

**POLICY HANDBOOK****POLICY**

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION BELIEVES THAT EARLY CHILDHOOD IS A SIGNIFICANT PERIOD IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. INDEPENDENCE, INITIATIVE, DECISION MAKING, CREATIVITY, THE ABILITY TO LEARN, THE ABILITY TO RELATE TO OTHERS AND FEELINGS OF SELF-WORTH ALL HAVE THEIR BEGINNINGS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD. WHAT YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN AT THIS STAGE WILL HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON SUCCESSFUL LEARNING EXPERIENCES IN SCHOOL, ON PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ON FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY.

**REGULATIONS**

1. A parent may enroll a child in the jurisdiction's pre-kindergarten program when their age of entry is four years of age on or before December 31 of that year.
2. A parent may enroll a child in the jurisdiction's kindergarten program when their age of entry is five years of age on or before December 31 of that year.
3. A parent may enroll a child in the jurisdiction's Grade one program when their age of entry is six years of age on or before December 31 of that year.
4. The school Principal shall provide parents with a copy of this policy at the time the parents make a request for admission to a pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1 program.
5. A child younger than one described in policy will be admitted to a Division school only if the following conditions are met:
  - (a) The Superintendent or designate has been involved in the process and decision-making;
  - (b) Children, 3 years of age as of September 1 of the current school year, with a diagnosed developmental delay (e.g. speech and/or language) may qualify for additional program services and early entry to Pre-K.
  - (c) Children diagnosed with a developmental delay (e.g. speech and/or language) may qualify for additional program services and early entry to Kindergarten.
  - (d) An English Language Learner younger than one described in policy may be given consideration for early placement to gain additional opportunities within their entry program
  - (e) The parents, the school staff, and the Superintendent or designate agree that a suitable school program can be offered to the child and that the child will benefit from an early placement.
6. Early admission into a particular program means that the student shall have additional time within that program and shall not constitute early entry and progression through the pre-K to grade 12 program.
7. Consideration shall also be given to the availability of funding, the characteristics of the class in which the child would be placed, and the number of students in the class needing support services.

## **Policy IEB – Entrance Age, Cont'd.**

8. Normally, a child transferring into the Division, and who was enrolled in a publicly supported school system, shall be admitted to a Division school in the same program or grade placement as they were in their former jurisdiction provided that the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) is a resident of the Division and provided that an appropriate program can be offered.
9. The Primary Programs Framework for Teaching and Learning, Kindergarten to Grade 3 has been developed to provide the philosophical and theoretical foundation for teaching and learning in Pre-Kindergarten through grade three and includes ten Alberta Education principles (see attachment A).
10. Horizon Early Childhood Learning Programs are built upon the following philosophy statements:
  - 10.1 Early childhood is a significant period in human development
  - 10.2 Purposeful play is an important mode of learning for all children
  - 10.3 Parents are the first and most important teachers in a child's life and as such are valued partners in the early learning experience.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. Parents of a child younger than one described in policy, other than parents of a child eligible for PUF, must make notification to the Superintendent or designate of intent to seek admission to a Division school by June 30 in the year prior to the one for which admission is sought.
2. Conditions described in regulation no. 5 must be met by June 30 in the year prior to the one for which admission is sought.
3. Under exceptional circumstances the Superintendent or Designate may provide extensions beyond the dates included in number 1 and 2 above.
4. Parents of a child younger than described in policy who transfer into the division after deadlines will be granted reasonable time extensions.
5. Parents may appeal decisions made under this policy to the Board. Original birth certificates must be presented by parents upon registration as a student new to the Division.
6. School personnel shall inform the parents of a child younger than one described in this policy, who requests to gain admission to a division kindergarten program, of this policy, including conditions and procedures for early admission.

## **Attachment A**

### **Early Learning Programs Philosophical and Theoretical Foundation Framework for Teaching and Learning Principles**

1. Childhoods differ depending on social and cultural circumstances.
2. Children's development is influenced but not determined by their early experiences.
3. Children interact and learn in a variety of contexts
4. Children are co-constructors of knowledge and partners in learning.
5. Children are unique and active contributors to their learning.
6. Children construct and represent knowledge in a variety of ways.
7. Children are citizens and active participants in school and society.
8. Children are active collaborators in and users of assessment.
9. Children may require specialized programming and supports to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for later learning.
10. Children and their families may need coordinated community services to meet their needs.