



For official use only.

Date Received:

Waiver Application No.:

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Pursuant to KRS 156.161 and 701 KAR 5:170, Click or tap here to enter text. School District "District" hereby submits this waiver request to the Kentucky Board of Education seeking waiver from compliance with one or more statutes or administrative regulations.

The waiver(s) sought herein by District are sought to apply to the following District schools or programs: Christian County Public Schools.

This waiver request is a:

District must select only one of the following

- NEW APPLICATION. District seeks new waiver(s) of statutes or administrative regulations not previously granted to District by the Kentucky Board of Education pursuant to 701 KAR 5:170, or previously granted pursuant to 701 KAR 5:170 but now expired.
- RENEWAL APPLICATION. District seeks renewal of waiver(s) previously granted by the Kentucky Board of Education pursuant to 701 KAR 5:170 and still in effect as of the date of this application.
- AMENDMENT APPLICATION. District seeks to amend waiver(s) of statutes or administrative regulations previously granted to District by the Kentucky Board of Education pursuant to 701 KAR 5:170 and still in effect as of the date of this application.

In submitting this waiver request, District acknowledges and agrees to each of the following:

1. The Kentucky Board of Education does not have the authority to waive any statute or administrative regulation:
 - (a) Relating to health and safety, including required criminal background checks for staff and volunteers specified in KRS 160.380 and 161.148;
 - (b) Relating to civil rights;
 - (c) Required by federal law;
 - (d) Relating to compulsory attendance requirements under KRS 158.030 and 158.100 or the recording of data necessary for participation in the fund to support education excellence in Kentucky;
 - (e) Establishing certification requirements for teachers in core academic areas, except a waiver may authorize up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the teaching staff of a school may be employed without teacher certification if the individual possesses a baccalaureate or graduate degree in the subject the individual is hired to teach;
 - (f) Requiring students' participation in state assessment of student performance, as required under KRS 158.6453;

- (g) Financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements under KRS 156.265;
 - (h) Open records and open meeting requirements under KRS Chapter 61;
 - (i) Purchasing requirements and limitations under KRS Chapter 45A and KRS 156.074 and 156.480; or
 - (j) Requiring instructional time that is at least equivalent to the student instructional year specified in KRS 158.070.
2. The Kentucky Board of Education does not have the authority to waive any statute outside of its enforcement authority, or any administrative regulation promulgated by an agency other than the Kentucky Board of Education.
 3. District conducted a thorough review of this waiver request prior to submission to ensure that no part of its waiver request involves statutes or administrative regulations beyond the authority of the Kentucky Board of Education to waive as described in paragraphs (1) and (2) above. District understands that if it is determined that any portion of its request involves statutes or administrative regulations beyond the authority of the Kentucky Board of Education to waive as described in paragraphs (1) and (2) above, District's waiver request will be denied.
 4. District reviewed and understands the requirements and provisions of 701 KAR 5:170 as it relates to this waiver request.
 5. If District selected above that this is a NEW APPLICATION, District attaches to this Application Cover Sheet a Specific Waiver Request Form for each statute or administrative regulation for which District requests a waiver, and that District identified within each Specific Waiver Request Form the specific section, subsection, paragraph, or subparagraph of each statute or administrative regulation from which District requests a waiver.
 6. If District selected above that this is a RENEWAL APPLICATION, District attaches to this Application Cover Sheet a Renewal Application Form and all attachments required by the Renewal Application Form.
 7. If District selected above that this is an AMENDMENT APPLICATION, District attaches to this Application Cover Sheet an Amendment Request Form for a previously granted and unexpired waiver.
 8. If the District seeks identification of a school(s) or program(s) listed in the forms attached hereto as a School of Innovation pursuant to KRS 156.161 (4), it has: (a) utilized the Specific Waiver Request Form for each statute or administrative regulation from which District requests a waiver that prevents the District from entering into an agreement with an education service provider to assist in the management and operation of the school(s) or program(s) identified on the form; and (b) attached to the Specific Waiver Request Form a copy of the proposed agreement with the education service provider for the school(s) or program(s).
 9. In determining whether to grant this waiver request, in whole or in part, the Kentucky Board of Education will evaluate whether the request demonstrates that the waiver is more likely than not: (a) to improve the operation of the school(s) or program(s) listed in the forms attached

hereto, without hindering student academic achievement; or (b) to improve student academic achievement at the school(s) or program(s) listed in the forms attached hereto. District recognizes that such evaluation and determination is within the discretion of the Kentucky Board of Education.

10. District understands that if the Kentucky Board of Education at any time finds by a two-thirds (2/3) vote that a waiver granted pursuant to this request hindered school or program operations, endangered students, impeded student academic achievement, or supported financial malfeasance or criminal activity, then the waiver shall be rescinded. District recognizes that such a determination is within the discretion of the Kentucky Board of Education.
11. District recognizes that the existence of a waiver shall not negate the legal duties or professional responsibilities of a District employee, and agrees that it shall implement policies and procedures accordingly. District recognizes and agrees that any waiver granted pursuant to this request shall not be implemented in a way that violates, diminishes, or adversely impacts the civil rights of any student.
12. District understands and agrees that any waiver granted pursuant to this request, except for a waiver of minimum nutritional standards as provided in KRS 158.854, shall expire on June 30 of the third full school year following the date the request was approved by the Kentucky Board of Education, regardless of subsequent amendment, unless the Kentucky Board of Education renews the waiver prior to expiration. Waivers of minimum nutritional standards as provided in KRS 158.854 shall expire one year following the date the request was approved by the Kentucky Board of Education, regardless of subsequent amendment, unless the Kentucky Board of Education renews the waiver prior to expiration. District further understands and agrees that it shall track the expiration date of any waiver(s) granted pursuant to this request and will immediately implement all statutory and regulatory requirements upon the expiration date of any waivers granted pursuant to this request. District acknowledges that it is District's responsibility to request any renewals pursuant to the requirements of 701 KAR 5:170.
13. The information provided in this waiver request application and the attachments hereto are true and correct to the best of District's knowledge. The representations made by District in this waiver request application and the attachments hereto will be relied upon by the Kentucky Board of Education as material in its decision making. Upon learning that any information provided herein is inaccurate or incomplete, District will take affirmative steps to correct such information.
14. District represents that this waiver request, including any attachments hereto, were presented to the District board of education and approved by said board during a meeting on or tap to enter a date..
15. District understands that no waiver granted as part of this request shall imply, suggest, or otherwise indicate that any other statute or administrative regulation is implicitly waived and that District will continue to comply with all statutes and administrative regulations not specifically waived by the Kentucky Board of Education in response to this request.

Signature
Tom Bell
District Board Chair

April 16, 2026
Date

Mail this completed form and all attachments to:

Kentucky Department of Education
ATTN: Waiver Request
300 Sower Blvd. 5th Floor
Frankfort, KY 40601



District Name:

Christian County Public School

School(s)/Program(s) to Which Waiver Request Applies:

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Early Learning Center

Statute or Administrative Regulation District Requests be Waived:

Districts should include the specific section(s), subsection(s), paragraph(s), or subparagraph(s) that it requests be waived for the statute or administrative regulation listed. A separate Specific Waiver Request Form is required for each statute or administrative regulation that District requests be waived.

KRS 158.030(2) Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, any child who is six (6) years of age, or who may become six (6) years of age by August 1, shall attend public school or qualify for an exemption as provided by KRS 159.030. Any child who is five (5) years of age, or who may become five (5) years of age by August 1, may enter a primary school program, as defined in KRS 158.031, and may advance through the primary program without regard to age in accordance with KRS 158.031(6).

KRS 157.360 (2) Each district shall receive an amount equal to the base funding level for each pupil in average daily attendance in the district in the previous year.

KRS 157.360(9) Program funding shall be increased when the average daily attendance in any district for the first two (2) months of the current school year is greater than the average daily attendance of the district for the first two (2) months of the previous school year. The program funds allotted the district shall be increased by the percent of increase. The average daily attendance in kindergarten is the kindergarten full-time equivalent pupils in average daily attendance.

KRS 157.3175 (4) A child shall be eligible for a free and appropriate preschool education and related services if:

(a) 1. The child has been identified as a child with a disability in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. secs.

1400 et seq.; or

2. The child has been identified in accordance with the definitions and procedures for exceptional children and youth in accordance with KRS 157.200(1)(a) to (m); and

(b) The child is three (3) or four (4) years of age:

1. By October 1, for any year before 2017; or

2. By August 1, for 2017 or any year thereafter.

158.110 Transportation of pupils.

(1) Boards of education may provide transportation from their general funds or otherwise for any pupil of any grade to the nearest school to the pupil's residence

within the district if the pupil does not live within a reasonable walking distance to such nearest school of appropriate grade level. The local board may provide transportation by means of a board-operated transportation system, transit authorities organized and operating pursuant to KRS Chapter 96A, local governmental mass transit systems, and individual contracted buses and vehicles. (2) When space is not available at the nearest school, boards of education may provide transportation from their general funds or otherwise for any pupil of any grade who does not live within a reasonable walking distance to the nearest school of appropriate grade level where space is available. Transportation may be provided by means pursuant to subsection (1) of this section.

School of Innovation Designation

A District may seek to have school(s) or program(s) listed above identified as a “School of Innovation” for the purpose of allowing the District to enter into an agreement with an education service provider to assist in the management and operation of the school(s) or program(s). Does District seek to have the school(s) or program(s) listed above identified as a “School of Innovation” for this purpose?

District must select only one of the following:

- NO.
- YES. If District selects “YES,” it must describe below how the statute or administrative regulation listed above currently prevents the District from entering into an agreement with an education service provider to assist in the management and operation of the school(s) or program(s), and attach a copy of the proposed contract with an education service provider to assist in the management and operation of the school(s) or program(s).

Click or tap here to enter text.

Waiver Justification

Describe how the District wishes to operate the school(s) or program(s) listed above and how the statute or administrative regulation listed above prevents desired operations.

Christian County Public Schools intends to establish a 'Transitional Kindergarten' (TK) cohort option designed specifically for five-year-old students who are age-eligible for kindergarten but demonstrate a developmental need for a two-year primary entry track. Parents can choose to enroll their early 5 year old in a Transitional Kindergarten program if they feel their child is not ready for a traditional kindergarten setting. We wish to house this program within our dedicated Early Learning Center to leverage the facility's age-appropriate infrastructure (toilets, playgrounds, sensory spaces) and resources.

Operationally, this program will function as a bridge between early childhood and elementary school. The students will be coded as Kindergartners for SEEK funding purposes (will need a unique code to prevent students from flagged as retention) and instruction will be delivered by educators holding valid Kentucky certification in either Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) or Elementary Education (K-5). This specific staffing model ensures that teachers possess the pedagogical expertise to blend the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards with Kentucky Academic Standards for Kindergarten, providing rigorous kindergarten readiness instruction at a pace appropriate for 'young five' learners. This model ensures these students receive the intensity of instruction needed to be successful in full-day Kindergarten the following year, without the stigma of academic failure.

KRS 157.3175(4) strictly limits eligibility for the state preschool program to four-year-olds with specific risk factors (income) or developmental delays. Because the students in our proposed TK cohort are five years old and typically do not have a diagnosed disability, this statute technically disqualifies them from being served within the preschool program infrastructure. Currently to receive Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) funding as defined in KRS 157.360, these students must be coded as Kindergartners (Grade 00) in the student information system, resulting in coding them as retained when they enter a traditional Kindergarten classroom the following year.

Without this waiver, the district is forced into a binary choice: place these developmentally younger students into a large, traditional kindergarten classroom (where they are statistically likely to struggle and face retention), or deny them entry until compulsory age (losing a critical year of intervention).

Strict adherence to the eligibility definitions in KRS 157.3175(4) and KRS 157.360 prevents the district from utilizing available capacity in our Early Learning Center to serve this 'gap' population. By waiving the strict eligibility criteria, the district can legally house these five-year-olds in the most developmentally appropriate environment while still maintaining their status as SEEK-funded Kindergarten pupils.

Describe in detail how waiver of the statute or administrative regulation listed above will improve operations or student academic achievement in the school(s) or program(s) listed above.

1. Improvement to Student Academic Achievement:

"Waiving KRS 157.3175(4) and KRS 157.360, to allow these five-year-old students access to a blended Preschool and Kindergarten program within a preschool designated center and receive SEEK funding to provide a 5 day a week program, will significantly enhance school readiness and long-term academic success in three key areas:

Targeted Developmental Instruction: By placing these students in a setting designed for early learners, certified teachers can implement a hybrid curriculum that bridges the gap between Early Childhood Standards and Kindergarten Academic Standards. This ensures students master critical pre-requisite skills—specifically phonemic awareness, fine motor control, and social-emotional regulation—before attempting the full rigor of a standard Kindergarten curriculum.

Prevention of Academic Failure: 'Young five' students placed prematurely into a traditional primary classroom often experience early academic struggle, leading to gaps in foundational literacy and mathematics. This Transitional Kindergarten model provides the 'gift of time' and specialized instruction, reducing the likelihood of future grade retention, Special Education referrals based solely on maturity, and the psychological impact of early school failure. It is imperative that students attend full time; therefore SEEK funding must be granted to provide funding for staffing.

Optimization of the Primary Program: Creating a dedicated cohort for these learners allows the district's traditional Kindergarten classrooms to maintain a standard instructional pace. This differentiation improves academic outcomes for both the Transitional Kindergarten students (who receive the support they need) and the traditional Kindergarten students (who receive grade-level instruction without interruption), raising overall district readiness data."

2. Improvement to District Operations:

Operationally, this waiver allows Christian County Public Schools to maximize the utility of existing infrastructure and public funds:

Appropriate Learning Environment: The Early Learning Center is already equipped with age-appropriate amenities (toilets, furniture, playground equipment, and sensory spaces) that are physically safer and more accessible for developmentally younger five-year-olds. Innovation spaces allow students to develop Kindergarten readiness skills in a play based environment that is often needed for students who are not as developmental mature as peers.

Strategic Resource Allocation: By housing this program in the Early Learning Center, the district can centralize specialized resources (such as speech-language pathologists and occupational therapists already on-site) to serve these students more efficiently.

Cost-Effective Intervention: This model represents a proactive investment of SEEK funding. By addressing school readiness gaps at age five through a structured transitional year, the district aims to decrease the long-term operational costs associated with Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions (RTI) in later primary grades.

Describe how waiver of the statute or administrative regulation listed above may hinder student academic achievement in the school(s) or program(s) listed above. Describe how District will address any hindrance of student academic achievement if the waiver is granted.

The primary potential hindrance created by waiving KRS 157.3175(4) and KRS 157.360 to house Transitional Kindergarten students in the Early Learning Center is the temporary reduction in exposure to older peer models and standard elementary school routines. By separating these students from the general K-5 population for their first year of primary school, they may have fewer opportunities to observe the social and academic behaviors of older students (1st–5th graders). Additionally, attending the Early Learning Center for the 'transitional' year creates a need for an eventual physical transition to their zoned elementary school the following year, which could theoretically disrupt student continuity or cause anxiety if not managed properly.

Christian County Public Schools has developed a comprehensive mitigation plan to address these concerns and ensure a seamless educational experience:

- **Rigorous Instructional Standards:** To prevent any 'watering down' of academic expectations, the Transitional Kindergarten program will be led by certified IECE or Elementary (K-5) educators who will utilize the district's approved Kindergarten curriculum resources. This ensures that while the pacing is developmental, the content remains aligned with Kentucky Academic Standards, preventing any academic regression.
- **Structured Transition Protocols:** To address the physical transition to the home school, the district will implement a 'Bridge to Kindergarten' plan. In the spring semester, Transitional Kindergarten students will participate in scheduled visits to their zoned elementary schools to meet future teachers, tour the facilities (cafeteria, gym, library), and participate in orientation activities. This familiarizes students with the K-5 environment before they matriculate.
- **Data-Driven Placement:** The district will utilize a robust data-sharing system between the Transitional Kindergarten teachers and the receiving Elementary Kindergarten teachers. By passing on detailed student profiles, assessment data, and growth portfolios, we ensure that the receiving school is fully prepared to welcome each student, effectively eliminating the 'new student' learning curve typically associated with changing schools.
- **Camp Kindergarten:** Each summer Christian County Public Schools hosts a Camp Kindergarten for all incoming Kindergarten students. Each elementary school hosts a 4 day camp for students attending that elementary school in the fall. The camp is led by primary school staff to give kindergarten students a sneak peek at what school will be like. Students learn school wide expectations, get to know their teachers, and participate in a variety of learning activities.

Describe how District intends to measure the impact on students enrolled in the school(s) or program(s) listed above if a waiver is granted for the statute or administrative regulation listed above.

Christian County Public Schools will utilize a multi-tiered assessment strategy to measure the immediate and longitudinal impact of the Transitional Kindergarten (TK) program. Our evaluation plan focuses on three specific domains: developmental growth, kindergarten readiness, and long-term academic success.

1. Immediate Growth (Pre- and Post-Assessment): The district will measure student growth within the TK year using the Brigance Early Childhood Screen and district-adopted universal screeners. By administering these assessments at the beginning and end of the Transitional Kindergarten year, we will quantify specific gains in:

Academic Foundation: Phonemic awareness, early numeracy, and vocabulary development.

Physical/Motor Skills: Fine motor control (writing readiness) and gross motor coordination.

Social-Emotional Development: Self-regulation, attention span, and social interaction skills, measured through validated observational rubrics.

2. Comparative Kindergarten Readiness: The primary measure of success for this program is the students' readiness for the subsequent 'traditional' Kindergarten year. We will track the cohort's performance upon entering full-day Kindergarten against district averages. Success will be defined as 90% or more of the TK cohort scoring 'Ready' or 'Ready with Enrichments' on the K-Screen (Brigance) at the start of their second year, effectively closing the readiness gap that existed at their initial enrollment.

3. Longitudinal Success & Retention Prevention: To validate the long-term efficacy of the program, the district will tag this cohort in Infinite Campus to track their progress through the Primary Program (K-3). We will measure impact by comparing their trajectories to similar demographic peers who did not participate in TK. Key success indicators will include:

Reduced Retention Rates: A reduction in grade-level retention rates for this cohort in Grades 1–3 compared to historical averages for 'young five' students.

Intervention Reduction: A lower rate of referral for Tier 2/Tier 3 RTI interventions and Special Education evaluations compared to peer groups.

Third Grade Proficiency: Tracking the cohort's performance on the 3rd Grade KSA (Kentucky Summative Assessment) to ensure they meet or exceed proficiency standards in Reading and Math, validating that the 'gift of time' resulted in sustained academic achievement.


List every attachment to this form District provides in support of its responses above, including a brief description of how the attachment supports District's responses.

1. Christian County Board of Education Meeting Minutes (Approval of Waiver Application)

Description: Official record of the Board's approval to request this waiver, demonstrating local governance support for establishing the Transitional Kindergarten cohort to better serve developmental "young five" students.

2. Transitional Kindergarten vs. Traditional Kindergarten Curriculum:

Currently our preschool program utilizes Creative Curriculum and our elementary schools utilize Into Reading. In the transitional kindergarten classroom creative curriculum for kindergarten will be utilized. The teacher of this classroom will be able to blend components of the preschool and kindergarten levels of creative curriculum to best meet the students' needs.

 Kindergarten - Scope and Sequence.pdf

3. Transitional Kindergarten Daily Schedule

Description: A sample daily schedule for the proposed classroom. This supports the "Operations" section by illustrating the balance between rigorous instructional blocks (literacy/math centers) and age-appropriate developmental play, confirming the environment differs from a standard elementary schedule to meet the unique needs of these students.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/17kF-wLtIXqfelGrcPfNgS7C1ad0O_laStW3OETfrNvc/edit?usp=sharing

