

## About Junior Kindergarten

### Who is eligible for Junior Kindergarten?

Junior Kindergarten is a free, optional first year of school designed for students who turn five between September 2 and December 1 of 2021 (students who would only qualify for kindergarten using a waiver). Students who attend Junior Kindergarten go on to attend a full year of traditional Kindergarten the following school year. When space permits, students who turn five between June 1, 2021 and September 1, 2021 may be considered for the Junior Kindergarten program, as there is often room for some children with late summer birthdays. This is especially important to consider if your child did not attend a strong preschool program. Priority is given to students with birth dates closest to the start of the waiver window.

**Students who turn five after December 1, 2021 are not eligible for Kindergarten or Junior Kindergarten for the 2021-22 school year.** Students in this group may be eligible for the Great Start Readiness free preschool program coordinated by the district's Early Childhood Center, depending on your family's income. Children in this age group can enroll in the tuition preschool programs at the Early Childhood Center as well. Call the Early Childhood Center at 248-573-8330 or visit their page on the district website for additional information.

### Not sure if Junior Kindergarten is right for your child?

#### Kindergarten or Junior Kindergarten or Preschool?

In general, we recommend the children begin kindergarten with their same-aged peers. Therefore, in most cases, students who are turning five years old on or between December 2, 2020 and September 1, 2021 should enter kindergarten. As mentioned, students with late summer birthdays may be considered for the Junior Kindergarten program, but priority is given to students with birth dates closest to the start of the waiver window. This is especially important to consider if your child did not attend a strong preschool program.

While students with birthdays within the waiver window (between September 2, 2021 and December 1, 2021) could be eligible for kindergarten with a signed waiver, we normally suggest their families consider our Junior Kindergarten program or continue with preschool for an additional year.

If you are still undecided, you can reach out to the principal at your child's elementary school to discuss your child's specific needs.

If you need additional days to make your decision, you have until the Junior Kindergarten registration deadline to do so. The deadline is February 19, 2021.

<b>Turning 5 on or Before:</b>	<b>General recommendation:</b>
December 2, 2020 - September 1, 2021	Eligible for Kindergarten
June 30, 2021 - September 1, 2021	Eligible for Kindergarten, but <u>if space allows</u> , may apply for Junior Kindergarten
September 2, 2021 - December 1, 2021	Waiver Window - May enroll in Kindergarten with a signed waiver, <u>but in general we suggest families consider enrolling in our Junior Kindergarten Program</u>
After December 1, 2021	NOT Eligible for Kindergarten

**Where is the Junior Kindergarten program held?**

Junior Kindergarten will not be offered at all district elementary schools. Not all elementary schools have space for an additional program. Final school locations for the Junior Kindergarten program will be assigned after the initial round of kindergarten registration, as the number of needed Kindergarten classrooms determines the number of available classrooms at a school. The number of available classrooms for Junior Kindergarten determines the number of students the district is able to accept into the program.

**Is transportation provided for Junior Kindergarten?**

We are able to provide transportation only for Junior Kindergarten students who are attending their boundary school and live within a zone where busing is already provided to elementary aged students. This is because a bus route is already established and the route would typically have room for one or two more riders. Otherwise, Junior Kindergarten is like our Resident Open Enrollment program - it is an optional program and families provide or arrange their own transportation to and from school each day.

**When can I register for the Junior Kindergarten program?**

Registration forms will be available from the district's website beginning in late January. Registration forms must be completed and submitted prior to the end of the day on Friday, February 19, 2021 for students to be considered in initial Junior Kindergarten placements.

Registrations received after February 19, 2021 will be considered if/when space becomes available in the program.

**When will I know if my child got a spot in the Junior Kindergarten program?**

Our goal is that registrations received on time have a response as to program placement by mid March. Notification will occur primarily by email although we ask that you provide two working phone numbers as well.

Late registrations or waitlisted students will be notified if/when space becomes available within the program.