



# Outreach, Recruitment, & Lottery Guidance

This document is intended to serve as guidance in helping school districts with outreach and recruitment of eligible children for its Prekindergarten programming. It also offers guidance for conducting the lottery and informing families of the lottery results, when applicable. Districts are expected to make local decisions around this guidance based on their own locations, resources, programming, and populations served.



## Communication

The first step in outreach and recruitment is to establish multiple methods to communicate with families about the Prekindergarten program.



## Conducting the Lottery

The second step is to conduct a transparent and equitable lottery procedure, if there are more students than seats available.



## Informing Families

The third step is to inform families of student placements, lottery results, and the waitlist.



# Communicating the Prekindergarten Program

## Outreach, Recruitment, & Advertising

### Outreach

- Develop outreach and recruitment activities throughout the year to inform and engage families
- Host an open house/family information night in the winter or early spring for families to visit the school and learn about the program
- Reach out to local child care facilities

### Recruitment

- Collect information on eligible siblings from district families
- Send direct mailings to every district resident in the community about the Prekindergarten program
- Send postcards about registration

### Advertising

- In the local newspaper
- On the district website and social media
- In the district calendar
- At local grocery stores, gas stations, post office, library, police station, fire department, hospital, doctor's offices, pediatricians, dentists, community partners, places of worship, etc.

## Essential Information to Share With Families

- How the program meets specific student needs
- Unique characteristics of program sites
- How to rank choices, if applicable
- Enrollment period/Application deadline
- Instructions on where and how to register
- Age eligibility and required documentation
- Proof of residency and required documentation
- Lottery procedure
- Waitlist placement and procedure
- Notification date
- The daily schedule
- The monthly schedule/calendar
- District attendance policy
- District contact information



# Conducting the Lottery

## Components to Consider

Regardless of whether it is needed in a given year, or not, [8 NYCRR 151-1.4 (d)], dictates school districts must establish a process to select eligible children to receive universal prekindergarten services on a random selection basis (lottery) where there are more eligible children than can be served in a given school year.

Note: Under no circumstances can a district reserve slots or adjust lottery results to accommodate specific student demographics

### Method

- Clearly define the method and steps of the lottery draw
- Possible methods include: lottery ball machine, names randomly drawn from a container, electronic lottery

### Procedure

- Does the procedure address the incidence of multiples (twins, triplets, etc.) and eligible students living in the same household?
- Determine where and when the draw will happen
- Establish a transparent location, easily accessible by families, to house the procedure (district website, registration packet, etc.)

### Execution

- Conduct the lottery draw
- Determine what witnesses will be present and if it will be broadcast live
- When spots are filled, the lottery continues into a waitlist
- Make a record of the results

Tip: Provide a FAQ section to address common questions



# Informing Families

## Lottery Results & Waitlist

Establish a method for how the district will communicate the lottery results to families. This could include a phone call, e-mail, mailed letter, or a combination of methods.

Inform families of each student's program placement or spot on the waitlist, and what it means to be waitlisted, when applicable.

### Question to Address for Students on a Waitlist

- When and how will families be notified of an opening?
- How long do families have to accept an opening?
- How do families accept an opening?
- How can families check to see where their student currently is on the waitlist?
- What are the procedures for declining an opening?
- If a family declines an opening, does the student remain in the same spot or go to the bottom of the waitlist?
- What happens with students who enroll after the deadline/waitlist has been established?

### Prekindergarten Resources:

[Prekindergarten in New York State: Family Frequently Asked Questions Answered](#)

[Prekindergarten in New York State: Family FAQs Answered \(multiple languages\)](#)

[Family FAQs for Universal Prekindergarten \(UPK\) and Kindergarten Answered](#)

