



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

AMHERST EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOLS

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POWERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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The Amherst Schools - A Community of Excellence

Board of Education * 550 Milan Ave. Amherst, OH 44001 * (440) 988-4406

LEGISLATION GOVERNING EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

1. Kindergarten Age Requirements

For the 2026–27 school year, a child is eligible for kindergarten enrollment if they are five years of age by the first day of instruction, which is August 27, 2026. If a child is not five by this date but will reach five years of age before January 1, 2027, the child may be considered for early admittance upon referral by a parent or guardian, a district educator, a preschool educator familiar with the child, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Following the required evaluation, the district will determine whether the child qualifies for early entrance. If a child will not be five years of age before January 1, 2027, admittance to kindergarten may occur only in accordance with the district's acceleration policy, as outlined in Section 3324.10 of the Ohio Revised Code.

2. Acceleration

Early entrance to kindergarten is a subject addressed through gifted education and is outlined in Ohio's *Model Student Acceleration Policy*. Admitting a student who is not age-eligible to attend kindergarten a year early to school is considered a whole-grade acceleration. For academically talented young children, early entrance to school may be an excellent option. There is abundant evidence that bright children who are carefully selected for early entrance generally perform very well, both academically and socially.

AMHERST EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOLS

1. Age Eligibility

The Amherst Exempted Village Schools considers a child eligible for kindergarten if he or she attains the age of five on or before the first day of instruction of the school of admittance. A child under the age of six (6) who is enrolled in kindergarten will be considered of compulsory school age.

2. Early Admission Referral

Upon referral by a child's parent or guardian, an educator employed by the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child, a child may be tested for early admission to kindergarten if the child will be five (5) years of age between August 1st and January 1st, inclusive, and exhibits the mental, social, and emotional standards established by the Amherst Board of Education.

3. Board of Education Adopted State of Ohio Policy

On July 10, 2006, the Amherst Board of Education adopted an *Academic Acceleration Policy consistent with [Ohio's Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners](#)*.

Evaluations related to referrals submitted to Mackenzie Hall, Director of Curriculum, between August 15th and April 15th, will ordinarily be completed, and a written report issued within forty-five (45) calendar days of submission of the referral to the school principal. Evaluations related to referrals submitted between April 16th and August 14th will

ordinarily be completed, and a written report will be issued within forty-five (45) days of the start of the school year.

If a child is recommended for early entrance, the acceleration evaluation committee will develop a written acceleration plan for that child.

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. 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., beginning college at a younger age or physical size for athletics)?
- 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 *also* **easily achieves** when presented with new material.

Once the decision for early entrance is made, the choice is difficult to reverse. If a child is evaluated as a good candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, all stakeholders must be 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 & Workforce \(ODEW\)](#) website.
- The Ohio Department of Education & Workforce's website contains useful information about kindergarten, in particular, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment - Revised (KRA-R). There is a family guide on Early Learning and School Readiness (ELSR) link about the [KRA](#), 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). The same readiness guidelines should be considered when looking at whether early entrance is appropriate for a child.

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?

Development Area	Tips and Activities to Prepare Your Child
Physical Skills Does your child... • enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, and climbing; • draw and trace basic shapes; • cut with scissors; • bounce a ball; • ride a tricycle	• 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... • had required shots (or provide a signed waiver); • 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 not to talk to strangers; • developed a set routine for going to bed; • learned to follow safety rules?	• Help your children 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 and talk with your child.
Personal Needs Without help, can your child... • 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?	• Create morning and bedtime bathing and toothbrushing routines. • Allow your child to dress himself/herself • 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... • play well with other children; • separate from a parent without being upset; • share with other children; • care about the feelings of others;	• 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.

- follow routines;
- put toys away when asked?

- Provide guidance when your child is having difficulty.

APPLYING FOR EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

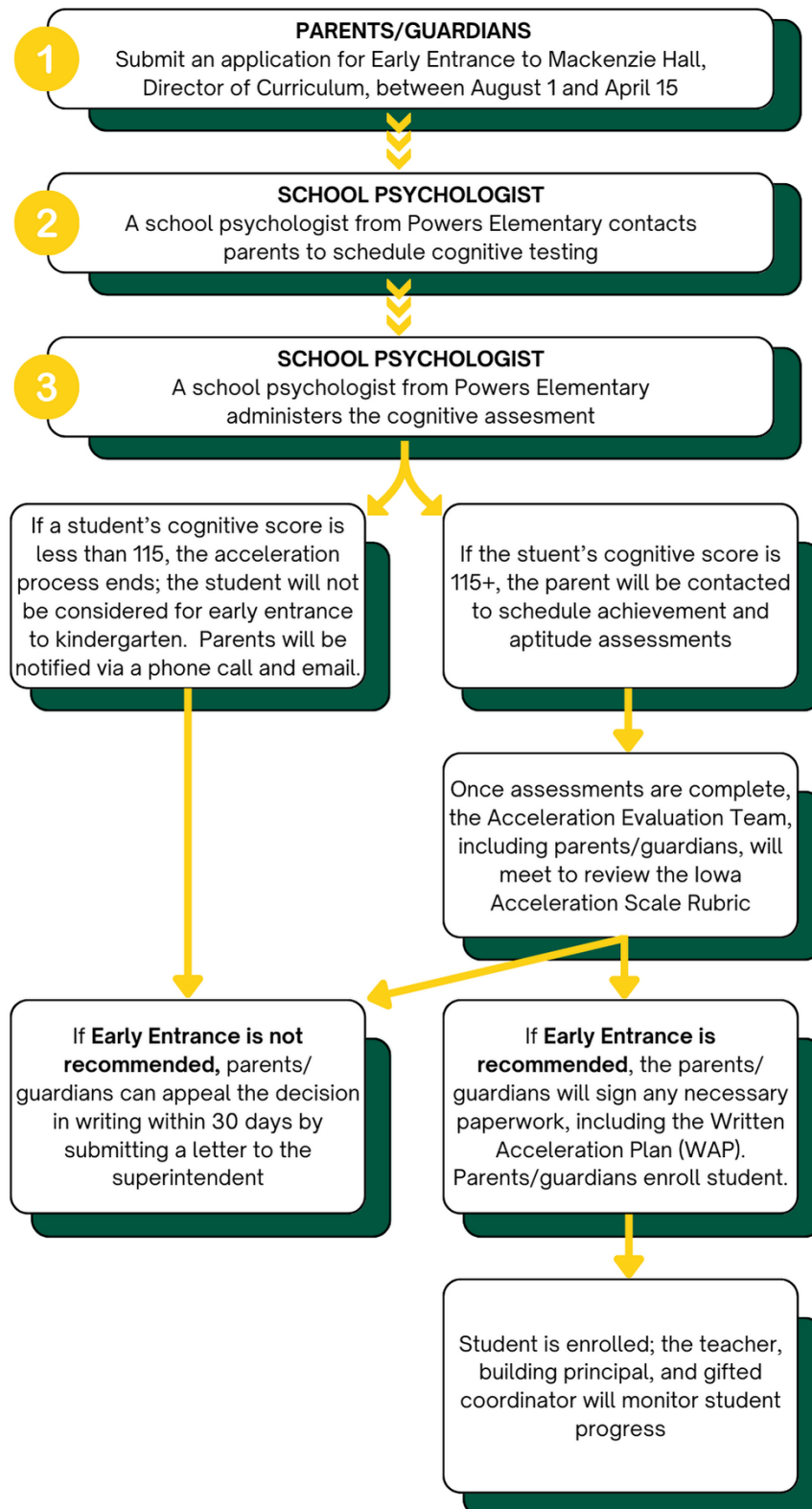
If you believe your child may be a candidate for early entrance to kindergarten, please complete the application packet.

- Once the application and checklist have been completed, they must be returned to Mackenzie Hall, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, no later than *April 15th*, 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 the application.
- Once the evaluations are completed, an acceleration evaluation committee will convene to conduct a fair and thorough evaluation of the child. This committee may include the following:
 - A. the Director of Curriculum & Instruction
 - B. a Power Elementary School Administrator
 - C. a kindergarten teacher
 - D. a parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred student
 - E. a gifted education supervisor
 - F. a school psychologist

HOW WILL MY CHILD BE EVALUATED FOR EARLY ENTRANCE?

Early entrance evaluations are completed in the spring. Because developmental readiness is essential 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 will then discuss and reach a consensus as to what placement is best for the child. The ***Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd Edition***, is used to determine the appropriateness of early entrance and whole-grade acceleration.

EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN FLOW CHART



*The Acceleration Evaluation Team will consist of the parent/guardian, school psychologist, principal or assistant principal, gifted coordinator and the Director of Curriculum and Instriction

INSTRUMENTS USED:

INDIVIDUAL INTELLIGENCE TESTS

- Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Third Edition (WPPSI-III)
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales- 5th Edition

*According to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, a student who achieves a score of 115 or higher on the WPPSI-III or Binet-V, is a viable candidate for acceleration. Students who do not achieve this score will **not** be considered for early entrance to kindergarten. However, if a student scores 115 or higher on the WPPSI or Stanford-Binet Scales, additional measures of achievement and aptitude will be administered and used in consideration for early entrance.*

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT TEST

- Woodcock-Johnson IV (Reading, Language, Math, and Academic Knowledge)

TIMELINE FOR EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN

Deadline for Early Entrance to Kindergarten Applications	April 15th
Deadline for completion of evaluations	45 days after submission of the application
Deadline for completion of acceleration committee meetings	June 15th
Deadline for written notification of the outcome of the evaluation process	June 15th
Deadline to submit a written appeal to the Superintendent, Mr. Mike Molnar, or his designee regarding the outcome of the evaluation process	June 30th

Applications received **after** April 15th will be scheduled at the discretion of the Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Mackenzie Hall.

RETURN APPLICATION TO:

Mrs. Mackenzie Hall
Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Amherst Exempted Village School Board of Education
550 Milan Ave.
Amherst, Ohio 44001
Mackenzie_Hall@amherstk12.org
440-988-4406

IMPORTANT

Very few children qualify for early entrance to kindergarten. Please make sure you proceed with childcare 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.

APPLICATION & PERMISSION FOR ASSESSMENT:

Early Entrance to Kindergarten



RETURN COMPLETED FORMS TO:

Mrs. Mackenzie Hall
Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Amherst Exempted Village School Board of Education
550 Milan Ave.
Amherst, Ohio 44001

Please complete this application if you feel that your child demonstrates academic achievement, and social, emotional, and physical maturity appropriate for kindergarten placement and should be considered for early placement in kindergarten/1st grade.

Child's Name: _____

Last Name

First Name

Middle Name

Birthdate: ____/____/____ Male ____ Female ____

Address: _____

House Number and Street

City

State

Zip Code

Parent/Guardian Name(s) _____

Relationship to child _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Preschool or Kindergarten Experience (please attach the preschool report card if available; List the nursery schools, Head Start, special programs, and other daycare programs attended. Include the dates of attendance and the approximate number of hours per week attended.)

Name of School/Program	Dates of Attendance	Number of Hours per 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.

RETURN APPLICATION & PERMISSION FOR REVIEW NO LATER THAN APRIL 15th.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the contents of the Early Entrance brochure and give permission to have your child assessed:

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

EARLY ENTRANCE CHECKLIST

The seven broad developmental dimensions provide the framework for the kindergarten instructional program. This checklist will help determine your child's readiness for a kindergarten program. Please read each statement and place a checkmark in the appropriate column.

1. Physical Well-being and Motor Development	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)			

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

3. Language and Literacy	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 (<i>uppercase and lowercase</i>)			
Can identify some beginning sounds			
Use some letters and words to write			

4. Mathematical Thinking	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			

5. Scientific Thinking	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			
Use the five senses to make observations about the natural world			

6. Physical Well-being and Motor Development	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)			

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

8. The Arts	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			