



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
EDUCATION ACTIVITY  
4040 NORTH FAIRFAX DRIVE  
ARLINGTON, VA 22203-1635

Policy and Legislation

08-ESPL-005

Date: November 26, 2008

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY  
POLICY MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Minimum Age Requirement for Pre-Kindergarten, the Sure Start Program, Kindergarten, and First Grade Dependents

It is the policy of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) that a child must be 5 or 6 years of age by September 1 of the enrolling year for entrance into kindergarten and first grade respectively. Entrants into pre-kindergarten or the Sure Start Program must be 4 years of age by September 1 of the enrolling year. This Policy Memorandum reflects a forthcoming DoD Instruction, "Eligibility Requirements for Education of Minor Dependents in Overseas Schools," and the reissuance of DoD Instruction 1342.26, "Eligibility Requirements for Minor Dependents to Attend Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS)," and supersedes any previous guidance for the minimum age requirement for kindergarten and first grade for school year 2009-10.

The only permitted exceptions to the September 1 date are for kindergarten and first grade transfer students who meet the criteria outlined in the attached. Parents of a child who meets these criteria may request a waiver from the principal.

*Shirley A. Miles*  
Dr. Shirley A. Miles  
Director

Attachment:  
As stated

EXCEPTIONS TO THE MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENT FOR KINDERGARTEN  
AND FIRST GRADE

Transfer Enrollment

*The prior enrollment of the student must be from a duly accredited program; i.e., a school recognized by the local education agency from the sponsor's assigned sending state. (If a student wants to transfer from a school which is not recognized, he or she must meet DoDEA's age requirements)*

**The elementary school principal is authorized to make an exception to the minimum age requirement for space-required students when one of the following criteria are met:**

(1) A student who was enrolled in, and attended his or her prior school shall be allowed to continue enrollment at grade level in DoDEA; commensurate with the student's current grade level, including kindergarten, while in a school of a local educational agency in the assigned sending state, or the Non-DoD Schools Program; at the time of transition, regardless of age.

(2) A student that has satisfactorily completed the prerequisite grade level in the local educational agency in the assigned sending state, or the Non-DoD Schools Program, shall be eligible for enrollment in the next highest grade level in DoDEA, regardless of age.

*Note:*

*Children entering a DoDEA school from a British program should adhere to the following grade equivalencies:*

<b><i>British Grade</i></b>	<b><i>American Grade</i></b>
<i>Reception</i>	<i>Prekindergarten</i>
<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Kindergarten</i>
<i>Year 2</i>	<i>First Grade</i>
<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Second Grade</i>
<i>Year 4</i>	<i>Third Grade</i>

*\*Completion of the "Reception" program does not constitute grounds for an exception to the basic age requirement for DoDEA kindergarten enrollment.*