

Admissions Informational Letter

Dear Thomas Metcalf School Applicants and Families,

Thank you for your interest in Thomas Metcalf School. Under the direction of the Dean of the College of Education, Thomas Metcalf School continues the long tradition reflected in the four-part mission of the Illinois State University Laboratory Schools:

- *Provide a school in which excellence in education theory and practice can be observed, studied, and practiced by teacher candidates and other pre-service school professionals;*
- *Provide an environment in which research and development activities may be conducted;*
- *Provide a comprehensive, high-quality academic program for students;*
- *Promote effective high-quality education throughout the teaching profession and aid other educators in the process of improving the quality of education in their schools.*

This letter contains information regarding the application process. It is our hope that you will find our online application process straightforward.

Step 1: Apply

Applications can be found on the website or in the main office. To access the online application, please go to the *Admissions* tab on the Metcalf website and click on *Apply* in the right-hand navigation menu. There you will find two application links; one for students applying to Kindergarten through 8th grade and one for students applying to Preschool. Please choose the appropriate link to submit your application.

Should you not have access to the applications online, you may pick up a paper copy from the Metcalf office (weekdays 8am-4pm). Please keep in mind that you must complete a separate application for each child. It is also important to note that regardless of the method of application (online or paper) **the application must be received no later than 4:00p.m. on March 1, 2024.**

Step 2: Submit Documentation

- **Appraisal Form:** Families should supply their child's current teacher or child care provider with the Appraisal Form Instruction Sheet. To access the appraisal form, please go to the *Admissions* tab on the Metcalf website and click on *Apply* in the right-hand navigation menu. There you will find the Appraisal Form Instruction Sheet. Please note that the first section of the form must be filled out by you before you give it to your child's teacher/child care provider.
 - If your child is homeschooled, please complete the digital appraisal form on your own.
 - If your child has not yet started school and is not in child care, please complete the digital appraisal form on your own.
 - If your child's school refuses to fill out the appraisal form, please complete the digital appraisal form on your own.
 - Appraisal forms must be submitted by March 18th in order for your child's application to be considered complete.
- **Report Card or Progress Summary:** Families should submit their child's most recent report card or progress summary to the Metcalf main office or via email at mvheld@ilstu.edu. This is not the teacher's responsibility. However, if you no longer have a copy of these items, please ask your child's current school for help.
- **IAR or equivalent exam** (for 4th-7th grade applicants only): Families should submit their child's most recent exam results to the Metcalf main office or via email at mvheld@ilstu.edu. This is not the teacher's responsibility. However, if you no longer have a copy of these items, please ask your child's current school for help.

Step 3: Wait for Results

Admission decisions will be in writing, not by telephone or email, and will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service on or before April 15, 2024.

Step 4: Dial 4 Screenings/Visits

Any child selected for admission to Kindergarten or Preschool will have to complete a Dial 4 screening before final admission is granted. Children selected for admission to 1st-8th grade will be invited to shadow a current student for a couple of hours.

We invite you to join us at our **Open House Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 6:00p.m.** Prospective families will have the chance to view an informational presentation, engage in a Q&A session, and tour the school. Please note, there will be no individual meetings or tours with the administrators prior to admission.

If you have any further questions, please call our office at (309)438-7621 or log on to our website at www.metcalfeillinoisstate.edu and go to the admissions tab.

Frequently Asked Questions

If I turn in my application first, will my child be first on the list?

No. Every completed application that is submitted before the deadline will be considered equally, not on a first come, first serve basis.

How are admission decisions made?

- 1) Applications are sorted by three different variables and are considered/reviewed in this order:
 - a. Those with parents/guardians employed at Metcalf/UHigh
 - i. Then sorted by grade and residential school district
 - b. Those with siblings already enrolled at Metcalf
 - i. Then sorted by grade and residential school district
 - c. All other applicants
 - i. Then sorted by grade and residential school district
- 2) All applications, regardless of which category they are in, are matched up to appraisal forms and then processed to remove all identifying information.
- 3) Applications are then given to the selection committee and pulled using a blind draw process until open spots are filled.

Do ISU employees get priority consideration for admission?

Not necessarily. Priority consideration is given to employees of the ISU Laboratory Schools (Metcalf and UHigh) as well as to siblings of students already enrolled at Metcalf. All other applicants share equal consideration.

Why do you ask for appraisal forms and supplemental documentation?

The selection committee uses information from the appraisal forms, report cards, progress summaries, DIAL 4 screenings etc. to prepare for the educational/developmental needs of our prospective students and to make sure we can support all student needs.

Will my preschooler be automatically enrolled into Kindergarten next school year?

No, there is no automatic admission from preschool into kindergarten. If you are interested in having your child attend Metcalf for K-8th grades, you will have to reapply. Applications will be equally considered with the rest of the community applications.

If my child is not selected for admission, will they be placed on a wait list?

Should a spot open up after the regular admission process has been completed, alternates are selected using the same blind pull process. If this should happen, and your child's application is selected, the Metcalf office staff will reach out to your family.