

A Parent's Guide to

Early Entrance to Kindergarten 2017-2018



Wellington Exempted Village Schools

305 Union Street
Wellington, Ohio 44090
Telephone: 440-647-4286

Westwood Elementary School

305 Union Street
Wellington, Ohio 44090
Telephone: 440-647-3636

Legislation Governing Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- A parent may request *early* admission to kindergarten if the child turns five years of age after the district's kindergarten entrance date of August 1 and before the following January 1. The local board of education shall determine entrance through a standardized testing program.
- Children who will not yet 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 possible early admittance if referred by an educator within the district, a pre-school educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child.
- Acceleration is the Law (House Bill 79 amended to House Bill 66 – June 30, 2006). Early entrance to kindergarten is a subject covered in the State of Ohio's *Model Student Acceleration Policy*. Appropriate use of accelerated learning opportunities; early entrance kindergarten, whole grade, subject, and early graduation support compliance with requirements in Ohio Administrative Code 3301-35-06.

Wellington Exempted Village School District

- The Wellington Exempted Village School District considers a child eligible for entrance into "regular" kindergarten if he/she attains the age of five on or before August 1st of the year he/she applies for entrance. A child under the age of six (6) who is enrolled in kindergarten will be considered of compulsory school age.
- By parental request a child may be tested for *early* admission to kindergarten if he/she will be five (5) years of age between August 1st and January 1st, inclusive, and exhibit the mental, social, and emotional standards established by the Wellington Board of Education. A checklist will be provided for the student's physician to complete. **If your child turns 5 years of age after August 1st and you believe he/she is a viable candidate for early entrance, please contact the Westwood Elementary School Principal or District Psychologist.**
- On June 20, 2006, the Wellington Board of Education adopted an *Academic Acceleration Policy*:

"Children who are referred for evaluation for possible accelerated placement 60 or more days prior to the start of the school year shall be evaluated in advance of the start of the school year so that the child may be placed in the accelerated placement on the first day of school."

"Children who will not yet 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 possible early admittance if referred by an educator within the district, a pre-school educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Children who will not yet 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 may also be evaluated for possible early admittance at the discretion of the principal of the school to which the student may be admitted."

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*. Developmental readiness is the key to determining whether or not early entrance is appropriate. Even though a child may have a great deal of ability, he/she 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 him or her?
- Will my child be frustrated by this placement?
- What are the possible long-term impacts for my child as he/she progresses through elementary, middle and high school (e.g., getting a driver's license at a younger age, 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?
For example, students are expected to ask and answer questions about key details in a text, retell familiar stories with details, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text, and identify similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic.

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. Today's kindergarten students are engaged in a rigorous instructional program. Please take the time to review the following information:

- 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 at screening or within the first six weeks of school.
- The *Ohio Department of Education* has on its website a checklist for kindergarten readiness. (See the *Kindergarten Readiness Checklist* on the next page.) When looking at whether early entrance is appropriate for a child, the same readiness guidelines should be considered.
- Kindergarten in the Wellington Exempted Village School District is a *full-day program*. The full-day program begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:25 p.m. Students are expected to participate in the academic program throughout the day.

Ohio Department of Education (ODE)

(<http://www.ode.state.oh.us>)

Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

To do well in school, children need to be supported and nurtured in all areas of development.

It is also important that your child is physically, socially and emotionally ready for school. This checklist can help serve as your guide. But please remember, young children change fast. If they cannot do something this week, you may see them do it a couple of weeks later.

Is your child ready for kindergarten? Ask yourself these questions:

Development Area	Tips and Activities to Help Prepare Your Child
Physical Skills Does your child... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, and climbing;• draw and trace basic shapes;• cut with scissors;• bounce a ball;• ride a tricycle?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Materials that will help your child develop the motor skills needed to learn to write include crayons, markers, pencils, glue, scissors, paper and paint, puzzles, LEGOS and blocks.• Activities that will help your child's coordination include climbing, jumping, skipping, playing ball, using playground equipment and riding a tricycle.
Health and Safety Needs Has your child... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• had required shots (<i>or provide a signed waiver</i>);• had a dental exam;• had a vision exam;• learned own first and last name;• learned first and last name of parent;• learned to watch for cars when crossing the street;• learned to not talk to strangers;• developed a set routine for going to bed;• learned to follow safety rules?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help your child learn his or her full name, address and telephone number.• Help your child to look both ways when crossing the street.• Talk with your child about strangers and who to go to for help.• Use bedtime as the opportunity to read to and talk with your child.
Personal needs Without your help, can your child... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• use the bathroom;• wash hands;• brush teeth;• use tissue to blow nose;• button and zip up shirts and pants;• put on and take off coat;• tie and/or use velcro shoes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create morning and bedtime bathing and tooth-brushing routines.• Allow your child to dress themselves.• Practice putting on shoes.• Help your child learn to use their words to tell other grownups when they are feeling sick or hurt.
Social and Emotional Skills Does your child... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• play well with other children;• separate from a parent without being upset;• share with other children;• care about the feelings of others;• follow routines;• put toys away when asked?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give your child small chores to learn responsibility.• Help your child learn to follow directions by giving simple steps.• Encourage your child to share.• Praise your child when he or she does something well.• Provide guidance when your child is having difficulty.

Applying for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- If you believe that your child may be a good candidate for early entrance, please obtain an information/application packet from the principal at Westwood Elementary School, or the Wellington Exempted Village School District School psychologist. You may call the principal of Westwood Elementary at (440) 647-3636 to have an information/application packet mailed.
- Once the application has been completed, it needs to be returned to the principal of Westwood Elementary School *no later than May 1st* in the year for which admission is being requested.
- An observation by a district representative in a preschool setting *may* need to be scheduled for your child. *Parents will be contacted if this observation is needed.* While some children may be cognitively ready for kindergarten, they may not be developmentally ready. This additional information may be needed to assess the social and emotional skills necessary to be successful in a school environment.
- The school psychologist will coordinate the evaluation process. *The evaluation will be completed within 45 days of the submission of application.*
- Once the evaluations are completed, an acceleration evaluation committee will convene for the purpose of conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the child. This committee may include the following:
 - 1) the Westwood Elementary School principal
 - 2) a kindergarten teacher
 - 3) a parent *or* legal guardian of the referred student *or* a representative designated by a parent *or* legal guardian of the referred student
 - 4) a gifted education supervisor
 - 5) a school psychologist

How will my child be evaluated for early entrance to kindergarten?

- Early entrance evaluation is completed in the spring.
- Because developmental readiness is important for success in kindergarten, students who are viable candidates for Early Entrance to Kindergarten are expected to be developmentally “on track” with the typical kindergarten student. Should a student fail to meet the developmental readiness assessment, the acceleration team (principal, kindergarten teacher, gifted supervisor, parent and/or legal guardian(s), and school psychologist) will then discuss and reach consensus as to what placement is best for the child. The *Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition* will be the guide for early entrance and whole grade acceleration.

Instruments used:

Individual Intelligence Tests

Woodcock Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ-COG)

According to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, a student who achieves a score of 115 or higher on the WJ-COG may be a viable candidate for acceleration.

Timeline for Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Deadline for Early Entrance to kindergarten applications May 1, 2017

Return referral to:

Paul Holland, Principal
Westwood Elementary School
305 Union Street
Wellington, OH 44090
(440) 647-3636

Deadline for completion of evaluations 45 days after submission of application

Deadline for completion of acceleration committee meetings 45 days after submission of application

Deadline for written notification of outcome of the evaluation process 45 days after submission of application

Deadline to submit a written appeal to the Superintendent or his/her designee
regarding the outcome of the evaluation process 30 days after notification of outcome

Applications received *after* May 1, 2016 will be scheduled at the principal's discretion.

IMPORTANT

Very few children qualify for early entrance to kindergarten. Please make sure you proceed with child care arrangements as a contingency. If you are selecting a preschool program please understand that those programs routinely fill up quickly. Please register your child as you normally would, but let the preschool know that your child is being considered for early entrance to kindergarten.

Wellington Exempted Village School District

Westwood Elementary School
Paul Holland, Principal

305 Union Street
Wellington, Ohio 44090
Phone: (440) 647-3636

EARLY ENTRANCE KINDERGARTEN CHECKLIST

The seven broad developmental dimensions provide the framework for the kindergarten instructional program. This checklist will help in determining your child's readiness for a kindergarten program. **Please read each statement and indicate by placing a checkmark how you rate your child's abilities.**

<u>Physical Well-Being and Motor Development</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Performs self-help tasks independently (dressing, undressing, zipping, tying, toileting, eating)	_____	_____	_____
Uses eye/hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks (drawing, writing, and cutting)	_____	_____	_____
Uses balance and control to perform large motor tasks (walking, jumping, and skipping)	_____	_____	_____

<u>Personal and Social Development</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Shows eagerness to learn (curious, likes to investigate)	_____	_____	_____
Follows rules and routines (cleans up at play time)	_____	_____	_____
Handles change and transition (dinnertime to bedtime)	_____	_____	_____
Interacts easily with one or more children	_____	_____	_____
Separates easily from parent	_____	_____	_____
The ability to listen (attend) for at least 10 minutes	_____	_____	_____

<u>Language and Literacy</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Listens for meaning in stories, discussions, and conversations	_____	_____	_____
Speaks clearly to share ideas and thoughts	_____	_____	_____
Can identify most letters (uppercase and lowercase)	_____	_____	_____
Can identify some beginning sounds	_____	_____	_____
Use some letters and words to write	_____	_____	_____

<u>Mathematical Thinking</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Can recognize numbers 0-20	_____	_____	_____
Can orally count forward to 20	_____	_____	_____
Can recognize, duplicate, and extend simple patterns (circle-triangle, circle-triangle, circle-triangle)	_____	_____	_____
Can recognize and duplicate basic shapes	_____	_____	_____

<u>Scientific Thinking</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Uses a magnifying glass to look at different objects	_____	_____	_____
Can describe and sort objects by one or more properties	_____	_____	_____
Uses the five senses to make observations about the the natural world	_____	_____	_____

<u>Social Studies</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Recognizes self and others as having same and different characteristics	_____	_____	_____
Describes roles and responsibilities of people (Mom is a doctor, she helps sick people)	_____	_____	_____
Recognizes the reasons for rules	_____	_____	_____

<u>The Arts</u>	Frequently	Sometimes	None of the time
Likes to paint and draw	_____	_____	_____
Likes to sing and dance	_____	_____	_____
Can share ideas about a drawing/painting	_____	_____	_____
Can recognize basic colors	_____	_____	_____

RETURN APPLICATION and PERMISSION FOR REVIEW NO LATER THAN MAY 1, 2017