

# Early Entrance Information

The Oconomowoc Area School District (OASD) follows the Wisconsin state statutes, which specifies that to enter five-year-old kindergarten; children must be five years of age by September 1.

Occasionally, exceptions to this policy are made for children whose potential and skills are in the superior range. Oconomowoc Area School District has specific criteria and procedures for considering parent requests for early entrance.

Research indicates that early entrance, early reading ability, and early math ability are not a predictor for success in school. In fact, children with strong early reading skills often plateau by third grade. Children who enter kindergarten early may experience social or emotional difficulties due to their immaturity. As they progress through school, children who are young for their grade level may incur more challenges fitting in with their peers in social situations and participating in extra-curricular activities because of their age and/or their size. These and other possible concerns of being younger than others in their classes should be considered carefully.

The Oconomowoc Area School District takes the issue of early entrance very seriously and may screen only one or two children per year. Very few children are found eligible for early entrance to five-year-old kindergarten.

# Criteria for Eligibility

OASD has developed standard criteria and procedures to allow for careful consideration of parents' requests for early entrance to five-year-old kindergarten. The criteria are:

<i>Five-year-old Kindergarten Criteria</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The child turns five by September 30 as documented by a certified copy of the child's birth certificate.</li></ul>
The child scores in the superior range on a variety of assessment tools in the areas of :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intellectual function score 130+</li><li>• Academic/School readiness score 121+</li><li>• Social/emotional abilities score 116+</li><li>• Fine motor skills score 118+</li><li>• Receptive and expressive language development score 120+</li></ul>

The child must meet or exceed the standard set by the OASD in five of the six categories listed above.

A recommendation will be made by the early entrance team to the Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Student Services.

See Early Entrance Assessment Grid for OASD Eligibility Standards.

# Procedures

- A parent will contact the Director of Student Services to indicate an interest in early entrance to five-year-old kindergarten or visit the district website at: [www.oasd.k12.wi.us](http://www.oasd.k12.wi.us)
- Parents may download the early entrance information including a parent letter explaining the procedure and the application.
- Parents will return the completed forms to the Director of Student Services by April 1<sup>st</sup> with a certified copy of the child's birth certificate for verification purposes (copy will be returned to parent).
- District staff will contact the parent to set up evaluation appointments which will take place at an OASD site.
- After review of the assessment information, the early entrance team will make a recommendation to the Director of Student Services and the Superintendent of Schools.
- The Superintendent, acting on behalf of the Board of Education, has the discretion and final authority to decide whether or not the child is to be admitted to five-year-old kindergarten.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **Q** *Does OASD consider early entrance to Kindergarten?*

**A** Under Wisconsin State Statutes, children must be five by September 1 of their kindergarten year for admission to kindergarten. However, OASD may consider early entrance if the child meets the criteria established by the district's early entrance policy.

- **Q** *Why do children applying for early entrance have to be assessed when other children entering kindergarten do not?*

**A** Children who turn five on or before September 1 are age eligible and therefore entitled to enter five-year-old kindergarten. A child whose birth date falls after September 1 may be considered for early entrance.

- **Q** *If I put my child in a private kindergarten, will he/she automatically be eligible for first grade the following year?*

**A** No. Children, not age eligible for first grade, will need to meet the criteria for early entrance to five-year-old kindergarten, adjusted for age.

- **Q** *Who makes the decision about whether my child can enter five-year-old kindergarten early?*

**A** The Early Entrance Team will make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools and the director of Student Services based on the results of the assessment information. The Superintendent, acting on behalf of the Board of Education, has the discretion and final authority to decide whether or not the child is to be admitted to five-year-old kindergarten.

- **Q** *Who should I contact about having my child tested for early entrance into five-year-old kindergarten?*

**A** You should contact the Director of Student Services or go to the school district website at [www.oasd.k12.wi.us](http://www.oasd.k12.wi.us) and click on the "Early Entrance" link.

- **Q** *Who will be testing my child and how long will this testing take?*

**A** The Early Entrance assessment team will be made up of: a school psychologist; a speech/language pathologist; an educational diagnostician, and a social worker. The assessment will be given over a series of days and lengths will vary (approximately one hour at a time).

- **Q** *When will decisions be made?*

**A** Our goal is to have most assessments and decisions completed by the end of the school year.

***The goal of the Oconomowoc Area School District is to work collaboratively with the parent/guardian to ensure that the best decision is reached for each individual child.***



## ***Early Entrance to Five-year-old Kindergarten***

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