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## Early Childhood Programs Frequently Asked Questions

### **Deerfield, Halls Cross Roads and Magnolia Elementary Schools Judith P. Hoyer Program**

#### *What is a “Judy Center”?*

Judy Centers are named after the late Judith P. Hoyer, an early childhood advocate and Supervisor of Early Childhood Education for Prince George's County, Maryland Public Schools. Judy Centers provide a central location for early childhood education and support services for children birth through Kindergarten and their families who reside in specific Title I school (high poverty) districts across the State of Maryland. Judy Centers are unique because they promote school readiness through collaboration with community-based agencies, organizations, and businesses. This integrated approach promotes program and service delivery that is conveniently located in or near Title I schools, ensuring that young children who may begin school at a deficit are given opportunities to start their formal education on a level playing field with their peers.

#### **Readiness for school includes:**

- being socially adjusted, emotionally aware, and able to communicate with adults and other children
- having an awareness of print and letter-sound relationships and understanding a story
- understanding basic math ideas, patterns, shapes and how to put things in a certain order
- having awareness of animal and plant life, and people’s roles in the family and the community
- being comfortable with individual creativity and an appreciation for self-expression through the arts

#### **12 Components of a Judy Center**

1. Full Day/Summer Programs
2. Provision of Breakfast/Lunch
3. Service Coordination and Family Support.
4. Combination of Early Education Services
5. Family Involvement
6. Early Identification/Intervention
7. Young Children with Disabilities Involvement
8. Health Services
9. Educational Training for all Staff and Partners



10. Adult Education/Family Literacy
11. Highly Qualified Programs
12. Judy Center Partnership/Leadership

Judy Centers are monitored on a regular basis and are required to meet the above twelve Component Standards.

***Who will benefit from the Judy Center approach at Deerfield, Halls Cross Roads and Magnolia Elementary Schools?***

- **Children in each school community will benefit** because the learning environments are positive, exciting, and age-appropriate. They are exposed to the seven domains of learning—personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts and physical development and health – in high quality environments. Children with disabilities or special needs are provided with interventions that may ensure greater school success.
- **Parents of young children in each school community will benefit** because there are many opportunities to become more involved in their child's education, increase their parenting skills and their own educational level, and participate in rich family-oriented activities.
- **Harford County Public Schools and Deerfield, Halls Cross Roads and Magnolia Elementary Schools will benefit** because children will enter school better prepared educationally and socially. Parents will become more involved and, through early intervention, developmental delays and speech issues will be remedied before children enter the primary grades. This has social, as well as financial benefits for the school system.
- **The state will benefit** from the improved quality of life for families with young children living in Maryland.

**Deerfield Elementary School Judy Center contact information**

Contact the school office at 410-612-1535

**Halls Cross Roads Elementary School Judy Center contact information**

Contact Michelle Bowditch at [Michelle.Bowditch@hcps.org](mailto:Michelle.Bowditch@hcps.org) Or 410-273-5524

**Magnolia Elementary School Judy Center contact information**

Contact Bonnie Mitrega at [Bonnie.Mitrega@hcps.org](mailto:Bonnie.Mitrega@hcps.org) or 410-612-1553

[http://www.msde.maryland.gov/MSDE/divisions/child\\_care/early\\_learning/Judy.htm](http://www.msde.maryland.gov/MSDE/divisions/child_care/early_learning/Judy.htm)



**Eligibility Age**

*At what ages are children eligible to enroll in early childhood programs?*

- According to *COMAR 13A.08.01.02*, the ages for school attendance are as follows:

<b>Special Education Early Intervention</b>	A child <b><u>between the ages of 3-years old and 5 –years-old</u></b> , who have an educational disability, are eligible for Early Intervention services.
<b>Prekindergarten</b>	A child admitted to the prekindergarten program in the public school shall be <b><u>4-years-old or older on September 1</u></b> of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.
<b>Kindergarten</b>	A child admitted to the kindergarten program in the public school shall be <b><u>5-years-old or older on September 1</u></b> of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.
<b>First Grade</b>	A child admitted to the first grade in the public schools shall be <b><u>6-years-old or older on September 1</u></b> of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.

*Can students seek admission to HCPS from a private, parochial, other public-school system, or a nonpublic program certified by the Maryland State Department of Education?*

Any student seeking admission from a private, parochial, other public-school system, or a nonpublic program certified by the Maryland State Department of Education shall be placed in the grade level to which they are certified by the sending school, provided the child is age-eligible.

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## **Special Education Early Intervention**

### ***What does disabled mean?***

Federal and State laws identify specific educational disabilities that entitle a child to special education services if it is determined that the disability is interfering with the child's learning.

### **These educational disabilities include:**

Autism Deafness  
Deaf/Blindness  
Developmental Delay  
Emotional Disability  
Hearing Impairment  
Intellectual Disability  
Multiple Disabilities  
Orthopedic Impairment  
Other Health Impairment  
Specific Learning Disability  
Speech or Language Impairment  
Traumatic Brain Injury  
Visual Impairment

### ***What is Child Find?***

“CHILD FIND” is the name given to the all-out effort to locate children who may be in need of special education services. It is a special education service provided by the Harford County Public Schools to identify children who live in Harford County, from ages 3 through 21, who are suspected of having an educational disability and who may be eligible for special education and related services.

### ***How do I refer a child to Child Find?***

- Children between the ages of three and five years, who live in Harford County and are not enrolled in a Harford County Public School may be referred directly by the parent/guardian to the Office of Child Find by calling 410-638-4386/87.
- Students who attend a private or parochial school in Harford County may be referred for screening by school teams or the parent/guardian by calling the Office of Child Find at 410-638-4386/87 for further information.
- Children enrolled in Harford County Public Schools, in grades K-12 who are suspected of having a disability and may be in need of special education, should be referred to the local school for screening.

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### ***What is the Child Find process?***

Parent or Guardian contacts the Child Find office at 410-638-4386/87.

- An IEP meeting is convened to consider the possibility that the student has an educational disability.
- If needed, assessments are completed.
- An IEP Meeting (Individualized Education Program) is convened to determine the child's eligibility for special education and related services.
- If a child is eligible, an IEP or a Service Plan will be developed, identifying goals and services to be provided.

### ***What services might an eligible student receive?***

Possible Services include:

- Special Education Instruction
- Speech/Language Therapy
- Audiological Services
- Psychological Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Vocational Education

### ***What is the cost involved?***

Child Find screening services are available, at no charge, to all Harford County residents three through 21 years of age. Assessments, evaluations, and all special education services which are determined to be necessary by the IEP Team are provided free of charge.

### ***What is the Infants and Toddlers Program?***

The Harford County Infants and Toddlers Program is an early intervention program for children birth to 4- years-old and their families. Through family-centered services, parents and caregivers are provided guidance and coaching to help their child be successful at home and in the community and develop school readiness skills.

Children ages 3 – 4-years-old are provided services through HCITP upon meeting the requirements of the MD Extended IFSP Option.

### ***Who is eligible for services?***

- Children who demonstrate a 25% delay in one or more areas of development.



- Children who demonstrate atypical development in one or more areas of development.
- Children with a diagnosis placing them at risk for developmental delays

***What services are available?***

- Audiology
- Counseling
- Evaluation
- Family education and support
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Psychology
- Service coordination
- Special instruction
- Speech/language therapy

***Where are services provided?***

Services are typically provided in the natural environment. This could include:

- A home
- Daycare setting
- Preschool
- Community event/activity
- Library
- Other community locations

***What is the process?***

The process begins by making a referral. Most referrals are made directly by the child's parents by calling the Harford County Infants and Toddlers office at 410-638-3823.

With parental consent, referrals may also be made by health care providers, child care providers, social workers, family members, and other individuals familiar with the child's development.

***Who provides the services?***

The Harford County Infants and Toddlers Program is an interagency program provided by:

- Harford County Public Schools
- Harford County Health Department

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- Harford County Department of Social Services
- Other private agencies

***What else should I know about Infants and Toddlers?***

If your child is under 3-years-old and you have concerns about their development, call the Harford County Infants and Toddlers Program at 410-638-3823.

If your child is over 3- years-old and you have concerns about their development or school readiness, call Child Find at 410-638-4386.

These programs are a public service to eligible children of Harford County and are provided at no charge to families.

***What is the Regional Early Intervention Classroom?***

The early intervention classrooms are designed to meet the needs of those students with moderate to severe delays in cognition, social interaction, communication and behavior. These students require a structured teaching routine presented in a language rich environment. Each classroom is staffed with a special education teacher and paraeducator. The classrooms are located in regional centers throughout the county. Students attend 2, 3, or 4 days per week. Related services such as speech-language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision and hearing services are delivered at the regional early intervention center (in or out of the classroom).

**HCPS Elementary Schools with Regional Early Intervention Classrooms**

Edgewood Elementary 600 Juniata Street 410-939-6616	Havre de Grace Elementary 203 East Bel Air Ave, Aberdeen, 410-273-5524
Homestead/Wakefield Elementary 900 South Main Street, Bel Air, 410-638-4175	North Bend Elementary 1445 North Bend Road, Jarrettsville, 410-692-7815
Youth Benefit Elementary 1901 Fallston Road Fallston, 410-638-4190	



## **Prekindergarten**

### ***What is prekindergarten?***

Prekindergarten is a state-funded program for 4-year-old children who are from families that are economically disadvantaged or homeless. The overall goal of prekindergarten is to provide learning experiences to help children develop and maintain school readiness skills necessary to be successful in school. The Prekindergarten program provides appropriate experiences that address the literacy, mathematical, cognitive, social, emotional [Table of Contents](#) of young children. In HCPS prekindergarten is a two-and-a-half-hour program offered in a morning and afternoon session.

### ***How does the prekindergarten application process work?***

- Applicants must be 4-years-old on or before September 1. There are no early entrance procedures for prekindergarten.
- Economics is the only requirement in determining prekindergarten eligibility.
- Parents may pick up an application at any Harford County public elementary school beginning the first Friday in May.
- Parents must submit the completed application packet, including the necessary documentation, to an elementary school that hosts a prekindergarten program

### **Necessary Documentation:**

**1. Proof of Income:** (Previous year's federal income tax form 1040, with child listed as a dependent.)

- *If you have filed for an extension, your application is not complete and will not be considered until you submit a copy of the 1040 form to the school.*
- *If you do not have an income, you will need to provide certification from the Department of Social Services that you are receiving a service: welfare, WIC, food stamps, and/or medical assistance. The eligibility letter must be provided for medical assistance.*

**2. Child's birth certificate.** If you do not have a birth certificate, one of the following is acceptable:

- Hospital certificate
- Physician's certificate
- Baptism/church certificate
- Passport/visa
- Birth registration



### 3. Proof of residence

The following may be acceptable for proof of residency:

- A current monthly utility bill\* (turn off notices not accepted) internet, cable, landline, gas & electric (usage detail page required). The utility bill must show name, service address, usage and charge.
- If a monthly utility bill CANNOT be provided ~Parent or Guardian must provide 2 Documents from the list below

One item from Column A PLUS One item from Column B

Column A	Column B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Homeowner’s Deed</li> <li>➤ Most recent mortgage payment *</li> <li>➤ Signed Settlement Agreement</li> <li>➤ Current signed Lease Agreement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pay stub *</li> <li>➤ W-2</li> <li>➤ Car, Homeowner, or Renter’s Insurance Declaration page</li> <li>➤ Government or official correspondence *</li> <li>➤ Change of address card from MVA or Post Office</li> <li>➤ Credit Card Statement *</li> <li>➤ Cell Phone bill *</li> </ul>

\*These documents must be dated within 30 days from date of enrollment.

### 4. Photo I.D. of parent

#### HCPS Elementary Schools with Prekindergarten Programs

##### Schools offering Full Day Prekindergarten

- Bakerfield Elementary 36 Baker Street, Aberdeen, 410-273-5518
- Churchville Elementary 2935 Level Rd, Churchville, 410-638-3800
- Deerfield Elementary 2307 Willoughby Beach Road, Edgewood, 410-612-1540
- Dublin Elementary 1527 Whiteford Road, Street, 410-638-3703
- Fountain Green Elementary 517 S Fountain Green Rd 410-638-4220
- George Lisby at Hillside Elementary 810 Edmund Street, Aberdeen, 410-273-5530
- Hall’s Cross Roads Elementary 203 E Bel Air Ave, Aberdeen, 410-273-5524
- Havre de Grace Elementary 600 Juniata St, Havre de Grace, 410-939-6616
- Joppatowne Elementary 410 Barksdale Road, Joppa, 410-612-1546
- Magnolia Elementary 901 Trimble Road, Joppa, 410-612-1553



- Meadowvale Elementary (Inclusion program) 910 Grace View Dr, Havre de Grace, 410-939-6622
- North Bend Elementary (Inclusion program) 1445 N Bend Rd, Jarrettsville, 410-692-7815
- North Harford Elementary 120 Pylesville Rd, Pylesville, 410-638-3670
- Riverside Elementary 211 Stillmeadow Drive, Joppa, 410-612-1560
- Roye Williams Elementary 201 Oakington Rd, Havre de Grace, 410-273-5536
- William Paca/Old Post Road Elementary 2706 Old Philadelphia Rd, Abingdon, 410-612-1566

### **Schools offering Half Day Prekindergarten**

- Abingdon Elementary 399 Singer Road, Abingdon, 410-638-3910
- Bel Air Elementary 30 East Lee Street, Bel Air, 410-638-4160
- Church Creek Elementary 4299 Church Creek Rd, Belcamp, 410-273-5550
- Edgewood Elementary (Inclusion program) 2100 Cedar Drive, Edgewood, 410-612-1540
- Homestead/Wakefield Elementary (Inclusion program) 900 South Main Street, Bel Air, 410-638-4175
- Prospect Mill Elementary (Inclusion program) 101 Prospect Mill Road, Bel Air, 410-638-3817

### **Kindergarten/First Grade**

#### ***What is kindergarten?***

All kindergarten programs in the public schools are full-day programs operating for 6.5 hours a day to support the academic, social, physical, and emotional development of kindergarten students.

#### ***Can parents “hold their child out” for one year if a child is age-eligible for kindergarten?***

- A parent may request a one-year waiver to defer entry to kindergarten. You may obtain a form by downloading the link, contacting your local school, or contacting the *Office of Early Childhood Programs*.
- Internal employees only:  
<http://share.hcps.org/searchcenter/Pages/Results.aspx?k=maturity%20waiver&s=All%20Sites>

#### ***If parents or legal guardians decide that it is in the best interest of their child who is already enrolled in kindergarten to be withdrawn, what must they do?***

- If parents or legal guardians feel that it is in the best interest of their child to be withdrawn from kindergarten, they must do the following:
- File a written request to withdraw the child from the program; and
- Register the child for enrollment in kindergarten the following school year.



***How do I register for kindergarten?***

- Please contact your local school to learn how that specific school handles the kindergarten registration process.
- Registration begins the first Friday in May.
- The child must be 5-years-old on or before September 1 of current school year.
- <http://www.hcps.org/parents/KRegistration.aspx>

**Necessary Documentation:**

**1. Child’s birth certificate.** If you do not have a birth certificate, one of the following is acceptable:

- Hospital certificate
- Physician’s certificate
- Baptism/church certificate
- Passport/visa
- Birth registration

**2. Proof of Residence** The following may be acceptable for proof of residency:

- A current monthly utility bill\* (turn off notices not accepted) internet, cable, landline, gas & electric (usage detail page required). The utility bill must show name, service address, usage and charge.
- If a monthly utility bill CANNOT be provided ~Parent or Guardian must provide 2 Documents from the list below

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\*These documents must be dated within 30 days from date of enrollment.



### **3. Photo I.D. of parent**

### **4. Immunization records and physical form**

<http://www.hcps.org/parents/immunizationrequirements.aspx>

***Do I need to register my child for kindergarten if my child is enrolled in a Harford County Public School prekindergarten program?***

- You do not need to register your child for kindergarten if he/she is already enrolled as an HCPS student in the same school.

***What if my child is transferring to a new school?***

- If your child is transferring to a new school, request a Maryland Student Transfer Record from the current school. Call the new school to make a registration appointment.

***Are there any informational events prior to the start of kindergarten?***

- All of the elementary schools hold an *Open House* event over the summer for incoming kindergarteners. Please contact your child's school for more information.

***Can Harford County Public Schools deny entrance into kindergarten or first grade?***

- No. Age is the only criteria required for entrance into kindergarten and first grade.

***Can a child be admitted early to kindergarten, or first grade?***

- Yes. Per *COMAR 13A.08.01.02, Age for School Attendance*, all local boards of education are to adopt a regulation permitting early admission to prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade.
  - A 4-year-old child, upon request by the parent or guardian, may be admitted to kindergarten if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission.
  - A 5-year-old child, upon request of the parent or guardian, may be admitted to the first grade if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission.
  - While *COMAR* requires that local school systems adopt regulations for early admission, the content of the policies and procedures must be determined by the local boards of education.

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***What is the process for applying for early admission to kindergarten?***

- Early admission to kindergarten is **open only to children whose birthdays fall between September 2 and October 15, inclusive.**
- The application process begins the **first Friday of May and ends the first Friday in June.**
- Applications for early entrance can be obtained at any Harford County elementary school or from the *HCPS Office of Early Childhood Programs.*

***During the school year, can a child who did not turn 5-years-old by September 1 be enrolled in the kindergarten program if he or she is attempting to transfer from another institution?***

- If an underage child is transferring from a kindergarten program in a public school in Maryland, the Harford County Public School System will verify that the child was enrolled through early admission procedures. After verification through school records, the child may continue in a HCPS kindergarten. Close monitoring of the child's progress will occur.
- If an underage child is transferring from a public kindergarten in another state, the child may continue in kindergarten pending receipt of school records. Close monitoring of the child's progress will occur.
- If an underage child is transferring from a private or parochial school kindergarten, the child will **not** be allowed to enroll in a HCPS kindergarten.

***Can a child who is enrolled in a private or parochial kindergarten program transfer to a public-school kindergarten program?***

- Yes. Per *COMAR 13A.08.01.01C*, an age-eligible child who attends a non-public kindergarten program for part of the year **may** transfer to a public kindergarten.

***What is the process for applying for early admission to first grade?***

- Since kindergarten is a mandatory grade, a student must first enroll in kindergarten (the appropriate grade for his/her age).
- If an underage student already fulfilled the kindergarten requirement through attendance in a public school in another state, the parent must provide records that demonstrate the child's successful year-long participation in that program to be admitted.

***If a child did not meet the age for kindergarten attendance, was admitted to kindergarten in a private or parochial school, and successfully completed kindergarten, can the child transfer to the public school as a first grade student?***



- Children who did not meet the age requirements and were admitted early to a private or parochial school kindergarten program will not automatically be enrolled in first grade in Harford County Public Schools. The child’s parents/guardians can apply for early admission to first grade. The application process begins the **first Friday of May and ends the first Friday in June**.
- Applications for advanced placement can be obtained at any Harford County elementary school or from the *HCPS Office of Early Childhood Programs*.
- If the child meets the performance requirements required by HCPS regulations, then the child will be granted early admission. The first step in this process is registering for kindergarten at the elementary school assigned to the family’s residence and completing the application for early admission to first grade.

***If the parents of a non-English speaking child apply for early admission, must accommodations be made?***

- No. The Maryland State Department of Education has determined that a local school system is **not** required to make adjustments in its early admission regulation to prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade for non-English speaking students. Assessments for early admission to kindergarten and first grade will be administered in the language of instruction – English.

***If the parents of a home-schooled child requests a transfer to public school, must they meet the September 1 age of entry for kindergarten?***

- *COMAR 13A.08.01.02*, allows a student to be enrolled in kindergarten home schooling if he/she is 5- years-old by September 1. A student who was home schooled, must be 5-years-old by September 1 to enroll in public kindergarten or meet the early admission criteria. A student who has completed a home school kindergarten program and requests transfer to first grade must meet the age requirement of 6-years-old by September 1 or the early admission to first grade criteria.

### **Considerations Regarding Early Entrance to School**

- ✓ Successful candidates of early entrance are often quick learners, independent and motivated, developmentally advanced, and socially mature compared to same age peers.
- ✓ Young children are emotionally vulnerable and may become stressed or anxious when adult expectations for their performance exceed their developmental capabilities. Children learn best when they are provided challenges that are appropriately matched to their ability and readiness level.



- ✓ Young children learn best through structured and self-directed play. The quality and quantity of their time spent playing impacts their ability to think creatively, make decisions, and cope with stressful situations.
- ✓ Entering school early is a decision that will have long-term effects on your child. The potential social/emotional and cognitive impact on your child as he/she progresses through elementary, middle, high school, as well as beyond is not foreseeable.
- ✓ How will your family respond when your child's new peer group reaches adolescence and is old enough to date, drive, and assume other adult prerogatives?
- ✓ Results from longitudinal studies indicate that carefully selected, advanced young learners tend to do very well academically and socially when provided early entrance.
- ✓ All children need challenges tailored to their intellectual strengths and their social and emotional development stage.

### **Harford County Public Schools General Disclaimer**

The web site of Harford County Public School is designed for informational and educational purposes only. Harford County Public Schools shall not be liable for any errors in the content, nor for any action taken in reliance thereon.

### **Harford County Public Schools Nondiscrimination Statement**

The Harford County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. Inquiries related to the policies of the Board of Education of Harford County should be directed to the Manager of Communications, 410-588-5203.

### **Harford County Public Schools Early Childhood Programs**

Kathy Griffin, Coordinator

Phone: 410-588-5252 • Email: [Kathy.Griffin@hcps.org](mailto:Kathy.Griffin@hcps.org) • Fax: 410-588-5370

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## SY 23-24 PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

	Title I	4 <sup>th</sup> Tier	Half Day PreK	Full Day Pre-K	Co-Taught Pre-K	Learning Together	Early Learner	Early Intervention	STRIVE	CSP	Judy Center	TSI	Priority	LPS	Community	Total Programs
ABES			1													2
BFES	SP			2												5
BAES			1													1
CCES			1													3
CVES				1												1
DAES																1
DFES	SP			4												7
DUES				1												1
EDES	SP		1													7
EMES																0
FHES																1
FLES																1
FGES				1												1
GLS	SP			2												4
HACH																2
HXES	SP			3												6
HDES				2												5
HIES																1
HWES			1													4
JVES																1
JOES	SP			2												4
MAES	SP			3												8
MVES				2												6
NOES																0
NBES				2												5
NHES				1												1
OPES	SP			5												7
PMES			1													3
RPES																1
RFES																1
RVES	SP			2												6
RWES				2												3
SWC																1
WJES																2
YBES																2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	