

Admission To The Public Schools At Or Before Age Five

In accordance with Connecticut state law, effective July 1, 2024, the Waterford Public Schools (the “District”) are open to all children five years of age and over who reach age five on or before September 1 of any school year. A child who has not reached the age of five on or before September 1 of the school year may be admitted to kindergarten only (1) upon a written request by the parent or guardian of the child to the principal of the school in which the child would be enrolled based on District residency requirements, and (2) following an assessment of the child, conducted by the principal of the school or an appropriate certified staff member of the school, to ensure that admitting the child is developmentally appropriate (“Early Admission Process”). The Early Admission Process shall be available only for a child who will reach the age of five on or after September 2 and before January 1 of the school year.

I. Assessment

- A. The District will assess a child who does not meet the statutory age requirement if admission of such child is requested in writing by a child’s parent or guardian. Such a request must be sent by electronic mail to the principal of the school in which the child would be enrolled based on the District residency requirements (the “Building Principal”) and must be received by the Building Principal no later than May 1 for current Waterford residents, and August 1 for students that move into the town after May 1 and before August 1.
- B. The Building Principal or an appropriate certified staff member of the school (together, the “Assessment Team”) will conduct an assessment of the child to gather information pertaining to the question of whether admitting the child is developmentally appropriate.
- C. The Assessment Team will take a holistic approach to assess a child’s developmental level in a variety of developmental domains (e.g., cognitive, social-emotional, physical development and health). The Assessment Team will use the Connecticut Early Learning and Developmental Standards to determine kindergarten readiness.
- D. The Assessment Team will obtain information from the parent or guardian as part of the assessment.
- E. The Assessment Team will gather and consider relevant information from the child’s preschool teacher/early care provider, if available, as part of the assessment.
- F. The Assessment Team will conduct the assessment in a manner that is designed to be culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- G. The Assessment Team will assess children whose parents request early admission at specifically defined times. If the request for early admission is received before May 1 for Waterford residents or before August 1 for new residents, the school principal or designee will contact the parent/guardian. If the request for early admission is received

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on or after August 1, it will not be accepted. All requests for early admission must be submitted on or before August 1.

H. The Early Admission Process will be administered universally across all schools in the District that operate kindergarten classrooms.

II. Children with Disabilities

A. All parents and guardians, including those children with disabilities, may request early entry to kindergarten pursuant to the Early Admission Process in Section I.

B. For a child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the Early Admission Process will be individualized and in alignment with the documented IEP accommodations/modifications in Section 5 (Supplementary Aids and Services) and Section 11 (District and State Testing).

C. For a child with a Section 504 plan, the Early Admission Process will be individualized and in alignment with the accommodations documented in the child's 504 plan.

III. Notification

The District will strive to notify parents and guardians who have requested their child be granted early admission to kindergarten as soon as possible.

Legal Reference:

Conn.Gen. Stat. § 10-15c Discrimination by public schools prohibited. School attendance for five-year-olds.

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-220 Duties of boards of education

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221 Board of education to prescribe rules, policies, and procedures

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-184 Duties of parents. School attendance age requirements

Public Act 23-208, "An Act Making Certain Revisions to the Education Statutes."

Connecticut State Department of Education, *New Entry Age for Kindergarten: Considerations for Connecticut Schools*, October 23, 2023.

Adopted: February 22, 2024

Revised: