

# Frequently Asked Questions

*2008 Minimum Entrance Age Change*

*May 2009*

It is the policy of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) that a child must turn 4, 5 or 6 by September 1 of the enrolling year for entrance into prekindergarten, Sure Start, kindergarten and first grade respectively.

**1. Why did DoDEA decide to change the entrance age birth date to September 1?**

The change aligns DoDEA with national trends as well as the age requirement in many military-impacted states. This change will assist in the transition of military family members beginning school as they PCS from location to location.

**2. If my child turns five years old on 1 September 2009, will he be able to enroll in the DoDEA Kindergarten program this coming school year (2009-2010)?**

Yes, he will be able to enroll in the kindergarten program.

**3. My child just misses the deadline for enrollment in kindergarten by a few days. Is there a waiver of the age requirement?**

No. There is no exception of the enrollment age requirement.

**4. Since my child just misses the deadline for enrollment, is there a DoDEA Preschool program which my child can attend?**

At DoDDS schools on overseas installations, some children turning 4 years old by September 1 could qualify for the DoDEA Sure Start Program.

At DDESS schools, all children turning 4 years old by September 1 are eligible to enroll in the half-day Prekindergarten program.

**5. My child will not be 5 years old by September 1 however is very bright and is ready to go to school. Can I request a waiver to the 1 September birth date requirement?**

There is no exception of the enrollment age requirement.

**6. My child has been evaluated as gifted/talented and has a birth date after September 1. What kind of accommodations/ waivers can I request to enroll him/her into Kindergarten?**

Entrance to kindergarten is based on age and not on a child's ability. The developmentally appropriate practices within the in DoDEA kindergarten learning environments are tailored to meet the individual needs of students to ensure continuous learning progress for all.

- 7. My child turned 5 years old on September 15, but was eligible to attend Kindergarten in the state where we lived because the entrance cut-off birth date was after September 1. With three weeks completed in the school year, we received orders to PCS to a location where my child will attend a DoDEA school. Will my child be allowed to continue in Kindergarten?**

Yes, a student who was enrolled in, and attended his or her prior school shall be allowed to continue enrollment at the 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 the fact their birthday is after September 1<sup>st</sup>.

*Note: The child must have been active in the current school year, and verification of enrollment is required (transfer sheet, report card, etc).*

- 8. If my child is currently enrolled (SY2008-2009) in the DDESS Pre-kindergarten or DoDDS Sure Start program as a four year old, will she be eligible to attend Kindergarten next year if the date of birth is after 1 September?**

No. All children who are currently enrolled in the DDESS Prekindergarten or DoDDS Sure Start programs will be guaranteed an additional year of enrollment in their current program if they do not turn 5 years old by September 1. This continuation will allow children to transition to the kindergarten program with their same-aged peers.

- 9. My child will not be five years old by 1 September but has a special education Individualized Education Program for services. Will she be able to attend school?**

Special education services written on a DoDEA IEP for any child three years old and older will be provided by the school system at no cost to the parent. The specific services may or may not include enrollment in a prekindergarten classroom, depending upon the unique needs of the child. Specific special education questions and/or concerns can be directed to the school principal.

- 10. What impact does this decision have on DoDEA schools and programs like Sure Start, Pre-kindergarten, and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade?**

A child must be four years old by September 1 to attend Prekindergarten or Sure Start and six years old by September 1 to attend first grade.

**11. My child will not be six years old by 1 September but completed Kindergarten at our previous duty station. Will he be able to enroll in DoDEA's 1<sup>st</sup> Grade?**

Yes, a student that has satisfactorily completed the prerequisite grade level in the Local Education Agency (LEA), LEA recognized school at the assigned military location, or the Non-DoD Schools Program, at a previously assigned military location or who are transferring (PCS) during the school year shall be eligible for enrollment in the next highest grade level in DoDEA, regardless of age.

**12. My child will not be 5 years old by 1 September but completed prekindergarten at our previous duty station. Will she be able to enroll in DoDEA's Kindergarten?**

No, the only prerequisite for kindergarten is age. Prekindergarten is not considered a prerequisite grade level for kindergarten.

**13. My family is currently living on an installation that has a DDESS school. My child will not be six years old by 1 September but we chose to have him completed kindergarten "outside the gate" at this same location. Will he be able to enroll in first grade at the DDESS School?**

No, he would not be able to enroll in first grade because he does not meet the age requirement and the sponsor's housing assignment was on an installation that offered kindergarten at a DDESS school. The child would follow DoDEA policy and enroll in DoDEA kindergarten.

**14. Would DoDEA accept a student into the first grade that attended a local or private school "outside the gate" at the sponsor's assigned duty station, that completed Kindergarten but did not meet the 1 September age cut-off?**

No, because the child was eligible for DoDDS enrollment because the sponsor's assignment is in the commuting area of a DODDS school. Enrolling a younger child in a program "outside the gate" does not allow for exception to the DoDEA minimum age policy.