



# Early Entrance to Kindergarten

TACOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2020-2021

# Who can apply to be tested for Early Entrance to Kindergarten?

- ▶ Washington law specifies that the age for entering kindergarten is five years old by August 31<sup>st</sup>.
- ▶ Early Entrance is only considered for children who will turn 5 between September 1<sup>st</sup> and October 31<sup>st</sup>.
- ▶ Student must show proof of residency in the Tacoma School district to apply for testing.

# What will be expected of my child in kindergarten?

- ▶ The Washington State Standards and district curriculum have become more and more rigorous.
- ▶ Kindergarten students are expected to work with peers, in large groups and independently.
- ▶ The class size is one teacher and 22 students, so students must quickly learn to follow routines and procedures.



Check out the Kindergarten report card for more information of what students are expected to master over the year in kindergarten.

- ▶ [Kindergarten Report Card Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking](#)
- ▶ [Kindergarten Report Card Math](#)

# How do I know if my child is ready for kindergarten?

Each child is unique and develops in their own way and in their own time. There are many aspects to child development including

- ❑ Large and fine motor skills
- ❑ Social Emotional skills
- ❑ Cognitive skills
- ❑ Language skills

# What are the predictors of kinder readiness?

## Pre-Academic Skills

- ▶ Knowledge of numbers and early cardinality
- ▶ Vocabulary
- ▶ Knowledge of letters and words
- ▶ Beginning and ending word sounds
- ▶ General knowledge of the physical world and social sciences

## Developmental Skills

- ▶ Verbal skills
- ▶ Auditory memory
- ▶ Visual memory
- ▶ Persistence
- ▶ Attentiveness
- ▶ Emotional/behavioral regulation
- ▶ Fine and visual motor skills

# What are the intellectual and academic indicators of readiness?

## Preschoolers

- ▶ Asks questions and explores
- ▶ Counts up to 20 objects correctly
- ▶ Identifies 10 or less letter sounds correctly

## 5 year-olds

- ▶ Relates information learned about the natural world
- ▶ Uses basic number and counting operations accurately
- ▶ Blends letter sounds into words

# What are the language indicators of readiness?

## Preschooler

- ▶ Has receptive vocabulary of several hundred words
- ▶ Describes characteristics of objects

## 5 year old

- ▶ Has extensive vocabulary, including technical terms (e.g. pediatrician)
- ▶ Describes simple relationships between objects

# What are the social emotional indicators of readiness?

## Preschoolers

- ▶ Focuses on tasks of interest
- ▶ Uses one or two strategies to solve a problem
- ▶ At times needs help to express strong emotions appropriately

## 5 year olds

- ▶ Sustains focus until task is completed
- ▶ Accepts reasonable challenges and continues through frustration
- ▶ Expresses self without fighting, crying etc.

# What are the fine motor indicators of readiness?

## Preschooler

- ▶ Writes some recognizable letters
- ▶ Copies basic shapes

## 5 year old

- ▶ Writes most letters in own name
- ▶ Able to copy more complex shapes and designs

# What does the research say about who is successful when entering kindergarten early?

Successful students have

- ▶ advanced skills in multiple domains
- ▶ parents with realistic expectations

Early Entrance kindergarteners are expected to achieve as much as 5 year olds of similar intelligence.

# What are the disadvantages to Early Entrance?

- ▶ Unnecessary pressure/stress of early exposure to kindergarten expectations
- ▶ Possibility of a negative first experience with academics/school may carry forward and impact child's feeling about him/herself and learning.
- ▶ Long term issues with age differences throughout school career (physical size and development, driving, dating, peer pressure)
- ▶ Repeating kindergarten is not typically an effective intervention as it has long term emotional impacts.

# What else do I need to know?

If you choose to have your child tested for Early Entrance to Kindergarten, you will need to

- ▶ Submit a completed application form
- ▶ Submit a completed parent questionnaire
- ▶ Pay \$50 cash or check in order to be scheduled for testing, (this is non refundable)
- ▶ Submit proof of residency (current utility bill, rental/lease agreement, mortgage statement)

**\*If your child qualifies, enrollment is not guaranteed but is dependent on space available at your neighborhood school basis and is for a 30 day trial period.**

# What do I need to know about testing?

- ▶ **2020 testing will be scheduled as soon as the COVID school closure is lifted and it is safe to proceed.**
- ▶ Parents are notified of the results of the testing immediately following the testing session.
- ▶ Students must successfully pass all areas of the test.
- ▶ There is no appeal of the testing results per district policy no. 3110. Decisions are final.
- ▶ **If accepted Early Entrance enrollment is for a 30 day trial period and student may be disenrolled at teacher/principal request if student is struggling with the kinder experience.**

# How does the testing work?

- ▶ Children are tested for approximately 60 to 90 minutes by our Early Childhood specialist.
- ▶ Testing is one-on-one while parents wait outside of the testing room.
- ▶ Tests are administered in English only.
- ▶ Areas assessed include cognitive, large and fine motor, visual motor, social emotional and language skills.

# How many children typically meet the criteria for Early Entrance?

- ▶ In the last 5 years, approximately 2% of students that were tested met the criteria and were accepted.

**\*Keep in mind that even if your child is accepted and enrolled, if he/she is struggling during the 30 day trial period he/she may be disenrolled. In this case, we can not guarantee space will be available in a preschool program as we are typically working from waiting lists by October.**