

# What Parents Should Know About **KINDERGARTEN** Entry, Enrollment, and Attendance



## Why should my child attend kindergarten?

- Kindergarten instruction develops the foundation for all other learning through grade 12. Students learn important skills such as early reading and self-regulation.
- Dual language learners can get support in kindergarten. They can learn English and the value of their language spoken at home.
- Any problems that may affect a child's ability to learn can be identified in kindergarten. Developmental concerns will be identified. The child will receive appropriate services through general education and/or special education. The earlier a problem is identified, the sooner the child can receive support. This will improve their ability to achieve throughout their school years.
- Keeping children out of kindergarten typically does not have long-term benefits. In fact, some education experts have found keeping children out of kindergarten may be detrimental for some children.

For more information, contact [andrea.brinnel@ct.gov](mailto:andrea.brinnel@ct.gov) or 860-713-6910, or visit <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Special-Education/Early-Childhood-Special-Education>

The Connecticut State Department of Education is an affirmative action/equal employment opportunity employer.

## Frequently asked questions about kindergarten entry, enrollment, and attendance

### At what age can my child enter kindergarten?

Connecticut law requires public schools to be open to all children who reach age 5 on or before January 1 of any school year.\*

### If my child is not 5 years old until after January 1 of the school year, can he or she still enter kindergarten?

It is the local board of education's decision to admit your child before he or she is age eligible for kindergarten.\*

### If my child is 5 on or before January 1 of the school year, do I have to send my child to kindergarten?

Parents of a child who is 5 years old have the option not to send their child to school until the child is 6 or 7 years old. If they choose not to send their child when the child is age eligible, they must go to the school district office and sign an opt-out form.\*\*

### Does my child have to be tested in order to enter kindergarten?

There isn't any state requirement for a child to be tested to enter kindergarten. Your school district may require testing or screening but your child can't be excluded from school when he or she is age eligible, regardless of the results of any test or screening.

### How long is the school year for kindergarten?

Public schools must provide half-day kindergarten programs for 450 hours of actual school work during school hours. If a public school chooses to offer full-day kindergarten, it must provide 900 hours of school work.\*\*\*

### Can my child attend full-day kindergarten?

Some schools do not offer full-day kindergarten for all children. If the school that your child will attend provides full-day kindergarten for all children then your child will attend full day kindergarten.

### Should I hold my child out of kindergarten even though he or she is age eligible?

The Connecticut State Department of Education strongly encourages parents to send their children to kindergarten when they are age eligible: 5 years old on or before January 1 of any school year. However, some parents do not send their children when eligible. This can be due to concerns that the kindergarten program may not be appropriate; that their child may be among the youngest in the class or may not be "socially mature enough"; or that their child is generally not yet "ready for kindergarten." Please know that all school districts are responsible for meeting the needs of all kindergarten students. School districts are required to provide an appropriate kindergarten experience for all children that are age eligible.

\* C.G.S. Sec. 10-15c \*\* C.G.S. Sec. 10-184 \*\*\* C.G.S. Sec. 10-15