

Early Entrance to Kindergarten Exception

A child must be five years of age as of midnight August 31 of the year of entry to be entitled to enter kindergarten. To provide a screening process and/or instrument(s) which measure the ability or the need, or both, of an individual student to succeed in earlier entry, the District has adopted the Early Entrance to Kindergarten process.

Criteria for the Early Entrance to Kindergarten Process (EEK)

Students must meet the following eligibility requirements to apply for early entrance to kindergarten screening, testing and assessment.

- A. Applicants must be 5 years of age as of midnight October 31.
- B. Applicants must reside within the District attendance boundaries.

Students will be allowed early entry to kindergarten based on the following criteria:

- A. Applicants must pass the early entrance social emotional screening.
- B. Applicants must pass early entrance testing, assessment and selection.

Mandatory Informational Meeting

An informational meeting will be held in the winter prior to the spring application period. Parents interested in early entrance to kindergarten for their student must attend. Information included will cover research statistics on early entrance, the applicable District policy and procedures. The early entrance screening, testing, assessment and selection process will be explained. For parents unable to attend, the meeting information will be available in a PowerPoint presentation via a link provided by the District. Parents must confirm on the screening packet checklist that they have attended, watched and/or reviewed the presentation.

Application

Following the informational meeting or a review of the PowerPoint presentation, parents wishing to pursue early entrance to kindergarten for their student, may submit a request for early entrance screening. Applicants who pass the screening will be eligible for early entrance testing.

A. Time Schedule

The application period for current resident students applying for fall entry is open from February 1 to April 1, this is a strict deadline. To accommodate new resident families that move into the District attendance boundaries after April 1, a brief application period will be open from July 1 to August 15. Documentation confirming the move was after April 1 is required.

B. Early Entrance Screening application packet

The screening application is a 2 step process, both are required. Parents will receive a screening packet checklist listing all required documents. The parent is responsible to ensure all documents listed in both steps below are submitted to the Early Learning Department by the applicable application deadline as stated in the “Time Schedule” listed above.

1. **Parent Request For Screening Application.** The screening application documents will be provided and/or completed by the parent:
 - a. Early Entrance Screening application form.
 - b. Parent questionnaire.
 - c. Copy of the child's birth certificate or passport.
 - d. Proof of District permanent residency.
 - e. A non-refundable screening fee payable to "Bellevue Public Schools". This fee may be prorated and/or waived for an applicant that would qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program.
2. **Preschool Teacher/Daycare Provider's Screening Packet.** The teacher screening documents must be completed and returned by the preschool teacher/daycare provider. Upon receipt of the complete request for screening application, parents will be given and/or receive instructions to access the documents required and will provide the following to the teacher or daycare provider:
 - a. Teacher letter with instructions and information on completing and returning the packet.
 - b. Teacher questionnaire.
 - c. Screening protocol.
 - d. A stamped envelope addressed to Early Learning Programs at the address listed on the screening packet checklist.

Screening

All applicants will be screened in the social emotional domain using a common social skills inventory protocol.

If the applicant scores in the above average range of social skills, they will be considered eligible for Early Entrance testing. If an applicant does not score in the above average range, they will not be eligible for testing.

Early Entrance Testing and Assessment

Applicants who passed the social emotional screening will be eligible for Early Entrance testing. The following will be required prior to testing:

1. Written parental permission form.
2. The testing fee payable to "Bellevue Public Schools." This fee may be prorated and/or waived for an applicant that would qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program.

The assessment process shall be based upon a review of each applicant's capability as shown by multiple criteria, from a variety of sources and data, intended to reveal each nominee's unique needs and developmental level.

The applicants will be assessed using multiple objective criteria. Assessment for the following areas shall occur: cognitive ability, large and fine-motor skills, visual-motor skills and communication skills.

The assessment team will assess the applicant in four developmental areas. The assessment team will include a school psychologist, a classroom teacher and an administrator with responsibility for supervision of the District's EEK program.

Selection

A Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee will review data that has been collected for each of the applicants. The committee is composed of a classroom teacher, a psychologist or other qualified practitioner with the training to interpret cognitive and achievement test results, an administrator with responsibility for the supervision of the district's EEK program and additional professionals, if any, that the District deems desirable.

The Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee will evaluate individual applicant assessment profile data using a blind (no name) process. The selection is based on:

1. A preponderance of evidence from the eligibility criteria that demonstrates the applicant meets all criteria; and
2. Evidence of clear need readiness for Kindergarten.

If both above criteria for eligibility are met the parent will be notified via mail.

Process for Appeal

Parents have the right to appeal the Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee's decision. Individuals appealing the selection committee's decision must submit a letter requesting review of decision within 14 school days of the decision.

Appeals must be based upon one of the following conditions:

1. A condition or circumstance believed to have caused a misinterpretation of the testing results.
2. An extraordinary and temporary circumstance that negatively affected the validity of the test results.

Appeals are reviewed by an Appeals Committee that consists of an administrator, psychologist, teacher and additional professionals, if any, that the District deems desirable. The parent will be notified of the decision in writing within 10 school days of the Appeal Committee's decision. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final. To maintain the validity of testing protocols, applicants will not be re-assessed or re-tested.

Guidance Team

If an applicant meets eligibility criteria, the school's Guidance Team will monitor the student's school progress and appropriateness of placement for the first six weeks of school.

Date: 09.13, 1.17, 8.19, 2.20