

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · PHILADELPHIA

Philadelphia School Enrollment Guide 2026 (School District of Philadelphia)

Enrollment steps from Pre-K to high school, documents, free PHLpreK, and rights for immigrant families.

SHORT ANSWER

To enroll a child in a Philadelphia public school, a birth certificate, immunization record, parent ID and proof of residency are enough; an SSN is not required, and the district may not ask about immigration status, guaranteed under Pennsylvania state law. For kindergarten, a child must be 5 years old on or before September 1, with no exceptions. Every child aged 3 to 4 can attend free pre-K through PHLpreK, regardless of income. Confirm district-specific details with your school before you go.

Step by step

- 1 Find your school.** Enroll directly at your neighborhood school or at the district's Office of Student Enrollment and Placement, 440 North Broad Street, Suite 111, Philadelphia.
- 2** Gather your documents and bring them to the school or the enrollment office.
- 3** If a language other than English is spoken at home, you complete a Home Language Survey at enrollment; the student may be referred to English language support (ESL) if needed.
- 4** Students ages 14 to 20 (grades 9-12) who recently arrived in the U.S. can ask the district about the Newcomer Learner Academy.

Document checklist

DOCUMENT	NOTES
☐ Child's birth certificate	
☐ Immunization record	
☐ Parent or guardian's photo ID	
☐ Proof of residency	A deed, mortgage statement, or signed lease plus one more document; if none of those is available, three separate approved documents are accepted

No Social Security number appears on this list. If you do not have a residency document in your own name, for example because you live with someone else, a notarized Residency Affidavit signed by both you and the property owner or renter can be used instead.

YOUR RIGHTS AS AN IMMIGRANT FAMILY

- Pennsylvania state law bars every school district, including Philadelphia, from requiring an SSN or asking about a student's or parent's immigration status as a condition of enrollment.
- The district may verify residency with a home visit, but this is not an immigration-status inquiry.

Age rules and PHLpreK

- Kindergarten: the child must be 5 years old on or before September 1, with no exceptions.
- **PHLpreK:** free pre-K for every child living in Philadelphia who is 3 or 4 years old as of September 1, 2026, with no income or employment requirement. To apply, bring: (1) a document proving the child's age (birth certificate, passport, Social Security card, or medical or school records); (2) a document proving Philadelphia residency (state ID, driver's license, voter ID, lease, or Social Security award letter); (3) the completed PHLpreK application.
- The 2026-27 PHLpreK application opened January 20, 2026, at phlprek.org. Helpline: 1-844-PHL-PREK (844-745-7735) or (215) 686-0310.

Bilingual support and a program for new arrivals

The Office of Multilingual Curriculum and Programs oversees English language support (ESL) services; the Home Language Survey completed at enrollment determines who needs it. Contact: 215-400-4240. A separate program, the Newcomer Learner Academy, serves students ages 14 to 20 (grades 9-12) who recently arrived in the U.S. with a beginning level of English, combining literacy and language instruction with English Language Arts, math, science and social studies content.

NOTE FOR IMMIGRANTS

Have your child's Turkish birth certificate and vaccination record translated into English and bring them to enrollment; not having an SSN will not delay enrollment.

Confirm district-specific details (document list, kindergarten age rule, office address and phone numbers) at philasd.org/enroll or with your school before you go. Information as of September 28, 2026.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN PHILADELPHIA

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients in Philadelphia and the surrounding area, in Turkish and English.

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