

## EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN AND PREKINDERGARTEN - AR

### I. Early Admission to Kindergarten

COMAR13A.08.01.02.B.(1)-(2) states that a child admitted to a kindergarten program in the public schools shall be 5 years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance. However, some four-year-old children may demonstrate capabilities warranting early admission to the Kindergarten year. To this end, Talbot County Public Schools has developed these administrative regulations to allow a parent or guardian to request early admission to kindergarten for their four-year-old child. Children will only be considered for early entry if they will turn five years of age on or before October 15 of the kindergarten year. Early Entry placements will be made only if space is available in the home school.

#### A. Application

1. Parents considering early admissions to kindergarten will make a request at the home school office for an Early Admissions Packet. At this time, the principal will schedule an appointment with the parent to discuss the issue of early admission and provide them with the Early Admission Application Packet (see appendix A.)
2. Parents will complete The Early Admission Application Packet and submit it to the principal at the home school. Applications will be accepted between May 1 and June 1 prior to the school year in which the child applies for early admissions. No applications will be accepted after June 1, unless the family is new to the area. The application must include the following:
  - *Application for Requesting Early Admission*
  - two letters documenting the child's abilities supporting school readiness; these should come from someone who has knowledge of the child in comparison to other children this age (e.g. pediatrician, child care provider, nursery school teacher, etc.)
  - any other records the parent/guardian feels would be useful in making the decision for early admission

#### B. Review and Consideration

1. A central team will be established to review all applications. This team will review all applicants between June 1 and June 30. The central team will review the application packet for evidence of cognitive and social maturity warranting consideration for early admission to kindergarten. The team will consist of the following membership, but not limited to:

### EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN AND PREKINDERGARTEN ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

- Early Learning Specialist
- Principal
- School Psychologist

- Special educator
- Kindergarten teacher

1. Upon review of the application, if the team determines there is no basis for further consideration, the parent or guardian will be notified in writing denying early admission.
2. If the application warrants further consideration, the team will designate a case manager who will contact the parent or guardian to arrange a time to conduct a formal assessment. Talbot County Public School assessment is required. The case manager will make every effort to make the time and location convenient to the parent/guardian.
3. A formal assessment will be administered, including multiple measures of the child's development. Assessment will take place between July 1 and July 31, Talbot County Public School assessment is required. Any child who does not participate in this assessment cannot be considered for early entry.
4. Data will be reviewed by the central team upon completion of the assessment. Determinations of early admissions will take place at this team meeting. The parent will be invited to participate in this meeting.

#### C. Notification

1. If the team deems that the child demonstrates capabilities warranting early admission, the parent will be notified in writing by August 31. Copies will be on file with the Early Learning Specialist and in the child's permanent record.
2. If the team deems that the child does not demonstrate capabilities warranting early admission, the parent will be notified in writing by August 31. Copies will be on file with the Early Learning Specialist and the child's permanent record.

#### D. Observation Period

Each child placed on an early entry will be monitored by the classroom teacher and the building administrator for a period of 30 days. At the end of this period, recommendations will be made to either continue the placement or to terminate the early entry based on how well the student is adjusting to the placement.

### **EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN AND PREKINDERGARTEN ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

#### E. Appeals

If an application is denied or terminated early, the parent or guardian may file for an appeal as outlined in the APPEALS AND HEARINGS POLICY CODE 2.4.

## **II. Early Admission to Prekindergarten**

The prekindergarten program is a state-funded prekindergarten program for four-year-old children who are potentially at-risk of having difficulties in school. The overall goal of prekindergarten is to provide learning experiences to help children develop and maintain

the basic skills necessary for successful school performance. Eligibility in Talbot County Public Schools is established in two tiers.

Tier I – income eligibility (would qualify for Free and Reduce Meals Program based on income)

Tier II – demonstrates other identified risk factors (see Prekindergarten Registration form)

COMAR13A.08.01.02A(3) requires that a child admitted to the prekindergarten program in the public schools shall be 4 years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for admission. However, there may be 3 year-old children who demonstrate educational needs warranting early admission into the prekindergarten program. Children will be considered for early entry into prekindergarten if they meet the following criteria:

- the child turns four years of age on or before October 15 of the year in which they are requesting early entry.
- The child is from an economically disadvantaged background (i.e. eligible for free or reduced price meal program as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture) or is homeless.
- there is evidence of lack of school readiness
- the child lives within the boundaries of the school at the time the request for early admission is made. Residency must be verified by the home school.
- The child is toilet trained.

Requests for early entry into prekindergarten will only be considered if space is available in the program.

#### A. Application

1. Parents considering early admissions to kindergarten will make a request at the home school office for an Early Admissions Packet. At this time, the principal will schedule an appointment with the parent to discuss the issue of early admission and provide them with the Early Admission Application.

### **EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN AND PREKINDERGARTEN ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

2. Parents will complete The Early Admission Application Packet and submit it to the principal at the home school. Applications will be accepted between May 1 and June 1 prior to the school year in which the child applies for early admissions. No applications will be accepted after June 1, unless the family is new to the area. The application must include the following:
  - *Application for Requesting Early Admission*
  - two letters documenting the child's abilities supporting the child's lack of readiness; these should come from someone who has knowledge of the child in comparison to other children this age (e.g. pediatrician, child care provider, nursery school teacher, etc.)
  - any other records the parent/guardian feels would be useful in making the decision for early admission

#### B. Review and Consideration

1. A central team will be established to review all applications. This team will review all applicants between June 1 and June 30. The central team will review the application packet for evidence of cognitive and social maturity warranting consideration for early admission to kindergarten. The team will consist of the following membership, but not limited to:
  - Early Learning Specialist
  - Principal
  - School Psychologist
  - Special educator
  - Prekindergarten teacher
2. Upon review of the application, if the team determines there is no basis for further consideration, the parent or guardian will be notified in writing denying early admission.
3. If the application warrants further consideration, the team will notify the parent of the decision.

#### C. Notification

1. If the team verifies that the child has met the necessary criteria for early entry into Prekindergarten, the parent will be notified in writing by August 31. Copies will be on file with the Early Learning Specialist and in the child's permanent record.
2. If the team verifies that the child has NOT met the necessary criteria for early entry into Prekindergarten, the parent will be notified in writing by August 31. Copies will be on file with the Early Learning Specialist and the child's permanent record.

### **EARLY ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN AND PREKINDERGARTEN ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

#### D. Observation Period

Each child placed on an early admissions to Prekindergarten will be monitored by the classroom teacher and the building administrator for a period of 30 days. At the end of this period, recommendations will be made to either continue the placement or to terminate the early entry based on how well the student is adjusting to the placement.

#### E. Appeals

If an application is denied or terminated early, the parent or guardian may file for an appeal as outlined in the APPEALS AND HEARINGS POLICY CODE 2.4.

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