

Frequently Asked Questions about Kentucky's School Enrollment Requirements

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Every year, thousands of parents ask what they must do to enroll their children in Kentucky's public schools. This section of our Web site answers parents' most frequently asked questions. It is always best to visit your local school and ask these questions directly. Most schools have their enrollment requirements available as a handout for parents. We also encourage parents to visit the school - with their children - prior to the first day of school.

Q. At what age are children required to enter school?

A. In Kentucky, under [state law](#), all children must be enrolled in school between the ages of 6 and 16. Children can enter primary school at age 5, but only if their 5th birthday is on or before October 1 of the current school year. So, a 4-year-old who will turn 5 by October 1 can enroll in primary school. See the state law that outlines these requirements [here](#).

Because school districts do not receive state funding for children who do not meet the age requirements set forth by law, they generally do not offer early enrollment options to those children. Within the primary program, children may be placed in classrooms based on ability levels, rather than age.

Preschool programs are available for eligible 3- and 4-year-old children as well.

Q. At what age, and using what criteria, are children eligible for the preschool program?

A. Preschool programs are available to 4-year-old children who are "at risk," meaning they are eligible for the federal School Lunch Program. Preschool also is available for 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities. Enrollment of a child in the preschool program is at the discretion of the parent or legal guardian. For more information about the preschool offerings in your district, or to see if your child is eligible, it is best to contact your local school district directly.

For general information on preschool, click [here](#) or contact [Annette Bridges](#) at (502) 564-8341.

Q. What documentation do I need to provide when registering my child in school?

A. Prior to school attendance, each child shall have on file:

- a legal birth certificate
- a Kentucky certificate of immunization
- proof of a preventative health care examination conducted within one year prior to initial entry into the school program and another preventative health care examination within one year prior to entry into the 6th grade proof of an eye examination by an optometrist or ophthalmologist, documented on the [Kentucky School Eye Exam Form](#)
- beginning with the 2010-11 school year, proof of a dental screening or examination by a dentist, dental hygienist, physician, registered nurse, advanced registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant, documented on the [Kentucky Dental Screening Form](#) (This form must be presented to the school no later than January 1 of the first year that a 5- or 6-year-old child is enrolled.)

For more information, contact [Karen Erwin](#) at (502) 564-5625.

Q. What immunizations are required?

A. All children are required to be immunized by schedule for DT, DTP or DtaP; OPV or IPV; Hep B; Hib; MMR; Td; and varicella.

It is the responsibility of the parent to abide by all state regulations of the Immunization Program for attendance at day care centers, certified family child care homes, other licensed facilities which care for children, preschool programs, and public and private primary and secondary schools. To download the required schedule for immunizations, visit <http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/kar/902/002/060.htm>. We suggest that you print this regulation for your doctor or health care provider.

For more information, contact [Karen Erwin](#) at (502) 564-5625.

Q. How do I prove my child was immunized?

A. A current immunization certificate must be on file at the school within two weeks of the child's enrollment.

Q. Is an eye exam required?

A. All children between the ages 3 and 6 who are entering public preschool, Head Start or public school for the first time must have an eye examination by an optometrist or ophthalmologist no later than January 1 of the school year.

See also: [School Eye Exam: Questions and Answers](#)

Q. What are the requirements regarding the preventative health care examination?

A. Each child needs a preventative health care examination within one year prior to the child's initial admission to school. A second examination is required within one year prior to entry into the 6th grade or initial admission to school. A third examination may be required by policy of the local board of education within one year prior to entry into the 9th grade or initial admission to school.

A cumulative health record is maintained by the school for each pupil entering school. The record will be maintained throughout the pupil's attendance. The record will include the preventative health care examination and screening tests related to growth and development, vision, hearing, and scoliosis, and findings and recommendations of a physician and a dentist.

Students who transfer from out of state also must provide documentation of a preventative health care examination, which must be on the [Preventative Health Care Examination form](#) dated December 1999.

Q. Where can I get copies of the required health forms?

A. The forms are [available for download](#) from this Web site.

Q. What are the requirements for home schooling?

A. If you want to home school your child, you must notify the local superintendent of schools, in writing, that you have established a home school. You must report the names, ages and place of residence of each child being home schooled. In addition, you must keep a legal birth certificate, Kentucky certificate of immunization and a copy of a medical examination on file for each child who is home schooled.

By law, all home schools are to keep attendance records and a portfolio containing samples of each student's best work. This record may be used to document the existence of the home school or if the child

transfers to a different educational setting. A record of courses taken and grades received also is required. The school term in Kentucky is 187 days (177 instructional and 10 non-instructional), with six-hour instructional days.

A director of pupil personnel from the local school district periodically may visit a home school to ensure that high-quality instructional requirements are being met. Home-schooled students may participate in public school extracurricular activities at a local school district's discretion.

For more information, contact your local school district. For general information about home schooling in Kentucky, please contact [Dawn Offutt](#) at (502) 564-4970.

Q. What do I need to know about non-public schools in Kentucky?

A. Kentucky has numerous high-quality non-public schools, each of which determines its own curriculum and extra-curricular offerings. Although non-public schools are not required to be accredited or certified to be considered legal schools, their oversight is the responsibility of each local school district or a governing body such as a diocese. The Kentucky Non-Public Schools Commission, a non-profit organization that represents the non-public school community, offers advice and assistance to non-public schools and parents seeking non-public schools. You can reach the commission at (502) 287-8332.

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