

**CONDITIONS, STANDARDS, AND PROCEDURES
FOR EXCEPTIONS TO AGE/OTHER ADMISSION
REQUIREMENTS FOR KINDERGARTEN OR FIRST GRADE**

R 421

I. Conditions and Standards for Admission

A. Early Admission to 5-Year-Old Kindergarten (5K) or First Grade Based Upon Successful Completion of a Full School Year of 4-Year-Old Kindergarten (4K) or 5K in Another School System

If a child was previously granted early admission to 4K or 5K in another school system, and the child successfully completed a full school year of such a 4K or 5K program, the District may approve the child's early admission in 5K or first grade, as applicable, provided that the child's parent or guardian supports the early admission and the District determines that the weight of other available information (including the results of any specific assessments that may be conducted) suggests that placement in 5K or first grade, as applicable, would be an appropriate placement.

The child's parent or guardian is expected to bring such previous school attendance and early admission requests to the District's attention as soon as reasonably possible, although this type of request can typically be evaluated with less advance notice than other requests.

B. Early Admission to 5K Without Prior Successful Completion of a Formal 4K

Under this section, the District does not accept applications for early admission to kindergarten for children who will turn five years old on or after October 15th of the school year in which the child is seeking early admission. However, the child's parent or guardian may choose to contact the teacher or principal prior to the start of the school year in question to discuss whether the child's progress should be closely monitored during kindergarten for potential grade-level acceleration or for other curricular or program adjustments.

For children who will turn five years old between September 1st and October 15th of the school year in which the child is seeking early admission under this section (i.e., without prior successful completion of a 4K program, as provided in Section A), the parent or guardian should complete the Application for Early Entrance to Kindergarten (E 421) and submit the application to the elementary school principal by May 1st of the previous school year. Applications submitted after May 1st may be considered in extenuating circumstances.

When an Application for Early Entrance is received by the school, the principal and the school psychologist will hold an initial meeting with the parents / guardians to understand the reason for the request and review any existing information that the parents / guardians are able to provide.

If the principal and school psychologist determine that Early Entrance should be considered, they will assemble an assessment team that might include a school psychologist, reading specialist, and others as deemed appropriate.

The Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children will be the evaluation tool used; as well as development history, parent reports, and observations in natural settings (involving social emotional opportunities with peers of similar ages) for indicators of social emotional development.

The parents / guardians will meet with a school team (principal, 4K coordinator, kindergarten teacher, school psychologist) to consider the assessment findings and recommendations.

The decision to approve or deny the request for early admission to 5K shall be based on an individualized assessment of the child's academic and social-emotional development and overall readiness to thrive in 5K. A request for early admission to 5K will not be approved under this section unless it is determined that the clear weight of the relevant and available information suggests that placement in 5K is a more appropriate placement than placement in 4K. In other words, exceptional circumstances must be identified.

Although the specific information that will be available and the specific considerations that will be relevant to each request for early admission will vary from child-to-child, the following conditions and standards reflect a common baseline for the assessment process:

1. A child being considered for early admission should attain standard scores that fall between the above average to exceptional range in IQ and other indicators, including early literacy and numeracy skills using the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children. If a child seeking early admission is an early reader, this is one relevant piece of information. However, variation in reading skills is the norm in this age group. Many children who are early readers enroll in kindergarten with their standard age-group peers, and that proves to be a sound long-term decision in regard to the child's overall welfare. In contrast, where a broader picture of the child's cognitive skills and aptitudes fall in a very-advanced range, such data tends to counsel more strongly in favor of early admission in terms of academic criteria.
2. The team's evaluation of the request shall consider whether there is evidence that the child has above-average skills, relative to other children entering 5K, in the following developmental areas:
 - The ability to address new situations or challenging tasks without signs of unusual levels of frustration, anxiety, avoidance or withdrawal.
 - The ability to follow instructions and independently begin tasks set out by those instructions.
 - The ability to successfully interact and play cooperatively with other children who are of the grade being considered.
 - The ability to participate effectively in group-based activities.
 - The ability to give sustained attention to a task or project.

The decision of the team will be confirmed in writing to the parents / guardians by the principal. If the request is denied, the notice of denial shall inform the parent or guardian of their opportunity to appeal the decision to the Director of Student Services. The appeal must be made in writing to the Director within 10 days of receipt of the principal's written confirmation. The Director shall provide a written response to the appeal within 10 days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Director is final.

Where a family's request for early admission and/or for an exemption from the kindergarten-completion requirement has been denied, the parent/guardian is encouraged to continue to work with the District to monitor the child's progress for potential eligibility for future grade-level acceleration or for other curricular or program adjustments.

The conditions, standards and procedures identified in this rule are not intended to address any placement or other curricular or program determinations made for a student with disabilities pursuant to an individualized education program (IEP).

C. Early Admission to First Grade Without Prior Successful Completion of a Formal 5K Program

The decision to approve or deny a family's request for early admission to first grade shall be based on an individualized assessment of the child's academic and social-emotional development and overall readiness to thrive in first grade. More specifically, parents or guardians of a child who is not six years old on or before September 1 in the year he/she seeks admission to first grade may apply for early entrance into first grade according to **Policy 421.1** and **Rule 421.1**.

Adopted: **05/01/2022**