

# Frequently Asked Questions about Early Admission

Rockford Area Schools

## What is the purpose of early admission?

The purpose of early admission is to identify children who have characteristics associated with advanced development in the areas of academic, behavioral, social and intellectual functioning. The early admission evaluation attempts to minimize risk associated with beginning school before a child is ready and to identify the children most likely to be successful.

## Is my child a good candidate for early admission?

Strong candidates for early admission display skills beyond their expected age level. While pre-academic and academic skills are important (i.e. early reading skills), advanced development in multiple areas is critical. For example, it is important your child interact with peers appropriately, handle parent/guardian separation and behave appropriately in situations which produce frustration.

Reflect on these questions as you make your decision about applying for early admission:

### Peer Group Factors - Now

1. Does my child enjoy being with older children?
2. Will my child and I find compatible families/peers in the class we are considering?
3. Will my child do well in a group where some students may be more than a year Older?

Keep in mind some parents are going to have children start when they are six.

### Peer Group Factors - Later

1. What impact will early entrance have on my child's experience with adolescent Issues such as dating, driving, and heading off to college?
2. Will my child and I find compatible families/peers in the graduating class we are considering joining who can give mutual support over the next thirteen years?

## What are the criteria for early admission?

**Age:** Your child must be 5 years old as of October 31st to be considered for early admission to kindergarten and 6 years old as of October 31st to be considered for early admission to Grade 1.

**Intellectual Functioning:** Superior general cognitive functioning as measured by a technically sound standardized test of intelligence. **Children will need to score at or above the 95th percentile to be considered for early admission.**

**Academic Readiness:** Superior school readiness skills. Must meet Rockford Area Schools' Read Well by Third Grade winter benchmarks for kindergarten students. Some skills assessed include letter identification, letter sounds, early reading skills, and number recognition.

**Social Competencies:** Scoring above average in all areas of the Social Skills Improvement System (which is a parent questionnaire) AND above average on the social development teacher questionnaire used by Rockford Area Schools (which is completed by a preschool teacher).

### **Who makes the decision?**

The final decision regarding the early admittance of a student is made by the early admission Team, a team of professionals comprised of district administrators, licensed school psychologist, and licensed teacher. The team will review written records that pertain to the student's previous school experiences and level of functioning.

This decision is final and will be made with the best interest of each child in mind. If a parent/guardian has a question regarding the placement decision, they may contact the Superintendent.

### **How is the cost determined?**

The cost is determined based on fees of local agencies and licensed professionals. The cost covers the time and resources of the professionals administering the evaluation. Per district regulations, the cost for an individual evaluation is determined annually and is paid by the parents/guardians. The cost for the comprehensive assessment is \$250. This payment is non-refundable and must be submitted with the application.

### **How do I get started?**

Call the office of the school in which you are requesting early entrance to schedule a meeting with the principal and acquire application materials.

### **Is there a deadline for the early admission application?**

Yes. Applications need to be submitted to the Office of the Superintendent no later than May 1st.

**When and where does the evaluation take place?**

Evaluations are conducted at REAMS during the months of June and July.

**How do I know if my child is granted early entrance?**

The Early admission team will make the final decision and provide the decision, in writing, to parents no later than July 30th.

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