendance area.

Transportation is provided if the distance between the pupil's residence and the school s/he attends exceeds 1 ½ miles measured by the usual travel route, or if the routes to the school are judged unusually hazardous by the Board of Education (BOE).

Option 2: Families may designate a different pick up/drop-off address from their primary address (for example, a day care location). This address must be a verified address in the MMSD school district. Based on the pick-up address, a student will be placed at an MMSD site serving that 4K attendance area.

Transportation is provided if the distance between this residence and the school s/he attends exceeds 1 ½ miles measured by the usual travel route, or if the routes to the school are judged unusually hazardous by the Board of Education (BOE).

Option 3: If no transportation is needed, families may choose from any MMSD school site or ECE center that has available space. Please note: If families choose an ECE center, the student must also enroll in and be accepted to that site (see #8).

If a student attends an MMSD elementary school for 4K that is not in their home attendance area, they are not guaranteed a 5K placement at the same school. 5K school placement is based on the home attendance area. Families must apply for internal transfer if they want their child to attend 5K at a school other than in their home attendance area.

<https://enrollment.madison.k12.wi.us/internal-transfer-requests>

- 10. Is there a fee for 4K?** The 4K program is tuition free; however, there is a \$40 materials fee families pay at the beginning of the school year.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- 11. Will transportation be provided for families?** Transportation will not be provided to every 4K location in the city. A student requiring transportation will be placed at a site where transportation is provided. In most cases, those sites will be MMSD school buildings. The [MMSD transportation policy](#) will apply, which states that to qualify for transportation: a) the distance between the pupil's residence and the school s/he attends shall exceed 1 ½ miles measured by the usual travel route, or b) the routes to the school are judged unusually hazardous by the Board of Education (BOE).
- 12. Can a family get transportation from 4K to a child care site?** Yes, as long as the center is within the transportation area defined for that site. The [MMSD transportation policy](#) referred to in the answer to Question 9 above will apply.

## **SERVING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

- 13. How will special needs students be served?** Students in 4K who have an individualized education program (IEP) will be served by a licensed special education teacher in the 4K classroom. In the schools, this will be similar to how all K-5 students receive special education services, aligned to the student's IEP. In the community, itinerant special education teachers will teach the number of hours indicated in the IEP at the site.
- 14. Will three-year-olds with special needs be in the 4K program?** The law stipulates that three-year-olds with disabilities may be included in the 4K program if regular education three-year-olds are also included in the program. Therefore, our Early Care and Education (ECE) sites may include three-year-olds with disabilities in their 4K program. This is at the discretion of the ECE site. However, MMSD school sites do not include three-year-olds in the 4K programs.
- 15. What support is available for students who are English Language Learners?** English Language Learners are offered support in various ways depending on the site. Some sites utilize Bilingual Resource Teachers (BRTs), Bilingual Resource Specialists (BRs), and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. Four elementary school sites offer bilingual 4K programs with instruction in Spanish.
- 16. Will 4K be the only model available to parents of students who have an identified disability? Will a home option still be available?** Students with disabilities who have an IEP will have the same options that regular education four-year-olds will have. Families will be able to select from partner ECE centers that have available space or programs in MMSD buildings. Students requiring specialized transportation will attend the site that is within the transportation boundary—the same as regular education students. It is MMSD's responsibility to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment with their same-age peers, including 4K classrooms. Just as with our K-12 students, a home option may be available if necessary for a child to receive a free appropriate public education.

## CURRICULUM

**17. Will a specific curriculum be required by MMSD?** A curriculum and assessment subcommittee, comprised of MMSD Preschool Resource Teachers as well as ECE providers, has defined that the 4K curricula must be developmentally appropriate, align with the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) and Accreditation criteria, be play-based, research-based, inclusive of culture, race, social class, gender, languages and needs, and designed to promote partnerships with families. Individual centers may design their own unique programming to meet these requirements. MMSD school sites utilize "Creative Curriculum for Preschool, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition."

**18. What assessments are used in 4K?** GOLD (Creative Curriculum), Pre-K PALS

## LOGISTICS

**19. When did 4K begin?** The BOE voted (on 1/11/10) to begin 4K in September, 2011.

**20. Is 4K required?** Enrollment in 4K is not required by the state of Wisconsin. A law took effect on October 21, 2009 (WI Act 41) requiring attendance for five-year-olds enrolled in kindergarten. 4K attendance is optional and is not affected by this new law.

**21. What are the days/hours of the program?** The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) requires a minimum of 437 hours of instruction per school year.

Approximate 2017-18 Hours for MMSD school sites: To be determined

ECE Centers: Varies per center site

In ECE sites, the center will have discretion, subject to MMSD's approval, around the weekly days and times of the program, as long as the DPI minimum requirement of 437 hours per year is met. Please note: exact hours for 4K programs in MMSD school sites may vary slightly from year to year based on the school year calendar.

**22. Can the 4K program extend to the summer months in ECE centers?** ECE sites create their own schedule for delivering the required 437 hours of 4K programming, subject to MMSD's approval. The 437 hours must be delivered during the MMSD school year.

**23. Can 4K programs be multiage?** MMSD is supportive of multi-age environments; MMSD school sites do not have multiage programs. ECE sites determine if their program will be multi-age.

**24. What is the required teacher-to-child ratio for a 4K classroom?** [DPI](#) does not have a required child/teacher ratio for 4K. MMSD school sites have approximately a 1:18 ratio. ECE centers are City of Madison and/or National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited, requiring no more than 1:10 with no more than 20 students in any one classroom.

- 25. Can students be picked up late?** ECE centers will have discretion to develop their own procedures for students who are picked up late. However, the District encourages centers to work with families to avoid penalties for occasional tardy pick-ups.
- 26. Parents/families may expect that there would be no fees or a reduction of fees for their child's extended care at ECE centers due to their participation in the 4K program. How can early ECE providers address this expectation?** By law, all children participating in the collaborative 4K program have rights to a "free public education." Parents will be asked to complete an MMSD enrollment form, which becomes a commitment for the free services. ECE sites will have their own enrollment forms that indicate the fees for services provided for child care services for the remainder of the day outside of the 437 hours of 4K for those parents requesting the additional care. ECE centers are not required to adjust their fee schedule.
- 27. Can ECE centers charge fees to 4K families?** A materials fee of \$40.00 will be charged to all 4K students per MMSD BOE policy. For students who have paid, the fee will be returned to the centers. Similar to K-12 programming, ECE centers may ask parents to provide their students' school supplies, or funding for the actual field trips; however, according to BOE policy, no student shall be excluded from any activity based upon inability to pay and participation in 4K may not be contingent on families providing supplies. The BOE is the only entity that may assess a fee of any kind. An ECE center may charge additional fees to a family for a child enrolled in child care.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

- 28.** The MMSD is committed to effectively partnering with families to support student achievement. Schools and ECE centers offer many opportunities for parents/caregivers throughout the school year to join their child/children in both daytime and evening activities. Families can view specific site calendars for more information on family activities. Additionally, the MMSD 4K program provides monthly take home activity calendars and book or game bags for parents/caregivers to engage with their child and extend learning at home.

For more information about 4K, see the following links:

[Collaborating Partners](#)  
[Department of Public Instruction 4K webpages](#)