

January 12, 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are excited to welcome our new kindergarten students to the Berlin Public Schools for the 2024-2025 school year. This communication is intended for parents and guardians of children who don't turn five until September 2, 2024, through January 1, 2025.

On June 29, 2023, the Connecticut Legislature changed how old a child must be to start kindergarten. Public Act 23-208, Section 1(a) changed the birth date cutoff from January 1 of any given school year to September 1 of any given school year. This is consistent with the large majority of states in our country and is well supported by research. Please see the [attached memo](#) from the State Department of Education and the Office of Early Childhood for more information.

Berlin Public Schools will transition to this new law over the next two years. We understand that childcare can be an issue and hope that this will help families plan.

Kindergarten Age Requirements for 2024-2025:

Any child who will be five years of age on or before September 1, 2024, and meets all residency requirements is eligible to begin kindergarten at the start of the 2024-2025 school year.

- Caregivers of children who are not five years old on or before September 1, 2024, need to request a waiver by making a written request to their child's future principal. Use [this link](#) to submit your request by February 15.
- Caregivers planning to request a waiver are encouraged to attend an informational meeting on February 1 at 6:30 pm in the McGee Library Media Center.
- Children will have to take part in an assessment administered by the district. These will be scheduled after February 15.
- Based on the assessment, the district will make a recommendation regarding whether your child is deemed ready to start kindergarten at four years old.
- ***For this year only***, parents will have the opportunity to override the educational staff's recommendation, thus allowing four-year-olds to start school for the 2024-2025 school year.

Kindergarten Age Requirements for 2025-2026:

Any child who will be five years of age on or before September 1, 2025, and meets all residency requirements is eligible to begin kindergarten at the start of the 2025-2026 school year.

- Caregivers of children who are not five years old on or before September 1 need to request a waiver by making a written request to their child's future principal.
- Children will have to take part in an assessment administered by the district.
- The district will make a recommendation regarding whether your child is deemed ready to start kindergarten at four years old; this will be a rare exception. **The decision of the district stands and parents will not have the ability to override this decision.**

If you have any questions, please contact either Michelle Zeuschner, Ed.D. at mzeuschner@berlinschools.org, Laurie Gjerpen at lgjerpen@berlinschools.org, or Kara Watson at kwatson@berlinschools.org. Additional information about all children's registration will be sent out from my office soon.

Sincerely,
Brian J. Benigni
Superintendent of Schools