A Parent's Guide to Early Entrance to Kindergarten



NORTH MERRICK UFSD

SETTING CHILDREN ON THE RIGHT COURSE

Harold D. Fayette Elementary School

Irene Lenhart Administrative Building

Kindergarten Registration

1057 Merrick Avenue

North Merrick, NY 11566

(516) 292-3694

North Merrick Central Administration

Dr. Cynthia Seniuk, Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Kate Caporusso, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Personnel

Ms. Marie Donnelly, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations

Dr. Edward Murphy, Assistant to the Superintendent for PPS and Special Education

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North Merrick UFSD and Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- The North Merrick UFSD considers a child eligible for entrance into "regular" kindergarten if s/he attains the age before **December 2nd** of the year s/he applies for entrance.

  By parental request a child may be tested for *early* admission to kindergarten if s/he will be five (5) years of age between December 2nd and December 31st. The child must be currently enrolled in a preschool program.

- The Early Entrance to Kindergarten process shall be reviewed annually by the Early Entrance to Kindergarten Committee, comprised of a psychologist, kindergarten teacher and the Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education & PPS.

Is early entrance to kindergarten the best choice for your child?

Early entrance should be viewed as a means to meeting a child's *needs*. The key to determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate for your child is to assess their level of developmental readiness. Even though a child may possess a great deal of academic ability, s/he may not be ready for kindergarten. Social and emotional maturity, personal development, and motor development are all 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 of his or her chronological age. This opportunity is designed as a method to meet individual differences in school readiness.

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)?
- 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 with new material.

Once the decision has been made for early entrance, the choice is difficult to reverse. If a child is evaluated as a viable candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, it is important that all stakeholders are 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 time to review the ***Kindergarten Curriculum Guide,*** which is available on our website, www.nmerrickschools.org.

- Please review the New York State Core Curriculum Guides for Grade K in the following areas:

English Language Arts:	http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/nys-next-generation-ela-standards.pdf
Social Studies:	http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/social-studies
Mathematics:	http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/nys-next-generation-mathematics-p-12-standards.pdf
Science:	https://www.nextgenscience.org/new-york
Physical Education:	http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/pe/pe1.html

- Kindergarten in the North Merrick UFSD is a *full-day program*. The program is from approximately 8:30 a.m. until 2:45 p.m. Students are expected to participate in the academic program throughout the day.

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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
Physical Skills Does your child… • enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, and climbing; • draw and trace basic shapes; • cut with scissors; • bounce a ball; • 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. • 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 Has your child… • had required shots *(or provide a signed waiver)*; • had a dental exam; • had a vision exam; • learned own first and last name; • learned first and last name of parent; • learned to not talk to strangers; • developed a set routine for going to bed; • learned to follow safety rules?	• Help your child learn his or her full name, address and telephone number. • 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.
Personal needs Without your help, can your child… • 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?	• 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.
Social and Emotional Skills Does your child… • 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? • communicates wants and needs? • manage conflicts appropriately?	• Give your child small chores to learn responsibility. • Help your child learn to follow directions by giving simple steps. • Play board games. • Encourage your child to share and provide opportunities for peer interactions. • Praise your child when he or she does something well. • Provide guidance when your child is having difficulty. • Engage your child in role playing.

Applying for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- If you believe that your child may be a good candidate for early entrance, and your child participated in one full year of a preschool program, please obtain an information/application packet for Kindergarten Registration at the North Merrick Union Free School District Administration Building *or* call (516) 292-3694 to have an information/application packet mailed to your home.
- Once the application has been completed, please return it to the Pupil Personnel Office **no later than March 1st** in the year for which admission is being requested.
- An observation by a district representative (school psychologist) 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 application will then be routed to your son or daughter's home school where the school psychologist will coordinate the evaluation process. The home school has until **May 1st** to complete all evaluations.

How will my child be evaluated for early entrance to kindergarten?

- Early entrance evaluation is completed in the spring concurrently with kindergarten orientation.
- 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 meet the identification criteria for Superior Cognitive identification, but fail to meet the developmental readiness assessment target based on the BASC-3 (Behavior Assessment System for Children- Third Edition), the student will not move forward in the process.

Instruments used:

Individual Intelligence Tests

The *Woodcock-Johnson V Tests of Cognitive Abilities and Achievement-Brief Intellectual Ability*

Those students who meet the criteria move on for the developmental screening and a possible classroom observation.

Criteria: *Superior Cognitive identification is 120 Standard Score.*

Behavior Rating Scale- Developmental Screening

The BASC-3 (Behavior Assessment System for Children- Third Edition)

Those students who meet the criteria move forward to a classroom observation.

Timeline for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

March 1 Deadline for early entrance to kindergarten applications

Return application to:

Dr. Edward Murphy
Assistant to the Superintendent for PPS & Special Education
1057 Merrick Avenue
North Merrick, NY 11566
(516) 868-4902

May 1 Deadline for home schools to complete evaluations

June 17 Deadline for home schools to complete committee meetings

June 24 Deadline for written notification to parent from Superintendent of Schools regarding outcome of the evaluation process

July 15 Deadline to submit a written appeal to the Superintendent or his/her designee regarding the outcome of the evaluation process

Applications received *after* March 1st, and prior to the start of the new school year, will be processed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Deputy Superintendent of Schools.

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 routinely fill up quickly. Please register your child as you normally would, but let the Preschool Office know that your child is being screened for early entrance to kindergarten. Additionally, if you feel strongly that your child may be a good candidate for early entrance and you will need before/after school child care, please make sure you let the Extended Care Program know that your child is being screened for early entrance to kindergarten.

North Merrick UFSD
Irene Lenhart Administration Building
1057 Merrick Avenue
North Merrick, NY 11566

Phone: (516) 292-3694
Fax: (516) 292-3097

North Merrick UFSD Schools

Camp Avenue Elementary
1712 Merrick Avenue
North Merrick, NY 11566
(516) 379-0200
Principal: Dr. Hillary Bromberg
School Psychologist: Ms. Jessica Price

Harold D. Fayette Elementary
1057 Merrick Avenue
North Merrick, NY 11566
(516) 489-3090
Principal: Dr. Christine Talbot
School Psychologist: Ms. Julianne Woods

Old Mill Road Elementary
1775 Old Mill Road
North Merrick, NY 11566
(516) 379-0945
Principal: Ms. Meghan Dixon
School Psychologist: Dr. Nicole Gerbe



APPLICATION
Early Entrance to Kindergarten

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO:
North Merrick UFSD / Office of Special Education & Pupil Personnel Services
Dr. Edward Murphy
1057 Merrick Avenue, North Merrick, NY 11566

Please complete this application and Parent Checklist if you feel that your child demonstrates academic achievement and social, emotional, and physical maturity appropriate for kindergarten placement and should be considered for early placement in kindergarten.

Child's Name_____
Last **First** **Middle Initial**

Birthdate_____/_____/_____ **Male**_____**Female**_____

Address_____
Street **City** **State** **Zip Code**

Custodial Parent(s) / Guardian(s) Name_____
Relationship to child_____

Home #: _____**Work #:**_____**Cell#:**_____
Pager#: _____ **Email:** _____

Preschool Experience - *(please attach preschool report card if available)*

List the nursery schools, Head Start, special programs, and other day care programs attended. Include the dates of attendance and the approximate number of hours per week attended.

Name of School/Program	Dates of Attendance	# of Hours/Week

Why do you feel that your child would be ready for a kindergarten program? Comment on your child's social behavior and academic skills. *(Use additional paper, if needed)*

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

RETURN APPLICATION FOR REVIEW NO LATER THAN MARCH 1st
Signature permits district to administer formal standardized testing

_____ ____/____/_____
Signature, Custodial Parent / Guardian **Date**

PARENT CHECKLIST

The seven broad developmental dimensions provide the framework for the kindergarten instructional program. This checklist will provide our committee with additional information regarding your child. **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, to share ideas and thoughts	_____	_____	_____
Can identify most letters (uppercase and lowercase)	_____	_____	_____
Can identify some beginning sounds	_____	_____	_____
Use some 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 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	_____	_____	_____