**Title: 5022 EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN**

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|  | **5022 Early Entrance to Kindergarten****5022.1 Early Entrance Testing**The purpose of early entrance testing in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown is to accommodate the requests of parent(s)/guardian(s) of prospective kindergarten students possessing markedly high ability and maturity as compared to their chronological ages. It is designed as a measure to meet individual differences in school readiness, providing for an educational program and a method of acceleration for those who can profit by it. In general, however, it must be realized that most children will have the best chance for successful school experience if they begin their schooling with children of their own age group at the usual time of entrance.**5022.2 Preliminary Considerations**1. Upon the request of the parent(s)/guardian(s), a child who will be five years of age by January 1 of the school year for which admission is requested may be considered for early entrance into kindergarten.
2. Early entrance into first grade will be considered on an individual basis. This will be determined by school administration and other school personnel.
3. Children considered for early entrance testing must possess, in the judgment of the best professional advice available, the advanced intellectual, social, and emotional maturity necessary so that early entrance admission shall not be harmful educationally, socially, and emotionally, nor diminish opportunity for growth and leadership experiences of the child.
4. Results of research indicate that with rare exceptions children adjust and achieve better in later years when they are in classes of children with like ages. Entering school early tends to bring social, emotional, and academic challenges that are minimized only when children show unusually high social and emotional maturity.
5. Underage children who are recommended for early admission shall be those who: are within the upper five percent with respect to mental ability (generally, 14 to 16 months advanced in mental or chronological age, and have intelligence quotients of at least 125 to 130 on a deviation scale), and are within the upper 50 percent in social and emotional development.

**5022.3 Procedures For Admission**1. The parent(s)/guardian(s) contacts the local Catholic school concerning early entrance screening.
2. The school sends a copy of this policy concerning early entrance to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
3. If, after reviewing the policy, the parent(s)/guardian(s), wishes to have the child considered for early admission, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall submit the following information to the local Catholic school:
4. A report from a psychologist, approved by the school, and paid for by the parent(s)/guardian(s) which indicates the child’s:
* Mental Maturity – with the lower limit being 125 I.Q. on a deviation scale;
* Social and Emotional Maturity – During the screening, the child shall demonstrate social and emotional characteristics that would permit him/her to conform with the pattern of behavior commonly expected of children in the grade the child is to enter. Such factors include cooperation, self-confidence, attention span, independence, ability to follow directions, and the ability to get along with peers and adults;
* Verbal Ability – Evidence is established by the examiner that the child’s understanding and use of vocabulary and ability for verbal expression are adequate for the grade he/she is to enter ;
* Physical Ability – The examiner’s observation includes an assessment of the child’s general health and physical well-being, along with the development of visual-motor perception and muscular coordination.
* **All of the above criteria will be considered.**
1. Any previous school experience the child has had to date, e.g., nursery school, preschool, day care, so that the school can evaluate the child’s experiential background and social maturity;
2. A written statement requesting an evaluation and citing the reasons why the child should be considered for early entrance.
3. The parent(s)/guardian(s) has the responsibility to submit the information in item 3 above to the school no later than May 15 of the school year preceding the school year of requested admission.
4. Upon receiving all of the information requested, the school will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) to set up an appointment to discuss the results of the early entrance testing. This appointment will take place between May 15 and June 15.

**5022.4 Qualifying Factors** 1. If accepted, the child, on early entrance admission, shall be placed on probationary status for the first quarter of the regular school year. The purpose of the probationary period is to ensure that the developmental needs of the child are met. If, during this period, the teacher documents instances that indicate that in the best interest of the child he/she should be withdrawn, a conference will be arranged. The parent(s)/guardian(s), the principal, and the teacher will be included in the conference. The principal’s decision at this time shall be final.
2. A child evaluated and accepted for early entrance to kindergarten is not required to be re-evaluated for entrance to first grade but may be re-evaluated upon request of the school principal.
3. Children who were placed by an early entrance testing program and who are received by transfer are placed in the grade to which they were assigned in the previous system. After the probationary period, the teacher may request another evaluation of the child. The child may be reassigned to another grade if this is deemed more suitable to his/her needs.
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