

Canal Winchester Local School District

A Parent's Guide To Early Entrance Kindergarten



Canal Winchester Local Schools
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Canal Winchester, Ohio
(614) 837-4533

Indian Trail Elementary School
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Early Entrance Criteria

The Canal Winchester Local School District Board of Education shall establish the following entrance age requirements for students, which are consistent with statute and sound educational practice, and directs that all eligible students be treated in an equitable manner.

A child is eligible for entrance into kindergarten if s/he attains the age of five (5) on or before August 1st of the year in which s/he applies for entrance. A child under age six (6) who is enrolled in kindergarten will be considered of compulsory school age.

The District provides early admission to kindergarten for qualified students. Copies of the Referral for Acceleration forms are available on the website or at Indian Trail Elementary. Any student residing in the District may be referred by a staff member or a parent/guardian to the principal of the school for the evaluation for possible early admission. **All referral forms must be received by the Indian Trail Elementary office no later than April 30th. No late forms will be accepted.**

Pursuant to R.C. 3321.01, all children who will be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall be evaluated upon request of the child's parent or legal guardian. Children who will not 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 early admittance if referred by an educator within the District, a pre-school educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Such children may also be evaluated at the discretion of the principal of the school to which the student may be admitted.

Upon referral for early entrance, the principal (or his/her designee) of the school to which the child may be admitted shall obtain written permission for testing from the child's parent/guardian. A preliminary cognitive screening will be administered to the student to determine eligibility for further evaluation.

Children referred for early entrance will be evaluated in a prompt manner. For those children who have been screened and determined eligible for further assessment, the principal of the school to which the child may be admitted shall convene an acceleration evaluation committee to determine whether early entrance is appropriate for that child. The acceleration evaluation committee shall include the following:

- a parent/legal guardian or representative designated by the parent/guardian
- a gifted education coordinator or gifted education specialist
- a principal or assistant principal of the school to which the child may be admitted
- a teacher at the grade level to which the student may be admitted
- a school psychologist

The acceleration evaluation committee shall be responsible for conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the student. The acceleration evaluation committee will also consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

Prior to the committee meeting, children considered for early entrance shall be evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by the Ohio Department of Education.

A meeting will be conducted with the parent/guardian following the evaluation to inform him/her of the committee's decision and, if appropriate, to discuss the results of the evaluation and the nature of the kindergarten program.

The parent/guardian will be provided with a written summary of the outcome of the evaluation process. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.

Appeals must be made in writing to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of the parent/guardian receiving the results of the evaluation. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the appeal and notify the parent/guardian of his/her decision within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent or his/her designee's decision will be final.

If a child is recommended for early entrance, the acceleration evaluation committee will develop a written acceleration plan for that child. The plan will specify:

- placement of the child in the accelerated setting;
- strategies to support successful early entrance; and
- an appropriate transition period for accelerated students.

A school staff member will be assigned to oversee the implementation of the acceleration plan and to monitor the child's adjustment to the early entrance. At any time during the transition period, a parent/guardian of the child may request in writing that the child be withdrawn from the accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall remove the child without repercussions.

Also, at any time during the transition period, a parent/guardian may request in writing an alternative accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall direct the acceleration evaluation committee to consider other placement options and to issue a decision within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the request. If the student will be placed in a different setting from that initially recommended, the acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly, and a new transition period shall be specified.

At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The child's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

Is Early Entrance To Kindergarten The Best Choice For My Child?

Early entrance should be viewed as a means of meeting a child's *needs*. The key is determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate for developmental readiness. Even though a child may have a lot 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 with children who are one year older than he or she?
- 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 new material.

Once the decision has been made for early entrance, the choice is difficult to reverse. 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. The basis of this change are the new academic learning standards. 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://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?page=2&TopicRelationID=463>

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

ODE>Learning Supports>Early Learning and School Readiness>Kindergarten>KRA-L

Kindergarten classes in the Canal Winchester Local School District are *half-day programs*. Students are expected to participate in one of the half-day academic programs daily.

According to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, a student who meets the Critical Item (Section II) of one standard deviation above the mean (115) is a viable candidate for acceleration. The students, who meet the criteria, move on for the developmental screening and possible classroom observation.

Applying For Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- If you believe your child may be a good candidate for early entrance, you may complete a “Referral for Acceleration” form found at the end of this packet.
- Once the form has been completed, it needs to be returned to school office at Indian Trail Elementary between **March 1st and April 30th**.
- A school psychologist will coordinate the evaluation process and call to schedule an appointment for testing.
- Once all evaluations are completed, an acceleration committee will convene for the purpose of reviewing the evaluation results. This committee may include the following people: The elementary school principal or assistant principal, a kindergarten teacher, a parent or legal guardian of the referred student, the gifted education coordinator, a school psychologist, a school counselor, and/or the Director of Curriculum & Instruction or Special Services.

IMPORTANT

Early entrance is not an evaluation to determine readiness. State and local policies require the child’s ability to far exceed that of the average kindergarten student, and thus very few children qualify for early entrance to kindergarten. Your child may seem to behave very much like other age-eligible kindergarteners, but still may not pass the stringent early entrance requirements. Please make sure to proceed with childcare arrangements as a contingency. If you are selecting a preschool program, please understand that those programs fill up quickly. Please register your child as you normally would, but let the preschool know that your child is being screened for early entrance to kindergarten.



CANAL WINCHESTER LOCAL SCHOOLS REFERRAL FOR ACCELERATION FORM

Student's Name:		Grade:		Sex:	
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Date:			Date of Birth:	
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Parent/Guardian Names:			
Street Address:			
City:		Zip:	

Person Initiating Request:			
Relationship to Student:			

Daytime Cell #:		Email:	
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Type of Acceleration Requested:

<input type="checkbox"/> Early Entrance Kindergarten For school year _____	Required score of 115 or higher on cognitive ability assessment. (Does not guarantee time) Preference: <input type="checkbox"/> Morning <input type="checkbox"/> Afternoon
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<input type="checkbox"/> Whole Grade Acceleration For school year _____	Required assessments in all subject areas: grade level, two grade levels above and IQ. <input type="checkbox"/> From grade _____ to grade _____
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<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Subject Acceleration For school year _____	Select only one academic area below: <input type="checkbox"/> Math <input type="checkbox"/> Reading/Language Arts <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
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Social-Emotional Factors

Would acceleration be socially and emotionally appropriate?	
Please explain the effect you believe acceleration will have on your child's relationship to older peers.	

Academics

Why do you think your child is academically ready to be advanced?

Testing is required for acceleration purposes. Your child will receive testing by designated school personnel and the information may be shared with your child's teachers, principals and other appropriate school personnel. The school district will inform you if your child qualifies for acceleration.

Please check box if giving permission and fill in child's full name:

- Yes, I give permission for direct testing of intellectual ability and/or individual subject testing for my child, _____, to be tested by a school psychologist.

Parent Signature:		Date:	
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Please return form to:
 Mr. Eric Riddle
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 6767 Gender Road, Canal Winchester, OH 43110
eriddle@cwls.us Fax: (614) 833-2167