



How to Start Your Kindergarten School Search - Resource Kit

It's never too early to start looking at what schools in St. Louis City can provide for your incoming Kindergartener. You may choose your designated neighborhood school, or consider other schools based on the special programs or unique offerings they have. Here are 4 things we highly suggest thinking through as you start your school search.

1. Determining your child's specific needs and the type of education you are looking for.

As their caregiver, you know your child best. You know their personality, how they learn, and what environment would be best for them to thrive. All of these are important things to have considered prior to searching for schools because this will help you know what you are looking for and what is non-negotiable for you and your family. We have a [Priorities Worksheet](#) available that you can complete prior to starting your search. You can also schedule a FREE [Navigator Appointment](#) where they will guide you through completing the worksheet.

2. Taking the time to research the different school types available.

The 4 main options in the St. Louis City area are public, Magnet-Choice, public charter, and private-independent schools.

- Public schools make up the majority of the school options in the city, neighborhood schools which means that depending on where you live, you are "assigned" to go there.
- Within the public school, there are also Magnet-Choice schools which include the Gifted and Talented program and other educational programs with a special focus. These programs can require additional testing and application processes so account that in your timeline, this process could start a year prior to when your child would start school.
- Public charter schools are independent of public school districts but are open to any child that lives in the city and they do not have tuition. They all have slightly different application processes and deadlines so make sure to research those.
- Private independent schools are independent of the state and do not get public funding so they are tuition-based. Some private schools are faith-based and others are not.

Click [here](#) to learn more in-depth about the different types of schools on our website.

3. Familiarizing yourself with different enrollment processes

Neighborhood schools have an open enrollment which means that you are guaranteed a spot based on your address. Other schools require an application and may have a lottery which means that students who apply by the deadline will get randomly selected for a spot. Lastly, selective enrollment admits students based on merit and these usually require an entrance exam and/or an interview. Keep in mind that with both Lottery and selective enrollment processes deadlines can vary and some are as early as November the year prior to when your child will be starting Kindergarten.

4. Scheduling a FREE School Navigator Appointment

Navigating the school search process can be tough, but our School Navigators are here to help you understand all of your school options. Navigators are available to talk in person or virtually throughout the week and weekend. Click [here](#) to schedule an appointment with a School Navigator.