



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

WV Universal Pre-K S.o.S. Webinar

**Pre-K Enrollment Changes,
Transportation, and Attendance**

January 12, 2017

Age Requirement Changes in WV Code Pre-K and Kindergarten

During the 2017 legislative session, Senate Bill 186 was signed into law, which amends §18-5-18 and §18-5-44 of the Code of West Virginia.

The code changes can be accessed at:

<http://www.legis.state.wv.us/WVCODE/ChapterEntire.cfm?chap=18&art=5§ion=18#05> for kindergarten and;

<http://www.legis.state.wv.us/WVCODE/ChapterEntire.cfm?chap=18&art=5§ion=44#05> for pre-k.

Age Requirement Changes in WV Code Pre-K and Kindergarten

- The changes adjust the kindergarten age attainment requirement from five prior to September 1 to age five prior to July 1, with the July 1 date to become 5 enforceable with the 2019-2020 school year.
- This code also changes the early childhood education program age attainment date requirement from age four prior to September 1 to age four prior to July 1, with the July 1 date becoming enforceable with the 2018-2019 school year.

WVBE Policy 2525 Enrollment Changes (Effective July 1, 2018)

§126-28-5. Eligibility and Enrollment:

- 5.1. Adjusted the early childhood education program age attainment date requirement from age four prior to September 1 to age four prior to July 1, with the July 1 date becoming enforceable with the 2018-2019 school year.
- 5.1.a. Three year old children can be enrolled in the WV Pre-K System if they have an IEP.

WVBE Policy 2525 Enrollment Changes (Effective July 1, 2018)

- 5.1.b. remain in policy: Children who are age eligible for kindergarten shall be enrolled in kindergarten, instead of WV Pre-K, unless assessment data can determine that kindergarten placement for that child is not in the child's best interest.
- 5.1.c. A child may remain in the WV Pre-K classroom for longer than one year if the decision is in the best interest of the child and based on child assessment data.

*Children should typically attend one year of pre-k.

County Considerations for Age Requirement Changes

- Get the word out- Age attainment date requirements must be shared across the state. This includes:
 - Parents
 - All school personnel
 - All collaborative partners
 - Child care centers
 - Birth to Three
 - Social Service agencies serving young children
 - Doctors/Dentists offices(Example: <https://tinyurl.com/Kanawhapkenroll>)
- Review county kindergarten early entrance policies to ensure alignment with age requirement changes.

County Considerations for Age Requirement Changes

- There is no early entrance for pre-k.
- Ensure that age requirement changes are addressed in county pre-k procedures, including:
 - Collaborative Contracts
 - Pre-K Packets, pamphlets, or information provided to the public on the county program, including websites and social media
 - Enrollment procedures and forms

Transportation and WV Pre-K

- In WV Universal Pre-K programs, transportation is considered a support, not a mandated service, unless it is a related service for children with disabilities in accordance with state and federal requirements.
- Transportation services vary across counties. When transportation is provided, there are specific requirements that must be met.

Transportation and WV Pre-K

When transportation is provided:

- Bus drivers who transport young children must be trained in supervision of young children.
- Bus drivers must inspect the bus at all final drop off points to assure that no children are left on the bus. These inspections must be charted and maintained by the driver's supervisor.
- Pre-k children must sit in a segregated area of the bus.

Transportation and WV Pre-K

- Pre-k programs who offer transportation must provide information on requirements to families and personnel, including transportation staff. Information can be included in countywide procedures, parent handbooks, staff trainings.
- A workshop guidance tool titled, Transporting Young Learners was designed to assist county collaborative early childhood teams in providing training for bus drivers who transport young children.
- Transporting Young Learners can be accessed at <https://sites.google.com/a/wvde.k12.wv.us/wv-pre-k-principal-workshops/Home/transporting-young-learners>.
- Many programs have adapted Transporting Young Learners to include information specific to their procedures.

Transportation and WV Pre-K

When transportation is provided:

- Staff must assist children on and off buses at the pre-k site.
- A parent/guardian or designated person must meet the bus for pick up and drop off.
- at each WV Pre-K site where bus transportation is provided, **a designated person must follow-up within the first hour of arrival time with the family of any child who is not present or accounted for each day.**
(This requirement should be connected to the county attendance policy)

Attendance in WV Pre-K

6.1. Enrollment in an approved participating WV Pre-K program is voluntary; however, once the child is enrolled, attendance must follow W. Va. Code §18-8-1 et seq., which allows the program administrator (i.e., principal, director, executive director), teacher and parent/guardian to pursue disenrollment of the child if they concur that requiring further attendance for that school year is not in the best interest of the child. Once a child is dis-enrolled, re-enrollment is not guaranteed for that school year.

Attendance in WV Pre-K

What does that mean?

- A county pre-k attendance policy must be in place. The pre-k attendance policy should include:
 - Strategies and guidance for developing positive attendance habits. (Linkage to county literacy plan)
 - Procedures to ensure that the parent/guardian and other family members, as appropriate, understand the availability of services, the attendance policy and the benefits of childhood education.
 - Procedures for contact with families when children are absent to ensure that children are accounted for daily.
 - Provision for working with families whose children are chronically absent and/or tardy that does not penalize the family for acting in the best interest of the child.
 - Disenrollment process
 - Provisions for children with documented chronic medical conditions must be included as defined in W. Va. 126CSR81, WVBE Policy 4110, Attendance (Policy 4110).
 - Guidelines for excused absences and when children should not attend school.
 - Attendance records and entry into WVEIS.

Linking Transportation and Attendance in WV Pre-K

Transportation requirements should be include or linked to attendance policies for those children who ride the bus.

- Expectations for parents to contact school staff to let them know when their child will not be attending.
- Let parents know that they will be contacted within the first hour of arrival time of the school day when their child is absent.