

# Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

## Be Prepared for Back-to-School Season

by Summer Stanley

Getting ready to send your children back to school means a lot more than just stocking up on pencils and spiral-bound notebooks. As summer starts to wind down, it's a great time to gather all of the paperwork your child will need to start the school year on the right foot.

The following tips serve as guidelines only; be sure to check with your district and your child's school for specific rules.

### Kindergarten



Most states require rising kindergartners to be at least 5 years old, but some school districts may allow children who will turn 5 in the middle of the school year to enroll. If your child meets the following guidelines, he or she is likely to be allowed early admission:

- Mental age between 14 and 16 months greater than his or her chronological age as determined by standardized tests
- Total IQ of at least 130
- Demonstrates the social and emotional characteristics expected of kindergarten students

The school's psychologist should also recommend early admission. Preregistration often begins in early spring for the following fall.



### Elementary School and Up

You may be asked to provide:



- Proof of your child's age and identity: either a birth certificate or another reliable document stating the child's identity and age (such as a passport, school ID card, school record, report card, military ID, hospital birth record, adoption record or baptismal certificate).
- Proof of residence, such as driver's license, voter/motor registration card, utility bill, rent statement, income tax return statement, proof of home ownership (including a mortgage statement) or any official document showing both your name and address.
- Records of vaccination and immunization against specified diseases. Check with your school district to find out which immunizations are required. You may also contact your district to find out how to apply for exemption from vaccinations for religious or medical reasons.
- Some schools require vision and dental check-ups at certain ages. Make the required appointments before registering.
- Child's social security card. Some districts will assign a student ID number if you choose not to provide the social security number. Ask about your district's policy.
- Lead screening. In most districts you will need to bring lead test results or documentation from a physician stating that the child is at low risk. The test or document must date within a year from the start of school.
- Tuberculosis test. Some districts require results of a tuberculosis test or a letter from a physician certifying that the child is low risk.
- Proof of physical examination. Some districts require you to provide proof that your child has had a physical examination within one year prior to the beginning of school.
- Registration and emergency medical referral forms



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## Charter Schools

Check the school's website or call to see if there are any added requirements such as an application form. Some performing or visual art charter schools require students to demonstrate their talent with an audition or a portfolio of work.



## Private Schools

Many private schools require an application form, teacher recommendations, and past report cards. Some schools require your child to interview and take a formal assessment. Like charter schools, some performing or visual art schools require an audition or a portfolio of work.



## Homeschool

State requirements for homeschooling vary—visit a site like <https://hslida.org/content/laws/> to see the guidelines for your state.



Check well in advance of the school year to find out what paperwork is required and when the deadlines are. To be sure what a particular school's requirements are, check with your school district, the school's website, or call the school directly.



### Resources:

"Enrolling in Kindergarten: What You Need to Know," accessed July 25, 2018, from <https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/kindergarten-what-to-know/>

"Frequently Required Documents to Enroll Your Child at a New School," accessed July 25, 2018, from <https://blog.vitalchek.com/birth-certificates/frequently-required-documents-to-enroll-your-child-at-a-new-school/>

"School Enrollment Requirements," accessed July 25, 2018, from <https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/school-enrollment-requirements/>

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