

Meigs Local School District

A Parent's Guide for

Early Entrance

(Kindergarten and First Grade)



Adopted 2017

Legislation Governing Early Entrance To Kindergarten and Giftedness

1. Requesting Early Admission - Ohio

In Ohio, a parent may request *early* admission to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the district's kindergarten entrance date. School districts are permitted to determine the Kindergarten entrance date (either August 1 or Sept. 30) and before January 1. The Meigs Local School District has chosen August 1 as its Kindergarten entrance date. The local board of education shall determine entrance through a standardized testing program.

2. Referral by an Educator

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 pre-school educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.

3. Acceleration

State of Ohio

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.

A unique type of whole-grade acceleration is early entrance (i.e., kindergarten or first grade). For academically talented young children, early entrance to school may be an excellent option. There is abundant evidence that bright children who are carefully selected for early entrance generally perform very well, both academically and socially (A Nation Deceived: how Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students, 2004).

Meigs Local School Districts' Procedure

1. Age Eligibility

A student must be age five (5) to enter kindergarten or age six (6) to enter grade one. Compulsory school age is six (6). However, if a child enters kindergarten at age 5, he or she is considered to be of compulsory school age. No district shall admit to the first grade a child who has not successfully completed kindergarten.

The Meigs Local School District 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.

2. Early Admission Request

There are four types of acceleration that may be requested by parents for early entrance:

- **Kindergarten:** A child will be 5 before January 1st.
- **Kindergarten:** A child will **not** be 5 before January 1st.
- **1st grade:** A child will be 6 before January 1st.
- **1st grade:** A child will **not** be 6 before January 1st.

3. Board of Education Adopted State of Ohio Policy

The Meigs Local Board of Education adopted the State of Ohio's *Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners*:

“The District provides early admission to kindergarten and first grade for qualified students. Copies of the referral forms for evaluation for early entrance to kindergarten or first grade will be available in each school building and on the district website. Any student residing in the District may be referred by an educator employed by the District, a preschool educator who knows the child, the child's parent or guardian, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. The referral shall be made to the principal of the school for evaluation for possible early admission. Referral requests for early entrance must complete the application packet and return to the building principal no later than the last week of May prior to the school year being requested for early entrance. If any application is received after this date, the district cannot guarantee evaluation prior to the new school year. The principal and committee will determine eligibility and arrange for testing. The child's mental age should be between 14 and 16 months above his/her chronological age as determined by standardized tests and/or a score of 69 or above on the kindergarten screener. The child's I.Q. should be at least 125 on a deviation scale as determined by the Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd edition.”

4. Annual Review of Process

The Early Entrance to kindergarten process shall be reviewed annually by the Department of Academic Affairs.

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, s/he may not be ready for kindergarten. Social maturity, personal development, and motor development are very 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. 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 or physical size for athletics).
- Early entrance is not designed as a replacement for child care. Is this a *need* or a *want*?
- 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 (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 to look for in the areas of ability/achievement/aptitude/behavior?

My child seems advanced beyond other children his/her age in these ways:

- Understands the meanings and use of words better than other children his/her age;
- Is curious about many things and asks questions often;
- Is very good at working puzzles or solving problems;
- Has a great sense of humor and understands jokes more than other children his/her age;
- Has a good memory and remembers details of conversations or stories;
- Is interested in difficult concepts such as time and space;
- Concentrates on certain activities much longer than other children his/her age;
- Reads (and understands text) in picture books or chapter books;
- Figures out math-related problems better than other children his/her age.

Expectations of Kindergarten Students

1. Introduction

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. In addition, Ohio, along with many other states across the United States, has adopted Common CORE for the purpose of preparing Ohioans to meet the demands of the knowledge-based economy and the needs of the 21st century.

What are some important school and academic factors?

My child:

- *Enjoys learning new information or skills;*
- *Participates in community-sponsored activities such as sports, dance, gymnastics, and library and museum programs;*
- *Believes he/she is capable of succeeding at new tasks.*
- *Has the ability to attend, or pay attention, for relatively long period of instruction.*
- *He/she can draw and trace basic shapes and cut with scissors.*

What are some important developmental factors?

My child has the following developmental characteristics:

- *He/she has average fine and large motor coordination (i.e., holding a pencil, skipping);*
- *He/she is able to use the computer to play games or find information.*
- *He/she can use the bathroom without adult help.*
- *He/she can button and zip up shirts and pants, tie or Velcro shoes and put on and take off his/her coat.*
- *Has the ability to separate from the parent without being upset.*

What are some important interpersonal skills for entering school?

My child:

- *Thoughtfully considers feedback and criticism and modifies behavior appropriately;*
- *Often behaves in a way that is positive and effective;*
- *Has good interpersonal skills with age-mates, as well as with both older and younger children and with adults;*
- *Has excellent interpersonal relationships with adults in a teaching role.*
- *Has the ability to follow routines.*

What are some important attitudes and supports necessary for success in school?

- *My child is enthusiastic about going to kindergarten or first grade.*
- *As a parent, I understand that a child's success in school depends on support provided at home. I am able to give my child additional support to help in his/her transition to a new setting with much higher academic demands than he/she encountered in preschool.*

2. Ohio Department of Education Website

Parents can easily access more information about Kindergarten on the Ohio *Department of Education* website.

ODE > Topics > Early Learning > Kindergarten

ODE > search for: “Academic Acceleration for Advanced Learners”

ODE > search for: “Kindergarten Readiness Checklist”

ODE > search for: “The Young Gifted Child”

The Ohio *Department of Education's* website also contains useful information about the next generation of assessments.

Understanding a child's learning and development is critical to both families and educators. In previous school years, children took the **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment – Literacy (KRA-L)** when entering school. In fall 2014, a new **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)** was used which is based on Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards.

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment or KRA, will give kindergarten teachers a comprehensive picture of a child's learning and development at kindergarten entry, pinpointing where each child is in physical well-being and motor development, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies and social skills.

ODE> Testing > Ohio's New Kindergarten Readiness Assessment > New Kindergarten Readiness Assessment FAQ'S – For Parents

3. Meigs Local City School District's Kindergarten Program

Kindergarten in the Meigs Local School District is a *full-day program*. The day begins at approximately 7:55 a.m. until 2:15 p.m. Students are expected to participate in the academic program throughout the day.



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><u>Physical Skills</u> - 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; ▪ 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><u>Health and Safety Needs</u> - Has your child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ had required shots (<i>or provide a signed waiver</i>); ▪ 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; learned to follow safety rules? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help your child learn his or her 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><u>Personal needs</u> - 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 use 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 on shoes. ▪ Help your child learn to use their words to tell other grownups when they are feeling sick or hurt.
<p><u>Social and Emotional Skills</u> - 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, please obtain an information/application packet from the building principal or district gifted coordinator.
- Once the application has been completed, it needs to be returned to the Building Principal or a Designee at the Meigs Local School Districts Administration Office at 41765 Pomeroy Pike Pomeroy, OH 45769 by May 31st prior to the school year being requested for early entrance.

MAY 31 IS THE DEADLINE FOR ANY REFERRALS; NO REQUESTS WILL BE HONORED AFTER THIS DATE.

- Once scores for the Kindergarten Screener have been verified. The application will then be routed to a school psychologist who will set up a time to begin the cognitive evaluation process.
- The psychologist will administer a cognitive ability test. Students scoring 125 or higher are considered viable candidates for acceleration and will then move on to academic testing provided through the Gifted Education Department.
- 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:
 - the school principal
 - a kindergarten teacher
 - a parent or legal guardian of the referred student
 - a gifted education coordinator
 - a school psychologist or guidance counselor
- Students 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 the developmental readiness assessment, the acceleration team will then discuss and reach consensus as to what placement is best for the child.

IMPORTANT

Very few children qualify for early entrance to kindergarten. Please make sure you proceed with child care arrangements as a contingency. If you are selecting a preschool program, please understand that those programs fill up quickly. Please register your child as you normally would, but let the preschool know that your child is being screened for early entrance to kindergarten.

PARENT CHECKLIST

EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

The seven broad developmental dimensions provide the framework for the kindergarten instructional program. This checklist will help in determining your child's readiness for kindergarten. **Please read each statement and indicate, by placing a "checkmark", how you rate your child's abilities.**

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING AND MOTOR DEVELOPMENT	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 (walking, jumping and skipping)			
PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Shows eagerness to learn (curious, likes to investigate)			
Follows rules and routines (cleans up at play time)			
Handles change and transition (dinnertime to bedtime)			
Interacts easily with one or more children			
Separates easily from parent			
The ability to listen (attend) for at least 10 minutes			
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Listens for meaning in stories, discussions, and conversations			
Speaks clearly, able to share ideas and thoughts			
Can identify most letters (uppercase and lowercase)			
Can identify some beginning sounds			
Uses letters and words to write			
MATHEMATICAL THINKING	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Can recognize numbers 0-20			
Can orally count forward to 20			
Can recognize, duplicate, and extend simple patterns (circle-triangle, circle-triangle, circle-triangle)			
Can recognize and duplicate basic shapes			
SCIENTIFIC THINKING	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Uses a magnifying glass to look at different objects			
Can describe and sort objects by one or more properties			
Uses the five senses to make observations about the natural world			
SOCIAL STUDIES	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Recognizes self and 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			
THE ARTS	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Likes to paint and draw			
Likes to sing and dance			
Can share ideas about a drawing/painting			
Can recognize basic colors			

**MEIGS LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN REFERRAL FORM**

According to The Model Policy for Academic Acceleration (Section 3324.10 of HB 66) and the Meigs Local School Districts Board Policy for Mandatory Kindergarten, the option of early entrance to kindergarten shall be available to all children demonstrating advanced academic ability beyond their same age mates.

General Information /Process:

Step 1. Complete this form and submit with a Preschool letter or documentation of readiness by May 31, to the Building Principal or a Designee at the Meigs Local School Districts Administration Office at 41765 Pomeroy Pike Pomeroy, OH 45769. All documentation must be included for the referral to be accepted.

Step 2. Evaluation – Must have parent permission (page 2) to complete the following assessments.

- A. **Kindergarten Entrance Screening** – Student readiness for kindergarten will be assessed. This will include an assessment of fine motor and social skills.
- B. **Test of cognitive abilities** – Student will be individually tested using a nationally-normed standardized test from the approved list published by the Ohio Department of Education. Students exhibiting advanced intellectual and reasoning abilities should be considered for early entrance. (Test of cognitive abilities will be conducted only after the testing results from Section A reveal scores in the advanced range.)

Step 3. Review of Assessment Items/Reason for Referral – Upon completion of the evaluation process, the results will be reviewed by the building principal, gifted coordinator and gifted intervention specialist. A school psychologist may also be asked to review the results and provided input.

Step 4. Parent/Guardian Conference – The review team listed in Step 3 will meet with the parent(s) or guardian to review assessment results and make final decision with regard to appropriate student placement.

Please Note: According to HB 66, for children who are not yet 5 by January 1, a referral is required from an educator within the district or a preschool teacher, pediatrician, or psychologist who is familiar with the child.

Part 1: Student Information

Student Name: _____ Gender: _____ Birthdate: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Current School Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Current School Address: _____

Part 2: Family Information

Father's Name: _____ Father's Occupation: _____

Is parent living with child? Yes No Sometimes

Mother's Name: _____ Mother's Occupation: _____

Is parent living with child? Yes No Sometimes

APPROVAL FOR EARLY ENTRANCE ASSESSMENT

Your child has been referred for Early Entrance into Kindergarten. Assessments are required to complete the process. One or more of the following assessments may be administered to your child.

Woodcock-Johnson III(WJIII), Tests of Cognitive Abilities, and/or Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT), Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence™-Third Edition (WPPSI™-III), Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)-4th Edition, Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales-5th Edition, Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test(UNIT).

I understand that if I grant permission, my child may receive assessment(s) by designated school personnel and that the information may be shared with teachers, principals, and other appropriate school personnel. I will be informed of whether or not my child qualified for early entrance.

No assessment will be made without your permission. Please sign below to authorize assessment.

_____ Check here if student has been identified as needing testing modifications based on ESL, pre- school with disability, etc.

AUTHORIZATION

Signature of Parent or Guardian Required

Date

RETURN COMPLETED FORM BY MAY 31, TO: Building Principal