

A Parent's Guide to Early Entrance To Kindergarten



North Olmsted City Schools

26669 Butternut Ridge Road
North Olmsted, OH 44070

Telephone: 440-588-5314

Legislation Governing Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- Pursuant to A.C. 3321.01 and Ohio Department of Education guidelines, a parent may request *early* admission to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the district's kindergarten entrance date (September 30th) and before January 1. The local board of education shall determine entrance through a standardized testing program.
- Pursuant to A.C. 3321.01 and Ohio Department of Education guidelines, Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall also be evaluated for possible early admittance if referred by an educator within the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.

North Olmsted City School District

- The North Olmsted City School District considers a child eligible for entrance into “regular” kindergarten if s/he attains the age of five on or before September 30th of the year s/he applies for entrance. A child under the age of six (6) who is enrolled in kindergarten will be considered of compulsory school age.
- By parental request a child may be tested for *early* admission to kindergarten if s/he will be five (5) years of age between September 30th and January 1st, and exhibit the mental, social and emotional standards established by the North Olmsted Board of Education, **by filling out the early entrance application by June 10th of the year admission is requested. If your child turns 5 years of age after January 1st and you believe s/he is a viable candidate for early entrance, please contact the NOCS Gifted Coordinator, Dr. Heather Keenan.**
- On December 18, 2006 the North Olmsted Board of Education adopted an *Academic Acceleration Policy*:

“Children who are referred for evaluation for possible accelerated placement 60 or more days prior to the start of the school year shall be evaluated in advance of the start of the school year so that the child may be placed in the accelerated placement on the first day of school.”

“Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall also be evaluated for possible early admittance if referred by an educator within the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested may also be evaluated for possible early admittance at the discretion of the principal of the school to which the student may be admitted.”

Is early entrance to kindergarten the best choice for your child?

Early entrance should be viewed as a means of meeting a child's *needs*. Developmental readiness is the key to determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate. Even though a child may have a great deal of ability, s/he may not be ready for kindergarten. Social maturity, personal development, and motor development are important factors for a child's success in school.

Early entrance is *designed for the exceptional child* who is both academically ready as well as developmentally mature when compared to others his or her chronological age. This opportunity is designed as a measure to meet individual differences in school readiness.

Some considerations when determining if early entrance is right for a child:

- Is my child capable of working in a classroom setting with children who are one year older than him or her?
- Will my child be frustrated by this placement?
- What are the possible long-term impacts for my child as s/he progresses through elementary, middle and high school (e.g., beginning college at a younger age).
- Early entrance is not designed as a replacement for child care. Is this a *need* or a *want*?
- Do I understand the expectations for students in kindergarten today?
For example, students are expected to ask and answer questions about key details in a text, retell familiar stories with details, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text, and identify similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic.

There is a difference between *ability* and *achievement*. Some children may appear exceptional simply because of their access to opportunities (e.g., preschool programs, parents working with them on skills, or access to learning materials). Early entrance is designed for the child who not only has ability but easily achieves when presented new material.

Once the decision has been made for early entrance, the choice is difficult to reverse. If a child is evaluated as a good candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, it is important that all stakeholders are supportive of the decision.

What is expected of students in kindergarten?

Kindergarten, like many other areas of education, has changed considerably over the past couple of decades. Today's kindergarten students are engaged in a rigorous instructional program. Please take the time to review the following information:

- Parents can easily access the *Early Learning Content Standards* as well as the subject specific *Academic Content Standards* for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies on the *Ohio Department of Education* [website](http://www.ode.state.oh.us).
- Please see the attached *Kindergarten Readiness Checklist* on the next page which provides guidance in determining your child's readiness for kindergarten.
- Kindergarten in the North Olmsted City School District is a *full-day program*. The full-day program begins at 8:50 a.m. ending at 3:30 p.m. Students are expected to participate in the academic program throughout the day.

Ohio Department of Education (ODE)

(<http://www.ode.state.oh.us>)

Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

To do well in school, children need to be supported and nurtured in all areas of development.

It is also important that your child is physically, socially and emotionally ready for school. This checklist can help serve as your guide. But please remember, young children change so fast. If they cannot do something this week, you may see them do it a couple of weeks later. Students should have mastery of the majority of the developmental areas listed below.

Is your child ready for kindergarten? Ask yourself these questions:

Development Area	Tips and Activities to Help Prepare Your Child
Physical Skills Does your child... enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, and climbing; draw and trace basic shapes; cut with scissors; bounce a ball; ride a tricycle?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials that will help your child develop the motor skills needed to learn to write include crayons, markers, pencils, glue, scissors, paper and paint, puzzles, Legos and blocks. Activities that will help your child's coordination include climbing, jumping, skipping, playing ball, using playground equipment and riding a tricycle.
Health and Safety Needs Has your child... had required shots (<i>or provide a signed waiver</i>); had a dental exam; had a vision exam; learned own first and last name; learned first and last name of parent; learned to watch for cars when crossing the street; learned to not talk to strangers; developed a set routine for going to bed; learned to follow safety rules?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help your child learn his or her full name, address and telephone number. Help your child to look both ways when crossing the street. Talk with your child about strangers and who to go to for help. Use bedtime as the opportunity to read to and talk with your child.
Personal needs Without your help, can your child... use the bathroom; wash hands; brush teeth; use tissue to blow nose; button and zip up shirts and pants; put on and take off coat; tie and/or use Velcro shoes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create morning and bedtime bathing and tooth-brushing routines. Allow your child to dress themselves. Practice putting on shoes. Help your child learn to use their words to tell other grownups when they are feeling sick or hurt.
Social and Emotional Skills Does your child... play well with other children; separate from a parent without being upset; share with other children; care about the feelings of others; follow routines; put toys away when asked?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give your child small chores to learn responsibility. Help your child learn to follow directions by giving simple steps. Encourage your child to share. Praise your child when he or she does something well. Provide guidance when your child is having difficulty.

Applying for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- If you believe that your child may be a good candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, please complete the last 3 pages of this packet.
- Once the application has been completed, it needs to be returned to Dr. Heather Keenan at heather.keenan@nolmsted.org or mailed to 26669 Butternut Ridge Road by June 10th of the year.

How will my child be evaluated for early entrance to Kindergarten?

- Early entrance evaluation is completed in the spring and early summer.
- The gifted coordinator will coordinate the student testing process.
- The early entrance to kindergarten evaluation is a three step process. The first step is ability testing with one of our school psychologists. A student with a standard age composite score of 115 or above on ability testing moves on to the second step. If the student scores below 115, early entrance to kindergarten is not recommended.
- The second step includes additional on grade level achievement testing in Reading, Math, Language, and Writing. Also, the student's aptitude is determined by using the raw scores normed to proposed grade level at the time of testing (eg. K.O for EEK summer testing). If the student scores high enough on the additional assessments, the evaluation process moves on to the third step.
- The third step includes the completion of the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS). Parents and teacher IAS responses are gathered and entered into the IAS Scale. All the data is combined to determine if early entrance to kindergarten is recommended for the student. If early entrance to kindergarten is approved, the acceleration committee will develop a Written Acceleration Plan. If early entrance to kindergarten is denied, parents have 30 days to appeal the decision in writing to the superintendent of schools.
- The Iowa Acceleration Scale data is presented to an acceleration evaluation committee meeting which convenes for the purpose of conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the child. This committee may include the following:
 - 1) Building principal
 - 2) a kindergarten teacher
 - 3) a parent *or* legal guardian of the referred student *or* a representative designated by a parent *or* legal guardian of the referred student
 - 4) a gifted education coordinator
 - 5) a school psychologist

Timeline for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- Deadline for Early Entrance to kindergarten application is **June 10th** of the year admission is requested
Return application to: **Dr. Heather Keenan**
Heather.keenan@nolmsted.org
Or mail application to:
26669 Butternut Ridge Road
North Olmsted, OH 44070

IMPORTANT

Very few children qualify for early entrance to kindergarten. Please make sure you proceed with child care arrangements as a contingency. If you are selecting a Preschool program please understand that those programs routinely fill up quickly. Please register your child as you normally would, but let the preschool know that your child is being screened for early entrance to kindergarten.



North Olmsted City Schools

APPLICATION

Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Deadline for Early Entrance to kindergarten applications: **June 10th of the year admission is requested**

ABOUT EARLY ENTRANCE

A unique type of whole-grade acceleration is early entrance to school (i.e., kindergarten or first grade). For academically talented young children, early entrance to school may be an excellent option.

The state of Ohio requires that all students considered for Early Entrance be evaluated for suitability using the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS)- 3rd edition. This tool requires looking at many aspects of the child beyond academics. It also requires multiple assessments, in some cases, if the child scores at the required score criteria. These assessments will likely occur over multiple testing periods over multiple days when our staff is available to conduct the required assessments.

PLEASE NOTE: If your child meets any of the following situations, the IAS-3 recommends the child **NOT** be accelerated/considered for early entrance if:

- The student's ability score (measured by IQ) is less than one standard deviation about the mean (below a score of 115).
- The student would be accelerated into the same grade as (or higher grade than) a sibling.
- The student currently has a sibling in the same grade.
- The student indicates that he/she does not want to be whole-grade accelerated. (This will be determined through direct conversation with the student prior to assessment process scheduling.)

REFERRAL FOR:

Child Name _____ Potential School _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Current School Name: _____ School Phone: _____

Current School Address: _____ Teacher Name: _____

Student Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female Current Grade: _____ Student's birthdate: _____

Type of acceleration Requested:

☐ Early Entrance to Kindergarten (my child will be 5 before January 1)

☐ Early Entrance to Kindergarten (my child will not be 5 before January 1)

☐ Early Entrance to 1st Grade (my child will be 6 before January 1)

☐ Early Entrance to 1st Grade (my child will not be 6 before January 1)

Father's/Guardian's Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Is parent living with child: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Mother's/Guardian's Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Is parent living with child: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Siblings:

NAME	GENDER	AGE	GRADE	SCHOOL

Prior Professional Evaluation Services:

DISABILITY	SPECIFIC TYPE	DATE OF DIAGNOSIS	SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES	COMMENTS (OPTIONAL)
Specific Learning: e.g. Written Language, Math, Reading, Nonverbal, other				
Developmental: e.g., Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, PDD- NOS, other				
Other Health Impairment: e.g., ADD, ADHD, other				
Social- Emotional/Psychiatri c: e.g., Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, other				
Physical: e.g., Visual, Hearing, Motor, Traumatic Brain Injury, other				
Other:				

Is your child reading? _____

What early math skills is your child showing? _____

I have reviewed the considerations and do not feel they would negatively impact my child's success in school.

I request evaluation for my child for possible early entrance to kindergarten or first grade.

I give my permission for (Student's name) _____ to receive group and/or individual standardized tests. I understand that I will receive the results of the testing and the information gained from this assessment will be used as an aid in educational decisions related to my early entrance request. I further understand that this information will be treated as confidential; shared only with appropriate educational personnel; and will not be released without my prior consent.

Parent/Guardian Name(please print) _____

Parent/Guardian signature _____

Relationship to Student _____

Date _____

The referral request will be processed and parents will receive the final determination for early entrance in 45-60 days from the date the referral is received.

District Representative Receiving Referral _____ Date _____

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Heather.keenan@nolmsted.org

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