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School Enrollment

FACT SHEET

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What do I do to enroll my child in school for the first time?

If this is the first time your child will be enrolling in any public school, call the school and ask what you must bring with you to enroll your child. As a minimum, most public schools require the following documents: birth certificate; proof of custody/guardianship (documentation which determines where the child resides and who has decision-making authority); proof of residency; and record of immunizations (DHMH Form 896).

What do I do if my child is transferring from one school to another?

Call the school your child last attended and ask the school to prepare a Maryland Student Exit Record (SR7). Tell them the last day your child will attend school and ask if you may pick up the appropriate documents or if they can be mailed to you or brought home to you by your child. Also, request a copy of your child's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan if applicable.

Call your child's new school and schedule an appointment. Be sure to take the SR7 card with you. The appointment will ensure that time is set aside to speak with you and to answer any questions you may have. Also, ask what items you need to bring with you to enroll your child in the new school.

Why is proof of custody/guardianship required?

Proof of custody/guardianship is required to identify who is legally responsible for the child and who can make educational decisions and be contacted in case of an emergency. Each local school system determines which documents will be accepted as proof (i.e. a court order; separation or divorce decree; or a birth certificate which identifies the parents). Call the school and ask what documents are acceptable.

Why is proof of residency required?

The residency of the parents/legal custodian/guardian determines the child's right to attend the public school. Acceptable proof of residency is established by each local school system. You should call the school where you plan to enroll the child to find out what will be accepted as proof of residency. Generally accepted documents are: property deed; current rental lease; current utility bills containing applicant's name and address; or a current property tax bill.

Why do I need to bring proof of age?

Proof of age is particularly important the first time a child enrolls in school. It helps determine which services and programs are available to the child. The mandatory attendance law applies to children between the ages of five (5) and seventeen (17) years of age. Beginning the 2017-18 school year, the compulsory age of attendance will be between five (5) and eighteen (18) years of age. A birth certificate and other documents as determined by each local school system may be used as proof of age. Call the school to see what documentation.

Why do I need to bring immunization records?

All children need to have an up-to-date copy of immunization records to be enrolled in and to attend a public school. If your child's immunizations need to be updated and you can bring proof of an appointment within 20 days to obtain the immunizations, you may temporarily enroll your child pending receipt of the required immunizations. Your doctor or health clinic and provide the DHMH 896 Form, or a computer-generated form, for you to take to the school.

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<p>Why do I need to provide proof of income when I register my child for prekindergarten in public school?</p>	<p>The prekindergarten program in the public schools is provided for four-year-old children who are from families with economically disadvantaged backgrounds or who are homeless. These children must be automatically enrolled in prekindergarten if their parents choose to apply. The local enrollment policies require that school systems request income information to determine if the children are eligible for the free or reduced price meal program according to federal guidelines. This eligibility is used to determine whether or not a child can be automatically enrolled in prekindergarten.</p>
<p>Why do I need to complete the lead form?</p>	<p>All children enrolled in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and the first grade who currently live or have ever lived in targeted zip codes must show evidence of blood lead testing. To comply with the law, parents/guardians must complete the MDHD Blood Lead Testing Certificate available from your school.</p>
<p>Why do I need to bring the current Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or 504 Plan for my child to the new school?</p>	<p>This will ensure that your child receives the appropriate services and accommodations which were specifically developed for your child. It will also provide the school with the dates for the annual review of your child's program as well as any re-evaluations that may be required.</p>
<p>Do I need to bring the most recent report card and/or withdrawal grades?</p>	<p>This information is very helpful in matching a continuing program for your child. It tells the school what courses your child was taking and may indicate the instructional level. For elementary children, it may indicate the reading or math series with which your child was being taught. For high school students, it may indicate credits earned and/or graduation requirements which have been met.</p>