

## **Preschool Admissions Priorities (PESD 206)**

### **Eligibility and Age Definitions**

To be admitted to Pacific Preschool, children are generally required be 3 or 4 years old. Children must also meet the state-mandated vaccination requirements for preschoolers. Families must have all forms and relevant vaccine requirements completed prior to the first day of attendance.

\*Definition of Three Years Old: Children who have their third birthday on or before Dec. 1 are considered three-year-olds and may enroll in August of that year. Children who have their third birthday on Dec. 2 or later may enroll on or after their third birthday.

Definition of Four Years Old: Children who have their fourth birthday on or before Dec. 1 of the school year are considered four-year-olds for that school year.

These definitions are strict for the California State Preschool (CSPP) program and more flexible for the tuition-based program. However, Pacific Preschool is never able to accept children younger than 2.6 years, due to license requirements.

### **Determination of the Number of Available Slots**

Pacific Preschool is licensed for a maximum of 24 students per day. Based on staffing, funding, the details of various grants, and other factors, the superintendent will determine the number of slots available in each of the following categories:

- CSPP (State-Funded) Exceptional Needs Slots
- CSPP (State-Funded) Regular Slots
- Tuition-Based Slots
- Flex Slots

After the superintendent determines the number of slots available in each category, the registrar, in consultation with the superintendent, will fill the slots based on the priority order below for each category.

### **Process for Filling Slots**

In February of each year, the Superintendent, in consultation with the Registrar, will make an initial determination of the number of each type of slot for the next school. The Registrar will review each type of slot and prioritize all interested families according to the priorities below during February. Following prioritization, the Registrar will offer available slots to families.

Families will have 3 business days after being offered a slot to respond stating whether or not they intend to enroll their child. Families who are offered slots will have until May 15 to complete all necessary enrollment paperwork. New CSPP families offered slots in February

through April must make and one or more appointments with the Registrar between April 15 and May 15 to review and finalize all paperwork. Families who do not do so may lose their slot.

Each time additional slots become available after the initial prioritization in February, the Registrar will reconsider all families who have completed an interest form, and determine which family has the highest prioritization for the type of slot that is available.

### **CSPP Exceptional Needs (i.e. Disabilities) Admission Priority**

Children with exceptional needs, i.e. disabilities, are defined as children having an active individualized family service plan or an active individualized educational program (IEP) (ed code 8205(h)). Three- and four-year-old children are eligible for CSPP services if the child has exceptional needs. If necessary, children with exceptional needs will be prioritized within this category by the same priority order as within the CSPP regular admission priority.

### **CSPP Regular Admission Priority**

1. The first priority for services shall be given to three-year-old or four-year-old children who are recipients of child protective services or who are at risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited and for whom there is a written referral from a legal, medical, or social service agency. (If Pacific Preschool is unable to enroll a child in this first priority category, we shall refer the child's parent or guardian to local resources and referral services so that services for the child can be located.)
2. Once the set-aside for children with exceptional needs is filled, the second priority for services shall be given to all three- and four-year-old children with exceptional needs from families with incomes below the income eligibility threshold. This priority is for children with exceptional needs that are enrolling in CSPP after the available CSPP Exceptional Needs slots have been filled.
3. The third priority for services shall be given to eligible three- or four-year-old children who are **not** enrolled in a state-funded transitional kindergarten program. This priority does not include children eligible based on having exceptional needs if they are from families with incomes above the income eligibility threshold. Children shall be enrolled in the following order:
  - a. Eligible children with the lowest income according to the income ranking on the most recent schedule of income ceiling eligibility table shall be enrolled first.
  - b. If two or more families have the same income ranking according to the most recent schedule of income ceiling eligibility table, the child that is identified as a dual language learner shall be enrolled first. If there are no children who are identified as dual language learners, the child that has been on the waiting list for the longest time shall be admitted first.

NOTE: Contractors must use the processes in Management Bulletin (MB) 23-03 to determine if a child is a dual language learner prior to prioritization.

4. The fourth priority, after all otherwise eligible children have been enrolled, shall be children from families whose income is no more than 15 percent above the eligibility income threshold. Within this priority category, priority shall be given to three- and four-year-old children with exceptional needs interested in enrolling beyond those already enrolled in the percent of funded enrollment set aside pursuant to Section 8208, then to four-year-old children before three-year-old children without exceptional needs.

After all otherwise eligible children have been enrolled in the first through fourth priority categories, the contractor may enroll the children in the following order:

5. A CSPP site operating within the attendance boundaries of a qualified free and reduced-price meals school, in accordance with EC Section 8217, may enroll any three- and four-year-old children whose families reside within the attendance boundary of the qualified elementary school. These children shall, to the extent possible, be enrolled by lowest to highest income.
6. Transitional Kindergarten or kindergarten pupils enrolling in the CSPP for extended learning and care, pursuant to EC Section 48000(1).

### **Tuition-Based Admission Priority**

If further prioritization is necessary within any of these categories, older children should be prioritized over younger children. If that is insufficient to resolve the priority issue, priority shall be determined by date of inquiry.

1. Children who are currently enrolled in Pacific Preschool.
2. Children of families who live or work or will live or work within Pacific Elementary School's district boundaries. In split custody families, residency is defined as the location where the student sleeps a majority of nights. Working within the district is defined as a child who has at least one custodial parent who regularly works 10 hours or more per week, Mondays through Fridays, within the district boundaries.
3. Siblings of current Pacific Elementary students who are classified as, or who are likely to be classified as, English Language Learners.
4. Other siblings of students who are currently enrolled in Pacific Preschool or Pacific Elementary School.
5. Siblings of students accepted into and expected to attend programs and/or grade levels of Pacific Elementary School determined by the administration to be under-enrolled.
6. Other four-year-olds who are not age-eligible for transitional kindergarten or who are declining transitional kindergarten, if necessary, ordered by date of inquiry.
7. Other three-year-olds or younger children, if necessary, ordered by date of inquiry.

## **Flex Admission Priority**

The purpose of flex slots is to allow the superintendent and registrar flexibility to enroll children who have a high degree of need for preschool services, and who may arrive in the district mid-year, or at another time when regular CSPP and Tuition-Based slots are full. Flex slots may be used for families receiving CSPP or paying tuition. They may also be used to enroll students between ages 2.6 and 3 or who are older than the cutoff to qualify as a 4-year-old if the superintendent determines the circumstances warrant it. The superintendent shall have full authority to prioritize use of flex slots, but they are intended for children such as:

- Children of families who are residing in or have recently taken up residence within the district boundaries, who are experiencing homelessness, or who are migrant.
- In-district children who would benefit from early academic intervention for any reason, including special needs, English Language development, or lack of previous school experiences.
- Siblings of students accepted into and expected to attend programs and/or grade levels of Pacific Elementary School determined by the administration to be under-enrolled.

When using flex spots to enroll CSPP students, the district will continue to follow the CSPP enrollment priorities listed above.

## **Admission to Pacific Elementary School Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten**

Admission to Pacific Elementary School is a separate process from admission to Pacific Preschool, and requires different forms and vaccinations.

Age-appropriate preschool students enrolled by January 1 and who submit the appropriate forms by the February 1 deadline have priority for enrollment in transitional kindergarten or kindergarten at Pacific Elementary School the following fall.