



School District of Manatee County 2010-11 School Year Voluntary Pre-kindergarten Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) Program?

The VPK program prepares four-year-olds for Kindergarten and builds a strong foundation for their continued educational success. A parent can select either a private provider or public school. There are two kinds of VPK programs to choose from; 540 hours during the school year or 300 hours during the summer. This document contains information about the public school year program.

What is the cost of the program and who is eligible?

VPK is free and open to all Florida resident children who are four years old on or before September 1, 2010. The program is a 3 hour per day program. At some sites, parents can choose to pay \$12 per day if they want their child to attend the entire school day.

What are the steps to register for a School District of Manatee County VPK program?

1. Beginning February 16, 2010: Go to Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County; 3526 9th St. West, Bradenton Florida 34205; to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility (COE). You must provide your child's birth certificate, a Florida I.D. or drivers license and current proof of residence (water bill, light bill, paystub, bank statement, etc.) ELC Phone # (941) 757-2900
2. From March 1st through March 19th, the 2010-11 VPK Priority Choice registration period will be taking place at the Parent Information Center (234 Manatee Ave E., Bradenton, FL – Tel: 941-708-4971) for Manatee County Public Schools. VPK Priority Choice is not on a first-come, first-served basis. All VPK Priority Choice applications will be processed following the three week application period.

Applications will be processed using the following ranked criteria:

1. School/District Staff applications
2. Applicants with a sibling(s) scheduled to attend the school
3. Applicants living within the attendance zone of the school
4. All other applicants will be placed in the choice pool for computerized placement

Applicants will be notified in late March/early April by mail of the school placement and the procedures for accepting placement/school enrollment.

Parents who do not receive their choice option for VPK may contact Maggie Villaseñor at 708-8770 ext. 2076 to be placed on a waiting list(s). Any student applying for VPK outside of the Priority Choice period will be placed based upon capacity at the school and on a first-come, first-served basis.

All applications for VPK placement must be submitted to the Parent Information Center, 234 Manatee Ave E, Bradenton, FL 34208. Be sure to bring your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) from Step #1 to the Parent Information Center and the other required documents listed on the following page.

How is the program structured?

Most of our VPK settings housed in elementary schools are inclusive. This means that student groupings in each classroom may be a combination of VPK students, students who are learning to speak English, and students with special needs. This setting is an ideal way for all children to learn and play together. Every classroom follows a state approved VPK curriculum and students are taught by specially trained and certified teachers who are assisted by talented paraprofessionals.

To register for a public school site:

The Certificate of Eligibility (COE), child's birth certificate, original (blue) Florida Certificate of Immunization, and original (yellow) Physical Exam document are required to register for a public school site.

At which schools will the VPK program be offered in the 10-11 school year?

Ballard Elementary School
Bayshore Elementary School
Blackburn Elementary School
Braden River Elementary School
Freedom Elementary School
Gullett Elementary School
Kinnan Elementary School
McNeal Elementary School
Mills Elementary School
Myakka Elementary School
Oneco Elementary School
Orange Ridge-Bullock Elementary School
Palma Sola Elementary School
Prine Elementary School
Rogers Garden Elementary School
Samoset Elementary School
Sea Breeze Elementary School
Tara Elementary School
Tillman Elementary School
Wakeland Elementary School
Williams Elementary School
Lakewood Ranch High School
Manatee High School
Palmetto High School
Manatee Technical Institute (MTI West)

What are the options if a desired school site is at full capacity?

- 1) choose another school site
- 2) choose a private provider
- 3) join a waiting list(s)
- 4) save the Certificate of Eligibility and use it for the 2011 Summer VPK program



What is the student-teacher ratio for VPK?

One teacher and one teacher aide are assigned to every 18 students.

Is transportation provided for my VPK child?

No. It will be the responsibility of the parent to provide their own transportation.

What are the payment procedures and policies for VPK?

The School District of Manatee County will provide a full day Preschool Program at participating elementary and high schools. For students attending a full day program, payment will be required for the portion of the day that is not covered by Voluntary Pre-K (VPK).

- Pre-Payments may be made by cash, personal check or money order made payable to your VPK school site. Please make sure that your child's name is located somewhere on your payment. Payments will be due the 1st Friday of each month.
- Pre-Payments may be made weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, but must be made on or before the due date indicated on the monthly invoice.
- There is no charge for official school holidays.
- If your child is absent from school, the fee remains the same.
- An official payment envelope will be sent home by the teacher in your child's backpack. Please fill out the information on the front of the envelope and send it back to the teacher. Please DO NOT mail your payment.

What are the attendance requirements?

VPK is a 540-hour program and has attendance requirements for the 3 hours per day considered VPK. All absences must be documented by the school and monitored for compliance with VPK attendance requirements.