

# KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT



## FOLLOW THE STEPS TO ENROLL FOR THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR

**Did you know?** Even if you have other children attending school in Minnetonka, you must complete the steps to enroll your child in Kindergarten. Begin with the online form at [minnetonkaschools.org/enroll](http://minnetonkaschools.org/enroll).

### IMPORTANT DEADLINE - JANUARY 15, 2020

**Resident families:** The priority deadline for resident online enrollment is January 15, 2020. What do we mean by priority? Families must make an important decision for their Kindergartener: English (all elementary schools), Chinese Immersion (Excelsior and Scenic Heights) or Spanish Immersion (Deephaven, Clear Springs, Groveland and Minnewashta). Your first choice of language and school are given **priority** when you register by January 15. After that date, your first-choice schools or programs may be filled.

**Open-enrolled families:** The state deadline for open enrollment applications is January 15, 2020. There are several steps in the approval process outlined at [minnetonkaschools.org/oe-checklist](http://minnetonkaschools.org/oe-checklist). Families that submit an open enrollment application will be notified by February 15; at that time, they will be asked to complete the online approved open-enrollment registration.

### DISTRICT OF CHOICE

Minnetonka Public Schools is among the best-performing school districts—not just in Minnesota, but across the nation. Starting in Kindergarten, our primary goal is to inspire the love of learning in children through academic, social and emotional teaching strategies. Our curriculum balances active, playful, hands-on learning with individual,

small- and large-group instruction designed to nurture early academic skills and promote social development. Throughout the grade levels, our innovative programs and extensive supports help each student succeed:

- Personalized, child-centered education
- Caring support to promote student well-being
- K-5 computer coding
- Unique programs for advanced learners in elementary school: Navigator, Wings, project-based learning and accelerated math and reading
- Before- and after-school childcare in Explorers Club [minnetonkaschools.org/explorers](http://minnetonkaschools.org/explorers)

### ENROLLMENT EVENTS - NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

*Preschool Story Hours are parent & child events, designed to provide a positive “first look” at school. Kindergarten Info Nights are designed for parents/guardians only. RSVP is **not required** to attend.*

Location	Events in November & December 2019
Clear Springs Elementary 952-401-6950	November 13, Preschool Story Hour, 9:30 a.m. December 12, Kindergarten Info Night for Parents, 6 p.m.
Deephaven Elementary 952-401-6900	November 14, Preschool Story Hour, 9-10 a.m. December 12, Kindergarten Info Night for Parents, 6 p.m.
Excelsior Elementary 952-401-5650	December 5, Kindergarten Info Night for Parents, 6 p.m.
Groveland Elementary 952-401-5600	November 12, Preschool Story Hour, 9:30 a.m. December 10, Kindergarten Info Night for Parents, 6 p.m.
Minnewashta Elementary 952-401-5500	December 5, Kindergarten Info Night for Parents, 6 p.m. December 10, Kindergarten Info Night for Parents, 6 p.m.
Scenic Heights Elementary 952-401-5400	November 12, Preschool Story Hour, 9:30 a.m. December 10, Kindergarten Info Night for Parents, 6 p.m.
Kindergarten Webinar (Virtual presentation)	November 19, 12-1 p.m. Register at <a href="http://bit.ly/Kinders2020">http://bit.ly/Kinders2020</a> (Register to receive the webinar recording, even if you cannot attend the 11/19 virtual presentation)

## Message

from the Superintendent

The District has been able to establish its strongest educational and financial condition ever at the end of the 2018-19 year. The quality of education continued to improve at all levels and in all schools this past year, and we are headed for an even stronger quality this year. Both were achieved by the strong support of our community with the passing of the 2015 referendum by 72 percent and the careful growth of enrollment. None of our schools is over-crowded, and people fabricating that false narrative have created unnecessary concerns among parents.

The School Board is limiting future enrollment to 11,100, which is slightly above this year's enrollment. However, any reduction in the current level of enrollment would create the beginning of a decline in revenue and the critical fund balance that has been created to get the District through the remaining five years of the 2015 referendum. There is already a planned use of much of the current fund balance over the next five years in order to reach the end of the current levy authority, and that expected decline in fund balance could not absorb any loss of enrollment without forcing program changes, increases in class sizes and employee lay-offs. The District could most certainly not live on the revenue of just resident students, and families would flee the community if schools start to be less than they expect.

Dr. Dennis Peterson, Superintendent



## Facts About Minnetonka's Enrollment Strategy

With its outstanding teachers, innovative academic, arts and music programs, top-notch facilities and a student-centered approach to personalized learning and student well-being, Minnetonka Schools earns its reputation for excellence and continues to be a district of choice for area families. Enrollment cannot be reduced without significant impact on revenue. If revenue decreases, measures would immediately have to be taken to reduce staff and raise class sizes.

### Open enrollment benefits resident students



Strong enrollment has been key to the District's success. While many districts are in decline, Minnetonka is thriving through strategic growth fueled, in part, by state-approved open enrollment. Through the revenue brought in from open enrollment, students have benefited from opportunities including language immersion, VANTAGE, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Tonka Online, Minnetonka Research, Wilson Reading and more.

### OE revenue helped resident enrollment rebound



Reflecting back to 2006, the second-grade class had just 383 students and enrollment projections K-12 were bleak. Since 2007, through open enrollment, Minnetonka Schools has brought in an additional \$203 million to provide lower class sizes and more opportunities for resident students than would have been possible. Resident enrollment has grown only because the District was able to use open enrollment dollars to enhance programs that help all students achieve personal excellence.

### District enrollment is flattening out



Fall 2019-20 enrollment is 11,066, and while capacity is 12,000, the District's schools are at or near target enrollment levels as set by the superintendent and principals. On October 3, 2019, the School Board froze enrollment at 11,100 students. As part of its Goal 3, the Board will strategically review target enrollment at each building this year. The District's go-forward plan is to maintain numbers rather than to grow to capacity. The District will continue to embrace open-enrolled families sufficient to keep enrollment at or near target levels.

### State aid for non-resident students exceeds the costs to educate them



Minnetonka taxpayers do not pay for non-resident students because state funds follow the student to their district of choice. The amount of state aid the District receives for each non-resident student is far more than the cost of educating that student. Therefore, no property tax revenue is necessary to educate non-resident students. In 2019-20, Open Enrollment is generating \$26.5 million for Minnetonka Schools. Of that amount, the District will spend about \$11 million on costs that open-enrolled students add. The remaining \$15.5 million is being used to fund outstanding programs, provide additional student supports and add new opportunities.

### Open-enrolled families pay for transportation



Non-resident families are responsible for their students' transportation. The District does not provide additional buses for out-of-district students; however, they can meet and ride an existing resident bus. Some families contract with a bus company directly for transportation.

Tell us what you think! Submit feedback to the District at [minnetonkaschools.org/lets-talk](https://minnetonkaschools.org/lets-talk)

### The District is focused on sound fiscal management



Being responsible stewards of taxpayer funds is a critical role of the School Board and administration. The District has pursued numerous restructuring and refinancing opportunities to lower interest rates, benefitting taxpayers and keeping levies as low as possible. We are one of just 70 school districts in America that has earned Moody's Aaa Bond Rating, and we're proud of consecutive Excellence in Financial Reporting Awards since 1994.

### A vibrant school system is good for residents



Our school district would be in decline without the added revenue Open Enrollment brings. Declining districts do not draw new residents. The strength of Minnetonka Schools is a positive benefit for resident homeowners. Without Open Enrollment, the District would not be attractive to the many new residents who have bought houses, and property values would decline.

### Parent satisfaction at an all-time high



The District's annual parent survey measures satisfaction at every grade level and 99 percent of families who responded rate the quality of education in Minnetonka Schools as excellent or good. Ninety-four percent of respondents feel the community receives a good value from its investment in local public schools.

## SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

# VOTE NOVEMBER 5, 2019

Find Your Polling Place:  
<https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us>



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