

**PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION TO FIRST GRADE EARLY AND/OR
WITHOUT HAVING COMPLETED KINDERGARTEN**

R 421.1

A. Conditions and Standards for Admission Under the Legal Age

A child who is not six years old on or before September 1 in the year he/she seeks admission to first grade may be admitted to first grade if he/she meets either of the following requirements:

1. The child has successfully completed a 5-year-old kindergarten program or its equivalent, or
2. The child demonstrates the academic and developmental readiness skills expected for successful participation in first grade. Evidence must exist that the child's educational welfare would best be served by placement in first grade.

B. Conditions and Standards for Exemption from Kindergarten Completion Requirement

A child who has not completed 5-year-old kindergarten may be admitted to first grade if he/she meets any of the following requirements:

1. The child has successfully completed a program for 5-year-old children that the school district deems equivalent to kindergarten. Documentation of program completion shall be required.
2. The child demonstrates academic and developmental readiness skills expected for successful participation in first grade. Evidence must exist that the child's educational welfare would best be served by placement in first grade.
3. Before either commencing or completing first grade, the child moved into Wisconsin from a state, country or territory in which completion of 5-year-old kindergarten is not a prerequisite to entering first grade.
4. Before either commencing or completing first grade, the child moved into Wisconsin from a state, country or territory in which completion of 5-year-old kindergarten is a prerequisite to entering first grade and the child was exempted from the requirement to complete 5-year-old kindergarten in the state, country or territory from which the child moved.

C. Procedures

Requests for early admission to first grade or exemption from the mandatory kindergarten completion requirement shall be made and acted upon in accordance with the following procedures:

1. A written request shall be submitted to the appropriate elementary school principal in writing by May 1st for the upcoming school year. The request shall include the rationale for making the request and any academic or other information that supports the child's readiness for first grade admission. Families moving into the District after that date may submit a request no later than August 1st.
2. The principal and school psychologist shall meet with the child's parent or guardian to discuss the reasons for requesting the child's first grade admission early and/or without having completed kindergarten and to review related student record information. If at this meeting it is determined that the child has met one of the eligibility requirements outlined above for admission to first grade, the child's admission shall be approved and documented.
3. If the principal and school psychologist determine if additional information or evaluation is needed. If so, the principal shall request parental permission for evaluating the child and appoint appropriate staff members to complete the evaluation. The evaluation process will concentrate on obtaining information regarding skills and behavioral characteristics that are correlated with success in first grade. The child will be assessed for reading readiness using the same District-selected assessment instrument that the District uses to assess kindergarten students for reading readiness. Other areas evaluated may include: cognitive or intellectual development; math and writing skill development; adaptive skill development; social/emotional maturity; communication skills and sensory motor/physical development. Staff shall use a combination of behavioral observation and teacher-made assessment tools to assess developmental and skill levels of the child.

The staff members completing the evaluation shall meet with the principal and parents / guardians to analyze the results of the evaluation and any other data available to determine the appropriateness of the child's admission to first grade. In order to be admitted to first grade, the child must demonstrate the academic and developmental readiness skills expected for successful participation in first grade and there must be evidence that the child's educational welfare will best be served by first grade placement.

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.

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