



# A Parent's Guide to Early Entrance to Kindergarten or 1st Grade



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Empowering all students to achieve their educational goals, to direct their lives, and to contribute to society.

## Legislation Governing Early Entrance

- According to **Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3321.01** a parent may request early admission to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the district's kindergarten entrance date of August 1 and before January 1. The local board of education shall determine entrance through a standardized testing program.
- The Board may admit a younger child to kindergarten if the child satisfies the Board's early entrance criteria. 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.
- Acceleration is the Law (House Bill 79 amended to House Bill 66 – June 30, 2006). Please refer to the State of Ohio's Model Student Acceleration Policy for more information.

## Westlake City School District

- The Westlake City School District considers a child eligible for entrance into "regular" kindergarten if s/he attains the age of five on or before August 1st of the year s/he applies for entrance. A child under the age of six (6) who is enrolled in kindergarten will be considered of compulsory school age.
- By parental request a child may be tested for early admission to kindergarten if s/he will be five (5) years of age between August 2nd and December 31st, inclusive, and exhibit the mental, social and emotional standards established by the Westlake Board of Education. **If your child turns 5 years of age after January 1st and you believe s/he is a viable candidate for early entrance, please fill out the early entrance packet and return by April 1st.**
- In December of 2017, the Westlake Board of Education adopted policies related to entrance to school and academic acceleration: 5112

"Evaluations related to referrals submitted to the Department of Academic Services no later than April 1 in the year for which admission is being requested, will ordinarily be completed and a written report issued within forty-five (45) calendar days of submission of the referral to the Department of Academic Services. Evaluations related to referrals submitted to the Department of Academic Services after April 1 will be reviewed at the discretion of the Director of Academic Services."

"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 are also to 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. The building principal may also request an evaluation at his/her discretion."

## **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, s/he 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. This opportunity is designed as a measure 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?
- 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? 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 easily achieves when presented new material.

If a child is evaluated as a good 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 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 website. <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Ohios-Learning-Standards>
- The Ohio Department of Education's website contains useful information about kindergarten, in particular, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?Page=2&TopicID=463&TopicRelationID=778>

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

<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Early-Learning/Kindergarten/Kindergarten-Readiness-Checklist>

- Kindergarten in the Westlake City School District is a half-day or a tuition-based full-day program. The half-day program runs from 7:50 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. or 11:40 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. The full-day program begins at 7:50 a.m. ending at 2:20 p.m. Students are expected to participate in the academic program throughout the day.



## Ohio Department of Education (ODE) (<http://www.ode.state.oh.us>)

### 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. Students should have mastery of the majority of the developmental areas listed below.

**Is your child ready for kindergarten? Ask yourself these questions:**

Development Area	Tips and Activities to Help Prepare Your Child
<p><b>Physical Skills</b> Does your child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, and climbing;</li> <li>• draw and trace basic shapes;</li> <li>• cut with scissors;</li> <li>• bounce a ball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Activities that will help your child’s coordination include climbing, jumping, skipping, playing ball, and using playground.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health and Safety Needs</b> Has your child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• had required shots (<i>or provide a signed waiver</i>);</li> <li>• had a dental exam;</li> <li>• had a vision exam;</li> <li>• learned own first and last name;</li> <li>• learned first and last name of parent;</li> <li>• learned to watch for cars when crossing the street;</li> <li>• learned to not talk to strangers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help your child learn his or her full name, address and telephone number.</li> <li>• Help your child to look both ways when crossing the street.</li> <li>• Talk with your child about strangers and who to go to for help.</li> <li>• Use bedtime as the opportunity to read to and talk with your child.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Personal needs</b> Without your help, can your child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use the bathroom;</li> <li>• wash hands;</li> <li>• brush teeth;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create morning and bedtime bathing and tooth-brushing routines.</li> <li>• Allow your child to dress themselves.</li> <li>• Practice putting on shoes.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use tissue to blow nose;</li> <li>• button and zip up shirts and pants;</li> <li>• put on and take off coat;</li> <li>• tie and/or use Velcro shoes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help your child learn to use their words to tell other grownups when they are feeling sick or hurt.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social and Emotional Skills</b> Does your child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• play well with other children;</li> <li>• separate from a parent without being upset;</li> <li>• share with other children;</li> <li>• care about the feelings of others;</li> <li>• follow routines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give your child small chores to learn responsibility.</li> <li>• Help your child learn to follow directions by giving simple steps.</li> <li>• Encourage your child to share.</li> <li>• Praise your child when he or she does something well.</li> <li>• Provide guidance when your child is having a difficult time.</li> </ul>

## Applying for Early Entrance

- If you believe that your child may be a good candidate for early entrance, please obtain an information/application packet from the District’s website. The Early Entrance packet is online under the Early Entrance Tab on the Registration page at <http://www.wlake.org/registration1/kindergarten>. You may also pick up an Early Entrance Packet at the Westlake Board of Education Office.
- Once the application has been completed, it needs to be returned to the Department of Academic Services by **April 1st** in the year for which admission is being requested. (Any applications turned in after April 1st will be reviewed at the discretion of the Director of Academic Services, K-6.)
- The Director of Academic Services, K-6 or designee will coordinate the early entrance process. A school psychologist will administer the assessments. The evaluation will be completed within 45 business days from receipt of the completed packet.
- 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.
- Once the evaluations are completed, the acceleration evaluation committee will convene for the purpose of conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the child. This committee may include the following:
  - A. parent/legal guardian or a representative designated by the parent/guardian
  - B. gifted education coordinator or gifted education specialist, or, if neither is available, a school psychologist or a guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration
  - C. principal or assistant principal of the school to which the child may be admitted
  - D. teacher at the grade level to which the student may be admitted

## **How will my child be evaluated for early entrance to Kindergarten?**

- Early entrance evaluation is completed in the spring.
- Because developmental readiness is important 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 meet the identification criteria for Superior Cognitive identification but fail to meet the developmental readiness assessment, the acceleration team (principal, kindergarten teacher, gifted specialist, parent and/or legal guardian) will then discuss and reach consensus as to what placement is best for the child. The **Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition** will be the guide for early entrance and whole grade acceleration.

### **Individual Intelligence Tests**

Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI) is most typically used for this assessment.

According to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition, a student who achieves a score of 115 or higher on the WPPSI is a viable candidate for acceleration. Students who do not achieve this score will not be considered for early entrance to kindergarten. If a student does not achieve a score of 115 or higher, parents may elect to have their child tested privately at their own expense.

However, if a student scores 115 or higher on the WPPSI, additional measures of achievement and aptitude will be administered and used in consideration for early entrance.

## **2019-2020 Timeline for Early Entrance to Kindergarten/1st Grade**

Deadline for Early Entrance to kindergarten/1st grade applications: April 1, 2019

Deadline for completion of evaluations: 45 school calendar days after submission of application

Deadline for completion of acceleration committee meetings: June 1, 2019

Deadline for written notification of outcome of the evaluation process: June 1, 2019

Please return the completed application, information sheet and consent form to:

Department of Academic Services

Westlake Board of Education

24525 Hilliard Blvd.

Westlake, Ohio 44145

**Note: 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 that the Acceleration Committee's decision is to not admit your student to Kindergarten or First Grade as an early entrant.**

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**APPLICATION and PERMISSION FOR ASSESSMENT:  
Early Entrance to Kindergarten/1st Grade**

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**Return Complete Form to:**  
Department of Academic Services  
Westlake Board of Education  
24525 Hilliard Blvd.  
Westlake, Ohio 44145  
440-250-1269

Please complete this application if you feel that your child demonstrates academic achievement, social, emotional, and physical maturity appropriate for kindergarten/1st grade placement and should be considered for early placement in kindergarten/1st grade.

**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#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Preschool or Kindergarten Experience - (please attach preschool/kindergarten 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.

<b>Name of School/Program</b>	<b>Dates of Attendance</b>	<b># of Hours/Week</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Why do you feel that your child would be ready for a kindergarten/1st grade program? Comment on your child's social behavior and academic skills. (Use additional paper, if needed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN APPLICATION & PERMISSION FOR REVIEW NO LATER THAN April 1, 2019**

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the contents of the Early Entrance brochure and give permission to have your child assessed:

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature, Custodial Parent / Guardian**

**Date**

# EARLY ENTRANCE CHECKLIST



**Return Complete Form to:**  
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 Westlake Board of Education  
 24525 Hilliard Blvd.  
 Westlake, Ohio 44145  
 440-250-1269

The seven broad developmental dimensions provide the framework for the kindergarten instructional program. This checklist will help in determining your child’s readiness for a kindergarten program. **Please read each statement and indicate by placing a “checkmark” how you rate your child’s abilities.**

<b><u>Physical Well-Being and Motor Development</u></b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>None of the time</b>
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)	_____	_____	_____

<b><u>Personal and Social Development</u></b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>None of the time</b>
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	_____	_____	_____

<b><u>Language and Literacy</u></b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>None of the time</b>
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	_____	_____	_____

## EARLY ENTRANCE CHECKLIST continued...

Please read each statement and indicate by placing a "checkmark" how you rate your child's abilities.

<b><u>Mathematical Thinking</u></b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>None of the time</b>
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	_____	_____	_____

<b><u>Scientific Thinking</u></b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>None of the time</b>
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	_____	_____	_____

<b><u>Social Studies</u></b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>None of the time</b>
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	_____	_____	_____

<b><u>The Arts</u></b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>None of the time</b>
Likes to paint and draw	_____	_____	_____
Likes to sing and dance	_____	_____	_____
Can share ideas about a drawing/painting	_____	_____	_____
Can recognize basic colors	_____	_____	_____