

POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Date Submitted: November 20, 1979 Date Reviewed: May 11, 1982 January 17, 2006 July 15, 2014	Number: 600-18
Subject: Early School Admissions	Date Approved: November 20, 1979 February 21, 2006 August 19, 2014 Date Revised: October 20, 1987 December 20, 1989 April 19, 2005 July 15, 2014 Date Effective: December 20, 1989 February 21, 2006 May 26, 2009 August 19, 2014

1. PURPOSE

To establish a policy under which the intent of the adopted COMAR 13A.08.02, which included sections allowing local boards of education to adopt regulations for early admission of children who miss the established cut-off dates for prekindergarten, kindergarten and grade 1.

Prekindergarten	Kindergarten	First Grade
A child admitted to the prekindergarten program must be four years old or older on September 1 of the School Year in which the child applies for entrance.	A child admitted to the kindergarten program must be five years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.	A child admitted to the first grade program must be six years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.

2. POLICY

The Board of Education of Somerset County supports the intention that in rare instances a child demonstrates such superior and exceptional abilities and/or potential that he or she would best be served in the Public Schools through early school admission into either kindergarten or the first grade.

According to MSDE, the goal of pre-kindergarten is to provide learning experiences to help children develop and maintain the basic skills necessary to be successful in school and is intended for 4 year old children from families with economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The pre-kindergarten program is for children who are potentially at-risk of having difficulties in school and lack school readiness skills. There may be children who demonstrate educational needs warranting early admission into the prekindergarten program.

Therefore the Somerset County Public Schools should develop procedures and guidelines for determining the eligibility for early admission of those children if early admission is requested by the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Early entry placements will be made only if space is available in the program at their home school.

3. **Procedures and Guidelines**

An application for Early Admission (Form 1) must be completed by all parents or guardians, who are requesting early admission for their child into either prekindergarten, kindergarten or first grade. All applications for early admission must be submitted to the school principal where the child will be attending on or before August 1st of the school year early admission is requested. A parent or guardian moving into Somerset County during the first month of the school year should contact the school principal to start this process.

Upon the receipt of the completed application, the school principal will review the procedures and guidelines for determining early admission eligibility with the parent(s) or guardian(s) and initiate the formal screening process. Additionally the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be given the Parent Behavioral Checklist (Form 2) to be completed and returned to the school within a week following the application for early admission.

Children being considered for early school admission into kindergarten or first grade will be assessed in two areas, Language and Literacy and Mathematical Thinking. Children being considered for admission into prekindergarten will be assessed through a developmental inventory and must demonstrate developmental delays or be at risk for such delays as identified by an IEP. The purpose of these assessments is to assist school personnel in determining the child's need for early admission and/or potential for success if early admission is granted.

Date(s) for administration of the assessments will be established when the completed application is submitted to the school by the parent (s) or legal guardian(s). All assessments shall be administered by the appropriate staff and completed the two weeks prior to the opening of the new school year. The following assessments will be administered.

Grade	Assessments
Prekindergarten	Referred to Special Education/Battelle Developmental Inventory
Kindergarten	DIBELS Prekindergarten End of Year Math Benchmark/ Reading Benchmark
First	DIBELS Kindergarten End of Year Math Benchmark/ Reading Benchmark

An early admission review committee consisting of the school principal, appropriate school based staff, Child’s parent(s) or guardian(s) and the elementary supervisor will review the application packet, the parent checklist and the assessment data to determine if a child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission. The committee will be chaired by the school principal. The school principal will be responsible for arranging the conference and ensuring that all procedures have been properly followed and all forms have been completed. The parent(s) or guardian(s) must be notified five days in advance of the date and time of the early admission conference. Every effort should be made to ensure that the specified date and time are convenient to the respective parent(s) or guardian(s). A record of the conference proceedings and committee recommendations concerning Early Admission shall be kept using (Form 3). The Application form, the Parent Behavior Checklist, the assessment and the committee minutes will be placed in the student’s cumulative folder.

No child will be considered for early admission who has not met the following criteria.

Grade	Criteria
Prekindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Income Eligibility Guidelines and • Documentation that both receptive and expressive language skills are below the age equivalent of child in prekindergarten.
Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met the established DIBELS benchmark for the beginning assessment • Scored at least 95% or better on the math assessment.
First Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met the established DIBELS benchmark for the beginning assessment. • Scored at least 95% or better on the math assessment.

Upon reaching a joint decision, the school principal will notify the superintendent of school of its formal recommendation using (Form3). Within five days the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified in writing by the superintendent of his or her official placement decision. The school will then abide by the official placement decision.

All parent(s) or guardian(s) have a right to appeal the decision of the superintendent of schools. An appeal hearing before the Somerset County Board of Education will be granted within 30 days of receiving a written request from the parent(s) or guardian(s). This request must be received by the superintendent of schools within five working days of his or her notification that early admission has not been granted. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified in writing of the date and time at least five days before the appeal hearing. The decision of the Somerset County Board of Education will be final.

(Form 1)



EARLY SCHOOL ADMISSION APPLICATION

Child's Name _____ DOB: / /
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Sex: Male Female Race: _____ Birthdates of brothers/sisters: / /
/ / , / /

Parent/Guardian (Name): _____

Address: _____
Street City State Zip Code

Phone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Grade Placement Requested: Prekindergarten _____ Kindergarten _____ Grade 1 _____

SCHOOL AND RELATED EXPERIENCES

List all programs in which your child participated. Include the dates of attendance and the approximate number of hours per week attended.

<u>Name of School/Program</u>	<u>Dates of Attendance</u>	<u># Hours/Week</u>
_____	____ / ____ / _____, ____ / ____ / _____	_____
_____	____ / ____ / _____, ____ / ____ / _____	_____
_____	____ / ____ / _____, ____ / ____ / _____	_____
_____	____ / ____ / _____, ____ / ____ / _____	_____

Why do you feel that your child would be ready for a prekindergarten, kindergarten or first grade program? (Circle program)
Comment on your child's social behavior and academic skills. (Use reverse side, if needed.)

Signature, Parent/Guardian Date

**EARLY ADMISSION
PARENT BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE**

To be filled out by the Child's Parent or Guardian

Child's Name _____ Age: _____
 School _____ Date: _____
 Parent/Guardian _____

PLEASE CHECK EVERY ITEM. PUT YOUR CHECK UNDER THE ONE COLUMN HEADING ALWAYS, OFTEN, SOMETIMES, SELDOM, NEVER) THAT IS TRUE OF YOUR CHILD.

ITEM	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	SELDOM	NEVER
1. Is not easily upset when told "no"					
2. Plays well alone					
3. Plays well with his/her own age					
4. Gets along well with older children					
5. Gets along well with people and adults in authority					
6. Adjusts well in new and unfamiliar situations					
7. Cooperates with others					
8. Is dependable; will carry out task when requested to do so					
9. Respects rights and property of others					
10. Displays an awareness of right, wrong, good, bad					
11. Returns materials when finished with them					
12. Cares for personal belongings					
13. Accepts corrections without becoming upset					
14. Prefers to do things for himself/herself when able					

ITEM	ALWAYS	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	SELDOM	NEVER
15. Persistent: will try a second time if unsuccessful on first attempt					
16. Tries hard to do things right					
17. Can direct attention to an activity for at least 15 minutes					
18. Speaks clearly and freely					
19. Recognizes own name					
20. Follows simple directions					
21. Can relate experiences in proper sequence					
22. Knows lots of words and uses them well					
23. Has a good memory					
24. Tries to figure out how things work					
25. Asks many "how" and "why" questions					
26. Notices ways in which people and things are alike and different					
27. Describes things he/she sees around him/her					
28. Speaks with confidence when in a group					
29. Can locate things that go together					
30. Enjoys stories, books, pictures					

Early Admission Committee
Minutes

School _____ Date _____

Name of Child _____ Date of Birth _____

Grade Placement Requested: Prekindergarten Kindergarten First Grade (Circle)

Participants/Title

Case Management Checklist:

- _____ Application Completed and Signed
- _____ Parental Behavioral Checklist Completed
- _____ Academic Assessments Completed

Academic Assessments Results: Prekindergarten Kindergarten First Grade (Circle)

ASSESSMENT	RESULTS

Criteria Met: _____ Yes _____ No

The Early Admission Committee does _____ does not _____ recommend that
_____ Be granted early admission into Somerset
County Public Schools System.

Please state briefly the committee's reasons for reaching this decision.

Principal