



# THE EXTENDED ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

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## What is the Extended Elementary Education Program (EEEP)?

EEEP is a state-funded pre-kindergarten program for four-year-old children potentially at risk of failing in school. The goal is to provide learning experiences that help children develop and maintain the basic skills necessary for successful school performance by providing developmentally appropriate experiences that address the literacy, cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs of young children. Maryland has EEEP pre-kindergarten classrooms in 33% of all elementary schools.

Local school systems must develop policies and procedures for implementing pre-kindergarten programs that are in accordance with COMAR 13A.06.02. Under these regulations, an EEEP site operates one morning and one afternoon session five days a week for a minimum of 2.5 hours daily per session. Each classroom has 20 students and is staffed with one state-certified early childhood teacher and a qualified full-time assistant.

Each school system is required to review its program every three years in accordance with the *Standards for Implementing Quality Early Learning Programs*, which cover program management, the quality of early education in the classroom, staff development, and procedures for communication with kindergarten and first grade teachers as well as public/private partnership with child care programs.

## Who is eligible for EEEP?

Each local school system's enrollment policies and procedures determine the eligibility of four-year-old children in accordance with statewide student eligibility and selection criteria appearing in COMAR 13A.06.02.05. This ensures that those children with the greatest educational needs are being enrolled in the program. There are three types of eligibility:

- **Automatic Enrollment Criteria:** A local school system automatically enrolls four-year-old children residing in the attendance area into the program if any one of the following applies to the child: limited English proficiency and limited English proficient; homelessness, even if the capacity of 20 students per class is exceeded; or prior participation in a Head Start or Even Start program.
- **Prioritized Criteria:** A local school system gives priority for enrollment to children who reside in the attendance area for whom any of the following criteria apply: referral; emergency and health situations; or home and family circumstances. COMAR 13A.06.02.03 defines these prioritized criteria.

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## ***Who is eligible for EEEP?***

- **Out-of-Attendance Area Criteria:** If all available pre-kindergarten vacancies are not filled by using either the automatic enrollment criteria or the prioritized criteria for student eligibility and selection, a school may enroll those from outside its attendance area if the students are eligible, based on the automatic enrollment or prioritized criteria for student eligibility and selection.

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## ***What are the long-term effects of EEEP?***

An analysis on the long-term effects of EEEP pre-kindergarten programs indicates that enrollment in the program has a positive effect on the participants' school performance through elementary and middle school. The findings also suggest that participation in EEEP pre-kindergarten programs significantly reduced the number of children who were identified as having disabilities or for placement in special education.

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## ***How is EEEP funded?***

The state legislature approves funding for the program. Local school systems may combine EEEP, Title I, and State Compensatory Education funds as well as Targeted Poverty Grants and the Governor's Early Grade Initiative Funds to operate the pre-kindergarten programs.

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## ***How are schools selected to receive EEEP funds?***

According to COMAR 13A.06.02.04, before applying for EEEP funds, a local school system must rank its elementary schools according to the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced price meals. The system then determines priority for the need of pre-kindergarten programs using the following criteria, applying them equally across all of its elementary schools:

- The relationship of the EEEP pre-kindergarten program and school improvement
- Demographic factors such as school mobility and level of literacy proficiency
- The need for high quality early childhood education programs for each school's attendance area
- The need for public and private partnerships to link EEEP pre-kindergarten programs with child care, Head Start, and family education services.