

Heir Force Community School

PARENT'S GUIDE for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Legislation Governing Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- A parent may request early entrance to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the HFCS Kindergarten entrance date of August 1 and before January 1, of the upcoming school year. Entrance shall be determined through a standardized assessment.

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**. The key to determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate for a child is developmental readiness. Even though a child may have a lot of ability, he/she may not be ready for kindergarten. Other important factors to consider are social maturity, personal development and motor development.

Early entrance is **designed for the exceptional child** who is both academically ready as well as developmentally mature when compared to others his/her chronological age.

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/she?
- Will my child be frustrated by this placement?
- What are the possible long-term impacts as my child progresses through elementary, middle and high school (i.e., beginning college at a younger age)?
- 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 (i.e., preschool programs, parents working with them on skills or access to learning materials). Early entrance is designed for the child who has high ability and **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 good candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, it is important that all stakeholders are supportive of the decision.

Below are examples of what to look for in the areas of ability, achievement, aptitude and behavior.

My child seems advanced beyond other children his/her age in these ways:

- understands the meanings and use of words better than other children his/her age;
 - is curious about many things and asks questions often;
 - is very good at working puzzles or solving problems;
 - has a great sense of humor and understands jokes more than other children his/her age;
 - has a good memory and remembers details of conversations or stories;
 - is interested in difficult concepts such as time and space;
 - concentrates on certain activities much longer than other children his/her age;
 - reads (and understands text) in picture books or chapter books;
 - figures out math-related problems better than other children his/her age.
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Expectations of Kindergarten Students

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. Ohio, along with many other states across the United States, has adopted Common CORE for the purpose of preparing Ohioans to meet the demands of the knowledge-based economy and the needs of the 21st Century.

What are some important school and academic factors?

My child:

- enjoys learning new information or skills;
 - participates in community-sponsored activities such as sports, dance, gymnastics, library and museum programs;
 - believes he/she is capable of succeeding at new tasks;
 - has the ability to attend, or pay attention, for relatively long periods of instruction;
 - he/she can draw and trace basic shapes and cut with scissors.
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What are some important developmental factors?

My child has the following developmental characteristics:

- He/she has average fine and large motor coordination (i.e., holding a pencil, skipping);
 - He/she is able to use the computer to play games or find information;
 - He/she can use the bathroom without adult help;
 - He/she can button and zip up shirts and pants, tie or Velcro shoes and put on and take off his/her coat;
 - He/she is able to separate from the parent without being upset.
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What are some important interpersonal skills for entering school?

My child:

- thoughtfully considers feedback and criticism and modifies behavior appropriately;
 - often behaves in a way that is positive and effective;
 - has good interpersonal skills with age-mates, as well as with both older and younger children and with adults;
 - has excellent interpersonal relationships with adults in a teaching role;
 - has the ability to follow routines.
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What are some important attitudes and supports necessary for success in school?

- My child is enthusiastic about going to kindergarten.
 - As a parent, I understand that a child's success in school depends on support provided at home. I am able to give my child additional support to help in his/her transition to a new setting with much higher academic demands than he/she encountered in preschool.
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Ohio Department of Education Website

Parents can easily access information about kindergarten on the Ohio Department of Education's website, which can be found at education.ohio.gov.

The Ohio Department of Education's website also contains useful information about the next generation of assessments. Understanding a child's learning and development is critical to both families and educators.

The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) will give kindergarten teachers a comprehensive picture of a child's learning and development at kindergarten entry, pinpointing where each child is in physical well-being and motor development, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies and social skills.

HFCS kindergarten is a **full-day program**. Students are expected to participate in the academic program throughout the day.

Age Eligibility: A student must be 5 years of age to enter kindergarten. Compulsory school age is 6. However, if a child enters kindergarten at age 5, he/she is considered to be of compulsory school age. No district shall admit to the first grade a child who has not successfully completed kindergarten.

Heir Force Community School considers a child eligible for entrance into "regular" kindergarten if he/she attains the age of 5 on or before August 1 of the year he/she applies for entrance.

Applying for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- If you believe your child may be a good candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, you will need to contact HFCS before the regular spring kindergarten screening date. Early entrance applications will not be accepted if requested on a date after the regular spring kindergarten screening has taken place for the upcoming school year. Early entrance evaluations will only be conducted at the yearly spring kindergarten screening dates.
- Complete and return the application to the Impact Center located at 2000 N. Cole St. Lima, Ohio before the yearly spring kindergarten screening.
- All evaluations will be scheduled through the HFCS school office. Your application will be processed and the appropriate assessments will be scheduled.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten Evaluation Procedure

Heir Force Community School evaluates students for early entrance to kindergarten using the **ESGI standardized kindergarten assessment**. A student requesting Early Entrance must score at the 85% or higher on all designated ESGI subtests.