

Early Admission to Kindergarten

ISD 2909

Guidelines and Procedures

References:

Minn. Stat. §124D.02 Subdivision 1: Kindergarten Instruction

ISD 2909 School Board Policy 513: Student Promotion, Retention, and Program Design

Background:

Children who are not yet 5 years old on or before September 1 may be considered for early entrance into kindergarten. Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.02, allows for school districts to permit selected children for early admission into kindergarten if there is an early admission policy established by the school board.

School districts that have adopted an early entrance policy need a comprehensive evaluation procedure to help determine the child's cognitive, social, and emotional development and the child's ability to meet kindergarten grade expectations and progress to first grade the following year. The comprehensive evaluation for early entrance into kindergarten must:

- Use valid and reliable instrumentation
- Be aligned with state kindergarten expectations
- Include a parent report and teacher observations of the child's knowledge, skills and abilities

District 2909 minimum requirements for early admission to Kindergarten:

- Children considered for early admission to Kindergarten need to be turning 5 years of age no later than October 15.
- The child must score within a range of 115-130+ on the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Third Edition (WPPSI-III).
- The child must demonstrate advanced academic readiness and social-emotional development as compared to peers.
- The child may not be considered for early admission if it would result in joining an older sibling in the next grade.

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Process:

Step 1: Contact the building principal by January 15 of the year prior to discuss and consider moving forward with arrangements for the early admission to Kindergarten process.

Supporting documentation:

- Factors to be considered
- Kindergarten Expectations

Step 2: Parent/Guardian completes early admittance form and submits formal preschool screening results to principal. Screening results should be at or above the 90th percentile in all areas to be considered for early entrance.

Supporting documentation:

- Early Admittance Form and Questionnaire
- Preschool screening

Step 3: Principal will review preschool screening and determine if completing next steps in the process is warranted.

Supporting documentation:

- Agreement for the process of Having My Child Examined to Determine Readiness for Early Kindergarten Readiness

Step 4: Preschool teacher(s) completes readiness checklist and submit to principal. The child must earn a score of 32 or above in order to proceed.

Supporting documentation:

- Kindergarten Preparedness Checklist

Step 5: Parents/Guardians will be informed of the psychological assessment requirement which include: an assessment of cognitive abilities, behavioral and social assessments, and an assessment of pre-achievement skills. The psychological evaluation will be conducted by a licensed psychologist and the expenses related to these assessments are the responsibility of the family.

Supporting documentation:

- Required Standardized Assessments

Step 6: A written summary of the assessment results will be submitted to the school district when complete.

Step 7: A data review team will be assembled to review the assessment data and make a decision on early admission to Kindergarten.

- If early entrance is recommended, the District will place data in the students cumulative file. This includes all testing documents and observation inventories submitted by the family for consideration. The building administrator, classroom teacher, and family will review the child's progress within the first trimester.
- If early entrance is NOT recommended, the process will be halted and the building principal will communicate the information to the parent/guardian. The district is not responsible to place the child in a preschool or childcare setting should the kindergarten placement not continue.

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Factors to be Considered

Academic readiness skills are only one piece of the puzzle parents/guardians need to think of when considering early admission to Kindergarten.

Factors relative to the present situation:

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| Maturity | Being able to separate, attention span, interest in academic learning, dealing with emotions and frustration, self-control when dealing with difficult tasks. |
| Social Skills | How well does the child play with other children? How much experience has the child had with different groups of children? Can they independently solve social/emotional problems? How comfortable is the child with approaching and holding a conversation with an adult and peers? |
| Readiness Skills | Should be better than average (small/large motor, letter and number identification, and meaning of basic language concepts, following 2-3+ step directions, etc.) |
| Verbal Skills | How assertive is the child? Can the child ask for help? Is the child able to express needs at this current time? |
| Age | How close to the September cut-off is the birthday? Trend is towards children starting later, the child may be 2 years younger than classmates. |

Factors relating to future situations:

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| Decision | Affects not only kindergarten year, but also the rest of the child's academic career. Although skills may be strong at present, this does not mean that the child will continue to progress/perform at this rate. |
| Social Issues | Consider-exposure to dating, driving, and decision-making skills one year earlier. For example, the child will be 14 when classmates are 15 and 16. |
| Sports Participation | Consider age, physical readiness, and eligibility |
| Development | Body development at different ages may affect self-esteem |
| Post secondary | Age entering post secondary education and/or the workforce may be affected |

Considerations for parents:

- Why do you want to pursue early admission?
- Are there other options available in light of the above considerations (i.e. 5-day per week preschool program)?

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Kindergarten Expectations**

Social/Emotional Development

- Able to play with other children by interacting socially with peers in the classroom
- Self control, able to briefly delay gratification
- Has a sense of personal space - spatial awareness
- Able to communicate with adults and other children
- Able to transition easily from one thing to another by accepting change in routine without becoming fearful
- Separate from parents easily
- Give reasons for his/her opinions
- Accept opposition or defeat without crying
- Shares and takes turns
- Can work and complete a task without being easily distracted

Academic Development

- Can sit through a 15-20 minute activity (teacher-read stories, group time, class learning groups, etc.) by listening to teacher stories, another student, and participating in class discussions
- Can follow simple, 3-step directions and routines
- Has the ability to listen to directions without interrupting
- Some recognition of letters, sounds and numbers
- Able to print first name, draw a person, a line, and circle
- Hears words that rhyme and can generate rhyming words
- Hears words that begin with the same sounds
- Understands words that show position (up, down, inside, above, etc.)
- Can stay on topic in a class discussion
- Retell a story in the correct sequence
- Tell a story or relate an experience in own words

Physical and Motor Development

- Can run and jump (unless disability)
- Able to cut a line, circle, manipulate scissors, use crayons, markers, and pencils correctly to copy simple symbols
- Has the ability to perform self-help skills such as zipping a jacket or pants, buttons and snaps, putting on boots or shoes, toileting, etc.

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Form and Questionnaire/Agreement**

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Child's Name (First, Last) | |
| Gender | |
| Birthdate | |
| Name(s) of Parent/Guardian | |
| Address | |
| E-mail | |
| Phone Contact | |
| Name and Age of Sibling(s) | |

What experience has your child had in large group situations? How has the child performed in these groups compared to other children?

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How assertive is the child? Can they ask for help when you or other familiar adults are not around? Is the child able to solve simple problems independently? Please provide examples.

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Although our main concern with early admittance is not academic preparedness, what accelerated academic skills do you feel the child possesses? What accelerated social skills? Why do you feel the child would benefit from early school admission?

Does the child have any medical needs?

We have met with the building principal to discuss our early entrance to Kindergarten request. After the child has been evaluated and the results discussed as a team, we agree to abide by the decision/findings.

Signature of Parent/Guardian(s):

_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

Signature of Principal:

_____ Date: _____

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Kindergarten Preparedness Checklist

| Skill Assessment To be completed by students preschool teacher | 3 Always | 2 Sometimes | 1 Never |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Able to follow 3- part directions | | | |
| Able to follow class routines | | | |
| Successfully enters a group to play | | | |
| Able to sit in a circle or story for at least 10 minutes | | | |
| Has a conversation with at least 4 exchanges | | | |
| Uses sentences with at least 6 words | | | |
| Shows self control | | | |
| Dresses themselves (not including tying shoes) | | | |
| Uses scissors with thumb up and turning paper | | | |
| Holds writing utensils correctly | | | |
| Able to verbally communicate needs | | | |
| Recognizes many uppercase/lowercase letters | | | |
| Associates sounds with letters | | | |
| Understands the composition of words into sentences | | | |
| Able to take turns playing or talking | | | |
| Has interest in learning | | | |
| Column Totals | | | |
| Total Score | | | |

Additional Teacher Comments (please use the back of this page):

Completed by: _____

Date: _____

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Required Standardized Assessments

Parents/Guardians will be informed of the psychological assessment requirements which include: an assessment of cognitive abilities, and an assessment of pre-achievement skills. The psychological evaluation will be conducted by a licensed psychologist and the expenses related to these assessments are the responsibility of the family.

Cognitive Ability Assessment:

- Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scales of Intelligence (WPPSI) - Preferred; or
- Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ-COG)

Achievement Assessment:

- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT); or
- Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement (WJ-ACH)

Behavioral Assessments:

- Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BASC-3)

Please note: Evaluator must be a Licensed Child Psychologist.

Your pediatrician may also be a good source to locate an Evaluator.