

Entrance Age

Law sets the age at which a child may be enrolled in school. The law reads as follows:

NDCC 15.1-06-01. Schools free and accessible - School ages.

1. Each public school must be free, open, and accessible at all times to any child provided:
 - a. The child may not enroll in grade one unless the child reaches the age of six before August first of the year of enrollment;
 - b. The child may not enroll in kindergarten unless the child reaches the age of five before August first of the year of enrollment; and
 - c. The child has not reached the age of twenty-one before August first of the year of enrollment.
2. Notwithstanding subsection 1, a school district may not enroll in grade one a child who is not six years old before August first, unless the child will be six years old before December first and:
 - a. The child, by means of developmental and readiness screening instruments approved by the superintendent of public instruction and administered by the school district, can demonstrate academic, social, and emotional readiness; or
 - b. The child has completed an approved kindergarten program.
3. Notwithstanding subsection 1, a school district may not enroll in kindergarten a child who is not five years old before August first unless the child will be five years old before December first and the child, by means of developmental and readiness screening instruments approved by the superintendent of public instruction and administered by the school district, can demonstrate superior academic talents or abilities and social and emotional readiness.
4. The requirements of this section are not applicable to the children of military families, to the extent that the requirements conflict with enrollment provisions otherwise agreed to by the state in the compact on educational opportunity for military children.

Early Entrance

Since the law provides for exceptions for some children, who by reason of special talents or abilities may start school early, the Superintendent will establish appropriate procedures for early entrance to kindergarten or first grade.

It is the philosophy of the Fargo School District that children with unique talents and abilities as expressed in superior intellectual, verbal, social and emotional development should be allowed to participate in formal educational experiences at a younger age if they are able to adequately benefit from such instruction and meet the birth date criteria established by law.

Students who meet the December 1st age requirement (NDCC 15.1-06-01) and in addition successfully pass the early entrance evaluation system described below will be entered early if a parent so chooses.

The procedure for early identification for kindergarten and/or first grade in Fargo School District is as follows:

1. A pre-evaluation discussion will be held with parents to determine the basis for early entrance testing and inform the parents of the standards and criteria and evaluation procedures.
2. Parents who wish to proceed with the assessment process submit an early entrance application. Fargo Public Schools early entrance application deadline is April 15 of the year preceding desired attendance. Parents who proceed with the testing will be charged a fee of \$40.00.
3. An individual intelligence screening test is given. Screening instruments may include, but are not limited to, the Beery Test of Visual Motor Integration, the Kaufmann Brief Intelligence Test, and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. The child must achieve an intelligence quotient in the superior range in order to be considered for further evaluation.
4. If the student meets the criteria in #3, an individual intelligence test such as the Stanford-Binet or the Wechsler Pre-School and Primary Intelligence Scale-Revised will be given by qualified personnel. The intelligence test data is reviewed. Upon this review, an additional assessment of developmental readiness may also be requested.
5. A post-evaluation conference will be held with the child's parents to review the evaluation and the placement decision.

Early entrance intake includes:

1. The parent will be asked for the child's birth date. Early entrance to kindergarten is for children who turn five (5) between August 1 and November 30 of the school year. They will not be considered if the fifth birthday falls on or after December 1.
2. Early entrance is for children who have special talents or abilities as determined by a series of intellectual, developmental and readiness-screening instruments approved by the state department of public instruction and administered by the school district.
3. Early entrance process consists of the following steps:
 - a. Pre-evaluation conference between parents and school personnel.
 - b. Screening testing.
 - c. Individual testing.
 - d. Post-evaluation conference between parents and school personnel.
4. The entrance process may be stopped at any step if it becomes evident that the child does not meet the necessary criteria.
5. If, after receiving this information, the parent wishes to pursue the early entrance procedures, an application form will be given or sent to the parent.

6. For early entrance to grade one, the procedure is the same except that the age is six, not five.

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