

A Parent's Guide to
Early Entrance
To Kindergarten



Independence Primary School
7600 Hillside Road
Independence, Ohio 44131

Legislation Governing Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- A parent may request *early admission to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the district's kindergarten entrance date (August 1) and before January 1. The local board of education shall determine entrance through a standardized testing program.*
- Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by **the first day of January** of the school year for which admission is requested shall also be evaluated for possible early admittance if referred by an educator within the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.
- Acceleration is the Law (House Bill 79 amended to House Bill 66 – June 30, 2006). Please refer to the State of Ohio's Model Student Acceleration Policy for more information.

Independence Local Schools

- The Independence Local Schools considers a child eligible for entrance into "regular" kindergarten if s/he attains the age of five **on or before August 1st of the year s/he applies for entrance.** A child under the age of six (6) who is enrolled in kindergarten will be considered of compulsory school age.
- By parental request a child may be tested for *early* admission to kindergarten if s/he will be five (5) years of age between **August 1st and January 1st** and exhibits the mental, social and emotional standards established by Independence Local Schools. **If your child turns 5 years of age after January 1st and you believe s/he is a viable candidate for early entrance, please contact the Principal of Independence Primary School at 216-642-5870.**
- *On July 25, 2006 the Independence Local Schools Board of Education adopted an Academic Acceleration Policy:*

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*. Developmental readiness is the key to determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate. Even though a child may have a great deal of ability, s/he may not be ready for kindergarten. Social maturity, personal development, and motor development are important factors for a child's success in school.

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. This opportunity is designed as a means to meet individual differences in school readiness.

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 him or her?
- Will my child be frustrated by this placement?
- What are the possible long-term impacts for my child as s/he progresses through elementary, middle and high school (e.g. beginning college at a younger age).
- Early entrance is not designed as a replacement for child care. Is this a *need* or a *want*?
- Do I understand the expectations and rigors for students in kindergarten today?
 - For example, students are expected to ask and answer questions about key details in a text, retell familiar stories with details, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text, and identify similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic.

There is a difference between *ability* and *achievement*. Some children may appear exceptional simply because of their access to opportunities (e.g. preschool programs, parents working with them on skills, or access to learning materials). Early entrance is designed for the child who not only has ability but easily achieves when presented 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, like many other areas of education, has changed considerably over the past couple of decades. Today's kindergarten students are engaged in a rigorous instructional program. Please take the time to review the following information:

- Parents can easily access the *Early Learning Content Standards* as well as the subject specific *Academic Content Standards* for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies on the *Ohio Department of Education* website.

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/The-Standards>

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Early-Learning/Early-Learning-Content-Standards/Ohios-Kindergarten-Through-Grade-3-Learning-and-D/K-3-Standards.pdf.aspx>

- The *Ohio Department of Education* has on its website a checklist for kindergarten readiness. (See the *Kindergarten Readiness Checklist* on the next page.) When looking at whether early entrance is appropriate for a child, the same readiness guidelines should be considered.

Ohio Department of Education (ODE)

(<http://www.ode.state.oh.us>)

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. But please remember, young children change so fast. 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:

Development Area	Tips and Activities to Help Prepare Your Child
<p>Physical Skills Does your child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, and climbing; ● draw and trace basic shapes; ● cut with scissors; ● bounce a ball; or ● ride a tricycle? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Materials that will help your child develop the motor skills needed to learn to write include crayons, markers, pencils, glue, scissors, paper and paint, puzzles, Legos and blocks. ● Activities that will help your child’s coordination include climbing, jumping, skipping, playing ball, using playground equipment and riding a tricycle.
<p>Health and Safety Needs Has your child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● had required shots; ● 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; ● developed a set routine for going to bed; ● followed rules for safety? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help your child learn their full name, address and telephone number. ● Help your child to look both ways when crossing the street. ● Talk with your child about strangers and who to go to for help. ● Use bedtime as the opportunity to read to and talk with your child.
<p>Personal Needs Without your help, can your child ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 velcro shoes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create morning and bedtime bathing and tooth-brushing routines. ● Allow your child to dress themselves. ● Practice putting shoes on. ● Help your child learn to use their words to tell other grownups when they are feeling sick or hurt.
<p>Social and Emotional Skills Does your child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Give your child small chores to learn responsibility. ● Help your child learn to follow directions by giving simple steps. ● Encourage your child to share. ● Praise your child when he or she does something well. ● Provide guidance when your child is having difficulty.

Applying for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- If you believe that your child may be a good candidate for early entrance, schedule a conference with the Principal of Independence Primary School. At the time of your conference you can obtain an information/application packet. That packet needs to be returned to the Principal at Independence Primary School - 7600 Hillside Road, Independence, Ohio.
- An observation by a district representative in a preschool setting *may* need to be scheduled for your child. *Parents will be contacted if this observation is needed.* While some children may be cognitively ready for kindergarten, they may not be developmentally ready. This additional information may be needed to assess the social and emotional skills necessary to be successful in a school environment.
- The **School Psychologist at IPS** will coordinate the evaluation process. *The evaluation will be completed **within 45 days of the submission of application.***
- Once the evaluations are completed, an acceleration evaluation committee will convene for the purpose of conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the child. This committee may include the following:
 - 1) the Director of Pupil Services
 - 2) the school Principal
 - 3) a school guidance counselor
 - 4) a kindergarten teacher
 - 5) a parent *or* legal guardian of the referred student *or* a representative designated by a parent *or* legal guardian of the referred student
 - 6) a gifted education supervisor
 - 7) a school psychologist

How will my child be evaluated for early entrance to Kindergarten?

- Early entrance evaluation is completed in the spring.
- Because development readiness is important for success in kindergarten, students who are viable candidates for early entrance to kindergarten are expected to be developmentally “on track” with the typical kindergarten student. Should a student meet the identification criteria for Superior Cognitive identification but fail to meet the developmental readiness assessment, the acceleration team (principal, school guidance counselor, kindergarten teacher, gifted supervisor, parent and/or legal guardian(s), and school psychologist) will then discuss and reach consensus as to what placement is best for the child. The *Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition* will be the guide used for early entrance and whole grade acceleration.

Instruments used:

Individual Intelligence Test

Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Fourth Edition (WPPSI-IV)

According to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, a student who achieves a score of 115 or higher on the WPPSI-IV, is a viable candidate for acceleration. Students who do not achieve this score will not be considered for early entrance to kindergarten.

Achievement and Aptitude Test

Wechsler Individual Achievement Test - Third Edition (WIAT-III)

Timeline for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Pick up a kindergarten packet at your home school.....February-March

Schedule a conference with your home school building principal.....March-April

After your conference with the principal an Early Entrance Application will be given to you to complete.

Complete application and return to the Principal at Independence Primary School.....April 15

Return applications to: Principal of IPS
 7600 Hillside Road
 Independence Ohio, 44131

Attend kindergarten screeningApril/May

Deadline for school psychologist to complete evaluations45 days after submission of application

Deadline for completion of accelerated committee meetings45 days after submission of application

Deadline for written notification of outcome of the evaluation process45 days after submission of application

Deadline to submit a written appeal to the superintendent or his/her designee30 days after placement decision

Evaluations will be scheduled at the discretion of the Director of Pupil Services for applications received after April 15

***** IMPORTANT *****

Very few children qualify for early entrance to kindergarten.

Please make sure you precede with child care arrangements as contingency.

If you are selecting a preschool program, please understand that these programs routinely fill up quickly.

Please register your child as you normally would, but let the preschool know that your child is being evaluated for early entrance to kindergarten.

APPLICATION FOR KINDERGARTEN EARLY ENTRANCE

Independence Local Schools

Principal at IPS
7600 Hillside Road
Independence, Ohio 44131
Phone (216) 642-5870 Fax (216) 642-5851

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

Preschool: _____

I HEREBY GIVE MY PERMISSION FOR _____ to receive an evaluation for early admission to kindergarten. I understand the evaluation will be shared with the home-school building principal and other designated school personnel. In addition, I give consent for my child's preschool to complete a rating scale component of the *Iowa Acceleration Scale* as part of the acceleration assessment process. I further understand that I may revoke my consent at any time.

The child shall be evaluated in several developmental areas to determine his/her readiness for school.

The evaluation may include some or all of the following:

- Individually administered measure of intelligence.
- Assessment of educational readiness.
- Assessment of motor development.
- Observation of social development.

Please briefly state why you feel your child is ready for kindergarten and comment on your child's social behavior and academic skills: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Relationship to Child: _____ Date: _____

Requests must be received on or before April 15th of the current academic year
Submit application pages 6 & 7 to:
IPS Building Principal
7600 Hillside Road
Independence, Ohio 44131

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

EARLY ENTRANCE KINDERGARTEN CHECKLIST

The seven broad developmental dimensions listed below provide the framework for the kindergarten instructional program. This checklist will help in determining your child's readiness for a kindergarten program.

Please read each statement and rate your child's abilities by placing a checkmark in the appropriate column.

<u>Physical Well-Being and Motor Development</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Performs self-help tasks independently (dressing, undressing, zipping, tying, toileting, eating)	_____	_____	_____
Uses eye/hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks (drawing, writing and cutting)	_____	_____	_____
Uses balance and control to perform large motor tasks	_____	_____	_____
<u>Personal and Social Development</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Shows eagerness to learn (curious to investigate)	_____	_____	_____
Follows rules and routines (cleans up at playtime)	_____	_____	_____
Handles changes and transition (dinnertime to bedtime)	_____	_____	_____
Interacts easily with one or more children	_____	_____	_____
Separates easily from parent	_____	_____	_____
Demonstrates the ability to attend for at least 10 minutes	_____	_____	_____
<u>Language and Literacy</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Listens for meaning in stories, discussions and conversations	_____	_____	_____
Speaks clearly to share ideas and thoughts	_____	_____	_____
Identifies most letters (uppercase and lowercase)	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
Identifies some beginning sounds	_____	_____	_____
Uses some letters and words to write	_____	_____	_____
<u>Mathematical Thinking</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Recognizes numbers 0-20	_____	_____	_____
Orally counts forward to 20	_____	_____	_____
Recognizes, duplicates and extends simple patterns (circle-triangle, circle-triangle, circle-triangle)	_____	_____	_____
Recognizes and duplicates basic shapes	_____	_____	_____
<u>Scientific Thinking</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Uses a magnifying glass to look at different objects	_____	_____	_____
Describes and sorts objects by one or more properties	_____	_____	_____
Uses the five senses to make observations about the natural world	_____	_____	_____
<u>Social Studies</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Recognizes self/others as having same and different characteristics	_____	_____	_____
Describes roles and responsibilities of people (Mom is a doctor; she helps sick people)	_____	_____	_____
Recognizes the reasons for rules	_____	_____	_____
<u>The Arts</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Likes to paint	_____	_____	_____
Likes to sing	_____	_____	_____
Shares ideas about a drawing	_____	_____	_____
Recognizes basic colors	_____	_____	_____

Independence Primary School Early Entrance Flow Chart

