



Update to SchoolChoice and Universal Preschool (UPK) Colorado

Dear Parent / Guardian,

January 3, 2023

DPS is partnering with the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (“CDEC”) to continue expanding its Early Childhood Education program to more students and families.

Preschool, also called Early Childhood Education, or ECE, helps young children develop cognitively, socially and emotionally. This strong foundation readies them to enter the elementary years successfully and continue their joy of learning.

The SchoolChoice process for ECE families will be much different than in previous years due to Colorado voters passing **Proposition EE** in 2020 which Governor Polis signed into law in April 2022. Under the new state program, Universal Preschool (UPK) Colorado, families will be following the CDEC’s new application and lottery process to match their child with quality voluntary preschool at more than 80 schools in DPS or through private providers. There are a lot of unknowns, so families are encouraged to apply early to best navigate this new process.

Please take the following steps to apply to a DPS ECE program:

ECE3:

- 1) Apply on the DPS SchoolChoice website at <https://dps.schoolmint.net/> between January 13 and February 14 (closes at 4:00 pm). Select up to 12 programs to which you would like to apply.
- 2) Apply on the UPK website between January 17 and February 15 to see if you’re eligible for additional funding.

ECE4:

- 1) Apply on the DPS SchoolChoice website at <https://dps.schoolmint.net/> between January 13 and February 14 (closes at 4:00 pm). You will not select schools here– your school choices will not be recorded unless you also complete the next step.
- 2) Apply on the UPK website between January 17 and February 15 to select the schools to which you would like to apply.

Please note, the new state implemented process will not have a waitlist for ECE4 applications unlike the DPS ECE lottery system. As a state entity we must comply with the new CDEC program, and follow the guidance provided at the state level.

More information about the state’s inaugural Universal Preschool (UPK) Colorado program can be found on <https://cdec.colorado.gov/colorado-universal-preschool>. We look forward to updating you as new details come in, and starting your child’s educational journey here at DPS. If you have questions during the new application process, please contact the CDEC at (800) 799 5876.

Best Regards,

Priscilla Hopkins
Department of Early Education

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