

EARLY ENTRANCE AND GRADE ACCELERATION

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures for the consideration of early entrance for students in kindergarten and grade acceleration for students in grades 1-8.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The school board will allow early school entrance and grade acceleration. The following steps will be followed prior to the school district's decision regarding each individual student case.

- A. Early Entrance
Students who have met the criteria set by the Austin Public Schools will be allowed to enter kindergarten early. The decision made by the administration shall be final.

 - B. Grade Acceleration
Students who have met the criteria set by the Austin Public Schools will be allowed to accelerate.
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PROCEDURES

Early Entrance

1. The parent shall initiate a request for early entrance with the elementary principal in whose attendance area the child resides. All requests shall be submitted by April 1st of the prior school year.
2. Parents will be notified regarding the School District's decision on the request no later than June 15.
3. The process required of parents initiating a request for early entrance is enumerated in the "Austin Public School District #492 Policy and Procedure Guide." The request for early entrance requires a submission of:
 - a. An early childhood screening. This is available by Austin Public School for free for children ages 3 through 5.
 - b. A student background information form
 - c. Supplemental materials include:
 - i. A letter of support from the parents/guardian outlining why the child should be considered for early entrance to kindergarten.
 - ii. A letter of support from the pre-school teacher (or other adult who works with the child in a pre-school like setting) outlining the child's readiness academically, socially, and emotionally.
 - iii. The parents may also be asked to provide a psychologist's recommendation based on achievement and ability testing. The parents are responsible for all costs incurred to secure the recommendation.
4. Once the above materials are reviewed, the District Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Services will arrange a kindergarten assessment meeting with himself/herself, a Gifted and Talented Interventionist or designee, or Success Coach. The parents are asked not to accompany the child or observe the child during the assessment. The results of the assessment will be shared when the decision about early entrance is shared.
5. The student whose parents are requesting early entrance may also need to attend a kindergarten registration. The Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Services or a Gifted and Talented Interventionist or designee will observe the child's attention, adaptability, social skills, and communication skills.

6. After the above information has been gathered, a team that includes the District Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Services, the principal, and the administrator of the kindergarten assessment will meet to determine the findings of the collected data and to make a decision regarding the request for early entrance.

7. The principal or the District Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Services will contact the family to share whether or not Early Entrance to kindergarten is recommended. If the family would like additional information regarding the results of the Kindergarten Assessment, a meeting can be scheduled.

Note, if the child does not meet the age requirement for kindergarten, but has transferred from a state in which he/she did meet the age requirements and was previously enrolled. The parent will need to provide verification of enrollment from the previous district.

Grade Acceleration

It is the procedure of the Austin Public Schools to allow grade acceleration providing that the elementary and middle school student meets the following criteria:

1. The parent initiates the request with the building principal in whose attendance area the child resides. All requests should be submitted by April 1 of the prior school year. Parents will be notified regarding the District's decision on the request no later than June 15.

2. The building principal will arrange communication with himself/herself, the parent or guardian(s), the District Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Services, School Social Worker/Counselor, and the School Psychologist, the student's teacher(s), the central office designee, and if applicable, the building principal of the next level [as a whole, this makes up the Talent Development Team].

3. The Talent Development Team will gather the following information:

- a. A Full-Grade Acceleration form
- b. A teacher rating form
- c. Assessment data from the last two years that determines ability (CogAT7), achievement, and aptitude (STAR Testing)

The data gathered relates to the student's current achievement and abilities. It may be necessary to request further testing in order to make a decision. If that is the case, the parent is responsible for any costs incurred in this process.

4. After all necessary data has been collected the Talent Development Team will review the data, complete the Iowa Acceleration Scale (3d Edition), and make a recommendation as to whether the student shall be accelerated. The building principal is responsible for communicating the decision to the parent.

5. A second meeting with the parents/guardians shall be scheduled to discuss the acceleration decision and plan to support the student. A written notification will also be sent.

6. The student will be monitored by school personnel according to plan. Progress, concerns, or adjustments shall be reported to parents/guardians and other stakeholders.

Sources

Minn. Stat. § 124D.02

Minn. Stat. § 120B.15

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