

## **Early Entrance to Kindergarten**

According to state law, a child must be five (5) years of age as of midnight August 31 of the year of entry to be entitled to enter kindergarten. The law also provides for the Yakima School District to allow for individual exceptions in instances where parent(s)/guardian(s) with children having birth dates which narrowly miss the cut-off date request early entrance consideration. Since kindergarten early entrance is a decision that may affect a child's educational performances in both the short and long term, the district has developed a screening procedure to determine whether or not the child being considered has developmental skills sufficiently advanced in comparison with children his/her age to succeed in earlier entry.

### **1. Eligibility**

The parent(s)/guardian(s) who desire early entrance for their child should contact the central registration office.

Students who will turn five (5) years of age after the cut-off date of midnight August 31, but before midnight September 30, can be considered for early entrance into kindergarten at parent(s)/guardian(s) request, provided that the student meets screening criteria for early entrance.

### **2. Screening Procedure**

- 2.2 Parent(s)/guardian(s) must request the screening of their child through the Yakima School District's central registration office by August 15 of the school year in which they are seeking entry. There will be a screening fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25) per student.
- 2.3 Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of a screening date. Screening will occur between the dates of August 10 and September 2.
- 2.4 Each child will be screened individually using assessment instruments/processes to assess the areas of cognition, language, fine/gross motor, pre-academics, visual/auditory processing, and social/emotional development. All raw scores will be converted to standard scores. Children eligible for early kindergarten entrance must have standard scores at the fiftieth (50<sup>th</sup>) percentile rank or higher in all areas and must have three (3) or more areas at the ninetieth (90<sup>th</sup>) percentile rank of higher.
- 2.5 Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing of the screening results of whether or not the child met eligibility criteria for early entrance. If the child meets eligibility criteria, it will be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to enroll the child through the central registration office. Children who do not complete the screening will not be eligible.

### **3. Conditional Assignment**

If the child meets eligibility criteria for early kindergarten entrance and the parent(s)/guardian(s) elects to early enroll the child, he/she will attend a kindergarten classroom for a four (4)-week trial period to determine the appropriateness of the placement.

The building principal and kindergarten teacher will determine whether or not the child successfully completes the trial period and will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the results. If the child does

not successfully complete the trial period, the child will be withdrawn from the assignment and must wait until the following school year to attend. If the child successfully completes the trial period, the assignment will be made official.

#### **4. Appeals**

If the parent(s)/guardian(s) seeks to review the eligibility decision of their child, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall appeal in writing to the elementary curriculum office specifying the reason(s) for the appeal. Appeals will be considered by the building principal and elementary curriculum director. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing of the appeal decision.

#### Cross References:

(cf.: 3111 – Age of Admission)

(cf.: 3120 – Compulsory Attendance)

(cf.: 3121 – Enrollment and Attendance Records)

#### Legal References:

RCW 28A.225.010 Attendance mandatory – Age

RCW 28A.225.160 Qualifications for admission to district's schools – Fees for pre-admission screening

WAC 180-39-005 to 035 Pupils – Uniform entry qualifications

#### Adoption Date:

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