

**EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN
APPLICATION PACKET
(CONFIDENTIAL)**

SCORES _____ ILA _____ MATH _____

The application forms must be completed in full for a child to be considered for early entrance into kindergarten. Each child for whom you are completing an application **must not be age eligible** for kindergarten at the beginning of the school year. The child turning five-years-old on or before September 1 will automatically be able to enroll in kindergarten. The child must turn **five-years-old by October 15th** to be considered for the assessment. The information and the test results will be kept confidential with the sole purpose of consideration for early entrance into kindergarten.

There are two options for submitting the forms once they have been completed:

1. Save the forms as a document on your computer and return them as an email attachment to earlychildhood@hcps.org
2. Save them as a document on your computer, print and mail them directly to:

Executive Director of Elementary Education
Harford County Public Schools A.A. Roberty Building
102 South Hickory Avenue
Bel Air, MD 21014

You will be contacted when you should bring your child for the assessment.

Once the assessment is completed, you will be notified, in writing, from the Office of Early Childhood about the score and the decision of acceptance. Since this is the appeal process, all decisions are final. There are absolutely **no** retests.

Thank you for your cooperation. **A denial for early entrance into kindergarten does not mean that a child will be automatically accepted for prekindergarten. Understand that the application to prekindergarten occurs simultaneously and seeking early entrance into kindergarten may jeopardize your child's ability to enter prekindergarten. Assessments will be scored as soon as possible.**

- ★Applications will be available on the first Friday in May.
- ★Last day to accept applications for Early Entrance to Kindergarten is the first Friday in June.

Steps To Be Completed

Parent Use:

Name of Child for Whom Application is Being Made _____

Packet Information is Complete:

- _____ Parent Information Profile
- _____ Child's birth certificate
- _____ Letter of Consideration (from parent)
- _____ Reference letter(s) (pediatrician, preschool teacher, etc.)
- _____ **Signed Understanding of Assessment Process**

Date Returned _____ Verified by (Initials) _____

Early Entrance to Kindergarten PARENT INFORMATION PROFILE

*This profile must be completed in full by a parent or guardian before the child will be considered for early entrance into kindergarten. Remember to attach a letter of recommendation from the child's physician, nursery school teacher, or other person qualified to judge his or her development and capabilities. If the child attended preschool or prekindergarten, a letter of recommendation is required from your child's teacher. Send this form with a cover letter and the letters of recommendation to the Executive Director of Elementary Education, Harford County Public Schools, 102 S. Hickory Avenue, Bel Air, Maryland 21014, **by the first Friday in June.***

NOTE: No HCPS employee can provide a letter of recommendation for Early Entrance to Kindergarten. This will jeopardize the application and result in an automatic denial.

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Name of Parent/Guardian Completing This Form _____

Address _____

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

City, State and Zip Code _____

Email Address _____

School _____

Directions: Please answer each question below. If additional space is needed, write on the back of this form. If assistance is needed with this form, notify the school secretary.

1. Why do you want your child considered for kindergarten?
2. What abilities do you think your child has that qualifies for early entrance?
3. What types of play activities does your child usually engage in?
4. About how long will your child persist with a play activity or game?
5. What responsibilities does your child have at home? What do you do when your child does not follow through?

6. How does your child respond when (s)he tries but can't do something?

7. How do you respond when your child tries, but can't do something?

8. What types of reading activities is your child engaged in at home?

9. What kinds of experiences has your child had with writing implements such as paintbrushes, markers, crayons, and pencils?

10. What does your child know about numbers, shapes, and puzzles?

11. What does your child do when (s)he needs to use the bathroom?

12. Can your child button, snap and zipper to dress him- or herself?

13. What group experiences has your child had, for example, day care, Head Start or nursery school? How often did your child attend?

14. Could there be a negative impact for your child due to their developmental immaturity in the classroom?

UNDERSTANDING THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS For Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Having an extremely precocious child can be a very rewarding experience. Children who have the ability to read books and parts of the newspaper and to perform mathematical problems at a young age are indeed a wonder to behold. Entrance into formal education will enable the child to capture and focus the child's ability to continue the learning process.

The assessment that is given to your child for early entrance to kindergarten is a **confidential**, standardized test designed to measure the skills that the child has for school readiness. The assessment is focused on two areas, language arts and mathematics. A score of **90% on each section** is expected to be eligible for early entrance into kindergarten. Parents should be aware that the test is very difficult.

The assessor will conduct the two-part test with the child **without the parent present**. Precocious children are social and very often easily adaptable to new situations. The test consists of measuring standards and indicators, as set by the Maryland Department of Education, which identifies exceptionally gifted children. The test can be approximately two hours in length.

The assessor will quickly develop a relationship with the child. Children will be expected to respond from their own knowledge base and not be prompted for responses. Prior to the assessment, parents can assist in assuring the child that no answer they give is wrong and should be comfortable with talking to the assessor.

The assessor will not continue with the test if the child becomes frustrated or begins to be distracted which is an indication that the child is not ready for formal schooling. If the child continues to respond incorrectly, the assessor will also discontinue the process. It is the assessor's responsibility to keep the child on track and yet not allow the child to become frustrated or upset. The assessor will **not** give you an indication of how the child scored. Scoring of the test will be completed within the next 15 days.

The child that is accepted for early entrance to kindergarten as a result of the assessment will begin school on a probationary basis for the first thirty (30) school days. During that period, if the child is experiencing academic or emotional difficulties, a conference will be arranged with the child's parents or guardians to reconsider his or her placement. If the child is denied early entrance at the end of the probationary period, the child will be withdrawn from kindergarten. **It is recommended that parents make other arrangements.**

By signing below, you understand this is the appeal process for your child. Children not scoring 90% on the assessment will not be retested. The decision letter with scores is the final step. It is recommended that parents make other arrangements if the child is denied probationary admission.

By entering my name in this box, I acknowledge that the information above is true and accurate, and that this electronic signature has the same meaning as my handwritten signature.

Parent Signature

Date

**INFORMATION REGARDING TESTING for
EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN
AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT TO FIRST GRADE**

Children develop at different levels.

On the MSDE website you will find the standards for grades PK through grade 12. Children will be tested on the curriculum standards set by MSDE. You must keep in mind that these are the minimum expectations set by MSDE. Since you are applying for early entrance/advanced placement, your child is required to achieve a 90% score.

By signing below, you understand this process for your child. Children not scoring 90% on the assessment will not be retested. The decision letter with scores is the final step.

By entering my name in this box, I acknowledge that the information above is true and accurate, and that this electronic signature has the same meaning as my handwritten signature.

Parent Signature

Date

Things to Consider

- ⇒ Successful candidates of early entrance are often quick learners, independent and motivated, developmentally advanced, and socially mature compared to same age peers.
- ⇒ Young children are emotionally vulnerable and may become stressed or anxious when adult expectations for their performance exceed their developmental capabilities. Children learn best when they are provided challenges that are appropriately matched to their ability and readiness level.
- ⇒ Young children learn best through structured and self-directed play. The quality and quantity of their time spent playing impacts their ability to think creatively, make decisions, and cope with stressful situations.
- ⇒ Entering school early is a decision that will have long-term effects on your child. The potential social/emotional and cognitive impact on your child as he/she progresses through elementary, middle, high school, and beyond is not foreseeable.
- ⇒ How will your family respond when your child's new peer group reaches adolescence and is old enough to date, drive, and assume other adult prerogatives?
- ⇒ Although a capable young child needs to be challenged, those challenges need to be tailored to his or her stage of social, emotional and physical development as well as his or her intellectual strengths.
- ⇒ Results from longitudinal studies indicate that carefully selected, advanced young learners tend to do very well academically and socially when provided early entrance.

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Harford County Public Schools
102 S. Hickory Avenue
Bel Air, Maryland 21014
410-838-7300



Should You Consider



Early Entrance into Kindergarten for Your Child?

By Authority of the Superintendent
Harford County Public Schools

Should You Consider

Early Entrance into Kindergarten for Your Child?

Although rare, exceptions to the age of entrance policy are granted by the Harford County Public School system when it is clearly evident the precocious four-year-old child will be effectively served by a rigorous, standard-based curriculum in kindergarten. A child with exceptional abilities may be **considered** for early entrance into the kindergarten program upon the request of a parent/guardian. Some characteristics of exceptional ability in young children are as follows:

- Advanced, sophisticated vocabulary
- Early reading skills (not memorization)
- Advanced memory
- Long attention span, able to persevere on tasks that interest them
- Reasoning skills— early understanding of cause and effect, ability to see connections between ideas and events

Procedure for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- For a child to be eligible for early entrance to kindergarten assessment, the child must turn **5-years-old by October 15** and be a resident of Harford County.
- The application process begins the first Friday of May and ends the first Friday in June. Assessments will be administered in June and July of the current school year.
- Obtain the Early Entrance to Kindergarten packet from the attendance area school and complete the Parent Information Profile and other forms. The parent/guardian composes a letter stating reasons for consideration and obtains a letter of recommendation from a pediatrician qualified to judge the child's developmental capabilities. If the child has attended a preschool program or special program, a letter from the school teacher is required.

Note: Employees of HCPS cannot supply a letter of recommendation or reference for this process. This will jeopardize the application and result in an automatic denial.

- Return the packet to the Executive Director of Elementary Education, 102 S. Hickory Ave., Bel Air, MD 21014.
- For consideration, all information must be complete with parent signatures.
- After reviewing the information provided, the Executive Director will forward the application package to the Office of Early Childhood for a response to the parent/guardian.
- If the information provided indicates that a child is to be considered for early entrance into kindergarten, a specialist will contact the parent/guardian to schedule a language and mathematics assessment.
- For early entrance consideration, the child must achieve a score of at least **90% on both parts of the assessment**. Assessments are administered by the specialist **without parent/guardian presence** and lasts approximately 2 hours. A child may be assessed only **one** time for early entrance determination. (***It is important to note that if early entrance is denied, the denial is not an automatic acceptance into the prekindergarten program.**)
- If early entrance is recommended, the principal or designee of the attendance area school will schedule a conference with the parent/guardian to discuss the request. At this conference, parent/guardian should be prepared to share information about the child's previous group experiences and special strengths and needs. A plan for early entrance will be developed at that time.
- Placement will be for a **30day** probationary period pending the child's satisfactory social-emotional adjustments as determined by the classroom teacher.
- Upon completion of the probationary period, a final letter of placement will be sent to the parent/guardian from the Office of Early Childhood. If acceptance into kindergarten is recommended, all relevant kindergarten policies and procedures will apply, including daily school attendance.

REMEMBER...the intent of the above procedure is to make kindergarten available to younger students who are capable of working in a classroom setting with children **one year older**. The standards for entrance to the program are demanding to ensure that children are not frustrated by the advanced placement.

Before You Make An Early Entrance Decision, You May Want To Read:

- Elkind, D. (1987). *Miseducation: Preschoolers At Risk*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Elkind, D. (1988). Acceleration. *Young Children*, 43(4), 2.
- Colangelo, N., Assouline, S.G., & Gross, M. U.M. (2004). *A nation deceived: How schools hold back America's students*. Iowa City, IA: Belin-Blank Center. (Volumes 1 and 2).
- National Association for the Education of Young Children, <http://www.naeyc.org/>
- National Association for Gifted Children www.nagc.org
- Maryland State Department of Education, <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/>

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE

INFORMATION... please contact the principal of your child's school or the school system's Office of Early Childhood Programs (410-588-5252)

The Harford County Public School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. Inquiries related to the policies of the Board of Education of Harford County should be directed to the Manager of Communications, 410-588-5203.