

**TALBOT COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EASTON, MD 21601**

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## **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS TO PREKINDERGARTEN, KINDERGARTEN, AND FIRST GRADE**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of these regulations is to outline the process for early admission and/or enrollment of students into Talbot County Public Schools pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs, and first grade.

Each child who is a bona fide resident of Talbot County and is 5 years old or older and under the age of 18 shall attend public school regularly during the entire school year unless the child is otherwise receiving regular, thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public schools to children of the same age.

Students enrolled in Talbot County Public Schools must complete all required paperwork and provide the required proof of residency documents as outlined in Policy 10.7 - Admission of Resident and Non-Resident Students.

### **II. AGE FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

A. Pre-Kindergarten - Children admitted to the pre-kindergarten program in Talbot County Public Schools shall be 4 years old on or before September 1st of the year in which they apply for admission.

B. Kindergarten - Children admitted to the kindergarten program in Talbot County Public Schools shall be 5 years old on or before September 1st of the year in which they apply for admission.

C. First Grade - Children admitted to first grade in Talbot County Public Schools shall be 6 years old on or before September 1st of the year in which they apply for admission.

### **III. MATURITY WAIVERS**

A. A parent may request their child's required attendance in a kindergarten program be delayed due to the child's level of maturity. This request may occur prior to the start of the school year in which the child is scheduled to begin attending, or once the school

year has started and after the child has attempted to attend kindergarten. The process for filing this request is as follows:

1. The parent or legal guardian must file a written request with the Superintendent asking that admission into kindergarten be delayed due to the child's maturity level.
2. If at all possible, this request is to be filed with the Superintendent before the first day of school for the year in which the child becomes five year old.
3. If the child has attempted to attend kindergarten, and the parent feels it is in the child's best interest to withdraw from the program, the parent may request the maturity waiver after the start of the school year.
4. The Superintendent will respond to the parent or legal guardian in writing with an approval or denial of the request.

B. If a maturity waiver is approved for a child's delayed entrance into kindergarten, the child must attend kindergarten the school year immediately following the school year in which the delay was granted.

#### **IV. EARLY ADMISSION TO PRE-KINDERGARTEN**

The pre-kindergarten program is for children who are 4 years old by September 1st of the year in which they are registered for school. The overall goal of the program is to provide learning experiences to help children develop and maintain the basic skills necessary for successful school performance. Three year old children who demonstrate educational needs warranting early admission into the program may be eligible based on specific criteria. Early admission may only be granted if there is space available in the program.

##### **A. Criteria**

Students applying for early admission to pre-kindergarten must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The child turns four years of age on or before October 15th of the year in which they are requesting early admission to the program.
2. The child demonstrates a lack of school readiness.
3. The child lives within the school district boundaries for the school program requested.
4. The child is toilet trained.

##### **B. Application**

1. Parents considering early admission to pre-kindergarten will make a written request at the home school for early admission into the program. At this time, the principal will provide the Early Admission Packet and application, and schedule an appointment with the parent to discuss the issue of early admission.

2. Parents will complete the Early Admission Application and submit it to the principal at the home school. Applications will be accepted between May 1st and June 1st prior to the school year in which the child applies for early admission. No application will be accepted after June 1st unless the family is new to Talbot County. The application must include the following items:

- a. All completed forms from the Early Admission Packet
- b. Early Admission Application to Pre-Kindergarten
- c. Two letters documenting the child's abilities supporting the child's lack of readiness; these should come from someone who has knowledge of the child in comparison to other children this age (e.g. pediatrician, child care provider, nursery school teacher, etc.)
- d. Any other records the parent/guardian feels would be useful in making the decision for early admission

C. Review and Consideration

1. A central team will be established to review all early admission applications. All applications will be reviewed between June 1st and June 30th of each year. The review team may consist of the following membership, but is not limited to:

- a. Early Learning Specialist
- b. Principal
- c. School Psychologist
- d. Special Educator
- e. Pre-kindergarten Teacher
- f. Appropriate Curriculum Supervisor

D. Notification

The team will review all applications and notify the parent/guardian no later than August 15th of approval or denial for early admission into the program.

E. Observation Period

Each child placed on an early admission into a pre-kindergarten program will be monitored by the classroom teacher and the building administrator for the first 30 school

days. At the end of this period, recommendations will be made to either continue or terminate the placement.

F. Appeals

If an application for early admission to pre-kindergarten is denied or an early admission placement is terminated, the parent/guardian may file an appeal as outlined in Talbot County Public Schools policy 2.4 (Appeals and Hearings).

**V. EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN**

Children admitted to the kindergarten program must be 5 years old or older on September 1st of the school year in which the child is registered for school. Some 4 year old children may demonstrate capabilities warranting early admission to the kindergarten program. Four year old children will only be considered for early admission to the kindergarten program if they turn 5 years old on or before October 15th of the school year in which they are asking for early admission to the program. Early admission to the kindergarten may only be granted if there is room in the program.

A. Criteria

Students applying for early admission to kindergarten must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The child turns five years of age on or before October 15th of the year in which they are requesting early admission to the program.
2. The child lives within the school district boundaries for the school program requested.
3. The child is toilet trained.

B. Application

1. Parents considering early admission to kindergarten will make a written request at the home school for early admission into the program. At this time, the principal will provide the Early Admission Packet and application, and schedule an appointment with the parent to discuss the issue of early admission.
2. Parents will complete the Early Admission Application and submit it to the principal at the home school. Applications will be accepted between May 1st and June 1st prior to the school year in which the child applies for early admission. No application will be accepted after June 1st unless the family is new to Talbot County. The application must include the following items:

- a. All completed forms from the Early Admission Packet
- b. Early Admission Application
- c. Two letters documenting the child's abilities supporting the child's lack of readiness; these should come from someone who has knowledge of the child in comparison to other children this age (e.g. pediatrician, child care provider, nursery school teacher, etc.)
- d. Any other records the parent/guardian feels would be useful in making the decision for early admission

C. Review and Consideration

1. A central team will be established to review all early admission applications. All applications will be reviewed between June 1st and June 30th of each year. The review team may consist of the following membership, but is not limited to:

- a. Early Learning Specialist
- b. Principal
- c. School Psychologist
- d. Appropriate Curriculum Supervisor
- e. Kindergarten Teacher

2. Upon review of the application, if the team determines there is no basis for further consideration, the parent/guardian will be notified in writing denying early admission.

3. If the application warrants further consideration, the team will designate a case manager who will contact the parent or guardian to arrange a time to conduct a formal assessment. Talbot County Public School assessment is required. The case manager will make every effort to make the time and location convenient to the parent/guardian.

4. A formal assessment will be administered, including multiple measures of the child's development. Assessment will take place between June 15 and July 15. Any child who does not participate in this assessment cannot be considered for early entry.

5. Data will be reviewed by the central team upon completion of the assessment. Determinations of early admissions will take place at this team meeting. The parent will be invited to participate in this meeting.

D. Notifications

1. Parents/Guardians participating in the team meeting will be notified verbally and in writing at the meeting. Copies will be on file with the Early Childhood Supervisor and in the child's permanent record. The school will also

be notified of the child's status at the close of the meeting.

2. Parents/Guardians not participating in the team meeting will be notified in writing following the determination made at the team meeting. Copies will be on file with the Early Childhood Supervisor and the child's permanent record. The school will also be notified of the child's status at the close of the meeting.

E. Observation Period

Each child placed on an early admission into a kindergarten program will be monitored by the classroom teacher and the building administrator for the first 30 school days. At the end of this period, recommendations will be made to either continue or terminate the placement.

F. Appeals

If an application for early admission to kindergarten is denied or an early admission placement is terminated, the parent/guardian may file an appeal as outlined in Talbot County Public Schools policy 2.4 (Appeals and Hearings).

## **VI. EARLY ADMISSION TO FIRST GRADE**

A child admitted to the first grade in the public schools shall be 6 years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child is registered for school. Some 5 year old children may demonstrate capabilities warranting early admission to first grade. Five year old children will only be considered for early admission to first grade if they turn 6 years old on or before October 15th of the school year in which they are asking for entry to first grade.

A. Criteria

Students applying for early admission to first grade must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The child turns six years of age on or before October 15th of the year in which they are requesting early admission to the program.
2. The child lives within the school district boundaries for the school program requested.

B. Application

1. Parents considering early admission to first grade will make a written request at the home school for early admission to grade 1. At this time, the

principal will provide the Early Admission Packet and application, and schedule an appointment with the parent to discuss the issue of early admission.

2. Parents will complete the Early Admission Application and submit it to the principal at the home school. Applications will be accepted between May 1st and June 1st prior to the school year in which the child applies for early admission. No application will be accepted after June 1st unless the family is new to Talbot County. The application must include the following items:

- a. All completed forms from the Early Admission Packet
- b. Early Admission Application
- c. appropriate evidence that the child has successfully completed a Kindergarten experience in another state or jurisdiction that has a different age of entry requirement (e.g. school records).
- d. Any other records the parent/guardian feels would be useful in making the decision for early admission

C. Review and Consideration

The principal, in consultation with the Early Childhood Supervisor and/or the Director of Pupil Services, will review the information presented to make a determination of placement in grade 1 or in kindergarten. If additional information is needed, an assessment may be completed to provide additional information.

D. Notification

The principal, in consultation with an appropriate Curriculum Supervisor will determine if the child demonstrates capabilities warranting early admission to grade 1 and notify the parent in writing of the child's status by August 15th.

E. Observation Period

Each child placed on an early entry will be monitored by the classroom teacher and the building administrator for the first 30 school days. At the end of this period, recommendations will be made to either continue the placement or to terminate the early entry based on how well the student is adjusting to the placement.

F. Appeals

If an application for early admission to kindergarten is denied or an early admission placement is terminated, the parent/guardian may file an appeal as outlined in Talbot County Public Schools policy 2.4 (Appeals and Hearings).