

How Are Children Chosen for the NC Pre-K Program?

The Gates County Preschool Program strives to follow the policies of the NC Pre-K Program which can be found at the Division of Child Development and Early Education's website (http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/mb_ncprek.asp).

The short version –

Who is eligible?

When initially determining children eligible for the NC Pre-K program we use the guidelines set forth in the NC Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirements. Most children must be income eligible. Military income does not have to be considered. We can serve some children whose family income is over the income guidelines if a child has an identified disability or another risk factor such as English as second language, chronic health condition that will interfere with learning or educational need as determined by an approved screening. However, no more than 20% of the of the NC Pre-K student enrollment can be over the income guidelines.

So, who gets the slots if more eligible children apply than there are slots?

In Gates County we prioritized all eligible children based on the following:

1. Income eligible and IEP
2. Income eligible and another risk factor
3. Income eligible only
4. Not income eligible but has a risk factor (We cannot fill over 20% of the NC Pre-K slots with children from families whose income is over the income guidelines).

Served and Not Served by a preschool setting is also considered within each of the 4 categories listed above.

If we have only a few slots left and all of the children are from the same priority group, for example, Income Eligible Only, then those from the lowest income group are chosen for placement. If all factors are the same for children competing for a slot, then the date of the application is considered.

We choose this method of placement, which has been consistently approved at our yearly audits, as we feel the goal of the program is to serve the children most in need of services.

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We treat the children on our Waiting List the same. After initial placement, all children not chosen for initial placement go back into a group and new applications are added to the group as they are received. When a slot becomes available then the applications are resorted based on the above criteria. Our thinking is that when a slot becomes available, the child most at-risk will be served. This, again, is our understanding of the overall goal of the program.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Carledia Dozier at 357-4133.