



LICKING REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

OFFICE OF GIFTED EDUCATION

145 North Quentin Road

Newark, Ohio 43055

PHONE: 740.349.6084

EMAIL: [GIFTED@LCESC.ORG](mailto:GIFTED@LCESC.ORG)

Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Updated 1/7/2026 with HB114

What is early entrance to kindergarten?

Early entrance to kindergarten occurs (EEK) when a school district evaluates a child who is not yet old enough to enter kindergarten, and admits the child to kindergarten early because the child demonstrates that he/she can succeed in kindergarten after a formal evaluation. In order to enroll in kindergarten, a student must be 5 years old by their district of residence’s first day of instruction of the school year of admittance. When a student does not meet the district’s kindergarten cut-off date, an early entrance request may be submitted to consider the child for enrollment in kindergarten.

Your child’s birth date determines the process for early entrance to kindergarten. If your child turns 5 after the district’s first day of instruction but before January 1st, the child may be referred for EEK evaluation. A referral may be submitted by the child’s parent or guardian, an educator employed by the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologists who knows the child. If your child turns 5 on January 1st or later, the child will be evaluated using a more extensive process, in accordance with your district’s acceleration policy.

Why is there early entrance to kindergarten?

Early entrance is designed for a child who is both academically ready and developmentally mature when compared to others his or her age. Even though a child may have a higher academic ability, they still may not be ready for kindergarten. Social maturity, personal development, and motor development are very important factors for a child’s success in school.

How do I know if my child is ready for kindergarten?

Early entrance is designed for the child who not only has the ability, but easily achieves when presented new material. Once the decision has been made for early entrance to kindergarten, the choice is difficult to reverse.

Does your child show positive social development?

- Separates from you without anxiety
• Handles change and transition well
• Follows directions
• Communicates needs effectively
• Cares about the feelings of others

Does your child demonstrate self-help skills?

- Uses restroom independently
• Uses a tissue to blow their nose
• Dresses self independently
• Puts on and zips up coat independently

Does your child use classroom tools and toys effectively?

- Holds and uses a pencil, crayon or marker
• Cuts with scissors
• Builds with blocks or Legos

Does your child use self-control?

- Cooperates and plays well with others
• Shares and takes turns
• Keeps hands to self

What are the academic expectations for kindergarten?

All of the skills listed below are expected to begin kindergarten in addition to the independent skills above.

Table with 3 columns: Skill, Identifies upper case letters, Identifies rhyming words, etc.



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**What is the Licking Regional ESC’s process for early entrance to kindergarten evaluation?**

The process depends on the child’s birth date.

**If your child turns 5 after your district of residence’s first day of instruction of the school year of admittance, but before January 1<sup>st</sup>:**

A referral may be submitted by the child’s parent or guardian, an educator employed by the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologists who knows the child to the home district’s building principal or the district’s gifted coordinator.

After the referral has been received, your child will be scheduled for an early entrance to kindergarten evaluation. The evaluation process is extensive and demanding on the child. It will take multiple hours to complete (similar to a normal school day). Please refer to the kindergarten readiness information on the front of this page to ensure that your child meets all the criteria for ability, achievement, aptitude, and behavior expectations **before** submitting the referral. Please note: Very few children qualify for early entrance to kindergarten.

**If your child turns 5 January 1<sup>st</sup> or later:**

A referral may be submitted by the child’s parent or guardian, an educator employed by the district, a preschool educator who knows the child, or a pediatrician or psychologists who knows the child to the district of residence’s building principal or the district’s gifted coordinator.

In addition to the evaluation noted above, the child will receive further testing after the initial evaluation day in order to follow a more extensive acceleration process as required by the district’s whole grade acceleration policy.

**Where and when does early entrance to kindergarten evaluation occur?**

Evaluations will take place at the Licking Regional Educational Service Center (LRESC) at 145 N. Quentin Road, Newark, Ohio 43055. After a referral is received and processed, you will be contacted to schedule testing. Both the child and parent will attend the evaluation day together. The parent is expected to remain in the building during the evaluation day with the exception of taking the child for a lunch/play break in the middle of the day.

Typical Evaluation Day Schedule	
9:30 Registration	11:30-12:00 Parent Conferences
9:40-10:15 Ability Test	12:00-1:00 Lunch/Play Break with Parent
10:15-10:30 Break	1:00-1:30 Readiness Test
10:30-11:30 Readiness Test	1:30-2:30 Achievement Test

**What is the next step to have my child evaluated for early entrance to kindergarten?**

Complete and submit the attached early entrance to kindergarten referral to either your home district’s building principal or the district’s gifted coordinator. **Referrals must be submitted by:**

- **Thursday, April 23, 2026 to receive an evaluation and decision prior to summer break**
- **Wednesday, May 27, 2026 to receive an evaluation and decision prior to July**
- **Monday, August 3, 2026 to receive an evaluation and decision prior to the first day of school**

You will be contacted to schedule testing after the completed referral is received and reviewed. If you have further questions, please call 740.349.6084.



# Licking Regional Educational Service Center

## Office of Gifted Education

145 N. Quentin Road, Newark, OH 43055

P: 740-349-6084/F: 740-349-6107

### REFERRAL AND PERMISSION FOR EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN EVALUATION

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

District of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed Grade: KDG Building: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email (print VERY clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(include city & zip code)

Student data will be evaluated for acceleration using a pre-determined process. Placement decisions will be made in accordance with the district's acceleration policy. The student may be given any assessment from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's list of approved instruments for gifted identification or a district approved assessment developed for early entrance to kindergarten. Results will be shared with the parent and appropriate school personnel.

### EARLY ENTRANCE ACCELERATION- KINDERGARTEN

Designate all testing sessions you are available:

- 4/29/2026 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Referral must be received by 4/23/26; Decision made prior to summer break
- 6/2/2026 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Referral must be received by 5/27/26; Decision made prior to July
- 8/7/2026 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Referral must be received by 8/3/26; Decision made prior to 1<sup>st</sup> day of school

1. I request that my child be evaluated for early entrance to kindergarten. I give permission for my child to be tested by a gifted coordinator. I understand that prior testing results may also be reviewed.
2. I understand that test results will be evaluated for potential early entrance to kindergarten/1<sup>st</sup> grade according to my District's policies and procedures. A referral **does not guarantee** my child an early entrance placement.
3. I understand that early entrance committee will make a final placement decision.
4. I understand that I may appeal the final placement decision, but must do so in writing to my District's superintendent within 30 days of the early entrance results letter.
5. I understand that referrals received after August 1<sup>st</sup> may be subject to adjusted scoring standards that reflect content missed in the kindergarten classroom from the start of the school year until the referral is processed.
6. Please indicate below if your child receives special services and already has a **formal** document outlining testing accommodations:  IEP  504  ESL  NONE \*Attach documentation if available.
7. I give permission to contact my child's preschool teacher.

Preschool teacher name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Relationship to Child

Date

Questions or Concerns? Contact your district's Gifted Coordinator at the Licking Regional Educational Service Center

<b>Garnett Andrews</b> Franklin Local, Newark  740.349.6104 <a href="mailto:gandrews@lcesc.org">gandrews@lcesc.org</a>	<b>Michelle Cowden</b> Lakewood & Licking Heights  740.349.6105 <a href="mailto:mcowden@lcesc.org">mcowden@lcesc.org</a>	<b>Stephanie Clark</b> Licking Valley & Zanesville  740.349.4977 <a href="mailto:saclark@lcesc.org">saclark@lcesc.org</a>	<b>Holly Hartman</b> Heath, Johnstown-Monroe, North Fork 740.349.6094 <a href="mailto:hhartman@lresc.org">hhartman@lresc.org</a>	<b>Alesha Haybin</b> Granville, Northern Local  740.349.6083 <a href="mailto:ahaybin@lresc.org">ahaybin@lresc.org</a>
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*Equal access will be available to all students for screening, further assessment, identification, and placement in eligible services, including minority or disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students for whom English is a second language.*

To be Completed by Gifted Coordinator

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Area/s of Identification:  SC  MTH  SCI  R  SS  CT  VPA  NONE Coordinator Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

# PREPARING A SCHOOL-READY CHILD

"Children who enter kindergarten ready to meet its academic, social, and emotional demands are more likely to achieve later academic and life success."<sup>1</sup>

## What is school readiness?

School readiness involves more than just children. In the broadest sense, school readiness is about children, families, early environments, schools, and communities. Children are not innately "ready" or "not ready" for school. Their skills and development are strongly influenced by their families and through their interactions with other people and environments before coming to school.<sup>2</sup>

School readiness occurs when children have the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in primary school, later learning, and life. Physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development are essential ingredients of school readiness. School readiness refers not only to ready children, but to ready communities, families, and schools.<sup>3</sup>



## The ready child

- has been well-cared for physically, interacts socially with others, has a positive self-perception, has the ability to understand the emotions of others, and can interpret and express feelings;
- approaches learning with enthusiasm and curiosity, has developed language and listening skills, and has cognition skills and general knowledge; and
- is prepared to learn successfully in school.

*School Readiness: Helping Communities Get Children Ready for School and Schools Ready for Children.* Child Trends Research Brief. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED444712.pdf>

## The ready school

- uses curriculum in kindergarten and the early grades that builds on prior learning;
- takes into account individual differences in language, culture, and prior experience; and
- employs teachers who know how to teach young children and have the resources to do so.

*NAEYC Position Statement on School Readiness.* <https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/Readiness.pdf>

## The ready family

- supports children in their learning and through transition to kindergarten;
- reads to their children daily; and
- continues to engage in their child's learning through the school years.

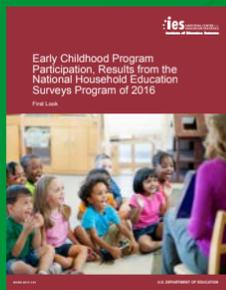
*PFCE Interactive Framework.* <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/pfce-interactive-framework>

## The ready community

- helps ensure that children have access to health care, immunizations, and nutrition;
- helps ensure that families have access to quality early childcare and education; and
- invests in resources and activities that support families and promote school readiness.

*School Readiness: Helping Communities Get Children Ready for School and Schools Ready for Children.* Child Trends Research Brief. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED444712.pdf>

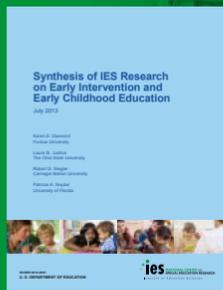
## Additional Resources



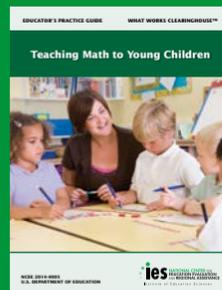
**Early Childhood Program Participation**  
<https://ies.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2017101>



**Patterns of classroom quality in Head Start and center-based early childhood education programs**  
<https://ies.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=REL2017208>



**Synthesis of IES Research on Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education**  
<https://ies.ed.gov/ncser/pubs/20133001/pdf/20133001.pdf>



**Teaching Math to Children in Preschool, Pre-K, and Kindergarten**  
<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/18>



Information and materials for this presentation are supported by IES/NCEE's Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast at Florida State University (Contract ED-IES-17-C-0011) as resources and examples for the viewer's convenience. Their inclusion is not intended as an endorsement by the Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast or its funding source, the Institute of Education Sciences.

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<sup>1</sup> Stedron, J. & Berger, A. (2010). NCSL Technical report: State approaches to school readiness assessment. Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislators <http://www.ncsl.org/documents/Educ/KindergartenAssessment.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Maxwell, K., & R.M. Clifford. 2004. Research in review: School readiness assessment. *Young Children* 59 (1): 42–46.

<sup>3</sup> Head Start, <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness>, retrieved January 12, 2018.



# THE READY FAMILY

## An Important Component of Preparing a School-Ready Child

### What is school readiness?

School readiness involves more than just children. In the broadest sense, school readiness is about children, families, early environments, schools, and communities. Children are not innately “ready” or “not ready” for school. Their skills and development are strongly influenced by their families and through their interactions with other people and environments before coming to school.<sup>1</sup>

A family that is ready for their child to start school **supports their child’s learning by preparing for kindergarten, reads daily with their child, and maintains a positive home-to-school connection.**

School readiness occurs when children have the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in primary school, later learning, and life. Physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development are essential ingredients of school readiness. School readiness refers not only to ready children, but to ready communities, families, and schools.<sup>2</sup>



### Preparing for Kindergarten

A ready family encourages preliteracy skills including speaking, listening and thinking. A ready family also teaches routines to prepare their child for a smooth transition to kindergarten.

- [How to Prepare Your Family for Kindergarten](#)
- [Get Ready for Kindergarten! Activity Calendar for Families](#)
- [Transitioning to Kindergarten](#)
- [Questions that Lead to Thinking](#)



### Reading Together

A ready family reads daily to their child. Reading together improves a child’s vocabulary and oral language skills, which are important for learning to read. Reading together also promotes a love of books.

- [Dialogic Reading: An Effective Way to Read to Preschoolers](#)
- [Notable Books for Younger Readers](#)
- [Just Take 20: Make Reading a Regular Routine!](#)



### Connecting Home and School

A ready family supports learning at home by providing a positive, literacy-rich environment and opportunities to practice skills that were taught in school. A ready family stays connected to school by volunteering and attending meetings and events at school.

- [Infographic: Supporting Your Child’s Literacy Development at Home](#)
- [Reading Rockets Video: The Home Front](#)
- [Literacy Begins at Home \(Pre-K-3\)](#)
- [Kid Zone! A Free Virtual Play Space for Kids and Families to Develop Literacy](#)
- [Empowering Parents](#)



### Educator Resources

- [Ready at Five](#)
- [Family Engagement in Transitions: Transition to Kindergarten](#)
- [Early Childhood Transitions: Supporting Children and Families](#)
- [Transition to Kindergarten Resources from ECLKC](#)
- [Parent Engagement](#)
- [Engaging Families in Early Childhood Education](#)
- [Ready Families: Strategies for Readiness](#)
- [Infographic: Succeeding in School: Essential Features of Literacy Development](#)

This document was developed by a collaborative group of representatives of the ten Regional Educational Laboratories throughout the United States.



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<sup>1</sup> Stedron, J. & Berger, A. (2010). NCSL Technical report: State approaches to school readiness assessment. Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislators. <http://www.ncsl.org/documents/Educ/KindergartenAssessment.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Maxwell, K., & R.M. Clifford. 2004. Research in review: School readiness assessment. Young Children 59 (1): 42–46. [http://www.medicoscolares.com.ar/articulos/299\\_Maxwell2004.pdf](http://www.medicoscolares.com.ar/articulos/299_Maxwell2004.pdf)

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