

Guide to Early Entrance to Kindergarten & First Grade



Early Entrance Criteria:

Early Entrance to Kindergarten – In Toledo Public Schools, students must be five years of age by September 30 to begin kindergarten. Students who turn five between October 1 and December 31 may have their parents or guardian make a referral for early entrance to kindergarten by completing the district's application.

If the child will not be five years old by December 31 of the year of desired enrollment, then the referral must come from a district educator, a certified preschool teacher, a physician, or a psychologist who knows the child. (Ohio Revised Code 3321.01)

Early Entrance to First Grade – Children need to complete kindergarten before they enter first grade. However, Ohio law does allow school districts to evaluate students for entrance to first grade without completing kindergarten. The district uses the same process that is used for testing for early entrance to kindergarten but it requires an additional year of knowledge because it follows kindergarten.

Early Entrance Timeline:

Tuesday following Presidents Day: Application window opens. Applications are available at www.tps.org or may be requested by phone at 419-671-8935.

March 31: Application due date. No late applications will be considered.

April-May: Initial assessments completed. Parents will be notified of the date/time for assessment.

May-June: Parents of students identified for additional testing will be notified of the date/time for assessment.

July: Parents are notified of the final decision regarding early entrance.

Common Questions about Early Entrance:

Who is Early Entrance to Kindergarten designed for?

Early Entrance to Kindergarten testing is designed for children who turn 5 between October 1 and December 31. The children who apply should appear to be developing academically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally well beyond their age level. Very few children meet these high eligibility standards.

Is Early Entrance to Kindergarten the Best Thing for Your Child?

Starting school early is a big decision for families. The possible social and emotional impact on a child as he or she goes through elementary school, junior high school and high school is not easily predictable. Parents should take the following ideas into consideration when making a decision on testing for early entrance.

- Ohio Revised Code considers early entrance to be an acceleration. This means that only students who demonstrate a very high level of achievement as measured by the assessments administered by the Advanced Academics staff and evaluated by the Acceleration Core Team which includes the Senior Director of Psychological Services, the Senior Director of Advanced Academics, and a Gifted teacher/kindergarten teacher. This team will meet after the assessments are complete and grade them and make the determination if the child qualifies for early entrance or not.
- Students' early school experiences shape their self confidence and influence the rest of their lives. It is important that we maintain high standards for early entrance so that our students are not frustrated by their advanced placement.

What is involved in the Early Entrance Screening process?

- Ohio State Law says that a child may be evaluated for Early Entrance if they will be 5 years old between October 1 through December 31. **If the child's birthday is January 1 or later, he or she must be referred for early entrance by a district educator, a pediatrician or family doctor, or a psychologist.**
- A parent or guardian needs to get an Early Entrance to Kindergarten application form either online (www.tps.org) or from the Gifted Office at DeVilbiss (419-671-8935). The forms need to be returned to that same office once the application is fully completed.
- An appointment will be scheduled once the form has been received in the Gifted Office. The first step of testing is the child works with a Gifted teacher to complete the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test. This test is used to determine an IQ score. If the child scores a 115 or more, he or she will be scheduled for

additional testing. If the child does not score a 115 or higher, he or she does not go on for testing and will not be eligible for starting kindergarten until the following year.

- Once the student completes the second assessment, the Acceleration Core Team will review the student tests and make the decision on early entrance. Parents will be notified of the decision by mail.
- For children who are eligible for Early Entrance, a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) will be written in a meeting with the Acceleration Core Team and the parents. After a successful implementation of the acceleration, the acceleration becomes a permanent placement.
- A parent or guardian has the right to appeal an early entrance decision. Appeals must be in writing using the appeals form and submitted to the Toledo Public Schools Superintendent or his designee within 30 days of the date of the acceleration decision. Questions can be directed to the Office of Advanced Academics, 419-671-8935.
- Questions on the process for Early Entrance testing can be directed to the Office of Advanced Academics at DeVilbiss High School, 3301 Upton Avenue, Toledo, OH 43613. Telephone number of the office is 419-671-8935.

Is early entrance the same as acceleration?

Yes. Early entrance to kindergarten or first grade is considered a whole-grade acceleration. Whole-grade acceleration is when a school or district, through an evaluation process outlined in district policy, places a student in a higher grade than is typical for the student's age. The purpose of whole-grade acceleration is to give the student access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. To learn more about acceleration, see [Academic Acceleration for Advanced Learners](#).

My district did not admit my child early to kindergarten, and I disagree with the decision. What are my next steps?

A family may file an appeal to the school district superintendent or the superintendent's designee. Contact your local school district to learn more about filing an appeal to the superintendent if you disagree with the decision regarding early admission. The superintendent's (or designee's) decision is final.

What is early admission to kindergarten or first grade?

Early admission, or early entrance, occurs when a district evaluates a child who is not yet old enough to enter kindergarten or first grade and admits the child to either grade early because the child is capable of succeeding in one of these grades. When granted early entrance to first grade, a child does not attend kindergarten.

What type of tests will my child be given during the early entrance evaluation?

For children who turn 5 after the district's age eligibility date (Aug. 1 or Sept. 30) but before Jan. 1, the school district determines the evaluation process. Typically, the evaluation considers academic, social, behavioral, and developmental factors. Ohio law says districts must use the Ohio Department of Education's only approved evaluation process, the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS). The Iowa Acceleration Scale is not a test, but an evaluation tool. The decision to accelerate a child rests with the district evaluation committee, which must determine appropriate placement.