

A. Purpose

To outline procedures for academic advancement, including early entrance to kindergarten before the state-mandated age of entry, grade level advancement beyond the age-appropriate grade level, and higher-level course placement.

B. Background

1. Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) is committed to ensuring that every student is prepared to thrive in college, careers, and the community, and to provide each student with rigorous learning experiences and personalized support through each step of their journey towards college and career readiness. When students show early readiness, FCPS provides opportunities for academic enrichment, advancement, and acceleration based on individualized student needs. Sometimes students may need both support and acceleration, based on individual needs, or adjusted timelines for advancement of grade levels or specific courses.
2. The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) [13A.08.01.02](#) directs local school systems to adopt a regulation permitting a 4-year-old child, upon request by the parent or guardian, to be admitted to kindergarten if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child demonstrates capabilities warranting early admission; by excelling on measures of kindergarten standards in the domains of literacy, math, and social foundations.

C. Definitions

1. "Advanced course placement" is defined to mean placement in an advanced or accelerated course that is different from placement recommended by school staff, based on a documented plan of action based on individual student needs.
2. "Academic Placement Plan" is defined to mean a documented plan of action created for individual students whose parent has requested academic placement different from that recommended by school staff. The written agreement will specify length and conditions of the probationary placement.
3. "Early Entrance to Kindergarten" is defined to mean the admission of a 4-year-old child who will turn 5 years of age within 45 days after the regular cut-off date of September 1 of that school year (*i.e.*, September 2 - October 16), by request of the parent, if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child demonstrates capabilities warranting early admission by excelling on measures of kindergarten standards in the domains of literacy, math, and social foundations.
4. "Grade level advancement" is defined to mean a placement in a grade level beyond the

age-appropriate placement, based on a documented plan of action created for an individual student whose parent has requested academic placement different from that recommended by school staff.

5. “Parent” is defined to mean a biological or adoptive parent, a court-appointed custodian or guardian, a foster parent, or a caregiver (as defined by the Education Article of the Maryland Annotated Code or as designated by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement).

D. Procedures

1. Early Entrance to Kindergarten

a. Application Process

- i. Parents can access the [Parent Application for Early Entrance to Kindergarten Form](#) through the FCPS website. The application may also be requested from the Office of Early Childhood Education.
- ii. Completed applications must be submitted to the Office of Early Childhood Education by May 15. Applications may be emailed or delivered to the Office of Early Childhood Education as specified on the FCPS website.
- iii. If a child relocates to Frederick County after the May 15th deadline, applications will be considered until the workday preceding the start of the FCPS student school year. Verification of the recent move to Frederick County is required.
- iv. Additional information about the application process may be found on the FCPS website.

b. Screening Process

- i. The Supervisor of Early Childhood Education and Judy Centers, with the Office of Early Childhood Education, oversees screenings to assess kindergarten readiness in the domains of literacy, math, and social foundations.
- ii. Parents will consent to testing by reading and signing an authorization form prior to the assessment.
- iii. The screening process will be administered by a trained examiner.
- iv. Parents may not accompany their child during the assessment.
- v. The assessment is administered only one (1) time to each child. Retesting will not occur for any reason.
- vi. The assessment includes a variety of activities that measure each child’s ability in the following domains: literacy, math and social foundations.
- vii. Parents will be notified of the approval or denial of their request for early admission to kindergarten in a timely manner.

c. Appeal Process

- i. Parents have the opportunity to appeal early entrance decisions by submitting a written notice within ten (10) calendar days of receiving a denial notification.
- ii. An appeal committee comprised of an elementary director, the Supervisor of Elementary Integrated Literacy and the Supervisor of Elementary Mathematics will meet no later than ten (10) business days after receipt of the appeal letter to review the matter and render a decision.

- iii. The decision of the appeal committee will be forwarded to the parents through the Office of Early Childhood Education. Such decision may then be appealed within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the decision, directly to the instructional director who serves as the Superintendent's designee.
- iv. Parents who wish to appeal the decision to the Superintendent may do so in accordance with Board of Education of Frederick County (Board) [Policy 105, Appeal and Hearing Procedures](#).

2. Grade Level Advancement and Advanced Course Placement

- a. Appropriate placement decisions are best made through a collaborative process involving school staff, parents, and the individual student. Placement decisions should be based on providing a pace of learning and level of challenge commensurate with the student's achievement level and abilities. When making placement decisions, providing opportunities for academic advancement when students demonstrate readiness is the priority.
- b. When a parent requests that their child be considered for advanced grade level or course placement or disagrees with a school-recommended placement decision, they may request an academic placement review. The academic placement review request must be in writing and submitted to the principal. The letter requesting a placement review should provide an explanation of why the student should be enrolled in an advanced class or program and include any documentation that supports the request.
- c. Once the request for an academic placement review is received, the principal and selected staff members will review the letter/documentation and consult with the parent. If it is determined that a placement change is appropriate, the principal and parent may create an [Academic Placement Plan](#) placing the student in the parent-requested placement on a probationary basis. The [Academic Placement Plan](#) will specify length and conditions of the probationary placement. If the student successfully completes the plan within the probationary period, the probationary status and plan will be removed and the student will remain in the placement. If a student does not successfully meet the expectations of the plan during the probationary period, the principal may reinstate the school-recommended placement or extend the plan.
- d. In cases when it becomes evident a student should be considered for review, or in which a parent requests a student be placed in Grade 1 without completing Kindergarten, or for placement in Grade 1 without attending Kindergarten; formal assessments of ability, aptitude, achievement, developmental and social emotional indicators will be considered. A conference will be held with the student's parent and school team to discuss these indicators and make a recommendation, subject to approval by the principal. Full-grade acceleration represents a conditional placement and requires the implementation of the [Academic Placement Plan](#) described in Section D(2)(c) of this Regulation.

3. Probationary Period

- a. Upon early entrance acceptance to kindergarten, grade level advancement, or advanced course placement, there will be a probationary period of 45 instructional days, during which the child will be expected to demonstrate evidence of meeting grade level standards and social and emotional readiness.

- i. The probationary period is 45 instructional days at the elementary and middle school levels.
 - ii. At the high school level, a shorter probationary period may be applied as determined by the [Academic Placement Plan](#) to ensure practical implementation for credit purposes.
 - b. If concerns are raised by parents or school personnel, the child's placement will be reevaluated before the probationary period concludes.
 - c. In the event that the child is not demonstrating evidence of meeting grade-level standards, social and emotional readiness and/or attending regularly, school personnel and/or the parent may choose to withdraw the child.
 - d. If the parent disagrees with the decision of school personnel to withdraw the child, the parent may follow the same appeal process as outlined above.
4. **Transfers.** Children who were admitted to a Maryland public school outside of Frederick County, based on early admission criteria of that county, will be admitted to FCPS kindergarten at any point during the kindergarten year.

E. Related Information

1. **Board Policy**
 - a. [Policy 105, *Appeal and Hearing Procedures*](https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/105)
(https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/105)
 - b. [Policy 416, *Progress Reporting*](https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/416)
(https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/416)
 - c. [Policy 430, *Attendance and Enrollment*](https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/430)
(https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/430)
2. **Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)**
 - a. [COMAR 13A.08.01.02, *Age for School Attendance*](https://fcps-md.info/COMAR_13A-08-01-02)
(https://fcps-md.info/COMAR_13A-08-01-02)
 - b. [COMAR 13A.08.01.02-03, *Kindergarten Readiness Assessment*](https://fcps-md.info/COMAR_13A-08-01-02-03)
(https://fcps-md.info/COMAR_13A-08-01-02-03)
3. **FCPS Regulations**
 - a. [Regulation 400-88, *Gifted and Talented Education*](https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/400-88)
(https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/400-88)
 - b. [Regulation 400-95, *Kindergarten Enrollment/Registration*](https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/400-95)
(https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/400-95)
 - c. [Regulation 416-02, *Grading and Reporting, Elementary*](https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/416-02) (formerly 500-06)
(https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/416-02)
 - d. [Regulation 416-03, *Grading and Reporting, Secondary*](https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/416-03) (formerly 416-01)
(https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/416-03)
 - e. [Regulation 416-05, *Academic Support, Intervention, and Promotion*](https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/416-05) (formerly 500-10)
(https://apps.fcps.org/legal/documents/416-05)

4. FCPS Resources

- a. [FCPS / Academics / Advanced Academics](https://www.fcps.org/academics/advanced_academics)
(https://www.fcps.org/academics/advanced_academics)
- b. [FCPS / Academics / Early Childhood Education](https://www.fcps.org/academics/early_childhood_education)
(https://www.fcps.org/academics/early_childhood_education)
- c. [FCPS / Academics / Early Childhood Education / Kindergarten Enrollment](https://www.fcps.org/academics/early_childhood_education/kindergarten_enrollment)
(https://www.fcps.org/academics/early_childhood_education/kindergarten_enrollment)
- d. [FCPS / Schools / Find Your School/Feeder Area](https://www.fcps.org/schools/find_your_school_feeder_area)
(https://www.fcps.org/schools/find_your_school_feeder_area)
- e. [FCPS Calendar Handbook \(2025-2026 School Year\)](https://fcps-md.info/Calendar_Handbook_25-26)
(https://fcps-md.info/Calendar_Handbook_25-26)
- f. **Forms**
 - i. [Academic Placement Plan](https://apps.fcps.org/forms/public-regulation-forms/64)
(https://apps.fcps.org/forms/public-regulation-forms/64)
 - ii. [Parent Application for Early Entrance to Kindergarten Form](https://apps.fcps.org/forms/parents-students-enrollment-records/220)
(https://apps.fcps.org/forms/parents-students-enrollment-records/220)

5. Maryland Statutes

- a. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. Article § 7-101](https://fcps-md.info/MD_Educ_Code_7-101)
(https://fcps-md.info/MD_Educ_Code_7-101)
- b. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. Article § 7-128](https://fcps-md.info/MD_Educ_Code_7-128)
(https://fcps-md.info/MD_Educ_Code_7-128)
- c. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. Article § 7-210](https://fcps-md.info/MD_Educ_Code_7-210)
(https://fcps-md.info/MD_Educ_Code_7-210)

F. **Regulation History** (Maintained by Legal Services)

<i>Responsible Office</i>	Office of Early Childhood Education
Adoption Dates	03/05/08
Review Dates	
Revision Dates	11/02/11; 03/19/14; 06/09/14; 11/20/25