

Sparta Area School District

Article 411 - Policy for Early Admission to First Grade

Unless a special waiver is granted by the Board of Education, all pupils will be expected to have successfully completed a kindergarten program prior to entering the first grade.

A special waiver for early admission into first grade or to be admitted to first grade without kindergarten may be granted by the Board of Education based on the criteria below:

Any child who has not yet become six years old on September 1, may apply to the Board of Education through the building principal for early admission to first grade. The criteria for early admission will be based on the child demonstrating a strong potential for success and being able to cope with the school environment intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally. The application for early admission to first grade shall be submitted to the building principal by the parents not later than 90 days before the start of the school year for those living in the Sparta Area School District at that time.

For parents of children applying for early admission for their children to first grade, the supporting evidence for or against early admission shall be submitted to the administration and School Board by the end of June for the upcoming school year. Based on the investigation and evaluation of all the evidence including the written summary of all individual testing, observation of the student by a first grade teacher and an interview of the parent and child by an elementary principal, the district administrator shall make a recommendation to the School Board regarding early admission of the student into first grade. The parents shall be advised of the School Board meeting at which the decision will be made. Under procedures prescribed by the Wisconsin State Superintendent of Schools, final authority for deciding upon early admission remains with the School Board.

The criteria for early admission to first grade specify that all prospective pupils who will be 5.10 years of age or older on or by September 1, must score at least the 84th percentile rank + or - the SEM (Standard Error of Measurement), or +1 standard deviation from the mean on the normal curve. Prospective pupils who will be between 5.08 and 5.10 years of age must score at least at the 98th percentile rank + or - SEM or +2 standard deviations on the normal curve. Those children under the age of 5.08 years must score at least at the 99th percentile rank + or - SEM or +3 standard deviations from the mean on the normal curve. The measures to be used are listed as follows:

-Intellectual- Wechsler Primary and Pre-school Scale of Intelligence-Revised (WPPSI-R). The student must score at or above his or her prescribed percentile for age on the full scale, performance scale and verbal scale of the WPPSI-R.

-Receptive Language- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R).

-Expressive Language- WPPSI-R vocabulary subtest and the expressive language section of the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales-Survey Edition (VABS-SE).

-Motor Functioning- Beery Tests of Visual-Motor Integration (VMI) and the fine-motor section of the VABS-SE. Gross-motor functioning will be established with the gross-motor section of the VABS-SE.

-Social & Emotional- Activities of the daily living section and the socialization sections of the VABS-SE. Skills in personal self-sufficiency, domestic activity, community functioning, interpersonal relationships, play and leisure time and coping mechanisms are assessed.

Additionally, all prospective students who have met the above criteria must be observed or interviewed by a first grade teacher prior to the upcoming school year for which early admission is being petitioned. The first grade teacher will use a combination of behavioral observation and teacher made assessment tools to assess developmental levels of the prospective student in social and academic areas. The teacher will then make a recommendation to the building principal regarding admitting the student early into first grade.

If after a student has been admitted to first grade, the teacher notices that the child is not developing appropriately, conferences will be held with the parents within the first nine weeks of school. Withdrawal of the student from first grade and placement into kindergarten may be advised and/or required.

All individual assessments will be done by a licensed school psychologist at no cost to the parent. Teacher observations or school psychologist observations will be done at no cost to the parent. The parent of the prospective student may obtain a private assessment at their own expense, but it will be accepted for consideration only if performed by a school psychologist licensed at Level II by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

In the case of a pupil with English as a second language, appropriate non-discriminatory assessment will be worked out in conference with the parents. Criteria equivalent to that described above must be demonstrated. In the case of a handicapped pupil, evaluations will be made on the basis of adaptive behaviors testing consistent with non-biased assessment procedures discussed in PI II, administrative rules for Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 115.

It is the policy of the Sparta Area School District to comply with all applicable state or federal laws concerning non-discrimination and, therefore, no person may be denied admission to any public school in this District or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational, or other program or activity on grounds that include, but are not necessarily limited to, the person's sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy or marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability or handicap as required by s. 118.13, Wis. Stat. This policy also prohibits discrimination as defined by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race and national origin), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Legal Reference:

Cross Reference:

Approved:

Revised: