

Bellevue School District
Early Entrance to Kindergarten 2014-2015
Frequently Asked Questions on Process

1. Q: Who is eligible to enter kindergarten early?

State and BSD guidelines require that students entering Kindergarten in the fall must be five years of age on or before August 31st. However, a child whose birth date falls on or between September 1st and November 30th may enter kindergarten if he or she meets the early entrance requirements.

2. Q: What kind of information is used to determine if my child is eligible for early entrance to kindergarten?

Your child's eligibility for early entrance to kindergarten will be based on an evaluation of your child's readiness for kindergarten. To increase the likelihood that your child will have a successful first year of school, he/she will be expected to meet standards approximately six months above his/her chronological age in all areas assessed.

The early entrance process involves an objective evaluation of your child's cognitive, gross and fine motor, visual-motor integration, communication, and social/emotional development. Children meeting the early entrance standards will be recommended for a six-week trial period in kindergarten beginning at the start of the following school year. Determination of final placement in kindergarten is the decision of the school's guidance team.

3. Q: What is the evaluation process for determining student eligibility for early entrance into kindergarten?

Step 1: Individual Testing

The individual testing takes approximately 60-90 min. and takes place at a centralized location within the district.

Step 2: Outcomes of Individual Testing

Families are notified of the testing results approximately 2 weeks from the testing date.

There are two possible outcomes of the individual testing:

- The student **did not** demonstrate the needed readiness skills and **is not eligible** for early entrance into kindergarten, or;
- The student **did** demonstrate the needed readiness skills and **is eligible** for early entrance into kindergarten. Families of students found eligible for early entrance must complete the regular registration process through their neighborhood school to enroll the student into a kindergarten program for the following school year.

Step 3: Trial Period

Students eligible for early entrance who enroll in a kindergarten program are assigned a trial period beginning at the start of the school year. Within six weeks, the guidance team (including your child's kindergarten teacher) will review your child's performance in the classroom to determine whether your child should continue as a kindergarten student. Determination of final placement into kindergarten is the decision of the guidance team. If the kindergarten placement is determined appropriate, additional reviews will take place near the end of both the kindergarten and first-grade year.

4. Q: What are the dates and times for this year's testing?

Testing occurs in the spring, probably in April 2014. Please refer to the district website for more specific information.

5. Q: How do I apply for an early entrance to kindergarten evaluation for my child?

Step 1: Applications are available from the Special Services Department at the Educational Services Center (ESC), by calling the Early Entrance to Kindergarten (EEK) secretary at 425.456.4149, beginning February 1 for the following school year. Applications are also available at the BSD website: <http://www.bsd405.org/earlyentrancekindergarten>

Step 2: Complete the application packet, which includes the following forms:

- Application form
- Parent questionnaire
- Teacher questionnaire (if your child attends daycare or preschool)
- Application Packet Checklist

Step 3: Mail the completed application packet with the additional materials:

- A check or money order for \$175 made payable to Bellevue School District. Note: Free and reduced lunch qualifications apply for Early Entrance Registration. Qualification of free lunch will waive the fee; qualification for reduced lunch reduces the registration fee to \$25. The EEK Office will verify with the neighborhood elementary school that free/reduced waivers apply.
- A copy of your child's birth certificate **or** passport
- Proof of residency (Provide **one copy**, choose from one of the following categories: copy of a utility bill, **or** lease agreement, **or** mortgage payment book coupon, **or** bank or credit card statement, **or** cell phone bill, **or** most recent W-2 statement, **or** property tax statement, **or** auto/homeowner's/rental insurance policy)
- Mail all application materials to Early Entrance to Kindergarten, ESC, P.O. Box 90010, Bellevue, WA 98005. Applications may be hand-delivered to the ESC, 12111 NE First St., Bellevue, WA. Applications must be received by April 1.

6. Q: How will I know you have received my application? How will I know when my child is scheduled for the testing?

An email or letter confirming the receipt of your application will be sent within two weeks of receipt of your application. When all packet materials are received, you will be notified via email or letter of your child's appointment for the testing within two weeks. If you have not received a letter within two weeks of turning in your application, please call the EEK secretary at 425.456.4149.

7. Q: What if my child doesn't meet standards on the individual testing administered by the EEK team and I do not believe the scores represent my child's kindergarten readiness skills?

You may appeal the decision to the Early Entrance Appeals Committee. The appeal must be written and offer compelling evidence of your child's cognitive, gross and fine motor, visual-motor integration, communication, and social/emotional development. An appeal letter should be sent to:

Special Education Dept. Secretary
Attention: Early Entrance Appeals Committee
Bellevue School District
P.O. Box 90010
Bellevue, WA 98005

All appeals must be received no later than 14 calendar days from the date of the results letter. These appeals will be considered and resolved in timely manner and before the end of the school year. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final.

8. Q: If found eligible to enter kindergarten early, how do I enroll my child?

Parents may submit enrollment forms to the neighborhood school. If your child is eligible for early entrance to kindergarten, information about the enrollment process will be provided with your child's testing results. If your child qualifies for early entrance to kindergarten, we will send a copy of testing results to the child's neighborhood school.