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## **540 EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN, CRITERIA AND PROCESS**

### **I. PURPOSE**

- A. The purpose of this policy is for the Board of Education for Pillager Public Schools to establish the age requirements for entrance to school.

### **II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Generally speaking the Pillager Public Schools board of education policy on entrance age to school corresponds to M.S. 120A.20 (Admission to Public School) which states:

“No person shall be admitted to any public school (1) as a kindergarten pupil, unless the pupil is at least five years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences; or (2) as a first grade student, unless the pupil is at least six years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences or has completed kindergarten; except that any school board may establish a policy for admission of selected pupils at an earlier age.”

As stated in M.S. 120A.20, in order to provide a more flexible age policy, which makes allowances for individual differences in children, the school board has a policy of allowing for the admission of selected students at an earlier age.

### **III. PROCESS**

All requests for early entry must occur prior to May 1 of the year for which the child would begin school. The request must be made in writing to the elementary principal. Only pupils who are four years old and their birthday falls between September 2 and October 31 will be considered for early entrance. All evaluations must be completed by June 15 of that same year in order that there is sufficient time to review the evaluation. This timeline is based on the fact that staff is not available in June, July and August.

When a child whose birthdate falls after the September 1<sup>st</sup> cutoff date (as established by Minnesota Statutes and Independent School District #116 policy) is presented as an early entrance candidate, an Early Entrance Evaluating Team will examine the child. The team shall consist of no less than four of the following five: a Kindergarten Teacher, Speech and Language Clinician, ECFE Teacher and an ECFE Parent Educator, and an ECSE Teacher.

The team shall examine the child and make a recommendation to the elementary principal based on the criteria established for early entrance exceptions. If the recommendation is positive, the child must be examined by a psychologist provided by the Paul Bunyan Special Education Coop. The expenses for this psychologist's services will be paid for by the parents of the child requesting early entrance. This will be paid in advance of the testing services.

Based on the team's recommendation and the psychologist's evaluation, the elementary principal will make a decision and inform the school board of said decision.

#### IV. **CRITERIA**

The primary criteria for early entrance to Kindergarten is exceptional development on the part of the early entrance candidate. The basis for determining on the part of the early entrance candidate. The basis for determining such exceptional development is the team evaluation, commensurate test scores on standardized tests, and an evaluation by a psychologist.

The primary areas evaluated are:

1. The child requesting early entrance must demonstrate superior general cognitive functioning as measured by the Woodcock Johnson or children must score at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on this test to qualify for early entrance.

And

2. The child requesting early entrance must demonstrate average or above average school readiness skills when compared to age-appropriate readiness measures to qualify for early readiness. Average will be defined as the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.

And

3. The child requesting early entrance must demonstrate average or above average social, emotional, and behavioral skills. This will be evaluated using the Behavior Assessment for Children (BASC) – Parent Rating Scale and also by gathering information through observation and student/parent/teacher interview. Child must score in the average or above average range on the BASC to qualify for early entrance.

#### V. **REQUIREMENT**

Students entering Kindergarten must present a birth certificate and proof of up to date immunizations in accordance with Minn. Stat. 123.70 which requires that all children who are enrolled in a Minnesota school be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps and rubella, allowing for certain specified exemptions. Students will not be allowed to start the school year late.

**Legal References:** Minn. Stat. 120A.20 (Admission to Public School)  
Minn. Stat. 123.70 (Immunization)