

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · NORTH CAROLINA

Enrolling a Child in School in North Carolina: 2026 Guide

Schools are county work, not city work. The base school place is automatic and the application window only matters for special programs. Documents, immunizations and language support.

SHORT ANSWER

The first sentence has to be this: **schools are county work, not city work.** There is no Raleigh City Schools; the **Wake County Public School System** is a single countywide district covering Raleigh, Cary, Apex, Garner, Morrisville, Wake Forest, Holly Springs, Fuquay-Varina, Knightdale, Wendell, Zebulon and Rolesville. The second sentence is a relief: **every family has a base school determined by their home address, and the place is assigned automatically.** A family arriving mid-year that has missed an application round does not end up with a child out of school. The application round only matters for magnet, year-round and early college programs.

The order: base school first, application second

- 1 Find your base school with the district's **address lookup**: wcpss.net/enroll/base-schools
- 2 Open the enrollment through the district's **online portal**: wcpss.net/enroll
- 3 Take the enrollment documents to the **base school**.
- 4 Hand in the immunization record and the **state health assessment form**.

For families who want a special program the windows are separate. For the round opening in fall 2026: **Early College and Crossroads FLEX, October 15 to December 11, 2026; magnet and year-round schools, October 15, 2026 to January 21, 2027; a second magnet round, March 1 to 12, 2027. Admission is not guaranteed**, and a family may also request a school change within **10 days** of enrolling, again with no guarantee. The magnet programs office is on **919-533-7295**. Some schools are capped to new transfers because of crowding. One point of honesty: the district's base school page and its main enrollment page did not agree on the application window dates, so we used the main enrollment page, and you should confirm before you apply.

Document checklist

DOCUMENT	NOTE
☐ The child's birth certificate	A certified copy

DOCUMENT	NOTE
☐ Photo identification for the parent or legal guardian	Asked for at enrollment
☐ County proof of address in the parent's name	A current water, gas or electricity bill within 30 days of its due date, or a lease signed within the last 60 days, or closing documents less than 60 days old
☐ The child's immunization record	A certificate of immunization completed by the child's doctor is required
☐ State health assessment form	The NC Health Assessment Form, on or before the first day
☐ Custody documents	If any
☐ Social Security number	Does not appear on the district's list of required documents, and we found no enrollment page asking for the child's number. We offer that as something we did not find rather than as a guarantee; we did not go inside the online enrollment flow

IF YOU CANNOT PRODUCE A LEASE OR A BILL

Families displaced from housing enroll through the district's **McKinney-Vento** program, which exists precisely to enroll a child who cannot produce a lease or a utility bill. That is the answer for a family that has just arrived and is staying with relatives or somewhere temporary. The item most likely to trip you up is proof of address, because the document has to be **in the parent's name**; do not let a refusal at the counter turn into a failure to enroll, ask the registrar about McKinney-Vento. Program page: wcpss.net/student-life/mckinney-vento

Immunizations and the health assessment: the rule is statewide

STAGE	WHAT IS REQUIRED
Kindergarten entry	Polio/IPV 4 doses, MMR 2, DTaP 5, Hib 3-4, Hepatitis B 3, varicella 2, pneumococcal conjugate (PCV) 4. Hib and PCV are not required of a child past the fifth birthday
Grade 7	One dose of meningococcal conjugate (MenACWY) and one Tdap booster
Grade 12	One MenACWY booster
HPV and influenza	Recommended, not required

- **The 30-day rule:** the parent must present the immunization record within **30 calendar days** of the child's first day of attendance; after that a child without the record **may not continue to attend**. The clock starts on the first day.
- **Health assessment:** state law requires every child entering a public school for the first time to have a health assessment carried out **within the 12 months before entry**, recorded on the NC Health Assessment Form and given to the school on or before the first day.
- **Exemptions:** state rules provide for medical and religious exemptions.

- **An immunization card brought from Türkiye is a foreign record** and will normally need to be reviewed and transcribed onto the state certificate of immunization by a U.S. clinician. We found no district or state public health page that accepts a foreign card as it stands. Appointments take time, so book the doctor **the same week** you enroll.

Official pages: [school immunization requirements \(K-12\)](#) · [immunization rules and the 30-day requirement](#) · [schools capped to new transfers](#)

Language support: interpretation is free, Turkish is not named

The district runs an **Office of Translation and Interpretation Services** inside its communications department, and **all interpretation services are free for families**. The **Language Assistance Line is (919) 852-3303**: a staff Spanish interpreter answers, and a caller who speaks another language is connected to an over-the-phone interpreter in that language. Every school office keeps an **I SPEAK card** listing the 15 most common languages in the district; the district does not publish that list of 15 on the page we read, and a family whose language is not on the card is told to name it so staff can request a telephone interpreter. Family Academy workshops are offered in Arabic, English, French, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish and Vietnamese, and the text-message service in English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Vietnamese, Hmong, Russian, Polish and Burmese.

Turkish is not named on any district language page we read. So we claim no Turkish support. What is true is that interpretation is free, that it is requested through the school office or the Language Assistance Line, and that the district's own policy is to find a telephone interpreter for a language that is not on the card. The district runs a Spanish-language portal; there is no Turkish equivalent. Open the call with Turkish interpreter, and for an important school meeting put the request **in writing before the appointment**.

FOUR LINES FOR A NEWLY ARRIVED FAMILY

- **The place is automatic.** Your address assigns your child to a base school, and missing a lottery or an application window does not stop you enrolling. That is the opposite of some lottery-based cities elsewhere in this series.
- **Proof of address must be in the parent's name.** If nothing is in your name yet, ask about the McKinney-Vento route.
- **The 30-day immunization clock starts on the first day of attendance.** Book the doctor the same week you enroll.
- **Interpretation is free and asking for it is your right.** We saw nothing on any official page saying the school asks about immigration status or requires immigration documents, but we do not offer that as a guarantee either: the required list is above, and if something not on it is asked for, ask first which rule it rests on.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN NORTH CAROLINA

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients across North Carolina, in Turkish and English. Free evaluation: clinchlaw.com/free-evaluation · +1 866-491-7669

Office: 321 N Central Expy, Ste 206, McKinney, TX 75070

Attorney responsible for this guide: Asim Clinch, Esq., Clinch Law Firm P.C. Attorney Asim Clinch is a member of the Missouri Bar (No. 76084) and practices U.S. federal immigration law.

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