

Kindergarten Waiver

Board of Education Curriculum Subcommittee
New Fairfield Public Schools
March 23, 2026



Kindergarten Waiver: NFPS Board of Education Policy 5112

5112

Students

Ages of Attendance/Admissions/Placement

The New Fairfield Board of Education (the "Board") complies with its legal obligation to cause each child five years of age and over and under eighteen years of age who is not a high school graduate and is residing within the Board's jurisdiction to attend school in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 10-184.

Effective July 1, 2024, the New Fairfield Public Schools (the "District") shall be open to resident children five years of age and over who reach age five on or before the first day of September of any school year. For children who will not reach the age of five on or before the first day of September of the school year, the child's parent or guardian may submit a written request to the principal of the school seeking early admission to the District. Upon receipt of such written request, the principal and an appropriate certified staff member shall assess such child to determine whether admitting the child is developmentally appropriate. For decisions relating to early admission to the District, the decision of the principal and appropriate certified staff shall be final.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing administrative regulations in furtherance of this policy. Such regulations shall identify procedures for the receipt and processing of requests for early admission to the District and for assessing whether early admission of a child is developmentally appropriate. The Early Admission Process shall be available only for a child who will reach the age of five on or after September 2 and before January 1 of the school year.

Kindergarten Waiver: Context & Timeline

Under current Connecticut law (Public Act 23-208), the mandatory age for kindergarten enrollment is five years old on or before September 1. While a waiver process has existed since 2024 to allow children turning five between September 2 and December 31 to seek early entry, new emergency legislation passed last week (SB 298) has established a “hard stop” for this practice.

The **Transition Timeline** is as follows:

School Year	Waiver Status	Requirement
2025-2026	Mandatory	Districts <i>must</i> assess any child with a late birthday upon the parent's request.
2026-2027	Optional	Districts <i>only</i> provide waivers if the local Board chooses to adopt an early admission policy. (CABE MODEL KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT AND EARLY ENTRY POLICY 5112.01)
2027-2028+	Banned	No waivers allowed; all children must be 5 by Sept 1. No exceptions.

NFES Kindergarten Waiver Information Sheet

Parents seeking a Kindergarten waiver for their child with a birthdate between September 2, 2021 - December 31, 2021, must complete the Kindergarten Pre-registration form.

All requests for a Kindergarten Waiver must be submitted by March 1.

About the Kindergarten Waiver Process

The Kindergarten Waiver provides for an early admission assessment process. **The purpose of the assessment process is to determine if starting kindergarten early is developmentally appropriate for your child.** Parents / guardians should understand that participation in the kindergarten waiver and assessment process **does not guarantee** admission to kindergarten.

Early Admission Assessment and Timeline

The Mini-K dates listed below will be used for the assessment of children whose parents/guardians have requested a Kindergarten waiver. You must sign your child up for one Mini K session date and time.

March 25, April 1, April 8

During the Mini K visit, your child will have the opportunity to interact with our kindergarten teachers, curriculum specialists, elementary administrators, and ELC Supervisor in an early childhood classroom setting. Together, this team will observe for skills that indicate kindergarten readiness based on the [Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards \(CT ELDS\)](#). The Assessment Team will also obtain information from the parent or guardian as part of the process.

Communication to Families

The NFES assessment team's final determination of your child's readiness for kindergarten will be based on a holistic review across social-emotional, physical, and academic domains. The Assessment Team will communicate to parents / guardians regarding the outcome of the process and waiver request by **April 10th**.

Indicators of Kindergarten Readiness

We encourage parents/guardians requesting a Kindergarten waiver to review the indicators below, along with the corresponding resources from the [Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards \(CT ELDS\)](#) (or, [Spanish version](#)), for insights into the key developmental milestones that will guide the assessment team's decision.



*What children, birth to five,
should know and be able to do*



The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards were developed to help families, communities, and early care and education programs work together to support children's early learning and growth.

Kindergarten Early Entry: Domains and Decision Guidance

Math	___ / 5	Literacy	___ / 5	Fine Motor	___ / 6	Social and Emotional	___ / 8
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☐ Indicators for kindergarten readiness in each domain, grounded in CT ELDS

Language	___ / 5	School-Based Recommendation:	___ / 29	Early K Entry:	Yes / No
		___ at least 5 Social/Emotional	___ at least 2 in all other categories	___ 14 or more total	

☐ Decision Guidance considers a holistic assessment of the child, weighting social-emotional readiness indicators