



# MDE Recommends

Michigan Department of Education  
<http://www.michigan.gov/studentissues>

## KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT and ALTERNATIVE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

The sections of the *Revised School Code* that address this issue are contained in the Michigan Compiled Law under MCL 380.1147 and 388.1606.

### ***Enrollment Age***

Michigan law entitles a resident child who is at least five years of age on or before December 1 to enroll in kindergarten until the 2013-2014 school year [MCL 380.1147]. For the 2013-2014 school year, a child who resides in the school district may enroll in kindergarten if the child is at least 5 years of age on November 1, 2013. For the 2014-2015 school year, a child who resides in the school district may enroll in kindergarten if the child is at least 5 years of age on October 1, 2014. Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, a child who resides in the school district may enroll in kindergarten if the child is at least 5 years of age on September 1 of the school year of enrollment. For the district to be eligible to count the pupil in membership and receive state aid, the pupil must meet these age requirements [MCL 388.1606(4)].

*Note: The ages prescribed above for a child's eligibility for enrollment in a school district also apply to a child's eligibility to enroll in a public school academy.*

### ***Exceptions Provided for Enrollment Age***

If a child residing in the school district is not 5 years of age on the enrollment eligibility dates listed above, but will be 5 years of age not later than December 1 of a school year, the parent or legal guardian of that child may enroll the child in kindergarten for that school year if the parent or legal guardian notifies the school district in writing not later than June 1 before the beginning of the school year that he or she intends to enroll the child in kindergarten.

If a child becomes a resident of the school district after June 1, the child's parent or legal guardian may enroll the child in kindergarten for that school year if the parent or legal guardian submits this written notification to the school district not later than August 1 before the beginning of that school year.

A school district that receives this written notification may make a recommendation to the parent or legal guardian that the child is not ready to enroll in kindergarten due to the child's age or other factors. However, regardless of this recommendation, the parent or legal guardian retains the sole discretion to determine whether or not to enroll the child in kindergarten.

If a school district or public school academy enrolls any children in kindergarten for a school year under subsection (3), the school district or public school academy shall notify the department of the number of those children enrolled by not later than December 31 of that school year.

*Note: Districts are not required to enroll a child in kindergarten until the child meets the age eligibility of the school year of enrollment as described above. If a district did agree to enroll a four-year old, the district would not be able to claim the child for state school aid purposes.*

### ***Alternative Kindergarten Programs***

The Michigan Attorney General ruled in an opinion cited as 1987 OAG 6467 that when a child is qualified by residence and age to attend kindergarten, the school district is obligated to accept the child's enrollment in kindergarten despite any recommendation of school district personnel that the child attend an alternative developmental kindergarten program.

*This information is provided as a service of the Michigan Department of Education and is distributed with the understanding that the Department is not engaged in rendering legal advice. Those individuals desiring or requiring legal advice should seek the services of an attorney.*

February 2013

Michigan Department of Education  
Frequently Asked Questions  
About Changes in the Kindergarten Entry Age  
February 2013

Question	Answer	Implication for Payment of State School Aid/Counting Child in Membership
1. What is the age my child must be to enter K in 2013?	5 on or before November 1	Child counts in membership.
2. What is the age my child must be to enter K in 2014?	5 on or before October 1	Child counts in membership.
3. What is the age my child must be to enter K in 2015 and in subsequent years?	5 on or before September 1	Child counts in membership.
4. What must I do if I want to enroll my child whose birthdate is before December 1 but after the enrollment date for the year he/she turns 5?	Inform resident district by June 1.	Child counts in membership.
5. What if I move after June 1?	Inform resident district by August 1.	Child counts in membership.
6. What if I move after August 1 but before school starts?	Parent may request early enrollment but the district is not required to allow early enrollment.	The district is allowed to enroll the student, but the student would not be eligible for state aid.
7. What if I notify the district after the cut-off date?	Parent may request early enrollment but the district is not required to allow early enrollment.	The district is allowed to enroll the student, but the student would not be eligible for state aid.
8. What if my child is enrolled in K early and we move to another district or from a state with an earlier entry date? Will he/she be allowed to continue in K?	Parent may request continued enrollment of child but the district is not required to allow the early enrollment.	The answer could vary based on if the student was counted in the previous district's membership.  If the student was not counted in membership (such as when the student moved to Michigan from another state), then the student would not be eligible for state aid.  If the early enrollment notification date has passed, and if the student was counted in

			<p>another district, then the district would be allowed to enroll the student. The district would then be allowed to claim a proration of FTE from the previous district (provided that the Section 25 language goes into effect during 2013-14).</p> <p>If the early enrollment notification date has not passed, the parent would notify the district of the early enrollment.</p> <p>As a side note, the district could always enroll the student without claiming state aid.</p>
9.	What if I want my child to participate in another district through schools of choice (SOC)?	<p>The child must participate in the schools of choice (SOC) selection process; in addition, the parent would need to notify the SOC district of the early enrollment by June 1. The district must allow a child eligible for early enrollment to participate in the process if the parent indicates to the district by the early enrollment notification date that s/he intends to have the child participate in the schools of choice selection process.</p>	<p>In order for the student to be eligible for state aid, the parent must notify the SOC district of the early enrollment by June 1; if the student moved into their current district after June 1, the parent would then have until August 1 to notify the SOC district of the early enrollment. Enrollment in the SOC district would then depend on if the application/enrollment window for the district was still open.</p> <p>Additionally, if the district operates a limited SOC program, the district is required to follow the guidelines for enrollment under 388.1705/388.1705c in the event that seats become available.</p>
10.	What about entering a Public School Academy early?	<p>The child must participate in the PSA selection process. The PSA must allow a child eligible for early enrollment to participate in the selection process as an eligible kindergarten if the parent indicates to PSA by the early enrollment notification date that s/he intends to have the child participate in the PSA selection process.</p>	<p>In order for the student to be eligible for state aid, the parent must notify the PSA district of the early enrollment by June 1; if the student moved into their current district after June 1, the parent would then have until August 1 to notify the PSA district of the early enrollment.</p>



## Kindergarten Waiver Information

### December 2012

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A recently enacted Michigan law amended the Revised School Code (MCL 380.1147), which changed the minimum age requirement for a child enrolling in kindergarten. Currently, a student must be five years old by December 1<sup>st</sup> to be eligible for enrollment to kindergarten. New legislation will change the "cut-off" date and will be gradually phased-in over three years; changing the requirement by one month each year. The changes will be implemented in the following manner:

- For the 2013-2014 school year, children must be five years old by November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- For the 2014-2015 school year, children must be five years old by October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- For the 2015-2016 school year (and beyond), children must be five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### Parent Waiver Option

If the child is not eligible for enrollment per the guidelines specified above and will be five years old by December 1<sup>st</sup>, the child's parent or legal guardian can apply for a waiver to enroll their student in school. Waiver deadlines and other information are as follows:

- If the child resides in the school district, the waiver must be submitted to the school district no later than **June 1<sup>st</sup>** before the beginning of the school year.
- If the child becomes a resident of the school district after June 1<sup>st</sup>, the waiver must be submitted to the school district no later than **August 1<sup>st</sup>** before the beginning of the school year.
- When in receipt of a waiver, districts can make recommendations to the child's parent or legal guardian, as to the child's readiness for school, and whether or not the child should be enrolled early.
- Regardless of a district's recommendation, the parent or legal guardian retains the sole discretion to enroll their child.

MPAAA has created three waiver forms for districts to use, which are included in this document. In addition, we have included a poster created by the West Shore ESD and shared with the Michigan School Public Relations Association (MSPRA). Feel free to customize these forms as needed however, please retain the source credit.

We hope you find these tools helpful!

{District/School Name}  
{District School Address}  
**Kindergarten Waiver Request for 2014-2015 School Year**

According to Michigan Law (MCL 380.1147), if a child residing in {District Name} is not five years of age on October 1, 2014 but will be five years of age not later than December 1, 2014, the parent or legal guardian of that child may enroll the child in kindergarten for the 2014-2015 school year if the parent or legal guardian notifies the school district in writing not later than June 1, 2014, that he or she intends to enroll the child in kindergarten. If a child becomes a resident of the {District Name} after June 1, the child's parent or legal guardian may enroll the child in kindergarten for that school year if the parent or legal guardian submits this written notification not later than August 1, 2014 under this subsection.

A school district that receives this written notification may make a recommendation to the parent or legal guardian as to whether the child is not ready to enroll in kindergarten due to the child's age or other factors. Regardless of the district recommendation, the parent or legal guardian retains the sole discretion to determine whether or not to enroll the child in kindergarten if the student is five years of age not later than December 1, 2014.

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

Verification of Age: ☐ Birth Certificate ☐ Government Record ☐ Hospital Record  
(Check one) ☐ Court Record ☐ Citizenship Paper ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Specify)

Evidence of School Readiness (provided by parent):

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian's Printed Name      Parent/Guardian's Signature      Date

**{District/School Name} Recommendation**

- ☐ {Administrator's Name} agrees with the recommendation of the parents to enroll in Kindergarten.  
☐ {Administrator's Name} recommends kindergarten begin in September 2015 for the following reasons:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Administrator's Signature      Date