



Arapahoe 5, Cherry Creek - 03030

Early Access Addendum

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

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

The Early Access process is open to students who are age 4 by October 1st for kindergarten and age 5 by October 1st for First Grade. The purpose of Early Access is to identify and serve the few highly advanced gifted children who require comprehensive academic acceleration. [12.08.(1)(c)]. The Early Access process is intended to support students who are evaluated and determined to possess exceptional cognitive aptitude, exceptional academic achievement, and exceptional school readiness and motivation.

Cherry Creek Schools communicates about its Early Access criteria, process, time frames, portfolio referral, assessments to be used, final determinations, and ALP development to parents, educators, and community members through multiple platforms and avenues.

Detailed information is posted on the main GT web page for the reference of all stakeholders. This information is also forwarded to Early Childhood program personnel, building principals, and teachers of the Gifted to disseminate to their respective parent communities at least once a year. This information highlights the intended purpose of the Early Access process as to identify and meet the needs of the few highly advanced gifted students who require comprehensive academic acceleration. Also on the main GT website, there will also be general information on highly gifted characteristics of young children. Information regarding fees to cover the costs associated with testing will be included in this communication. Students/families qualifying for free and/or reduced lunch will not be assessed a fee.

The Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services will present Early Access information to district and building personnel, including but not limited to: private and public preschools and kindergartens, district elementary and charter schools, early childhood director, elementary school principals, and other district departments, (e.g., Special Education and English Language Development, etc.) The Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services in conjunction with the Director of Early Childhood ensures that Early Childhood staff understands this process and is equipped with the knowledge of the characteristics to recognize in a child who might potentially qualify



through this process. Building principals are appraised of the process through presentations/trainings, internal webpages, and email correspondence from the Coordinator of Advanced Academics; they are also encouraged to share this information on their respective school web pages and other communication avenues.

The teachers of the Gifted receive professional development regarding the criteria, process, time frames, portfolio referral, assessments, final determinations, and ALP development through regularly scheduled GT Connection meetings. Review committee members receive additional training above and beyond that provided by the description above; this additional training is site-specific and individualized according to need and will involve parents, gifted education staff, early childhood staff, school-based staff, and district gifted education staff. Ongoing site training is available to schools and school teams through the Office of Advanced Academic Services.

Parents are encouraged to contact the Office of Advanced Academic Services with any questions and/or concerns they might have about the process. Parents have the option to request the mailing of the application packet or receive it via email. Finally, an appeals process is also outlined on the main GT webpage.

Criteria

Aptitude:

Criteria

The Early Access process is open to students who are age 4 by October 1st for kindergarten and age 5 by October 1st for First Grade.

Early Access decisions are a consensus process, and a full Body of Evidence is collected and utilized in making a determination of a student's need for Early Access into Kindergarten and/or First Grade. Determinations are not made on test scores alone. A student may score at the 97th percentile or above on a cognitive and/or academic achievement test yet still not exhibit all the necessary characteristics of school readiness for a child who would benefit from early access into kindergarten and/or first grade. Early access decisions are a consensus process. If a team cannot reach consensus, the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services will make the final decision in accordance with Cherry Creek School's early access program plan.

Aptitude:

Cherry Creek Schools utilizes norm-referenced cognitive assessments which are appropriate for identifying the cognitive abilities of young children. The assessments in use are as follows:

Primary Assessment

- Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence, Fourth Edition (WIPPSI-IV)

Secondary Assessment – sometimes used to ensure equity for underrepresented populations such as second language speakers, students with disabilities, etc.

- Differential Ability Scales-II (DAS-II)

Index and/or Full Scale scores which fall at the 97th percentile or higher will be qualifying data points, per state requirements, toward early access to Kindergarten for four-year olds and early access to First Grade for five year olds. All assessments will be administered by qualified staff members based on availability and as determined by the test makers' qualification specifications.

Other measures from outside sources will also be considered and might be included in the body of evidence toward determination of early access. A total charge of \$250.00 is assessed for Early Access Cognitive and Academic testing.

Achievement:

Cherry Creek Schools utilizes norm-referenced academic achievement assessments which are appropriate for identifying the academic achievement of young children. The assessments in use are as follows:

- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Third Edition (WIAT-III)



- Test of Early Mathematics Ability, Third Edition (TEMA-3)
- Test of Early Reading Ability, Third Edition (TERA-3)
- Test of Early Written Language, Third Edition (TEWL-3)

Subtest, composite, and total scores which fall at the 97th percentile or higher will be qualifying data points, per state requirements, toward early access to Kindergarten for four-year olds and early access to First Grade for five year olds. All assessments will be administered by qualified staff members based on availability and as determined by the test makers' qualification specifications. Other measures from outside sources will also be considered and might be included in the body of evidence toward determination of early access. A total charge of \$250.00 is assessed for Early Access Cognitive and Academic testing.

Performance:

A student's performance will be documented through a Portfolio Assessment completed and compiled by the child's parents and preschool teacher or caretaker if not attending preschool. The assessments utilized for this component are as follows:

- Gifted Rating Scales – Preschool (GRS-P) – The parent completes a form as does the current educator
- Kingore Observation Inventory, 4th Edition (KOI) – The parent completes a form as does the current educator
- Student Work samples of reading ability, number sense, mathematical problem solving skills, writing ability, problem solving, and creativity

Readiness, social behavior and motivation:

Assessment in the areas of school readiness, social behavior, and motivation will also be conducted.

Additionally, current levels of academic functioning will be obtained from the child's preschool teacher and/or an adult who is not the child's parent/guardian in the areas of advanced learning characteristics, self-help skills, and social skills. The instruments used are as follows:

- Preschool/Kindergarten Behavior Scale (PKBS-2) - The parent completes a form as does the current educator
- Teaching Strategies Gold & Gold Survey – Kindergarten Entry Assessment

Additionally, observations of the child will be made during testing to assess the student's fine motor skills, his/her ability to sit for an extended period of time, and the child's ability to listen and follow directions. The Iowa Acceleration Scales, Third Edition will also be utilized. Finally, an interview with the child and his/her parent will be conducted by the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services.

Support system:

The Coordinator of Advanced Academics will collaborate with each receiving building level team to ensure a smooth transition into kindergarten for the child and that state compliance measures are met. The transition team will be comprised of but not limited to the following: the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services, the pre-school director or designee, the building principal and/or designee, the teacher of the Gifted, the classroom teacher, a school psychologist, parents and/or guardian, and other personnel as determined necessary. This group will write an initial Advanced Learning Plan within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the school year or September 30th whichever is earliest. The Advanced Learning Plan includes an initial profile of the students' strengths and needs to inform and guide appropriate instruction. Additionally, the Advanced Learning Plan will contain a transition goal, one or more academic goals, and one or more social emotional goals. Input for developing goals is gathered from the parent(s), teacher of the Gifted, classroom teacher, school psychologist, and/or building principal. The team will also set progress monitoring dates for the remainder of the school year and facilitate Advanced Learning Plan revisions as needed. The first of these meetings will be held prior to the school year beginning or within the first 30 calendar days of the school year and then every 5 weeks thereafter



for the remainder of the initial school year. The goals will be progressed monitored in an ongoing fashion by the teacher of the gifted in conjunction with the classroom teacher and school psychologist to ensure the student is receiving appropriate supports and interventions to be successful. Progress to goals will be formally documented and reported in a written report at least once each grading period; this formal written report will be shared with the parents at the same calendar intervals. During the school year, classroom teacher observations, formative assessments, and ongoing home/school communication will be used to support a successful transition and student growth. Additional support and/or professional development will be provided to school teams, as needed, by the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services.

Process

Timelines:

The application window for Early Access to Kindergarten and First grade will open on January 15th and close on April 1st except when April 1st falls on a school holiday or weekend. In which case, applications will be due on the first school day after April 1st of each school year. A final determination of acceptance for Early Access will be made no later than 60 calendar days after the portfolio has been received by the Office of Advanced Academic Services or by the last day of May whichever comes first. Applications for Early Access will only be accepted for the upcoming school year from January 15th – April 1st each year for access to the school year to follow.

Applications from newly re-locating families will be considered after April 1st but no later than July 15th in order to allow time for screening, assessment, and determination to be completed before the first day of school which will ensure appropriate placement for the child. Proof of residency in the district will be required along with the other contents of the application and portfolio in such circumstances including proof of age of the child.

Advanced Learning Plans are developed for each child qualifying for early access no later than September 30th or 30 days after the start of school whichever arrives first. Professional development focused on identification and development/monitoring of Advanced Learning Plans is available to each school's teacher of the Gifted several times throughout the school year through GT Connections meetings or upon request. Additional trainings offered by the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services for elementary school teams to support understanding the Early Access process as well as developing appropriate supports and programming for these unique students.

A total charge of \$250.00 is required for Early Access Cognitive and Academic testing and is required at the time of submission of the student's application and portfolio.

Personnel:

The Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services in Cherry Creek schools is the portfolio referral designee for the Early Access process and is qualified to hold said designation by evidence by the appropriate degrees and licensures. The Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services in Cherry Creek Schools holds a Bachelor's of Arts in English, a dual Master's of Arts in Special and Gifted Education, an Educational Doctoral Specialist in Educational Leadership resulting in holding the following state of Colorado licensures:

- General Education: Secondary, English/Language Arts
- Special Education: K-12, Specialist
- Gifted Education: K-12, Specialist
- Principal: K-12
- The Early Access Review Team is comprised of the following personnel:
- Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services • Gifted Education Educator(s)
- Director of Early Childhood or designee
- Early Childhood Educator(s)



- Elementary School Principal(s)
- School Psychologist specializing in Early Childhood
- Test Administrators
- Other personnel as determined by need

All members of the Early Access Review Team participate in reviewing and making determinations of completed portfolios. One or more of the Early Access Review Team members will interview parents and children, conduct assessments, and make determinations. While private testing will be considered in the collection of the body of evidence, the administration of a gold-standard cognitive assessment will be required.

A school psychologist will administer and interpret all Cognitive Aptitude assessments. The Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services or appropriately licensed designee will administer and interpret all Academic Achievement and additional assessments required. The Transition/Support Team shall include the following personnel:

- Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services
- Building Principal of receiving student
- Building teacher of the Gifted
- Building school psychologist
- Building classroom teacher
- Members of the Early Access Review Team as deemed appropriate and/or necessary
- School support staff as deemed appropriate and/or necessary
- Parents, Guardians, or outside caregivers
- Others deemed necessary to ensure the child's success

Evaluation:

Evaluation - Process Description

Step 1

Interested parents will request portfolio components and instructions from the Office of Advanced Academic Services. The Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services or designee will address questions and concerns as they arise. A child must be age 4 by October 1st for Kindergarten or age 5 by October 1st for First Grade to be eligible to participate in this process.

Parents seeking early access for their child into Kindergarten or First Grade must submit an application containing the following measures by the pre-determined deadline to the Office of Advanced Academic Services:

- Gifted Rating Scales – Preschool (GRS-P) – The parent completes a form as does the current educator
- Kingore Observation Inventory, 4th Edition (KOI) – The parent completes a form as does the current educator
- Student Work samples of reading ability, number sense, mathematical problem solving skills, writing ability, problem solving, and creativity

Additionally, parents will be asked to submit documentation of residence within the district boundaries and birth age solidifying that the child will be age 4 by October 1st for Kindergarten or age 5 by October 1st for First Grade. When complete, the parents return the completed packet to The Office of Advanced Academic Services by the designated deadline.

Step Two

Once the completed packet is received by the Office of Advanced Academic Services, the parents will be contacted and scheduled to meet with the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services to review the completed materials and determine if any additional information is needed to evaluate the student's needs. Student work will be assessed for evidence of precocity that would allow the student to be successful in Kindergarten or First Grade. Should it be determined that the child's portfolio meets criteria, the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services will refer the child to formal cognitive assessment. The parent's will submit a fee of \$250.00 for formal



assessment unless the child meets the requirements for Free and Reduced Lunch, in which case, the fee will be waived. Areas to be assessed are as defined in the previous section of this Addendum.

Step Three

The child is referred to the school psychologist for cognitive assessment using one of the following measures:

- Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence, Fourth Edition (WIPPSI-IV)
- Differential Ability Scales-II (DAS-II)

In order to meet the state's requirements for Early Access, a student must be formally identified as Gifted and Talented according to the criteria specified in the Colorado Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA). The student must have an Index or Composite score at or above the 97th percentile.

Step Four

After the child completes the cognitive testing, he/she will be administered Academic Achievement assessment using one or more of the following measures:

- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Third Edition (WIAT-III)
- Test of Early Mathematics Ability, Third Edition (TEMA-3)
- Test of Early Reading Ability, Third Edition (TERA-3)
- Test of Early Written Language, Third Edition (TEWL-3)

In order to meet the state's requirements for Early Access, a student must be formally identified as Gifted and Talented according to the criteria specified in the Colorado Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA). The student must have a Subtest or Composite score at or above the 97th percentile.

Step Five

All data collected will be reviewed by the Early Access Review Team and a determination will be made. The parents of children who obtain qualifying scores in both cognitive aptitude and academic achievement along with a full body of evidence to support need for acceleration will be notified by a Letter of Determination as to the decision of the Early Access Review Team.

Step Six

For all students determined eligible for Early Access, the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services will contact the child's home-school principal to schedule a meeting to review the portfolio and assessment data. In collaboration with the home-school team, a transition meeting will be scheduled to develop and Advanced Learning Plan for the student. The Transition/Support Team shall include the following personnel:

- Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services
- Building Principal of receiving student
- Building teacher of the Gifted
- Building school psychologist
- Building classroom teacher
- Members of the Early Access Review Team as deemed appropriate and/or necessary
- School support staff as deemed appropriate and/or necessary
- Parents, Guardians, or outside caregivers
- Others deemed necessary to ensure the child's success

Additional Process Information

Parents will be notified of their child's progress at each interval in the process and notified of the results as they become available.

For those students who do not meet the criteria for Early Access, the process will end and parents will receive notification along with a copy of the written report of test results. Feedback will be given to the parents or those students who do not qualify for Early Access. If a student does not qualify for early access but testing indicates meeting the state's criteria for a gifted identification, once the student enters Kindergarten, a gifted identification process will be initiated and an Advanced Learning Plan will be written by the school's teacher of

**Monitoring:**

The receiving school's teacher of the Gifted will be the point person upon the student beginning school. The Support Team will follow the pre-determined and communicated timeline and mode of correspondence established at the transition meeting. Progress monitoring will be the responsibility of the teacher of the gifted in collaboration with the classroom teacher and school's mental health provider. Student progress will be documented and communicated to the parents every 5 weeks or with each marking period for the duration of the student's initial school year, and parents shall attend formal parent/teacher conferences twice annually. Ongoing data analysis of student performance will be collected from both classroom formative and summative assessments as well as district and state summative measures by the classroom teacher and reviewed with the support of the teacher of the Gifted. Additional social/emotional support will be provided by the school's mental health providers. Advanced Learning Plan goals will be monitored and revised as the Early Access student demonstrates growth and meets pre-determined goals and objectives.

A procedure for Early Access appeals/disagreements is in place and parents can submit, in writing, a formal appeal letter to the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services. Additionally, the parents can submit additional information for which they would like the Review Team to take into consideration during the appeal process. Once the review of any additional information is completed, the Coordinator of Advanced Academic Services will contact the parents both via telephone and in writing with an updated decision.

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.