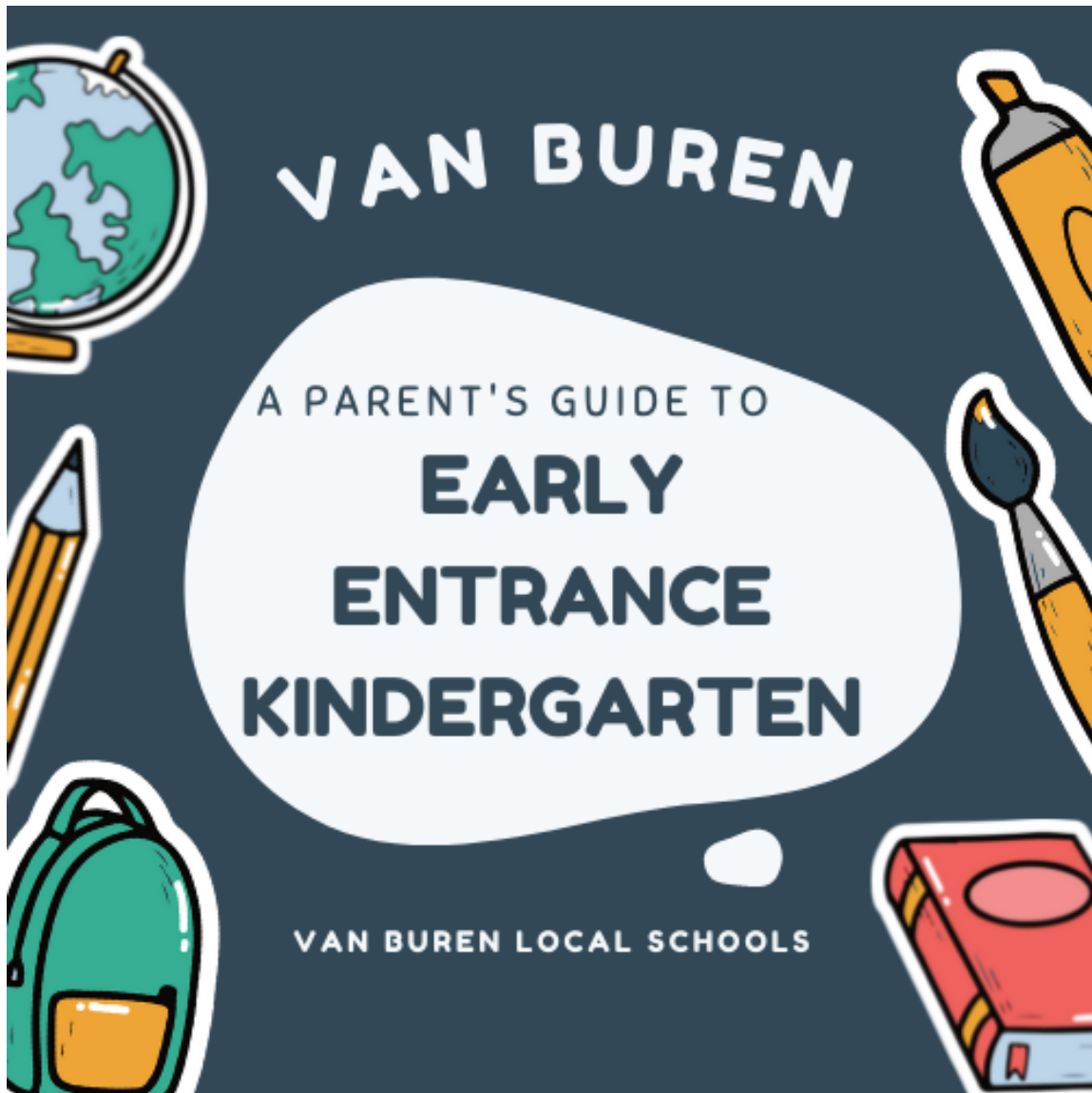




Van Buren Elementary School
301 S Main, Van Buren, Ohio
(419) 299-3416 Fax (419) 299-3566

Principal: Mr. Mike Newcomer
mnewcomer@vbschools.net

Gifted Coordinator: Mrs. Cassie Ohlrich
cohlich@vbschools.net

Early Entrance Criteria

The Van Buren Local School District Board of Education shall establish the following entrance age requirements for students, which are consistent with the statute and sound educational practice, and directs that all eligible students be treated in an equitable manner.

A child is eligible for entrance into kindergarten if s/he attains the age of five (5) on or before August 1st of the year in which s/he applies for entrance. A child under age six (6) who is enrolled in kindergarten will be considered of compulsory school age.

The District provides early admission to kindergarten for qualified students. Copies of the Referral for Acceleration forms are available at the Van Buren Elementary School Office. Any student residing in the District may be referred by a staff member or a parent/guardian to the principal of the school for the evaluation for possible early admission. **All referral forms must be received by the Van Buren Elementary office no later than April 15th.**

Pursuant to R.C. 3321.01, all children who will be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall be evaluated upon request of the child's parent or legal guardian. Children who will not 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 early admittance if referred by an educator within the District, a pre-school educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Such children may also be evaluated at the discretion of the principal of the school to which the student may be admitted.

Upon referral for early entrance, the principal (or his/her designee) of the school to which the child may be admitted shall obtain written permission for testing from the child's parent/guardian. A preliminary cognitive screening will be administered to the student to determine eligibility for further evaluation.

Children referred for early entrance will be evaluated in a prompt manner. For those children who have been screened and determined eligible for further assessment, the principal of the school to which the child may be admitted shall convene an acceleration evaluation committee to determine whether early entrance is appropriate for that child. The acceleration evaluation committee shall include the following:

- a parent/legal guardian
- a gifted education coordinator or gifted education specialist
- a principal or assistant principal of the school to which the child may be admitted
- a teacher at the grade level to which the student may be admitted
- school psychologist

The acceleration evaluation committee shall be responsible for conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the student. The acceleration evaluation committee will also consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

Prior to the committee meeting, children considered for early entrance shall be evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by the Ohio Department of Education.

A meeting will be conducted with the parent/guardian following the evaluation to inform him/her of the committee's decision and, if appropriate, to discuss the results of the evaluation and the nature of the kindergarten program.

The parent/guardian will be provided with a written summary of the outcome of the evaluation process. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.

Appeals must be made in writing to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of the parent/guardian receiving the results of the evaluation. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall review the appeal and notify the parent/guardian of his/her decision within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent or his/her designee's decision will be final.

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

- placement of the child in the accelerated setting;
- strategies to support successful early entrance; and
- an appropriate transition period for accelerated students.

A school staff member will be assigned to oversee the implementation of the acceleration plan and to monitor the child's adjustment to the early entrance. At any time during the transition period, a parent/guardian of the child may request in writing that the child be withdrawn from the accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall remove the child without repercussions.

Also, at any time during the transition period, a parent/guardian may request in writing an alternative accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall direct the acceleration evaluation committee to consider other placement options and to issue a decision within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the request. If the student will be placed in a different setting from that initially recommended, the acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly, and a new transition period shall be specified.

At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The child's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

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 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 of 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 he or she?
- 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.

The Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd edition, is the Ohio Department of Education's approved instrument for evaluating children for possible early entrance to kindergarten. According to the Iowa Acceleration Scale, a student who meets the Critical Item (Section II) of one standard deviation above the mean (115) is a viable candidate for acceleration. The students who meet the criteria will move on to achievement testing.

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. The basis of this change is the new academic learning standards.

The *Ohio Department of Education's* website contains useful information about kindergarten, in particular, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). There is a family guide about the KRA, which all kindergarten students will take within the first six weeks of school. Parents can easily access the information on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) at the web address listed below:

[Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment](#)

Kindergarten classes in the Van Buren Local School District are all day/everyday programs. Students are expected to participate in our Kindergarten program on a daily basis.

Applying For Early Entrance to Kindergarten

- If you believe your child may be a good candidate for early entrance, you may complete a "Referral for Acceleration" form found at the end of this packet.
- Once the form has been completed, it needs to be returned to the school office at Van Buren Elementary by **April 15th**.
- A school designee will coordinate the evaluation process and call to schedule an appointment for testing.
- Once all evaluations are completed, an acceleration committee will convene for the purpose of reviewing the evaluation results. This committee may include the following people: The elementary school principal or assistant principal, a kindergarten teacher, a parent or legal guardian of the referred student, the gifted education coordinator, and the school psychologist.
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IMPORTANT

Early entrance is not an evaluation to determine readiness. State and local policies require the child's ability to far exceed that of the average kindergarten student, and thus very few children qualify for early entrance to kindergarten. Your child may seem to behave very much like other age-eligible kindergarteners, but still may not pass the stringent early entrance requirements. Please make sure to proceed with childcare arrangements as a contingency. If you are selecting a preschool program, please understand that those programs fill up quickly. Please register your child as you normally would, but let the preschool know that your child is being screened for early entrance to kindergarten.



PARENT REFERRAL FOR ACCELERATION

Student's Name:		Grade:		Sex:	
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Date:		Date of Birth:	
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Parent/Guardian Names:			
Street Address:			
City:		Zip:	

Person Initiating Request:	
Relationship to Student:	

Daytime Cell #:		Email:	
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Type of Acceleration Requested:

☐ Early Entrance Kindergarten For school year:	Required score of 115 or higher on cognitive ability assessment.
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☐ Whole Grade Acceleration For school year:	Required assessments in all subject areas: grade level, two grade levels above and IQ. ☐ From grade ____ to grade ____
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☐ Individual Subject Acceleration For school year:	Select only one academic area below: ☐ Math ☐ Reading/Language Arts ☐ Science ☐ Social Studies ☐ Other
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Social-Emotional Factors

Would acceleration be socially and emotionally appropriate?	
Please explain the effect you believe acceleration will have on your child's relationship to older peers.	

Academics

Why do you think your child is academically ready to be advanced?

Testing is required for acceleration purposes. Your child will receive testing by designated school personnel and the information may be shared with your child's teachers, principals, and other appropriate school personnel. The school district will inform you if your child qualifies for acceleration.

Please check box if giving permission and fill in child's full name:

☐ Yes, I give permission for direct testing of intellectual ability and/or individual subject testing for my child, _____ to be tested by a psychologist.

Parent Signature:		Date:	
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Please return form to: Mrs. Cassie Ohlrich, Gifted Coordinator Van Buren Elementary School 301 S. Main St. Van Buren, OH 45889 cohlrich@vbschools.net Fax: 419-299-3566

Early Entrance Kindergarten Self Screen Checklist

Thank you for your interest in Early Entrance for Kindergarten. In accordance with the State of Ohio Model Acceleration Policy and Section 3324.10 of HB 66, public school districts shall offer interested parents screening opportunity for possible Early Entrance for their child. The standards for Early Entrance are more difficult than the standards for general entrance to ensure that students are able to perform and succeed in both Kindergarten and subsequent academic years.

The first step in the process is for you to self-screen the student. Please answer the following questions honestly and completely. This will give you an indication as to how to proceed in referring your student for further evaluation.

	Yes	No
Has your student attended a licensed preschool class for at least one year that includes a minimum of 7 hours of instruction each week?		
Has your child participated in at least one organized sport or formal class (art, music, dance, religious study, etc.) outside of a preschool or daycare setting?		
Does your child dress him/herself daily, take him/herself to the restroom unassisted, eat with a spoon and fork neatly, and communicate his/her needs verbally?		
Is your child able to sit and work on a task such as coloring or cutting for a 20 minute stretch without becoming distracted?		
Is your child able to look through picture books and "read" to him/herself by mimicking what he/she has heard before or by making up a new story based on the pictures?		
Has your child been read to on a daily basis, 5 or more times per week?		
Is your child able to count verbally from 0-20 and count objects from 0-10?		
Is your child able to recognize and name all numbers from 1-10?		
Is your child able to recognize and name the following shapes: circle, square, triangle, and rectangle?		
Is your child able to recite all/most of the alphabet?		
Is your child able to recognize and name all/most of the letters (both upper and lower case) of the alphabet?		
Is your child able to read and write his/her first name?		
Is your child able to provide a rhyming word for simple words such as cat, dog, tree, go, like, red, blue, look, big, my, sun?		
Is your child able to identify all of the following colors: red, green, yellow, blue, black, white?		
Is your child able to recite his/her complete address and phone number?		

If you answered no to 3 or more of these questions, your child **may not be** a strong candidate for Early Entrance to Kindergarten. Your child might benefit from enrollment in one of the many licensed preschool programs in Hancock County to help provide the foundation necessary for a successful and positive learning experience throughout his/her 13 years of public school.

Van Buren Schools

Gifted Educator and Coordinator / cohlrich@vbschools.net / 419-299-3416 ext. 239 / [Van Buren Schools Gifted Education Website](#)