

Quality Early Learning Programs for Non-Public Schools: Why You Should Consider On My Way Pre-K



1. What is "On My Way Pre-K"?

On My Way Pre-K is an Indiana state-funded pilot program that provides access to high quality pre-k programs for low income families.

2. Why should my school consider being a provider?

Most non-public schools are driven by their unique mission, first and foremost. The mission to serve families who are underserved with quality education is a resounding priority for our schools.

The educational market around you should also answer whether your school should participate. [Quality pre-k programs help the community](#) and they're great feeder programs to your kindergarten. If the public sector starts offering preschool for free soon, why would parents send their kid elsewhere?

3. What are the qualifications to be an On My Way Pre-K provider?

The beauty of our non-public schools is that they're all unique. For that reason, there's no one-size-fits-all box to check and several factors go into qualifying as a provider. The [website](#) put together by Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) is a great resource to check for specific requirements. Just make sure to scroll down and click on the tab that says, "Private or Non-Public School-Based Programs".

The website above will go over the following ways non-public schools can qualify:

- [Approved Accrediting Bodies](#)
- [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) provider eligibility standards](#)
- [Paths to Quality](#)

Still have questions about qualifying? Call Sean Jones at 317-232-7923 (Northern half of the state) or Nicole Richardson at 317-232-2035 (Southern half of the state).



4. Can a school anywhere in the state apply to be a provider if they meet the qualifications?

House Enrolled Act 1628 expanded pre-k access to all Indiana counties with certain limitations. Funding will be limited as it expands, so we encourage schools to apply as soon as they're able for next year.

5. What are the staffing, facility and program requirements? In other words, how much is involved?

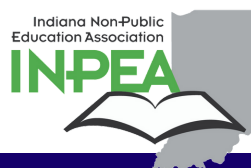
Yes, there are quite a few requirements for your facility to keep in mind for the program ([see facility packet here](#)). Although this packet may look cumbersome, as a K-8 or K-12 school, you likely already meet many of these requirements.

6. Which families are eligible?

If you have families that meet **most** of the qualifications below, but not all, we still encourage them to apply.

1. Child must be 4 but not yet 5 years old by August 1, 2019.
2. Child must be a resident of Indiana.
3. All parents/guardians in the household must have a service need (working, going to school, attending job training).
4. Families must earn less than 127% of federal poverty level. FPL information is available by [clicking here](#).

According to [House Enrolled Act 1628](#), beginning in 2020, families meeting only the requirements for limited eligibility, including income up to 185% of federal poverty level or SSI/SSDI income, must be capped at 20% of the total approved applicants.



7. What is the application process for families?

The interested family will apply online, and from there will be contacted to set up a meeting with an intake agent to continue the application. It's important to note this process is different than the voucher program where the school has more of a responsibility to take care of the application. On My Way Pre-K requires schools to empower families to take charge of their application, because schools aren't able to do it for them. More information about the family-side of the process can be found [here](#).

8. I've heard there have been improvements to the process. What's been done to improve and streamline OMWPK in the past year?

FSSA has acknowledged some of the issues families have experienced during the process in the past, like the kinks in family applications and meetings and communication with schools. FSSA now has new technology and communication supports in place that will streamline the process to make it more efficient and expedient for both schools and families. This includes text message and snail mail communication for those who don't have access to email.

9. Which non-public school leaders can I talk to about their experience?

Sometimes it's better to talk to someone in the weeds of a program than to see the details at a high level. We encourage you to reach out to any school participating, including these non-public school administrators currently taking part in the On My Way Pre-K program and are doing it successfully:

- Alessandra Baez, Director of Enrollment at Holy Spirit Catholic School (Indianapolis)
- Cristy Jordan, Principal at Saint Joseph Catholic School (Fort Wayne)
- Christine Exline, Assistant Principal at St. Monica Catholic School (Indianapolis)

10. Resources

- [Family and Social Services Administration](#)
- [INPEA](#)
- [ELAC report](#)



LEARNING THE LANGUAGE The ABCs of Early Learning



- **CCDF** - Child Care and Development Fund is a principal source of federal funding for child care. Part of On My Pre-K funding is from CCDF dollars, hence the federal requirements that have been included.
- **LLEP** - Legally Licensed Exempt Providers. Non-public school-based programs that do not wish to become licensed can complete the CCDF eligibility application process to participate in Paths to QUALITY™ and meet the requirements for On My Way Pre-K. This involves the completion of the LLEP Facility Packet and participation in an on-site inspection.
- **Registered Ministry** - Child care operated by a church or religious ministry that is exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code.
- **Licensed Center** - Providers that are licensed by the state of Indiana are automatically considered CCDF eligible providers. School-based programs may choose to become licensed or complete the process for LLEPs.
- **Intake** - Once a family applies for a grant, they will verify their eligibility and complete their grant approval process with the state-contracted county intake agent assigned to the appropriate county.
- **Service Need** - Parents and/or guardians in the household must be working, going to school or attending job training to qualify for a child care grant or voucher
- **PTQ (Levels 1-4)** - Paths to QUALITY™ is a free, voluntary Quality Rating and Improvement System designed to raise the standard of quality in early child care and education in Indiana. Paths to QUALITY™ includes four progressively higher levels of standards, with each level including and building upon previous levels.
- **VCP** - Voluntary Certification Program. Registered ministries must complete the VCP to participate in Paths to QUALITY™.