

Policy No. 421
Entrance Age (Early Admission) Policy

A child must be five years old on or before September 1 in the year he/she proposes to enter school to be admitted to kindergarten or six years old on or before September 1 to be admitted to first grade. The District may admit children to kindergarten or first grade at an age below the legal age in accordance with the following District procedures. The Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District has identified early entrance to kindergarten or first grade as full-grade acceleration, appropriate for those students who possess exceptional intellectual ability. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has defined exceptional intellectual ability, versus those being specific academic gifted, as:

Exceptional Intellectual Ability: Children with exceptional intellectual ability show early and rapid development of language ability; large vocabulary; strong powers of reasoning, analysis and/or synthesis; and advanced ability in critical thinking and problem solving. Typically these children are noted for being several years beyond their peers in their cognitive ability. In addition, they understand complex concepts, draw inferences between content areas and enjoy hypothesizing.

Specific Academic Ability: Children show early and rapid development of interest and ability in one or more of the specific academic areas of literacy, science, social studies, or math. Their vocabulary, enthusiasm, memory and recall for their area of ability are often outstanding. They demonstrate strong powers of reasoning, analysis and/or synthesis, and advanced ability in critical thinking and problem solving in their subject area. Achievement or ability testing in their area shows high aptitude for the subject(s).

Current enrollment for Kindergarten or first grade will be a factor in whether early admission is granted or the school the child may attend if granted early enrollment. However, additional assessments may be done and completion of a Kindergarten or first grade program alone will not meet early entrance criteria. Parents should not presume that the child's neighborhood school will be the school assigned for early admission.

There is no early entrance to four-year-old kindergarten (4K). Students who attend four-year-old kindergarten must be four years old on or before September 1 in the year he/she proposes to enter four-year-old kindergarten. Attendance or non-attendance in four-year-old kindergarten does not preclude a family from applying for early entrance to kindergarten or first grade.

Procedure

1. Early Entry into Kindergarten

The District will permit parents/guardians of children whose birth dates occur beyond the specified entry date by no more than three months (December 1) to apply for early admission. Because early admission is considered acceleration, District personnel assigned to the early entrance evaluation team (e.g. Director of Teaching and Learning, 4K Principal, School Psychologist, Advanced Learning Specialist, other staff as needed) will determine early admission according to the following procedures.

- a) Parents/guardians wishing early entry for their child will make a written request (not e-mail) to the Director of Teaching and Learning at the District Administrative Center postmarked by February 15 of the previous school year.
- b) District staff will send a screener for parents to complete. These screeners must be submitted to the District by March 1st to ensure completion of needed assessments prior to registration deadlines.
- c) Students will be scheduled to attend an in-person screening in March. Children meeting achievement and behavioral criteria on the paper and in-person screener will be referred for additional evaluation.
- d) Additional assessments will consist of:
 - (1) Cognitive assessment
 - (2) Academic Assessment in reading and mathematics

- (3) Iowa Acceleration Scale based upon observation, interview and formal assessment results as determined by the District, to determine academic ability, achievement levels and developmental readiness for Kindergarten.
 - (4) Other assessments as determined by the District may be administered based upon the results from any of the above assessments.
- e) These assessments will be administered in order. Students not meeting district criteria in a particular assessment will not be assessed further.

A student moving into the District after the start of the school year who is younger than the state's September 1st cut off date, and has attended a four year old or other kindergarten program will not automatically be admitted to kindergarten. The early entrance evaluation team will consult and determine how to proceed with the evaluation.

2. Early Entry into First Grade

The District will permit parents/guardians of children whose birth dates occur beyond the specified entry date by no more than three months to apply for early admission to first grade. All conditions in this procedure that apply to a child's early entry into kindergarten shall apply to the applicant for early entrance into first grade. In addition, the following applies:

- a) Parents/guardians wishing early entry to first grade for their child will make a written request (not e-mail) to the Director of Teaching and Learning—Curriculum and Instruction at the District Administrative Center postmarked by February 15 of the previous school year.
- b) District staff will send a screener for parents and children to complete. Children meeting achievement criteria on the screener will be referred for additional evaluation.
- c) Additional assessments will consist of:
 - (1) Cognitive assessment
 - (2) Academic achievement testing
 - (3) Iowa Acceleration Scale based upon observation, interview and formal assessment results to determine academic ability, achievement levels and developmental readiness for first grade.
 - (4) Other assessments as determined by the District may be administered based upon the results from any of the above assessments.
- d) These assessments will be administered in order. Students not meeting district criteria in a particular assessment will not be assessed further.

Exceptions may be made for those children who have successfully completed a kindergarten experience. In situations of this nature, the parent/guardian must submit to the District a statement from the previous school documenting the successful experience. Early entrance to first grade criteria must still be met.

3. Assessment Timeline

- a) All requests for early entrance will be maintained until February 15th at which time the district will mail screeners to parents.
- b) Screeners should be returned by March 1st. Additional assessments, if necessary, will be scheduled after the screener is scored.
- c) In-person screening for students whose parents have requested early entrance to kindergarten will be administered in March.
- d) A summary letter of the assessments administered and individual student performance will be provided to the parents within 14 days of the completion of the evaluation.
- e) When a request is approved, the district will provide additional information related to enrollment procedures and building assignment for the ensuing school year.
- f) The results of all assessments will become part of the student's educational record.

4. Appeals and Other Requests

Parents who wish to request exemption from the February 15th application deadline or birth date requirement will do so in writing to the Director of Teaching and Learning—Curriculum & Instruction. This request will include the reasons for requesting an exception, any information supporting the request and the specific action(s) being requested of the District.

Parents may appeal a denial for early entrance. Appeals or requests for exemptions must be made within two weeks of notification of denial for early entrance and will be made to the Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services.

Any requests or appeals made after August 15th may not be honored or may require additional rationale due to the impact this may have on class sizes or class availability.

LEGAL REF.: 120.12(25)

CROSS REF.:

346, Assessment Program

411, Equal Educational Opportunities

420, School Admissions

433, Assignment of Students to Schools (including Intradistrict Transfers)

Exhibits:

Parent Screening for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Parent Screening for Early Entrance to First Grade

District Criteria for Early Entrance to Kindergarten and First Grade

Adopted:

August 2002

Revised:

July 11, 2005

April 26, 2007

January 6, 2009

October 20, 2009

December, 2012

District Criteria for Early Entrance to Kindergarten and First Grade

Early Entrance Requirements for Kindergarten

Assessment Area	District Criteria
IN-PERSON SCREENER:	
PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) Alphabet Recognition	24/26
Letter Sounds	20/26
MCPASD Early Numeracy Assessment	24/38
Parental Response Rating – all questions answered, all responses indicative of Kindergarten readiness, no ratings below “sometimes”	3/3
***Below administered only when all screener criteria are met ***	
COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT – cognitive index or global intelligence quotient	98 th Percentile
ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	
Reading Composite – in standard deviations above age	98 th Percentile
Math Composite - in standard deviations above age	98 th Percentile
IOWA ACCELERATION SCALE	60 or above
Academic Ability, Aptitude and Achievement	10 or above
OTHER – administered as needed	

Early Entrance Requirements for First Grade

Assessment Area	District Criteria
SCREENER:	
Literacy/Written Language (at least three titles, with correct conventions and spacing)	3/3
Writing Prompt (using K-2 6 Trait Writing Rubric), overall score	3 or higher
Math Concepts	13/15
Parental Response Rating – all questions answered, all responses indicative of first grade readiness, no ratings below “sometimes”	3/3
***Below administered only when all screener criteria are met ***	
COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT – full scale score	98 th Percentile
ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	
Reading Composite – in standard deviations above age	98 th Percentile
Math Composite 0- in standard deviations above age	98 th Percentile
IOWA ACCELERATION SCALE	60 or above
Academic Ability, Aptitude and Achievement	10 or above
OTHER – administered as needed	