



January 26, 2022

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 packet contains information regarding the application process. It is our hope that you will find our online application process straightforward. To access the online application, please go to the *Admissions* tab on the Metcalf website and click on *Apply* in the left-hand navigation menu. Please apply using the link in the Online Application section of this page.

Should you not have access to the application online, you may pick up a 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 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2022.**

The Applicant Appraisal Form is to be completed by the applicant's current teacher or childcare provider (if the child is not yet in school) and should be mailed directly to Thomas Metcalf School by the teacher. While it is important that we receive these appraisals in a timely manner, they are not subject to the same March 1st deadline.

Admission decisions will be in writing, not by telephone or email, and will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service on or after April 15, 2022.

We invite you to join us at our **Open House Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.** Prospective families will have the chance to tour the school, view an informational presentation, and engage in a Q&A session. Masks will be required while on school property. 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.metcalf.illinoisstate.edu and go to the admissions link.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Surian".

Jason M. Surian Ph.D.
Thomas Metcalf Principal

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

ADMISSION GUIDELINES

Students will be admitted in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. *Class Size:* In an effort to serve as an exemplary school, Thomas Metcalf School limits the number of children per teacher. Depending upon the composition of a given class, the following enrollment ranges will typically be observed:

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Preschool | 12-16 students per class |
| Kindergarten | 16-20 students per class |
| Elementary (1 st -3 rd grade) | 18-23 students per class |
| Intermediate (4 th -6 th grade) | 23-25 students per class |
| Middle School (7 th -8 th grade) | 24-26 students per class |
2. *Siblings and Children of Lab School Employees:* Every attempt will be made to consider families, but since the needs of every grade level vary, each application must be considered on its own merit.
3. *Program Availability:* Enrollment at Metcalf may be dependent upon the availability of appropriate programming for a specific student.
4. *District of Residence:* Students will be admitted from a variety of school districts in and out of McLean County.

STUDENT SELECTION PROCESS

Applications are sorted by three different variables:

- 1) siblings already enrolled in the Laboratory Schools
- 2) children of Laboratory School employees
- 3) district of residence

The applications are then sorted by the grade levels being applied for. The number admitted at different grade levels will vary depending upon current enrollment needs.

The selection committee does not have access to student or parent names. The Superintendent of the Laboratory Schools reviews building decisions to ensure compliance with admission guidelines.

The timeline for the application process is:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Wednesday, Jan 26th | Applications become available at 8:00 a.m. |
| Wednesday, Feb 2nd | Informational Open House at 6:00 p.m. |
| Tuesday, March 1st | Application Deadline, must be submitted by 4:00 p.m. |
| Friday, April 15th | Decision letters will be mailed on or after this date. |

If your child is accepted, you will receive an acceptance packet that must be returned. With that packet, you must provide the **official certified birth certificate** from the county to save your spot. The Metcalf Main Office will make a photocopy and give you the original back.

Before *final* acceptance is issued, students applying for preschool and kindergarten will be asked to participate in an assessment process and those applying for grades 1-8 may be required to interview with a member of the administrative team.

The school reserves the right to ask students to withdraw from Metcalf for non-cooperation, persistent anti-social behavior pattern, any educational needs that a student has developed which cannot be met, or for other reasons as determined by Metcalf staff and administration.

CHECKLIST TO ENSURE A COMPLETE APPLICATION

(Do not submit this form—use this as a resource)

Be sure to submit the following:

- Application** (either the online or paper form)
- Applicant Appraisal Form** submitted to the teacher/childcare provider—Page 1 is to be completed by the parent/guardian as well as the top portion of page 3. The remainder of page 3 is to be completed by the applicant’s current teacher or childcare provider (if child is not yet in school) and **mailed directly to Thomas Metcalf School by the teacher.** **Please note that the Appraisal Form is intended to be confidential and should not be dropped off or mailed by the parent/guardian.

Before giving the form to the teacher, please:

- print your child’s name and current grade on the first page
- sign the form
- complete the Student ID, District of Residence, and Grade Applying For on pages 1 and 3.

TUITION/FEE INFORMATION

Students will not be kept from participating in activities because of financial need. For all students in preschool through 8th grade, we will use the federal guidelines for determining free and reduced lunches as the criteria for waiving or reducing fees. A semester or monthly payment plan will also be available to parents to spread out the impact of the fees.

Preschool Tuition for 2022-2023 school year (preschool fees may be paid in full, by the semester, or monthly with first payment due during registration in August)

As you may be aware, we charge tuition for children enrolled in the preschool program. Children enrolled in this program do not generate state reimbursement funds and, as a result, the cost of the program must be borne entirely by our operating budget.

Preschool students attend 5 days per week, 3 hours per day: \$3,500 per school year

Registration Fees for the 2022-2023 school year

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| K-2 nd | \$230 + \$50 Technology Fee |
| 3-4 th | \$275 + \$75 Technology Fee |
| 5-8 th | \$350 + \$75 Technology Fee |

Padlocks

Padlocks **must be purchased from the school** and will be sold at registration for \$8 each. You do not need to purchase a padlock each year; the padlock can be reused each school year.

- Each child in grades 3-8 will need to purchase a padlock for their hall locker.
- Each child in grades 5-8 will need to purchase an additional padlock for their PE locker.

Additional Fees Assessed Throughout the School Year:

Additional fees may be assessed for field trips, outdoor education, and other curricular programs.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Is my child old enough to apply to Metcalf?

We have a preschool for children who are 4 years old. The child must have turned 4 on or before September 1, 2022 but not yet have turned 5 by this date. If your child is age 5 on September 1, 2022, they are age appropriate for Kindergarten and would need to apply for Kindergarten placement. We do not service students in our preschool who are Kindergarten age appropriate.

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

No, every **completed** application that is received before 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1, 2022 will be considered equally.

3. Who decides if a student is admitted?

An admissions committee evaluates the applications according to the needs at each grade level. Each applicant uses a unique code as an identifier. The committee is not privy to the student's identity, only their demographic information and the assessment/supporting documents provided by their current teacher or child care provider.

4. My child is enrolled in the Metcalf preschool. Will he/she automatically be enrolled in Kindergarten?

Admission is **not** automatic, although priority may be given to children enrolled in preschool. You will need to go through the same application process as the rest of the community.

5. If my child is not admitted to Thomas Metcalf School, can his/her name be placed on a waiting list?

No, we do **not** maintain a waiting list for admission through the year. We **will** keep all applications on file over the summer to be used for last minute changes of enrollment for the upcoming school year. On rare occasions, we may have a few late admit options for students. If this is the case, and your child's application is chosen, you will be contacted by the Metcalf School Office Personnel before the start of the school year.

6. Is it true that Metcalf is a school only for gifted students?

No, we do not identify students as gifted nor do we offer programs or services specifically targeted at gifted students. We strive to offer a rich curriculum for all students.

7. What special education services does Heart of Illinois Low Incidence Association (HILIA) offer through Thomas Metcalf School?

Thomas Metcalf School has the resources to provide special education services to students who have low vision/blindness or who are deaf/hard of hearing. Students needing these services attend through HILIA's cooperative agreement between the child's home district and the Lab Schools. Our Support Services staff serves the needs of students with mild to moderate learning challenges. If a student has needs that go beyond this level, we team with the home district to determine where the services should take place.

8. If I apply, how likely is it that my child will be accepted into Metcalf?

Metcalf receives between 300 and 400 applications each year and admits between 40 and 60 students.