



PARMA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

5311 Longwood Avenue

Parma, OH 44134

Telephone: 440-842-5300

Legislation Governing Early Entrance to Kindergarten and Giftedness

- A parent may request *early* entrance to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the district's kindergarten entrance date of August 1 and before January 1.
- Early entrance to kindergarten for children not age five before January 1 will only be considered if the child is referred by an educator within the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child, or at the discretion of the principal of the school to which the student may be admitted.
- 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.

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 a child is developmental readiness. Even though a child may have a lot of ability, he/she may not be ready for kindergarten. Other important factors to consider are social maturity, personal development, and motor development.

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.

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 he/she?
- Will my child be frustrated by this placement?
- What are the possible long-term impacts as my child progresses through elementary, middle, and high school (i.e., beginning college at a younger age)?
- 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 (i.e., preschool programs, parents working with them on skills, or access to learning materials). Early entrance is designed for the child who has high ability **and** easily achieves when presented with 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 in the Parma City School District is a *full-day program*. Students are expected to participate in the academic program throughout the entire day.

Kindergarten has changed considerably over the last couple of decades. Today's kindergarten students are engaged in a rigorous instructional program. Educational standards help teachers ensure their students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful by providing clear goals for student learning. Parents can access the *Common Core State Standards* for English language arts and mathematics and the *Academic Content Standards* for science and social studies at the following website:

<http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?Page=2&TopicID=1695&TopicRelationID=1696>

The Ohio Department of Education's website provides information about the kindergarten readiness assessment for literacy (KRA-L) which all kindergarten students take within the first six weeks of school. Parents can access the website at:

<http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=778&ContentID=3930&Content=117686>

The Ohio Department of Education also provides parents with a *Kindergarten Readiness Checklist* which can act as a guide for parents to determine if a child is ready for kindergarten. This checklist is part of the district's Early Entrance Packet and must be returned with your child's application.

Applying for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Parma's Board of Education states that "a child is eligible for kindergarten if he/she attains the age of five (5) on or before August 1st of the coming school year. Children who do not meet the age criteria may apply for early entrance.

Early entrance to kindergarten may be permitted if all of the following requirements are met:

1. The child's cognitive ability, academic achievement, and aptitude result in an acceptable composite score on the Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition.
2. The child possesses and demonstrates social and emotional characteristics that permit conformity with behavior commonly expected of children in kindergarten.

To request early entrance into kindergarten for your child, please follow the steps outlined below to ensure that the process is completed properly and in a timely manner:

1. Obtain an *Early Entrance Packet* from the Student Services Department at the District Administration Office.
2. Provide a copy of your child's birth certificate indicating your child will be turning five during the next school year.
3. Complete the *Kindergarten Readiness Checklist*.
4. Complete and sign the *Early Entrance to Kindergarten Application* and the *Evaluation and Review Permission Form*.
5. Return the items listed above in Steps 2, 3 and 4 to the Student Services Department.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten Evaluation Procedure

The Parma City School District evaluates students for Early Entrance to Kindergarten using the *Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd edition* (IAS) in accordance with *ODE Model Policy for Academic Acceleration*. As required, an Acceleration Evaluation Committee will review the results of the comprehensive evaluation and determine the most appropriate available learning environment for your child.

The Acceleration Evaluation Committee Members:

1. The child's receiving principal or assistant principal
2. A teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated
3. A parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred child
4. A gifted education coordinator or gifted intervention specialist. If a gifted coordinator or gifted intervention specialist is not available in the district, a school psychologist or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration may be substituted.

Once all of the required acceleration documents have been received, arrangements will be made to begin the evaluation process.

1. You will be contacted by a staff member to schedule your child's individual cognitive ability assessment.
2. When your child's cognitive score is calculated:
 - a. You will be contacted by a staff member to schedule your child's individual achievement and aptitude assessment.

OR

 - b. You will be notified in writing if your child's ability score is below what is recommended to continue the acceleration evaluation process.
3. When your child's IAS results are complete, the Acceleration Evaluation Committee will be convened to conduct a fair and thorough evaluation of the child.
4. The Acceleration Evaluation Committee will issue a written decision to the principal and the student's parent or legal guardian based on the outcome of the evaluation process. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.
5. The Acceleration Evaluation Committee will develop a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) for students who will be admitted early to kindergarten.

Please Note: The *Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition* identifies the follow issues as critical to the success of an accelerated student and does not recommend accelerating students if:

- The student would be accelerated into the same grade as (or a higher grade than) a sibling.
- The student currently has a sibling in the same grade.
- The student indicates that he/she does not want to be whole-grade accelerated.

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. Please remember that young children change quickly. 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:

Physical Skills		
Does your child . . .	Yes	No
• enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, and climbing		
• draw and trace basic shapes		
• cut with scissors		
• bounce a ball		
• ride a tricycle		

Health and Safety Needs		
Has your child . . .	Yes	No
• had required shots (or provide a signed waiver)		
• 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		

Personal Needs		
Without your help, can your child . . .	Yes	No
• 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		

Social and Emotional Skills		
Does your child . . .	Yes	No
• play well with other children		
• separate from a parent without being upset		
• share with other children		
• care about the feelings of others		
• follow routines		
• put toys away when asked		

ODE June 23, 2011

Child's Name _____
First
Middle
Last



EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN EVALUATION AND REVIEW PERMISSION FORM

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Referred by: _____

In giving my permission, I understand that any or all of the following may occur in accordance with the *Ohio Department of Education Model Policy for Academic Acceleration*:

Administration of Assessments (e.g. cognitive, achievement, aptitude, and any other appropriate measures to determine appropriate placement);

Review of relevant records (releases of information will be included);

Observation(s) of my child;

Interview with caregiver and/or parent/guardian;

No assessment, evaluation or review will be done without your written permission.

I understand that if I grant permission, my child will receive assessment(s) by designated school personnel and that their information may be shared, as required, with teachers, principals, and other appropriate school personnel.

Permission is given to conduct the evaluation and review

Permission is denied

Print Name of Custodial Parent/Legal Guardian

Signature of Custodial Parent/Legal Guardian

Date

Please Note: *Granting permission does not guarantee access to acceleration options.