

**A Parent's Guide for**

# **Early Entrance to Kindergarten**



**Fairless Elementary School**

**12000 Navarre Rd SW**

**Navarre, Ohio 44662**

**330-767-3913**

## **Referral by Parent:**

The Fairless Local School District has chosen August 1 as its kindergarten entrance date. 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 and before January 1.

## **Referral by an Educator:**

Children who reside within the district but will not be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by January 1 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 preschool educator, pediatrician, or psychologist who knows the child.

## **Acceleration:**

Early entrance to kindergarten or first grade is typically addressed through the gifted education department. Early entrance is considered a whole-grade acceleration. Guidelines and procedures are found in the State of Ohio's [\*Model Student Acceleration Policy\*](#).

## **Disclaimer:**

Very few children who are referred for Early Entrance actually meet entrance criteria. Please be sure to make appropriate child care arrangements in the event your student does not meet the criteria for early entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade.

## **Fairless Local Board of Education Early Entrance Policy**

All children who will 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 be evaluated upon the request of the child's parent or legal guardian. 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. 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 may also be evaluated for possible early admittance at the discretion of the principal of the school to which the student may be admitted.

A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the evaluation process within forty-five (45) days of the submission of the referral to the referred student's principal. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.

A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the Superintendent within thirty (30) days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his/her final decision within thirty (30) days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next

available opportunity, if s/he is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as described in this policy.

## **Is Early Entrance the Best Choice for your Child?**

Early entrance is designed for the child who is both academically ready as well as developmentally mature when compared to others his or her chronological age. Early entrance should be carefully considered as an option to meet a child's unique needs. Even though a child may have the ability, s/he may still not be ready for kindergarten. Social maturity, personal development, and motor function are very important factors for a child's success in school.

There is a difference between ability and achievement. Some children may appear exceptional simply because of their access to opportunities (e.g., preschool programs, extracurricular activities, library, and museum programs). Both achievement and ability need to be considered when deciding on early entrance.

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?
- 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 younger age or physical size for athletics)
- Early entrance is not designed as a replacement for child care. Is this the best option to meet my child's needs?
- Do I understand the expectations for students in kindergarten today?

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

- Understands the meanings and use of words
- 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

## **Kindergarten Expectations**

**Kindergarten has changed considerably over the past decades. Today's kindergarten students engage in a rigorous instructional curriculum.**

**Academic Factors:**

- Enjoys learning new information or skills

- Participates in community-sponsored activities such as dance, sports, library and museum programs
- Believe s/he is capable of succeeding at new tasks
- Has the ability to attend/pay attention for a relatively long period of instruction
- Can draw and trace basic shapes and cut with scissors

**Developmental Factors:**

- Has average fine and gross motor skills
- Can use the bathroom independently
- Can put on and zip coat
- Can tie shoes
- Able to separate from the parent without being upset

**Interpersonal Factors:**

- Follows directions
- Cooperates with adults and authority figures
- Cooperates and plays with other children
- Keeps hands and feet to self
- Shares and takes turns
- Has the ability to follow routines

**More information about kindergarten can be found on the Ohio Department of Education website.**

<https://education.ohio.gov/topics/early-learning/kindergarten>

## **Applying for Early Entrance to Kindergarten:**

- 1. If you feel that your child is a good candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, contact Fairless Elementary with your request.**
- 2. The application for acceleration (found at the end of this packet) will need to be completed by the parent. It is recommended that the application be returned to the school by **June 1**. Once the application is signed by the principal, it will be forwarded to the gifted coordinator.**
- 3. Parents will be contacted to schedule individual ability and achievement testing.**
- 4. An observation by a district representative in a preschool setting may need to be scheduled for your child. Parents will be contacted if this observation is needed.**
- 5. Once the evaluation is completed, an acceleration evaluation committee will meet for the purpose of conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the student. This committee should include the following:**
  - Principal or assistant principal**
  - Kindergarten teacher**
  - Parent or legal guardian of the student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the student**
  - Gifted education specialist**
  - School psychologist or guidance counselor**
- 6. If early entrance is approved, then a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) will be completed prior to entering kindergarten. This document will include strategies to support a successful transition as well as an appropriate transition period. At any point during the transition**

period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing that the child be withdrawn from the accelerated placement.

## **The Evaluation Process**

- The Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) will be used to guide the decision of the acceleration team (principal, kindergarten teacher, gifted specialist, parent/legal guardian, guidance counselor, and school psychologist). It is an acceleration assessment process that is approved by the Ohio Department of Education.
- The IAS requires both ability and achievement measures. The achievement includes reading and math.
- Multiple testing sessions will need to be scheduled.
- The IAS also includes developmental readiness in the assessment process in determining early entrance.

## **Instruments Used:**

### **Individual Intelligence Tests**

**Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Fourth Edition**

### **Individual Achievement Tests**

**Wechsler Individual Achievement Test-Fourth Edition**

**Math and Reading**

# Fairless Local Schools

## Application/Referral for Early Entrance

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Referral:

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Person initiating referral : \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Parent Permission to Screen for Early Entrance

\_\_\_\_ I give permission for Fairless Local Schools to assess my child for early entrance into kindergarten.

\_\_\_\_ I do NOT give permission for Fairless Local Schools to assess my child for early entrance into kindergarten.

In giving my permission, I understand that my child shall be evaluated by an acceleration team using multiple data sources to determine my child's eligibility for early entrance into kindergarten. I also understand that I will be notified in writing of the outcome of the evaluation process, and that the results of all screenings and/or assessments will be shared with me .

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date