

A Parent's Guide to

Early Entrance to Kindergarten 2011-12

Liberty Center Local School District



Updated 5/25/2011

Legislation Governing Early Entrance to Kindergarten and Giftedness

- A parent may request *early* admission to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the district's kindergarten entrance date (August 1 or Sept. 30) and before January 1. The local board of education shall determine entrance through a standardized testing program.
- 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 pre-school educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.
- Early entrance to kindergarten is a subject typically addressed through gifted education. It is covered in the State of Ohio's *Model Student Acceleration Policy*. According to the Ohio Revised Code (3324.01), "gifted" means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under Division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of Section 3324.03 of the Revised Code.

Liberty Center Local School District

- The Liberty Center Local School District considers a child eligible for entrance into "regular" kindergarten if s/he attains the age of five on or before **August 1st** 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 August 1st and January 1st, inclusive, and exhibit the mental, social and emotional standards established by the Liberty Center Board of Education. **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 elementary office.**
- On Feb. 28, 2011 the Liberty Center Board of Education adopted the State of Ohio's *Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners*:
 - "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 pre-school 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."
- The Early Entrance to kindergarten process shall be reviewed annually by the Early Entrance to Kindergarten Committee.

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*. The key to determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate for is developmental readiness. Even though a child may have a lot 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?

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 time to review the **Parent Guide - Kindergarten Curriculum** which is available from the Department of Curriculum.
- 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/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?page=2&TopicRelationID=463>
- The *Ohio Department of Education's* website contains useful information about kindergarten, in particular, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment for Literacy (KRA-L). There is a family guide on the Early Learning and School Readiness (ELSR) link about the KRA-L, which all kindergarten students will take within the first six weeks of school.
ODE>Learning Supports>Early Learning and School Readiness>Kindergarten>KRA-L
- Kindergarten in the Liberty Center Local School District is a *full-day program*. Our program is from approximately 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 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.

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... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 toothbrushing 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.

Applying for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- If you believe that your child may be a good candidate for early entrance, please obtain an information/application packet from the elementary school office or call the office at (419) 533-2604 to have an information/application packet mailed.
- Once the application has been completed, it needs to be returned to the elementary school principal **no later than March 25th** in the year for which admission is being requested.
- An observation by a district representative (elementary guidance counselor and/or school psychologist) in a preschool setting *may* need to be scheduled for your child. *Parents will be contacted if this observation is needed.* While some children may be cognitively ready for kindergarten, they may not be developmentally ready. This additional information may be needed to assess the social and emotional skills necessary to be successful in a school environment.
- The application shall then be routed to the school guidance counselor who will be responsible for coordinating the screening and evaluation process. The elementary school has up to **May 20th** to complete the evaluations.
- Once the evaluations are completed, an Acceleration Evaluation Committee will convene for the purpose of conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the child. This committee may include the following:
 - 1) the home school 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
 - 6) the elementary guidance counselor

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

- Early entrance evaluation is completed in the late winter/early spring concurrently with kindergarten roundup.
- The *Ohio Department of Education* has on its website a checklist for kindergarten readiness. When looking at whether early entrance is appropriate for a child, the same readiness guidelines should be considered.
- The first step is an ability screening. If the child scores 115 or higher on all parts, the second step is intelligence testing. Children with birthdays between August and October must score 125; November 130; December 135.
- Because developmental readiness is important for success in kindergarten, students are also given assessments that measure their academic, language, and visual/fine motor skills. Students who are viable candidates for Early Entrance to Kindergarten are expected to be developmentally “on track” with the typical kindergarten student. Should a student meet the identification criteria for Superior Cognitive identification but fail to meet the developmental readiness assessment, the acceleration team (principal, kindergarten teacher, gifted services specialist, parent and/or legal guardian(s), guidance counselor, and school psychologist) will then discuss and reach consensus as to what placement is best for the child.

Instruments used:

Ability Screening Tests

Kaufman Brief Intelligence Scale- Second Edition (KBIT-2)

Individual Intelligence Tests

Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Third Edition (WPPSI-III)

Academic, Language, and Visual/Fine Motor Tests

Young Children’s Achievement Test (YCAT)

Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration- Fifth Edition (BEERY VMI)
According to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, a student who meets the Critical Item (Section II) of one standard deviation above the mean (115) is a viable candidate for acceleration. Those students who meet the criteria, move on for the developmental screening and a possible classroom observation.
Superior Cognitive identification (gifted) is 130 (minus the Standard Error of Measure, 127)

Timeline for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- March 25** Deadline for Early Entrance to kindergarten applications
Return application to: Liberty Center Elementary School
103 W. Young Street
Liberty Center, OH 43532
(419) 533-2604
- May 20** Deadline for the elementary school to complete evaluations
- June 2** Deadline for the elementary school to complete acceleration committee meetings
- June 9** Deadline for written notification of outcome of the evaluation process
- June 15** Deadline to submit a written appeal to the Superintendent or his/her designee regarding the outcome of the evaluation process

Applications received *after* March 25th will be scheduled at the principal's discretion.

IMPORTANT

Only a small percentage of four year old children are advanced enough to 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 or day care please understand that those programs routinely fill up quickly. Please register your child as you normally would for the day care or preschool, but let them know that your child is being screened for early entrance to kindergarten.



APPLICATION

Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Please complete this application if you feel that your child demonstrates academic achievement, social, emotional, and physical maturity appropriate for kindergarten placement and should be considered for early placement in kindergarten.

Child's Name _____

Last

First

Middle Initial

Birthdate ____/____/____ Male _____ Female _____

Address _____

Address _____

Custodial Parent(s) / Guardian(s) Name _____

Relationship to child _____

Home #: _____ Work #: _____ Cell #: _____

Pager #: _____ Email: _____

Preschool Experience - (please attach preschool report card if available)

List the nursery schools, Head Start, special programs, and other day care programs attended. Include the dates of attendance and the approximate number of hours per week attended.

Name of School/Program/Day Care	Dates of Attendance	# of Hours/Week
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Why do you feel that your child would be ready for a kindergarten program? Comment on your child's social behavior and academic skills. (Use additional paper, if needed)

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the contents of the Early Entrance to Kindergarten brochure:

Signature, Custodial Parent / Guardian

Date

RETURN APPLICATION & PERMISSION FOR REVIEW NO LATER THAN MARCH 25, 2011

PARENT CHECKLIST

The seven broad developmental dimensions provide the framework for the kindergarten instructional program. This checklist will help in determining your child's readiness for a kindergarten program. **Please read each statement and indicate by placing a "checkmark" how you rate your child's abilities.**

Physical Well-Being and Motor Development	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Performs self-help tasks independently (dressing, undressing, zipping, tying, toileting, eating)	_____	_____	_____
Uses eye/hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks.. (drawing, writing, and cutting)	_____	_____	_____
Uses balance and control to perform large motor tasks ... (walking, jumping, and skipping)	_____	_____	_____

Personal and Social Development	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Shows eagerness to learn (curious, likes to investigate) ..	_____	_____	_____
Follows rules and routines (cleans up at play time)	_____	_____	_____
Handles change and transition (dinnertime to bedtime) ...	_____	_____	_____
Interacts easily with one or more children	_____	_____	_____
Separates easily from parent	_____	_____	_____
The ability to listen (attend) for at least 10 minutes	_____	_____	_____

Language and Literacy	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Listens for meaning in stories, discussions, and conversations _____	_____	_____	_____
Speaks clearly, to share ideas and thoughts	_____	_____	_____
Can identify most letters (uppercase and lowercase)	_____	_____	_____
Can identify some beginning sounds	_____	_____	_____
Use some letters and words to write	_____	_____	_____

Mathematical Thinking	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Can recognize numbers 0-20	_____	_____	_____
Can orally count forward to 20	_____	_____	_____
Can recognize, duplicate, and extend simple patterns (circle-triangle, circle-triangle, circle-triangle)	_____	_____	_____
Can recognize and duplicate basic shapes	_____	_____	_____

Scientific Thinking	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Uses a magnifying glass to look at different objects	_____	_____	_____
Can describe and sort objects by one or more properties ..	_____	_____	_____
Uses the five senses to make observations about the..... natural world	_____	_____	_____

Social Studies	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Recognizes self and others as having same and different characteristics	_____	_____	_____
Describes roles and responsibilities of people..... (Mom is a doctor, she helps sick people)	_____	_____	_____
Recognizes the reasons for rules	_____	_____	_____

The Arts	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Likes to paint and draw	_____	_____	_____
Likes to sing and dance	_____	_____	_____
Can share ideas about a drawing/painting	_____	_____	_____
Can recognize basic colors	_____	_____	_____

PERMISSION FOR REVIEW

In order to evaluate the appropriateness of early admission, I give permission for Liberty Center Local Schools to administer to my child, _____, the following assessments:

1. Ability screener assessments
2. Intelligence testing
3. Academic, visual-perception and language assessments

In giving my permission, I understand that any or all of the following may also occur:

- 1) Review of relevant preschool records provided by the parents/guardians;
- 2) Interviews with caregiver and/or parent/guardian;
- 3) Observation(s) of my child at their preschool;
- 4) Other: as needed

I further understand and agree that the information collected by the school district will then be reviewed by the Acceleration Evaluation Committee and parents/guardians to see if the child meets the criteria for early entrance to kindergarten.

Print name of Parent/Legal Guardian

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Date