



# Lawrence Public Schools

**Section J: Students**

**J4**

**Subject: Entrance Age and Grade Change Policy**

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Lawrence Public Schools, in keeping with Massachusetts State Board of Education regulations on permissible school entrance age, may establish the age at which children shall be allowed to enter school. The State Board requires that children be permitted to enter kindergarten in September of the calendar year in which they turn five years of age.

In accordance with the above, initial admission to pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and grade 1 shall be based solely on chronological age. Admission to grades other than these shall be based on chronological age, transcript, academic readiness, or other relevant factors as shall be deemed appropriate by the school administration.

## **Kindergarten**

Only children who will be five (5) years of age by September 1 of the current year will be admitted to kindergarten. No exceptions to this will be allowed, other than the case of a child who will be five (5) years of age by December 1 of the current year and who is transferring into Lawrence from another U.S. or U.S. Territory kindergarten program, based on proof of successful completion of at least five months in the grade.

Applicants for pre-kindergarten must be age three (3) by September 1 of the current year (or 2.9 with an IEP). Four year olds, students with IEPs, and three-year-old siblings of students already enrolled in the same school will be prioritized for placement. Remaining three-year-olds will be moved from a waitlist as seats become available.

Given that child development naturally varies considerably among our youngest learners and that LPS programs are equipped to support this wide range of development, grade change recommendations are discouraged and will only be made on appeal to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

## **First Grade**

Only children who will be six (6) years of age by September 1 of the current year will be admitted to first grade. No exceptions to this policy will be allowed, other than the case of a child who will be six (6) years of age by December 1 of the current year and who is transferring into Lawrence from another U.S. or U.S. Territory accredited school, based on proof of successful completion of at least five months in the grade. After initial placement in first grade, the school principal may subsequently investigate any recommended changes in grade placement, through testing and teacher assessment, and may, with parental approval, use the Grade Change Recommendation Form to recommend to the Family Resource Center (FRC) a change in grade placement.

## **Grades Two through Eight (2-8)**

Students enrolling in grades two through eight will be placed in a grade level based on proof of successful completion of the last grade attended in a U.S. or territory school.

Enrolling students who are new to the country and have not previously been enrolled in a US or territory school, will be assigned to a grade based on chronological age only.

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The school principal will subsequently investigate any recommended changes in grade placement, through testing and teacher assessment, and may, with parental approval, use the Grade Change Recommendation Form to recommend to the Family Resource center (FRC) a change in grade placement.

## **Grades Nine through Twelve (9-12)**

Students enrolling in grades nine through twelve will be placed in a grade level based on proof of successful completion of the last grade attended in a U.S. or territory school.

Enrolling students who are new to the country and have not previously been enrolled in a US or territory school, will be assigned to a grade based on the following criteria, in this order:

1. Language screening
2. Chronological age and records review

The school principal will subsequently investigate any recommended changes in grade placement, through testing and teacher assessment, and may, with parental approval, use the Grade Change Recommendation Form to recommend to the Registrar a change in grade placement.

Appeals to this policy may be made to the Superintendent or his/her designee. The decision of the Superintendent or his/her designee will be final.

Inquiries pertaining to this policy should be addressed to:  
**Community, Family and Student Engagement**  
60 Island Street  
Lawrence, MA 01840  
(978) 975-5900