

POLICY TITLE: Age at Entrance Prekindergarten, Kindergarten and First Grade		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: Unknown	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED: 7/8/2002	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED:
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Students		

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth age requirements for entrance to prekindergarten, kindergarten and first grade and to authorize a process for early application or waiver under specified circumstances.

II. Definitions

1. **Prekindergarten** means instructional programs provided to support four-year-olds who are eligible for enrollment in prekindergarten pursuant to Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”) 13A.06.02.

III. Statement of Policy

A. Prekindergarten Age at Admission

1. Age at Admission

Children admitted to the prekindergarten program in the public schools shall be four years old or older on or before September 1st of the school year in which they apply for entrance.

2. Early Admission to Prekindergarten

A three-year-old child, upon the request of the parent or guardian, may be admitted into prekindergarten if the Superintendent or his/her designee determines that the child is eligible under COMAR 13A.06.02 and the child has demonstrated educational needs warranting early admission.

B. Kindergarten

1. Age at Admission

Children admitted to the kindergarten program in the public schools shall be five years old or older on or before September 1st of the school year in which they apply for entrance.

2. Early Admission to Kindergarten

A four-year-old child, upon the request of the parent or guardian, may be admitted into kindergarten if the Superintendent or her/his designee determines that the child demonstrates capabilities warranting such early admission.

C. First Grade

1. Age at Admission

Children admitted to the first grade in the public schools shall be six years old or older on or before September 1st of the school year in which they apply for entrance.

(a) A five-year-old child, upon the request of the parent or guardian, may be admitted to the first grade if the Superintendent or his/her designee determines that the child demonstrates capabilities warranting such early admission.

(b) A parent or guardian of a child who attended an alternative program described below in Section D (2) (a) shall register the child for first grade before the opening of school of the year in which the child becomes six years old and shall provide documentation showing proof of attendance in the alternative program including:

- (1) the date the child was enrolled; and
- (2) the number of days the child was absent.

D. Waivers

1. Maturity Waivers

(a) A child five-years-of-age may be exempted from mandatory attendance for one (1) year if, before the opening of the school of the year in which the child becomes five years old:

- (i) the parent/guardian of the child files a written request for such waiver on the basis that such waiver is in the child's best interest due to the child's level of maturity; or,
- (ii) after a child is enrolled in Kindergarten a parent or guardian files a written request to withdraw the

child from Kindergarten for the same reason as set forth in D-1(a)(i) above.

- (b) The request described in Section D-1(a) shall be granted within five working days of receipt of the request.

2. Alternative Program Waiver

- (a) A child may be exempted from attending kindergarten if the parent/guardian of the child files in writing their intent to place the child in an alternative program and verifies that the child is enrolled in any of the following:

- (1) full-time in a licensed child care center; or,
- (2) full-time in a registered family day care home; or,
- (3) part-time in a Head Start 5-year-old-program.

- (b) A parent or guardian who elects to enroll a five-year-old-child in a full-time licensed daycare center, or full-time in a registered family daycare home, or part-time in a Head Start five-year-old program shall file their intent to enroll such child in such program with HCPS before the opening of school of the year in which the child becomes five years old. The parent or guardian shall verify enrollment by providing the name of the program, the address of the facility location and the facility license or registration number and expiration date.

E. Non-State Residents

- 1. A five-year-old child who moves into the State of Maryland who has had a kindergarten experience in another state for part of the school year in which the child is registering shall be enrolled in kindergarten.
- 2. A six-year-old child who moves into the State of Maryland who has not had a kindergarten experience may be enrolled in kindergarten or first grade. The Superintendent or her/his designee shall determine the appropriate grade placement of a six-year-old child who moves into Maryland based on a review of documentation provided by the parent or guardian.

- F. The Superintendent shall establish procedures for implementing this policy.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Barbara P. Canavan
Superintendent

Policy Action Dates							
ACTION		DATE		ACTION		DATE	
Adopted		Unknown					
Amended		7/8/2002					

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References	
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Patrick P. Spicer	JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: General Counsel
PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Kathy Griffin	JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Coordinator of Early Childhood Education
DESIGNEE NAME: N/A	JOB POSITION OF DESIGNEE: N/A
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005: Students .07.01.005	

LEGAL REFERENCES¹

1. Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland Section 7-101 (A)
2. Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”) 13A.08.01.02
3. All other references are set forth in the policy.

¹ All references are to specific federal or Maryland statutes or regulations. References are provided for convenience and informational purposes only and are not to be considered as exhaustive or as precluding Harford County Public Schools from relying upon any other statutes or regulations in support of a policy.