

# Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools

## Early Entrance to Kindergarten

### Plan, Process and Resources



Early entrance is the practice of admitting a student to kindergarten who has not reached the typical age at which students are admitted to kindergarten, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. Early entrance available for students whose fifth birthday falls after August 1 but before January 1 of the year s/he plans to enter school - or for 1st grade, their 6th birthday falls within that date range.

1

Review Bellbrook-Sugarcreek's Early Entrance Information and Process

2

Submit an application and approval for evaluation, if desired and student is eligible

3

Once your application is received, an acceleration coach be in touch via email or phone call to go over the process.

4

Testing is scheduled for your child for the areas of achievement, aptitude, and ability, as appropriate. The Iowa Acceleration Scale will be used as an objective tool to guide the data collection process.

5

An acceleration review team will meet to review the child's data from testing, classroom observations, teacher and parent input. Logistical concerns for the child will also be considered.

6

A parent meeting will be scheduled to discuss results and determine best placement for the child's success.

# Early Entrance Plan

## Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools



The Bellbrook-Sugarcreek School Board recognizes that all students learn and progress at different rates and that the time it takes to reach academic standards varies among students. The board believes students should be challenged and supported to reach their full potential, and that the practice of early entrance can be utilized to match appropriate learning opportunities with students' abilities.

The goals of early entrance are to adjust the pace of instruction to the student's capabilities, provide an appropriate level of challenge by removing the barriers to accessing appropriately challenging curriculum, and to reduce the time period necessary for students to complete traditional schooling.

In rare instances young children are already reading, counting, and categorizing, are developmentally advanced in thinking skills, language acquisition, and quantitative reasoning, and may be ready for early entrance into kindergarten. These children also need to be advanced in personal development and emotional maturity. These students may be candidates for early entrance to kindergarten or to first grade. Typically, one or two children in a hundred meet the expectations required to enter school early.

Early entrance is a form of grade acceleration. Therefore, the team is not simply looking to see if a child is ready for kindergarten (or first grade); the team is investigating to see if a child is ready to accelerate a year ahead of his/her peers. Parents need to consider that early entrance is a decision that will impact the child throughout the school experience, not just for a year or two.

When accelerated children enter the middle grades or junior school, their peers may be more physically developed and have broader parental permission regarding social activities. Challenges may occur in high school as peers may have a driver's license or begin to date when the accelerated student is not eligible at that time. Parents must consider that entrance to college will follow earlier than traditionally expected, and the student will require profound maturity to effectively face adult decisions and potential pressures.

[www.sugarcreek.k12.oh.us/Gifted.aspx](http://www.sugarcreek.k12.oh.us/Gifted.aspx)

Questions?: [bssgifted@bss.k12.oh.us](mailto:bssgifted@bss.k12.oh.us)

# Timeline

Registration for Early Entrance opens August 15 and closes April 15th.

Evaluations and a written report is issued within forty-five (45) calendar days of submission of the referral to the school.

Evaluations related to referrals submitted to the school after April 16th and before August 14th will ordinarily be completed and a written report issued within forty-five (45) days of the start of the school year. Evaluations are typically not completed over the summer months due to staffing.

It is important to schedule preschool and/or daycare for your child, even if you want to apply for early entrance, as very few students will qualify for early entrance.

# Should academic acceleration be considered for a student?



## **Academic Readiness:**

- Understands the meanings and use of words better than other children his/her age
- Is curious about many things and asks questions often
- Is very good at working puzzles or solving problems
- Has a great sense of humor and understands jokes more than other children his/her age
- Has a good memory and remembers details of conversations or stories
- Is interested in difficult concepts such as time or space
- Concentrates on certain activities much longer than other children his/her age
- Reads (and understands text) in picture books or chapter books
- Figures out math-related problems better than other children his/her age



## **Social and Emotional Maturity:**

- Enjoys learning new information or skills
- Participates in community-sponsored activities such as sports, music, library, and museum programs
- Believes he/she is capable of succeeding at new tasks
- Considers feedback and criticism thoughtfully and modifies behavior appropriately
- Behaves often in a way that is positive and effective
- Has good interpersonal skills with same-age peers, as well as older and younger children, and adults
- Has excellent interpersonal relationships with adults in a teaching role

## **Early Entrance should not be considered if...**



- The child has one (or more) older sibling(s) in the grade in which he/she will be placed.
- The child did not want to attend preschool or missed school often because of illness or family issues.
- There is no extra time in the day to provide additional support to my child that he/she may need in order to transition to a new setting with higher academic demands.



Upon review of plan and checklists, complete the district application for early entrance if your child meets the requirements and recommendations.

*Acceleration should not come at the expense of social and emotional development. A multi-faceted approach, involving input from teachers, parents, and possibly psychologists, is recommended to make informed decisions.*

# Early Entrance Assessments

## **Evaluation for acceleration consists of three types of assessments:**

### **Ability Testing**

Provides a full-scale IQ score for the student. If the student's full-scale IQ is greater than or equal to 115, further evaluation will take place. If the full-scale IQ score is less than 115, the district will not recommend early entrance for the student and no further evaluation will take place.

### **Achievement Testing**

Provides information on the student's performance at the current age/grade level in the area recommended for acceleration. If the student is recommended for early entrance to kindergarten or whole-grade acceleration, then the student will be tested for achievement in mathematics, reading, and language arts skills.

Achievement testing in science and social studies may also be recommended for whole-grade acceleration.

### **Aptitude Testing**

Provides information on how the student is likely to perform at a higher grade level. Aptitude scores can often be obtained by norming achievement tests based on a higher grade level or age. It is recommended that aptitude testing be completed at two (2) grade levels above the student's current grade/age.

The above assessments are reviewed and evaluated by an acceleration evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate and available learning environment for the students. The testing and evaluation of students takes several hours, so that is something to keep in mind as considering your child's readiness as well.

# Bellbrook–Sugar Creek Schools Application for Academic Acceleration



Thank you for requesting Acceleration Nomination Forms for your child. Please allow us to share some information regarding acceleration to help you determine if this may be an appropriate choice for your child.

The acceleration procedure for Bellbrook–Sugar Creek Schools is a research-based, data-driven process employing the use of the Iowa Acceleration Scale, 3rd edition, which is the acceleration instrument approved by the State of Ohio. This scale allows us to take a multi-factored approach to determine if a student is a good candidate for acceleration. It is important to note that this procedure may, in some cases, take more than a month to complete. Because we are considering altering a student's educational placement, we make every effort to ensure a student should be accelerated and that the placement will be successful. Acceleration nominations should be carefully considered before they are submitted.

Most good candidates for acceleration will display some of the following characteristics, as identified by the State of Ohio:

- Demonstrate above average general cognitive ability
- Academically achieves one or more grade levels above the norm for his/her age
- Express a desire for more challenging instruction
- Are socially mature enough to adapt to an environment serving older students
- Respond positively to the possibility of acceleration

Acceleration is not a good option for students with some of the following characteristics, as identified by the State of Ohio:

- Student has an older sibling in the grade level to which the student may be accelerated
- Student is sufficiently challenged by the curriculum at his/her current grade level
- Student would be significantly less emotionally mature than typical students at the grade level to which he/she may be accelerated
- Student responds negatively to the possibility of acceleration

# Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools Application for Academic Acceleration

(including whole-grade, subject, and early entrance to  
Kindergarten)



Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Type of Acceleration to be Considered:**

Subject or Subjects (specify):  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Whole Grade: from grade \_\_\_\_\_ to grade \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Early Entrance to Kindergarten

☐ Early Graduation

## **Current Areas of Gifted Identification:**

☐ Superior Cognitive Ability   ☐ Reading   ☐ Mathematics   ☐ Social Studies   ☐ Science

☐ Creative Thinking Ability   ☐ Music   ☐ Dance   ☐ Drama/Theatre   ☐ Visual Arts

☐ Student is not identified as gifted at this time   ☐ Do not know if student is identified as gifted

• Explain why you are referring this student for acceleration or early entrance to kindergarten. Include any evidence you may have to indicate that he/she will be successful in an accelerated placement:

• Explain how this student will benefit more from acceleration or early entrance to kindergarten than from the implementation of differentiation strategies and other educational options in the current placement:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Initiating Referral

\_\_\_\_\_  
Position or Relationship to Child

**Return this completed form to the child's principal. If permission is granted to evaluate the child for acceleration, an acceleration committee will determine the most appropriate available learning environment for the referred student and will issue a written decision to the principal and to the student's parent or legal guardian within forty-five days of the referral.**

**Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools**  
**Office of Curriculum and Gifted Services**

**Permission to Test Form**

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Birthdate** \_\_\_\_\_ **Teacher** \_\_\_\_\_  
**School** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

My child may be assessed by designated Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools' personnel using assessment instruments approved by the State of Ohio. Within thirty (30) days of completion of assessment, I will be informed of whether or not my child qualifies, according to the State of Ohio criteria for gifted identification.

☐ I give permission for assessment(s) to be conducted.

☐ I do not give permission for assessment(s) to be conducted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime telephone number

Please call \_\_\_\_\_ with any questions or concerns.

**Please return this form to the student's building principal.**

Date Received by Gifted Services: \_\_\_\_\_



# Academic Acceleration Resources

[Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Early Entrance Guide](#)

[Ohio Department of Education and Workforce Academic Acceleration Web Page](#)

[Acceleration Institute at the Belin-Blank Center, Parent Resources](#)

[Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Board Policy for Academic Acceleration](#)

# Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools Board Policy for Early Entrance



This policy is compliant with Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3321.01, all children who will be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall be evaluated upon the request of the child's parent or legal guardian. Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested shall also be evaluated for possible early admittance if referred by an educator within the district, a pre-school educator who knows the child, or pediatrician or psychologist who knows the child. Children who will not yet be the proper age for entrance to kindergarten or first grade by the first day of January of the school year for which admission is requested may also be evaluated for possible early admittance at the discretion of the principal of the school to which the student may be admitted.

e) A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the evaluation process within 45 days of the submission of the referral to the referred student's principal. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.

f) A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the local Superintendent within thirty days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his or her final decision within thirty days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity if he or she is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as described in this policy.

## 2) ACCELERATION EVALUATION COMMITTEE

(1) The referred student's principal (or his or her designee) shall convene an evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate available learning environment for the referred student. This committee shall be comprised of the following:

- (a) A principal or assistant principal from the child's current school;
- (b) A current teacher of the referred student (with the exception of students referred for possible early admission to kindergarten);
- (c) A teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated (with the exception of students referred for possible early graduation from high school);
- (d) A parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred student;
- (e) A gifted education coordinator or gifted intervention specialist. If a gifted coordinator or gifted intervention specialist is not available in the district, a school psychologist or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration may be substituted.

# Bellbrook–Sugar Creek Schools Policy for Academic Acceleration

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# Bellbrook–Sugar Creek Schools Policy for Academic Acceleration

This policy is compliant with Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.



- (2) The acceleration evaluation committee shall be charged with the following responsibilities:
- (a) The acceleration evaluation committee shall conduct a fair and thorough evaluation of the student.
    - (i) Students considered for whole-grade acceleration and early entrance to kindergarten shall be evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by the Ohio Department of Education. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
    - (ii) Students considered for individual subject acceleration shall be evaluated using a variety of data sources, including measures of achievement based on state academic content standards (in subjects for which the state had approved content standards) and consideration of the student's maturity and desire for accelerated placement. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations. 9 | Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners | 2006
    - (iii) Students referred for possible early high school graduation shall be evaluated based on past academic performance, measures of achievement based on state academic content standards, and successful completion of state mandated graduation requirements. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
  - (b) The acceleration evaluation committee shall issue a written decision to the principal and the student's parent or legal guardian based on the outcome of the evaluation process. If a consensus recommendation cannot be reached by the committee, a decision regarding whether or not to accelerate the student will be determined by a majority vote of the committee membership.
  - (c) The acceleration evaluation committee shall develop a written acceleration plan for students who will be admitted early to kindergarten, whole-grade accelerated, or accelerated in one or more individual subject areas. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student shall be provided with a copy of the written acceleration plan. The written acceleration plan shall specify:
    - (i) placement of the student in an accelerated setting;
    - (ii) strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting;
    - (iii) requirements and procedures for earning high school credit prior to entering high school (if applicable); and
    - (iv) an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual content areas.
  - (d) For students the acceleration evaluation committee recommends for early high school graduation, the committee shall develop a written acceleration plan designed to allow the student to complete graduation requirements on an accelerated basis. This may include the provision of educational options in accordance with Ohio Administrative Code 3301- 35-06 (G), waiving district prerequisite requirements for enrolling in advanced courses, waiving district graduation requirements that exceed those required by the state, and early promotion to sophomore (or higher) status to allow the student to take the Ohio Graduation Test.
  - (e) The acceleration evaluation committee shall designate a school staff member to ensure successful implementation of the written acceleration plan and to monitor the adjustment of the student to the accelerated setting.

# Bellbrook–Sugar Creek Schools Policy for Academic Acceleration

This policy is compliant with Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.



## 3) ACCELERATED PLACEMENT

(a) The acceleration evaluation committee shall specify an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual subject areas.

(i) At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall remove the student without repercussions from the accelerated placement.

(ii) At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing an alternative accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall direct the acceleration committee to consider other accelerative options and issue a decision within 30 days of receiving the request from the parent or legal guardian. If the student will be placed in an accelerated setting different from that initially recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee, the student's written acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly, and a new transition period shall be specified.

b) At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.