

Early Entrance  
to  
Kindergarten  
(& 1<sup>st</sup> Grade)  
Guide for Families



Chagrin Falls Exempted Village School District  
400 East Washington St. Chagrin Falls, OH 44022  
Telephone: 440-247-5500

## Legislation Governing Early Entrance and Giftedness

By Ohio Department of Education guidelines, a parent may request **Regular Early Entrance to Kindergarten if the child turns age 5 after the district's kindergarten entrance date (August 1) and before January 1 of the school year in which placement is requested.** The local board of education shall determine entrance through a standardized assessment process.

Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall also be evaluated for possible early entrance if referred by a parent/guardian, an educator within the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. This evaluation for **Early Entrance to Kindergarten requires use of the district's Gifted Acceleration Policy, as this placement would be considered a grade acceleration.** This process requires assessment for the purpose of gifted identification in the areas of Math, Reading, and Cognitive Ability, administration of above-grade level assessments, assembly of an Acceleration Committee, and use of the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) in decision-making. As per Ohio Revised Code (3324.01), "gifted" means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under Division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of Section 3324.03 of the Revised Code.

### Chagrin Falls Exempted Village School District - Kindergarten Overview

- The Chagrin Falls Exempted Village School District considers a child eligible for entrance into "regular" kindergarten if s/he attains the age of five on or before August 1 of the year s/he applies for entrance. A child under the age of six (6) who is enrolled in kindergarten will be considered of compulsory age.
- By parental/guardian request a child may be tested for Regular Early Entrance to Kindergarten if s/he will be five (5) years of age between August 2 and December 31, and exhibit the mental, social and emotional standards established by the Chagrin Falls Exempted Village Board of Education. If your child turns 5 years of age on or after January 1, 2022 and you believe s/he is a viable candidate for Early Entrance to Kindergarten in the 2021-22 school year, please contact the district Director of Curriculum/Gifted Coordinator at (440) 247-2432 or via email at [becky.quinn@chagrinschools.org](mailto:becky.quinn@chagrinschools.org) - as this falls under the Early Entrance to Kindergarten - Gifted Acceleration process.
- A child is eligible for Entrance into 1<sup>st</sup> grade if s/he attains the age of six (6) on or before August 1 of the year in which s/he applies for entrance and has completed the kindergarten program of this district (or another program accredited by the state's Department of Education) and has been recommended by the teacher for advancement to the first grade. This requirement may only be waived if a district Acceleration Committee decides it is appropriate for the child. If your child turns 6 years of age on or after January 1<sup>st</sup>, has not yet completed Kindergarten, and you believe s/he is a viable candidate for **Early Entrance** to 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, please contact the district Director of Curriculum/Coordinator of Gifted Education at (440) 247-2432 or via email at [becky.quinn@chagrinschools.org](mailto:becky.quinn@chagrinschools.org).
- As per the Ohio Department of Education's Model Acceleration Policy, "*Children who are referred for evaluation for possible accelerated placement sixty 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 are referred for possible accelerated placement sixty or more days prior to the start of the second semester shall be evaluated for possible accelerated placement at the start of the second semester. In all other cases residency within our school district and proof of age is required.*"

## ***Is Early Entrance to Kindergarten the best choice for my child?***

Early entrance should be viewed as a means of meeting a child's *needs*. The key is determining whether or not Early Entrance is appropriate for this developmental readiness. Even though a child may have a lot of ability, s/he 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 s/he progresses through elementary, middle and high school (e.g., 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?*

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 students are engaged in a rigorous instructional program. Parents/guardians can easily access the Early Learning Content Standards on the Ohio Department of Education website at:

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1389&ContentID=1629&Content=135483>

Parents/guardians may also review the Ohio Department of Education's State Standards in Math and ELA and Ohio Department of Education's State Standards in Science and Social Studies for Kindergarten students by visiting:

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?Page=2&TopicID=1695&TopicRelationID=1696>

The Ohio Department of Education's K-12 Social and Emotional Learning Standards may also be helpful for parents/guardians to review. These may be viewed here:

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Social-and-Emotional-Learning/Social-and-Emotional-Learning-Standards/K-12-SEL-Standards-Full-Final.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>

Kindergarten is provided to all families in the Chagrin Falls Exempted Village School District **via a half-day program, free of charge**. Many families opt to enroll their child in a full-day Kindergarten program, which is provided via a per student fee assessed to each family. (Students eligible for free-reduced lunch may be eligible to attend without a fee or at a reduced rate.)

## 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 so 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? Please ask yourself these questions:**

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

## Applying for Regular Early Entrance to Kindergarten

If you believe that your child may be a good candidate for Regular Early Entrance to Kindergarten (students turning age 5 between August 2 - December 31), a printed copy of this information/application packet can be obtained within Gurney Elementary School, by phone (440) 247-5500, or by contacting the Director of Curriculum/Gifted Coordinator at the Chagrin Falls Exempted Village Schools Central Office (400 East Washington St. Chagrin Falls, OH 44022) to request.

- Complete the online registration through “Final Forms” by going to our web page at [www.chagrinschools.org](http://www.chagrinschools.org) and clicking on “Quick Links” which will take you to “Student Registration.”
- Upload required documentation as listed below.

Required Registration Documentation:

- **Photo ID** of legal parent/guardian
- **Original birth certificate** of the child being enrolled
- **Proofs of residency**
  - o **Homeowners** – Two of the following must be presented: tax bill, mortgage statement, insurance statement, bank statement, signed purchase agreement, or utility bill.
  - o **Tenants** – A signed lease agreement and Property Owner Declaration completed by the property owner must be provided in addition to the two proofs of residency. If the utilities are in the property owner’s name, then the property owner must provide two proofs of ownership.
- **Custody decree and shared parenting agreement** (if applicable) – Complete, current legal documentation must be presented at the time of registrations. The District must be notified of any future revisions.
- **Guardianship Legal documentation** (if applicable)
- **Immunization records**

**Registration is not finalized without completion of ALL of the required documents in Final Forms and the items listed above uploaded. REGISTRATION MUST BE DONE BEFORE EARLY ENTRANCE SCREENING WILL BE SCHEDULED.**

Appointments for Early Entrance to Kindergarten (for students turning age 5 between August 2 - December 31) may be scheduled by contacting Molly Edwards, School Psychologist at Gurney Elementary School at [molly.edwards@chagrinschools.org](mailto:molly.edwards@chagrinschools.org) **Please bring the completed application on page 6 to your scheduled appointment.**

### *How will my child be evaluated for Regular Early Admittance to Kindergarten?*

**The following process will be followed for any students who will turn age 5 between August 2 - December 31 of the year of requested enrollment for whom Early Entrance to Kindergarten is requested.**

**January – May:** Each student will be assessed via an individually-administered nationally normed cognitive assessment and will need to earn a **Full Scale IQ score of 120 or above.**

**(If the child has met #1 above) – January – May:** The parent(s)/guardian(s) of each student will be provided with checklists to complete to gather more information about the child.

**May – early June:** The student will be assessed on a nationally normed achievement test (i.e. the WIAT 4, the Woodcock Johnson IV Tests of Achievement, or other nationally normed identified assessment) in the areas of **Reading, Written Expression, and Mathematics, with performance grade-level normed relative to fall Kindergarten scores, with the overall achievement composite score falling at or above the 75th percentile rank (and each of the three individual composite scores falling at or above the 50th percentile rank).**

**May – early June:** The student will be tested on visual motor skills via a nationally standardized assessment called the VMI (Visual Motor Integration), **with needed performance meeting or exceeding the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.**

### **REMINDERS - EARLY ENTRANCE FOR STUDENTS TURNING AGE 5 ON JANUARY 1st OR BEYOND...**

- **Students who will turn age 5 on or after January 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year to be enrolled are considered Grade Acceleration candidates via Early Entrance to Kindergarten.** This will require the submission of a written referral from an educator within the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child, in addition to testing for the purpose of gifted identification. (If you are unable to access any of these individuals to gain a referral, please indicate this in writing and submit with your child’s registration information.) Your child may require an observation by a district representative (elementary guidance counselor and/or school psychologist). 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.
- Once the Regular Early Entrance to K evaluation of a student who will turn age 5 on or after January 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year to be enrolled is complete, 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: the home school principal or assistant principal, a kindergarten teacher or a gifted intervention specialist, a parent and/or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred student, a gifted education coordinator or gifted intervention specialist, a school psychologist or guidance counselor.

Chagrin Falls Exempted Village School District

Chagrin Falls Exempted Village School District  
 ATTN: Molly Edwards - Early Entrance to K  
 1155 Bell Rd. Chagrin Falls, OH 44022

Please complete this application if you feel that your child demonstrates academic achievement, social, emotional, and physical maturity appropriate for kindergarten placement and should be considered for early placement in kindergarten.

Child's Name _____			
Last _____	First _____	Middle Initial _____	
Birthdate* _____ / _____ / _____ Male _____ Female _____ Opt to Not Identify _____			
*IF CHILD TURNS 5 AFTER 12/31/2021, WRITTEN REFERRAL ALSO NEEDED			
Address _____			
Street _____	City _____	State _____	Zip Code _____
Custodial Parent(s)/ Guardian(s) Name(s): _____			
Relationship to Child: _____			
Phone Number(s): _____			
Email(s): _____			

**Preschool Experience:** (Please attach preschool teacher reports, if available)

List the nursery schools, Head Start, special programs, and other day care programs attended. Include the dates of attendance and the approximate number of hours per week attended.

Name of School Program	Dates of Attendance	# of Hours/Week

Why do you feel that your child would be ready for a kindergarten program? Comment on your child's social behavior and academic skills. (Use additional paper if needed)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the contents of the Early Entrance to Kindergarten packet and give permission to Chagrin Falls Exempted Village School District staff to assess your child as described in the packet.

\_\_\_\_\_ / / \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Custodial Parent/Guardian                      Date

**RETURN THIS SIGNED APPLICATION** on or before the identified testing date.