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Washington State Laws and Codes Related to School Entrance

Here are some of the laws and codes of Washington State that apply to admission to public schools. This is not a definitive list. It is meant to assist you in your decision to pursue early entrance for your child. You can obtain additional information from the website of the Washington State Legislature:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/>

Entrance to Kindergarten

WAC 392-335-010 Uniform entry age for kindergarten. Except as provided in WAC 392-335-025, a child must be five years of age as of midnight August 31 of the year of entry to be entitled to enter kindergarten.

WAC 392-335-025 Local option exceptions to uniform entry qualification. School districts may adopt regulations that provide for individual exceptions to the uniform entry qualifications established by this chapter. Such regulations shall provide for a screening process and/or instrument(s) which measure the ability or the need, or both, of an individual student to succeed in earlier entry.

Entrance to First Grade

WAC 392-335-015 Uniform entry age for first grade. Except as provided in WAC 392-335-020 and 392-335-025, a child must be six years of age as of midnight August 31 of the year of entry to be entitled to enter first grade.

WAC 392-335-020 Kindergarten experience qualification for first grade. Any child not otherwise eligible for entry to first grade who successfully has completed a kindergarten program in a public or private school shall be permitted entry to the school program: Provided, That the kindergarten program standards substantially equaled or exceeded the applicable basic education program requirements of RCW 28A.150.220 and WAC 180-16-200 through 180-16-220, each as now or hereafter amended: Provided further, That if the district of entry has reason to believe that an individual child so qualified may not succeed in the district's first grade program, the district shall have the option of placing the child in either kindergarten or the first grade for evaluation in the areas specified in WAC 392-335-025 and a final determination of the child's appropriate grade level placement no later than the thirtieth calendar day following the child's first day of attendance.

Definitions of "Approved" and "Accredited" Schools

WAC 180-55-015 Definitions.

(1) An "accredited school" is a state board of education approved private school that meets statutory requirements and rules established by the state board of education, and one that has satisfactorily completed the accreditation procedures described by the state board of education pursuant to RCW 28A.305.130(5) and WAC 180-55-005 through 180-55-020.

(2) "Approved private school" shall mean a school approved by the state board of education pursuant to chapter 28A.195 RCW and chapter 180-90 WAC.

3) "Accredited" status shall be assigned to state board of education approved private schools that:

(a) Complete and meet fully state board of education requirements for accreditation as described in WAC 180-55-020; or

(b) Participate and qualify in accordance with standards and procedures established by accrediting bodies or processes recognized by the state board of education.

Preadmission Screening Fee

RCW 28A.225.160 Qualification for admission to district's schools -- Fees for preadmission screening.

Except as otherwise provided by law, it is the general policy of the state that the common schools shall be open to the admission of all persons who are five years of age and less than twenty-one years residing in that school district. Except as otherwise provided by law or rules adopted by the superintendent of public instruction, districts may establish uniform entry qualifications, including but not limited to birth date requirements, for admission to kindergarten and first grade programs of the common schools. Such rules may provide for exceptions based upon the ability, or the need, or both, of an individual student. For the purpose of complying with any rule adopted by the superintendent of public instruction that authorizes a preadmission screening process as a prerequisite to granting exceptions to the uniform entry qualifications, a school district may collect fees to cover expenses incurred in the administration of any preadmission screening process: PROVIDED, That in so establishing such fee or fees, the district shall adopt regulations for waiving and reducing such fees in the cases of those persons whose families, by reason of their low income, would have difficulty in paying the entire amount of such fees.