

FROM: Tennessee Department of Education



Changes to Kindergarten Eligibility Law

Please take note of the following [statutes](#), which have changed the cutoff date for students starting kindergarten in 2013-14 and beyond.

Be sure to update your LEA website to reflect this change to assist families with access to accurate information:

T.C.A. 49-6-201(b)(3) *Children entering kindergarten shall be five (5) years of age on or before August 31 for the 2013-2014 school year and on or before August 15 for all school years thereafter.*

Directors of schools must determine how their districts will respond to the portion of the law below, which allows for children who turn five (5) years of age by Sept. 30 to enter kindergarten at the discretion of the district through assessment. If the district chooses to assess for early entrance the screening instruments used for that determination are at the discretion of the district:

T.C.A. 49-6-3001(B) *Notwithstanding subdivision (b)(2)(A), if the director of schools finds through evaluation and testing, at the request of the parent or legal guardian, that a child who is five (5) years of age on or before September 30 is sufficiently mature emotionally and academically, then the child may be permitted to enter kindergarten.*

The cutoff date for children turning four and entering pre-K in the 2013-14 school year remains as Sept. 30:

T.C.A. 49-6-104(a) *Each LEA is authorized to and may provide for enrollment in pre-kindergarten programs for any at risk child residing in the geographic area served by the LEA who is four (4) years of age on or before September 30.*

Please direct questions regarding this change to Connie.Casha@tn.gov.