# A PARENT'S GUIDE TO EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN or 1st GRADE

**Wellington Exempted Village Schools**
**Board of Education**
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# LEGISLATION GOVERNING EARLY ENTRANCE

## 1. Kindergarten Enrollment

A child shall be admitted to kindergarten if the child is five or six years of age, respectively, by the first day of August of the year of admittance. A child who does not meet the age requirements for admittance to kindergarten but who will be five years old prior to the first day of January of the school year in which admission is requested shall be evaluated for early admittance in accordance with district policy upon referral by the child's parent or guardian, an educator employed by the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Following an evaluation in accordance with a referral, the district shall decide whether to admit the child. If a child for whom admission to kindergarten is requested will not be five years of age prior to the first day of January of the school year in which admission is requested, the child shall be admitted only in accordance with the district's acceleration policy adopted under section 3324.10 of the Ohio Revised Code.

## 2. Acceleration

Early entrance to kindergarten is a subject addressed through gifted education and is outlined in Ohio's *Model Student Acceleration Policy*. Admitting a student who is not age-eligible to attend kindergarten a year early to school is considered a whole-grade acceleration. 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.

# WELLINGTON EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOLS

## 1. Age Eligibility

Wellington Exempted Village Schools considers a child eligible for kindergarten if he or she attains the age of five on or before the first day of school (September 1st) of the school year the child 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 Referral

Upon referral by a child's parent or guardian, an educator employed by the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child, a child may be tested for early admission to kindergarten if the child will be five (5) years of age between August 1st and January 1st, inclusive, and exhibits the mental, social, and emotional standards established by the Wellington Exempted Village Schools' Board of Education. The referral form (attached) needs to be completed by the person making the referral and submitted to the Board of Education (attn: School Psychologist)

## 3. Board of Education Adopted State of Ohio Policy (Chapter 6.01)

On June 29, 2006, the Wellington Exempted Village Schools' Board of Education adopted an *Academic Acceleration Policy consistent with* ***Ohio's Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners.***

Evaluations related to referrals submitted to the Wellington Exempted Village Schools Board of Education between **February 1st and April 30th**, will ordinarily be completed, and a written report issued within forty-five (45) calendar days of submission of the referral to the school principal.

# 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. Developmental readiness is the key to determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate. Even though a child may have a great deal of ability, he/she may not be ready for kindergarten. Social maturity, personal development, and motor development are 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 he/she 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? (For example, students are expected to ask and answer questions about key details in a text, retell familiar stories with details, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text, and identify similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic).

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 *also* ***easily achieves*** when presented with new material.

Once the decision for early entrance is made, the choice is difficult to reverse. If a child is evaluated as a good candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, all stakeholders must be supportive of the decision.

## WHAT IS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS IN KINDERGARTEN?

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. Please take the time to review the following information:

- Parents can easily access the Early Learning Content Standards as well as the subject-specific Academic Content Standards for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies on the ***Ohio Department of Education & Workforce (ODEW)*** website.

- The Ohio Department of Education & Workforce's website contains useful information about kindergarten, in particular, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment - Revised (KRA-R). There is a family guide on Early Learning and School Readiness (ELSR) link about the ***KRA***, which all kindergarten students will take at screening or within the first six weeks of school.

- The Ohio Department of Education has on its website a checklist for kindergarten readiness (see the Kindergarten Readiness Checklist on the next page). The same readiness guidelines should be considered when looking at whether early entrance is appropriate for a child.

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?

| Development Area | Tips and Activities to Prepare Your Child |
|---|---|
| **Physical Skills**<br>Does your child…<br>● enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, and climbing;<br>● draw and trace basic shapes;<br>● cut with scissors;<br>● bounce a ball;<br>● ride a tricycle? | ● 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<br>● Activities that will help your child's coordination include climbing, jumping, skipping, playing ball, using playground equipment, and riding a tricycle. |
| **Health and Safety Needs**<br>Has your child…<br>● had required shots (or provide a signed waiver);<br>● had a dental exam; had a vision exam;<br>● learned own first and last name;<br>● learned first and last name of parent;<br>● learned to watch for cars when crossing the street;<br>● learned not to talk to strangers;<br>● developed a set routine for going to bed;<br>● learned to follow safety rules? | ● Help your children learn his or her full name, address, and telephone number.<br>● Help your child to look both ways when crossing the street.<br>● Talk with your child about strangers and who to go to for help.<br>● Use bedtime as the opportunity to read and talk with your child. |
| **Personal Needs**<br>Without help, can your child…<br>● use the bathroom;<br>● wash hands;<br>● brush teeth;<br>● use tissue to blow nose;<br>● button and zip-up shirts and pants;<br>● put on and take off coat;<br>● tie and/or use Velcro shoes? | ● Create morning and bedtime bathing and toothbrushing routines.<br>● Allow your child to dress himself/herself<br>● Practice putting on shoes.<br>● Help your child learn to use their words to tell other grownups when they are feeling sick or hurt. |
| **Social and Emotional Skills**<br>Does your child…<br>● play well with other children;<br>● separate from a parent without being upset;<br>● share with other children;<br>● care about the feelings of others;<br>● follow routines;<br>● put toys away when asked? | ● Give your child small chores to learn responsibility.<br>● Help your child learn to follow directions by giving simple steps.<br>● Encourage your child to share.<br>● Praise your child when he or she does something well.<br>● Provide guidance when your child is having difficulty. |

## APPLYING FOR EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

If you believe your child may be a candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, please contact the principal at Westwood Elementary school and complete the application packet.

- Once the application and checklist have been completed, they must be returned to the Wellington Exempted Village School District Board of Education no later than ***April 30th,*** in the year for which admission is being requested.
- 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*. While some children may be cognitively ready for kindergarten, they may not be developmentally ready. This additional information may be needed to assess the social and emotional skills necessary to be successful in a school environment.
- The school psychologist will coordinate the evaluation process. The evaluation will be completed within 45 days of the submission of the application.
- Once the evaluations are completed, an acceleration evaluation committee will convene to conduct a fair and thorough evaluation of the child. This committee may include the following:
    - ➢ A Westwood Elementary School administrator
    - ➢ a kindergarten teacher
    - ➢ a parent *or* legal guardian of the referred student *or* a representative designated by a parent *or* legal guardian of the referred student
    - ➢ a gifted education coordinator
    - ➢ a school psychologist

## HOW WILL MY CHILD BE EVALUATED FOR EARLY ENTRANCE?

Early entrance evaluations are completed in the spring. Because developmental readiness is essential for success in kindergarten, students who are viable candidates for Early Entrance to Kindergarten are expected to be developmentally on track with the typical kindergarten student. Should a student fail to meet the developmental readiness assessment, the acceleration team will then discuss and reach a consensus as to what placement is best for the child. The ***Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition,*** is used to determine the appropriateness of early entrance and whole-grade acceleration.

### INSTRUMENTS USED:

**INDIVIDUAL INTELLIGENCE TEST**

- Woodcock Johnson Test of Cognitive Abilities (WJ-COG)
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-5th Edition-WISC-V

*According to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, a student who achieves a score of 115 or higher on the WPPSI-III is a viable candidate for acceleration. Students who do not achieve this score will* ***not*** *be considered for early entrance to kindergarten. However, if a student scores 115 or higher on the cognitive assessmentI, additional measures of achievement and aptitude will be administered and used in consideration for early entrance.*

**INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT TEST**

- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement - Third Edition (KTEA-3)
- Woodcock-Johnson IV *(Reading, Language, Math, and Academic Knowledge)*
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Assessment-4th Edition (WIAT-IV)

# Wellington Exempted Village Schools

## EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN FLOW CHART

*Updated 01/2025*

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) submit application for Early Entrance online between February 1st - April 30th

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Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted to set up a meeting for Early Entrance candidate's initial assessment.

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The school psychologist administers the cognitive assessments.

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If the cognitive score **is below 115**, the acceleration process ends, and the student is not eligible for Early Entrance to Kindergarten. Parents will be notified by mail and/or a phone call.




If the cognitive score is 115 or above, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted to schedule the achievement and aptitude assessments for the student. Data will be collected for the Iowa Acceleration Scale Rubric.

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Once the assessments are complete, the Acceleration Evaluation Team*, including parent(s)/guardian(s), will meet to review the Iowa Acceleration Scale Rubric.

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**If Early Entrance is not recommended**, parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to appeal the decision in writing within 30 days by submitting a letter to the superintendent.

**If Early Entrance is recommended**, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will sign any necessary paperwork, including the Written Acceleration Plan (WAP). Parent(s)/guardian(s) may enroll student.

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Student is enrolled: assigned teacher and building principal monitor the student's progress.

*The Acceleration Evaluation Team will consist of the parent(s)/guardian(s), the school psychologist, the principal, a grade level teacher, and the gifted coordinator.

## TIMELINE FOR EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

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|---|---|
| Deadline for Early Entrance to Kindergarten Applications | **April 30th** |
| Deadline for completion of evaluations | 45 days after submission of the application |
| Deadline for completion of acceleration committee meetings | June 15th |
| Deadline for written notification of the outcome of the evaluation process | June 15th |
| Deadline to submit a written appeal to the Superintendent, Dr. Andrew Peltz, or his designee regarding the outcome of the evaluation process | 30 days after notification of outcome |

### RETURN APPLICATION ONLINE

**IMPORTANT**

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

## Transition/Acceleration Plan

Should your child meet the criteria for Early Entrance to Kindergarten, all students will be given a Written Acceleration/Transition Plan (WAP). Wellington Exempted Village Schools WAPs will include strategies to ensure success and list staff members responsible for monitoring academic progress until the end of the transition period. Academic, behavioral, and social goals will be jointly developed by the teacher, school counselor, school psychologist, PreK teacher input (if applicable), building principal, and parent. The WAP will provide a transition period of six-eight weeks. At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's record shall be modified accordingly and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record in order to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

# Online Early Entrance to Kindergarten Application Form

****Use the above link to access and complete the Early Entrance to Kindergarten Application Form.****