



Montrose Re-1J, Montrose - 43010

## Early Access Addendum

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THE FOLLOWING SECTION IS REQUIRED IF THE ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT PERMITS EARLY ACCESS TO KINDERGARTEN OR FIRST GRADE. Refer to ECEA rules 12.08 for describing all sections and provisions required for early access.

**Early Access: Rule Section 10.02(1)(H) and 12.08 Gifted children who qualify for grade level acceleration and are age 4 for kindergarten, or age 5 for first grade, by October 1**

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**Directions:**

**Address each section and the provisions of the early access ECEA Rules 12.08.**

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/lawsregs>

**In each section below, describe the methods and/or tools that the administrative unit will implement for early access communication, criteria and process. Type your response in the white boxes referencing the topics.**

## Communication

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MCSD informs parents, educators and community members about the criteria, process, timelines, portfolio referral, tests, final determinations and ALP development via our website, print documents and through written and verbal communication with all stakeholders including principals, school psychologists and teachers. Additional in-person meetings occur on an as-needed basis. Information about Early Access is clearly posted on our website, along with descriptions of the process and accompanying documents. There is an online application accessible on our website to initiate the process.

Applications may be submitted between January 1st and April 1st. Testing occurs in April and a determination is made by the end of May. A determination letter is sent to every parent whether the student qualifies or not; the determination letter contains information about the body of evidence. If a student qualifies, the student will receive an ALP by no later than September and will have progress monitoring every five weeks with the support of the classroom teacher, GATE Facilitator and parents.

Only highly advanced gifted children who turn five years old after September 30, or high advanced gifted children who turn six years old after September 30, will be considered for Early Access. Unless the family qualifies for free and reduced meals, parents must pay a fee to have their child diagnostically evaluated with appropriate assessments by an appropriate state-licensed professional, which at MCSD is a school psychologist. The school psychologists at MCSD know how to support and evaluate highly advanced gifted children and can establish positive rapport to elicit the child's best performance under appropriate testing conditions.

The GATE Department will host professional development for pre-school, kindergarten and first grade educators and administrators about Early Access and ALP development at least once per year. Any staff involved in the process will be informed about the process, timelines, criteria and testing.



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## Criteria

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**Aptitude:**

The Early Access criteria for intellectual aptitude is the 97th percentile. We use the Differential Ability Scales II (DAS-II), which measures verbal, nonverbal reasoning, spatial, and general cognitive ability.

**Achievement:**

The Early Access criteria for achievement is the 97th percentile. We use the Test of Early Mathematical Abilities for Gifted Students (TEMA-3) and the Test of Early Reading Abilities for Gifted Students (TERA-3).

**Performance:**

Test scores are not the only standards used for a determination for Early Access. A student may score in the 97th percentile on both aptitude and achievement but may not have data that supports school readiness, and not every child who scores in the 97th percentile or above may benefit from Early Access.

The student must demonstrate ability two or more years above the same age peers. To demonstrate this, a "Body of Evidence" is used to make a determination, which includes a portfolio of work and may also include parent/teacher/school psychologist observations, the Kingore Observation Inventory, Iowa Acceleration Scale, Gifted evaluation Scale (GES-3), Draw-a-Person Intellectual Ability Test for Children, previous testing information, prior placements or participation in advanced programming, Development History.

**Readiness, social behavior and motivation:**

The application that parents must submit asks questions that indicate readiness, social behavior and motivation, which is considered along with observations from the school psychologist. A SIGS Home and/or School form is used for observation ratings. The child is also included in the conversation to determine their wishes and readiness for acceleration.

**Support system:**

Students who qualify for Early Access will have their progress monitored once every five weeks, and their ALP will be updated with each progress monitoring review. GATE Facilitators and classroom teachers will discuss the student's progress during review, and parents will be included in the process during Parent/Teacher Conferences and/or as needed. Parents receive a Letter of Determination and are included in the support system, along with the student's teacher(s), early childhood staff, building administrator(s) and GATE facilitator, through written communication and/or electronic communication. The support system team collaborates to determine what supports are needed for each individual Early Access student.

The ALP includes student strength area(s), interests, instructional needs, and affective needs. The ALP includes an academic goal and a transition goal for their first year. The ALP also states that the student was enrolled through Early Access so the state auditing requirements are met and must include the phrase "grade acceleration". Each goal indicates who will support, what method will be used to support, and when the support will be provided along with progress monitoring dates for revision of goals.

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## Process

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**Timelines:**

Applications for Early Access are due no later than April 1st for the following school year and can be submitted between January 1 and April 1. Parents submit a Developmental History Form, a permission for classroom observation form, and an Early Access Portfolio (with artifact descriptions) along with their application. Review of the application materials begins after Spring Break (generally the first week in April); during this review period, all available data is gathered to be included in the body of evidence, and the body of evidence is then



reviewed by the Early Access Review Committee; next steps are discussed with parents and the child. If the appropriate next step is further assessment, Early Access assessment is scheduled with the school psychologist. Early Access assessment takes place during the month of April. The Early Access review committee then reviews new assessment data and considers the body of evidence as a whole in order to make a final determination. A letter of determination is then sent to parents, which explains the decision and the procedure for disagreements.

We keep an open line of communication with families during the Early Access Application process until the determination is made. The team makes a determination within 60 days after collecting the body of evidence. Only highly advanced gifted children who turn five years old after August 1, or high advanced gifted children who turn six years old after August 1, will be considered for Early Access. The ALP is created by no later than September 30.

**Personnel:**

The Early Access Review Committee is established every year and includes the following personnel: a GATE Facilitator, Kindergarten/1st Grade Teacher, a licensed School Psychologist and the GATE Coordinator. The School Psychologist administers testing for cognitive abilities and achievement as well as observations on readiness, performance, social behavior and motivation. The team collaborates to review the body of evidence for each applicant and makes a decision regarding Early Access.

Applications requests are collected via Google Forms/Sheets monitored by the GATE Coordinator; when a request is made and an application submitted, the GATE Coordinator notifies the Early Access Review Committee and organizes meetings to initiate the process; a folder is created to collect the body of evidence; a Google Sheet tracks progress of the Early Access Review Committee for each applicant. The GATE Coordinator sends the determination letter to parents and building principal.

After a student is accepted through Early Access, a Support Team is formed, including the classroom teacher, GATE Facilitator and building personnel as needed.

**Evaluation:**

Parents may submit a request for Early Access evaluation, which may be submitted electronically on our website via a Google Form, or which may be submitted via mail on a hard copy. The GATE Coordinator, upon receiving a request form (found on our website) for Early Access evaluation, convenes with the GATE department to determine next steps. Parents submit the application, permission for classroom observation, Developmental History form, and a portfolio including artifacts with short descriptions for each artifact. The contents of the portfolio are outlined and explained on our Early Access page of the GATE website to assist parents in collecting material for the portfolio. The portfolio is evaluated by one of our district psychologists, who also conducts classroom observations of the student and administers and evaluates all qualitative and quantitative assessments. Once the body of evidence has been collected, a review committee convenes to evaluate the evidence. The review committee may consist of the school psychologist, GATE Coordinator, GATE Facilitators, teachers and building administrators. The review committee makes a consensus decision together and then notifies the parents of the determination via a written letter, which also explains the appeal process for disagreements. If the review committee cannot come to a consensus, more data may be collected and re-evaluated in a timely manner. Once a student has been accepted for Early Access, the GATE Facilitator in the student's school works with the student's classroom teacher, building administrator, the student and the student's parents to create an ALP, which includes an academic goal and a transition goal. All stakeholders sign off on the ALP by no later than September. If the student qualifies for gifted identification but is not deemed an appropriate fit for Early Access, an ALP will still be created and shared with the student's school to provide supports as needed; the GATE Facilitator will work with the regular classroom teacher to provide support to the student.



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Each year, the Early Access Review Committee reviews all steps, procedures and responsibilities of the AU Early Access process before we begin and after the process has been completed. After review, we adjust and revise as needed.

**Monitoring:**

GATE Facilitators are contacted before the student starts kindergarten or first grade to remind them of the ALP deadline of September 30. These ALPs are submitted with October count. ALP goals are progress monitored every five weeks by the GATE Facilitator, Classroom teacher and parents.

**Dispute Resolution: Will the AU be using the same procedure for disagreements process as in the main Program Plan? Yes**

**The administrative unit's program plan is due with the Comprehensive Program Plan or no later than January 1 prior to early access implementation.**