



EARLY ENTRANCE INTO KINDERGARTEN POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedure for parents who want to enroll their child in Kindergarten prior to the legal entrance age of five (5) years on or before September 1st.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Minnesota Statute 120A.20 requires kindergarten students to be at least five years of age on September 1 unless a school board has established a policy for early entrance. This policy applies to parents/guardians who desire to enroll a child in kindergarten prior to the legal entrance age of five years on or before September 1.

The School District recognizes that children develop physically, emotionally and intellectually at different rates, resulting in varying levels of school readiness. An orderly determination for Early Entrance into kindergarten has been established by the Board of Directors of Natural Science Academy.

III. CRITERIA USED TO Make Early Entrance Determination

Early Entrance to kindergarten will be considered for those children who will be five years of age after September 1. But before October 1st of the year in which enrollment is desired. Requests for Early Entrance should be submitted as soon as possible after the NSA open enrollment period begins, on January 1st, but no later than March 1st, of the preceding school year. No child whose birthday comes after September 30th will be considered for Early Entrance.

To be eligible for Early Entrance under current guidelines, candidates will be evaluated for specific academic and social milestones to ensure that the child has socially, emotionally and physically matured to a point, that enables them to associate and achieve with in-coming kindergarten students and be able to meet kindergarten grade expectations and progress to first grade in the subsequent year.

The comprehensive evaluation will be aligned with state kindergarten expectations, and include a parent report and teacher observations of the child's knowledge, skills, and abilities. Evaluations will be based on the six domains of *The Early Childhood Indicators of Progress* that reflect the full range of child development. They are as follows:

- **Social and Emotional Development**
- **Approaches to Learning**
- **Language and Literacy Development**
- **Creativity and the Arts**
- **Cognitive Development (includes Mathematical and Logical Thinking, Scientific Thinking and Problem Solving, and Social Systems Understanding)**
- **Physical and Motor Development**

III. PROCEDURES

In order to be considered for Early Entrance to kindergarten at Natural Science Academy, a prospective student must satisfy the following requirements.

- All Early Entrance candidates must meet the cut off birth date of five years, before October 1st of the year in which enrollment is desired.
- All Early Entrance candidates are required to participate in Early Childhood Screening.
- Parents seeking Early Entrance for their child submit an Early Entrance Application to the NSA school office by March 1st of the year preceding desired fall enrollment.

Parents interested in Early Entrance for their child can begin the process by taking the following steps:

1. Parents must apply by filling out and submitting the Early Entrance Application Form to NSA administrators after January 1st but no later than March 1st of the year preceding enrollment. Application materials are available through the Natural Science Academy office. The application is not complete without a copy of the child's birth certificate, Early Childhood Screening results.
2. Once the application is received and it is determined the child meets age requirement, The Early Entrance Team, composed of an NSA Lead Teacher and kindergarten team member, will contact the parents/guardians and schedule a meeting. During the meeting members of the team will go over the application with the Parents/guardians while the kindergarten team members interview the child. If the team determines it appropriate, an observation would then be scheduled.
3. Following the observation, parents/guardians will be notified by a school administrator whether the child is recommended to proceed to the Cognitive Assessment phase of the process or if the child is not recommended for Early Entrance to Kindergarten.
4. For children who progress to the Cognitive Assessment phase of the process, following completion of their individual evaluation, the Early Entrance Team will meet to discuss the results of the assessment. Consideration will be given to all the criteria listed above.

5. A post-assessment interview will be held with the parents and school professionals to inform the parents of their child's performance. The decision for Early Entry will be shared at this time.

Adopted: 2/21/17

Reviewed: _____