



March 2024

EARLY CHILDHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future sets early childhood opportunities as its first pillar. For Garrett County Public Schools (GCPS), this includes free **universal access to pre-kindergarten for ALL 4-year-old children** and expanded pre-kindergarten opportunities for 3-year-old children who meet the eligibility requirements. This aspiration of having all of the county's earliest learners in high-quality programs that help children develop and maintain the necessary cognitive and social skills to be successful in kindergarten is a goal for GCPS and is articulated in its mission:

The mission of Garrett County Public Schools, in partnership with our community, is to inspire and foster student growth by providing rigorous instruction and learning opportunities, sustaining a culture of excellence, and preparing our students for life in an ever-changing world.



HIGH-QUALITY COMPONENTS OF PRE-K PROGRAMS OFFER:

- Highly qualified staff
- Attention to the whole child, including social, emotional, and physical/motor development
- Age-appropriate literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, technology, and physical education experiences
- Pre-k class sizes capped at no more than 20 students
- Family involvement, including regular home/school communication and resources for parents to be involved in their child's education

Garrett County Public Schools are currently accepting applications for Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 online for the 2024-25 school year. To be eligible for Pre-K 4, a child must be four (4) years old by September 1, 2024. **Pre-K 4 is a free universal program in which all students who meet the age requirement will be eligible to participate. This year, GCPS Pre-K 4 is serving 159 learners across five school sites.**

GCPS strives to place students at the elementary school in their home district first. However, high enrollment numbers at individual schools sometimes require sending students to other locations in order to maintain class size ratios. Additionally, some of our smaller schools do not have a pre-k program. In this case, GCPS will place students at the next closest location with open seats. Once all applications have been received and classroom numbers have been evaluated at all schools, the exact location of your child's placement will be determined. If your child needs to be placed at a different elementary school other than your home school, the Office of Elementary Education will notify you of that placement in early August.

Pre-K Three-Year-Olds			
Household Size	Monthly Income Requirements	Household Size	Monthly Income Requirements
1	\$ 3,765	7	\$ 11,835
2	\$ 5,110	8	\$ 13,180
3	\$ 6,455	9	\$ 14,525
4	\$ 7,800	10	\$ 15,870
5	\$ 9,145	11	\$ 17,215
6	\$ 10,490	12	\$ 18,560



PRE-K THREE-YEAR-OLDS

To be eligible for Pre-K 3, a child must be three (3) years old by September 1, 2024. In addition to the age requirement, Pre-K 3 also has income eligibility requirements. Household monthly income varies by household size and must be less than or equal to what's outlined in the table on the left.

Children with disabilities and children from homes where English is not the primary spoken language will be eligible regardless of income.

Registration will be held for both Pre-K-3 and Pre-K-4 in April. Applicants will receive additional information regarding their application status and registration appointments by April 15, 2024. Please complete the registration application at www.gcps.net/enrollment.

If you have questions about the Pre-K program, please contact the Office of Early Childhood at 301-334-8927.

Garrett County Public Schools CAREER LADDER

Level 4

Must be a position available (based on district need). Meets all skill and credential requirements for Levels 1-3.

Level 3

(i) An NBC Teacher; (ii) If there is no assessment comparable to NBC, a teacher with a master's degree in their subject area; (iii) An assistant principal.

Level 2

A teacher pursuing: (i) A master's degree; (ii) 30 credits of a program of study approved by the State Board; (iii) NBC.

Level 1

State Licensed Teacher

What is the career ladder? Why is this relevant?

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future has established recruiting and retaining high-quality staff as its second pillar. That includes revisioning our approach to professional learning and evaluation, redefining teachers' role so they can spend more time on activities that improve instruction and adjusting the traditional salary scale to align with the four levels in the Blueprint. This aspiration of having all critical positions filled with high-quality and diverse talent is a goal that is shared by Garrett County Public Schools (GCPS) and is articulated in its vision:

"Education is the key to the vitality and sustainability of our community. The Garrett County Public School System maintains an environment in which staff, students, parents, and the community work collectively for a brighter tomorrow. While celebrating the culture and traditions of Garrett County, the school and community collaboratively create an environment where the needs of the whole child are nurtured to become productive, enthusiastic, and successful members of society."

What are the opportunities?

The purpose of the career ladder is to transform teaching into a high-status profession in Maryland. And to do so, we'll need to:

- Attract high-performing students to pursue the high-status teaching profession;
- Retain high-quality teachers who gain additional responsibility, authority, status, and compensation as they gain additional expertise;
- Transform the education system in the State into a top-performing system in the world;
- Support the reorganization of the school day;
- Provide teachers with professional learning and peer collaboration time during the school day.

Most importantly, the career ladder represents an opportunity to compensate teachers competitively and at a level that signals the value and importance of their work.

GCPS Timeline

July 1, 2024

GCPS will roll out a negotiated plan for Levels 1, 2, and 3.

July 1, 2025

GCPS will roll out a plan for Level 4 including new lead teacher positions.

To use teachers time in new ways that will yield improved student outcomes, such as:

- Identifying, working with, and tutoring students who need additional help;
- Working with the most challenging students;
- Working with students living in concentrated poverty; and
- Leading or participating in professional learning.