



Charter School Institute - 80010

## 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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**CSI Communication with Schools:** CSI provides regular communication and support to School Leaders and Gifted Education Coordinators regarding Early Access:

- **Early Access Webpage:** CSI maintains a webpage devoted to [Early Access](#). It includes links to CDE's Fast Facts for Early Access, CSI Policy and Procedural Guidance, and links to a variety of resources - characteristics of young learners, identification tools, readiness checklists and behavioral inventories.
- **Early Access Training:** CSI provides an annual webinar on Early Access communication, identification and procedures for ALP development and monitoring. The webinar is recorded for use by Gifted Coordinators and School Leaders who provide training to other members of the Early Access Team. Recorded trainings and slides are saved on the website and provided via email attachment to Gifted Coordinators.
- **CSI Policy and Procedural Guidance:** This document is provided to schools to assist in developing the Early Access policy and procedures that are described in the school's Gifted Program Plan.
- **Data Submissions Training:** CSI provides training to school data submissions staff on reporting Early Access students in the Data Pipeline and maintaining audit documentation (ALP) for funding eligibility. A student shall be age 4 by October 1 for kindergarten; and, age 5 by October 1 for first grade. ALP must be on file by September 30 of each early access year to be verified and counted in the October enrollment. The phrase "early access" or "grade acceleration," must be clearly written or marked on the student's ALP in order to receive funding.

**School Communication with Parents/Community:** CSI schools determines the method(s) of communication that best meet the needs of their school community. The most common avenues for communication described in school Gifted Program Plans are Student/Parent Handbooks, school websites, brochures, and Kindergarten



round-up meetings. Schools make every effort to provide information in languages that members of the school community can understand. Information provided to community members includes:

- A definition of Early Access
- Information about the school's Early Access Process & Timeline
- Application/Portfolio Requirements
- Assessment Process and Tools
- Criteria for Qualification
- Fee information, including fee waiver information if a student is eligible for FRL
- School contact

## Criteria

### **Aptitude:**

Each CSI school determines the assessment tool to measure aptitude for Early Access. All schools select from approved measures in the [CDE Matrix of Commonly Used Measures](#). Cognitive measures must be norm-referenced. Cognitive measures that claim to measure general intellectual ability ("g") up to three standard deviations above the mean are acceptable. Norms older than 10-14 years do not reflect today's demographics in their sampling, and therefore, are not approved for use.

CSI schools utilize the 97th percentile as the minimum criterion for this measure.

Aptitude tests frequently chosen by CSI schools include:

- WPPSI-IV
- KABC-II
- DAS-II
- K-BIT2
- Bateria III Woodcock Munoz (Cognitive)

Determination for Early Access is based on a body of evidence and no single criterion shall determine identification. Every student with a score above the 97th percentile on aptitude tests may not benefit from early access to kindergarten or first grade.

### **Achievement:**

Each CSI school determines the assessment tool to measure achievement for Early Access. All schools select from approved measures in the [CDE Matrix of Commonly Used Measures](#). Achievements tests utilized measure skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Achievement tests selected by schools must be norm-referenced. Only summative achievement tests may be used for identification purposes.

CSI schools utilize the 97th percentile as the minimum criterion for this measure.

Achievement tests frequently chosen by CSI schools include:

- Woodcock-Johnson IV NU Tests of Achievement, Forms A and B
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Third Edition
- TEMA-3 (mathematics)
- TERA-3 (reading)
- TEWL-3 (writing)



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CSI schools utilize the 97th percentile as the minimum criterion for this measure.

Determination for Early Access is based on a body of evidence and no single criterion shall determine identification. Every student with a score above the 97th percentile on achievement tests may not benefit from early access to kindergarten or first grade.

**Performance:**

Each CSI school determines the assessment tools to measure performance for Early Access. All schools select from approved measures in the [CDE Matrix of Commonly Used Measures](#). Performance data include portfolio and qualitative and quantitative data collected by the school.

Performance assessments frequently chosen by CSI schools include:

- Work Sampling via classroom performance or student portfolio
- GRS-P
- GES
- SIGS

CSI schools utilize the 97th percentile as the minimum criterion on norm-referenced behavior scales and demonstrated ability of two or more years above same-age peers as the criterion on qualitative measures.

Determination for Early Access is based on a body of evidence and no single criterion shall determine identification. Every student with a score above the 97th percentile on norm-referenced behavior scales may not benefit from early access to kindergarten or first grade.

**Readiness, social behavior and motivation:**

Each CSI school determines the assessment tools to measure school readiness for Early Access. CSI schools are encouraged to select from CDE approved school readiness assessments.

School readiness assessments frequently chosen by CSI schools include:

- DRDP-K
- REAL
- Teaching Strategies Gold Survey - Kindergarten Entry Assessment
- Teaching Strategies Gold

**Support system:**

In order to provide a support system to the child participating in early access, CSI schools build a collaborative team of parents and school professionals. The letter of determination includes signatures of the parent/guardian, Gifted Coordinator, early childhood staff, receiving teacher and School Leader. All parties agree to recognize and support the child's placement in Kindergarten or first grade. During ALP development, this Support Team develops a transition goal that is monitored throughout the first year of early access. Plans for regular communication between the parent and receiving teacher are outlined, including a schedule for 5 week monitoring meetings with the Support Team. Methods for communicating with the student about school success will also be outlined.

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## Process

**Timelines:**

Each CSI school timeline will include dates or date ranges for the following procedures.

**Eligible Students:** Pursuant to CSL 22-20-204(2) CSI permits early access to kindergarten to a highly gifted advanced four year old and early access to first grade to a highly gifted advanced five year old. The student must reach the age of four by October 1 for kindergarten or the student must reach the age of five by October 1 for grade one.

**Application Period:** CSI encourages schools to develop early access application windows that align to their respective kindergarten application windows. Applications for early access are due on or before April 1st for the following school year. Each school shall announce when it will begin accepting applications and when the application period closes. CSI schools may, at their discretion, consider applications after April 1st provided the determination is made by September 1 or by the start of the upcoming school year, whichever is earlier.

**Referral:** Upon receiving an early access application, the Gifted Coordinator, School Leader or other qualified person will make a decision to move forward with early access assessment. It is the discretion of the CSI school to offer initial screening, testing, or an interview to inform a decision to accept the screening portfolio and continue with the remainder of the implementation steps.

**Assessment window:** CSI schools will conduct necessary tests to compile the body of evidence that includes all early access criteria.

**Determination:** Determinations will be made by a team within 60 calendar days of the school receiving the child's application portfolio. Written notice of determination will be provided to the parent/guardian.

**Deadline for Parent to Accept or Decline:** CSI schools will provide a clear deadline for parents/guardians to accept or decline the offer of early access.

**ALP Development:** When a child is determined to be qualified for early access, the school shall convene the Support Team to develop an ALP according to their Gifted Program Plan Procedures no later than the end of the first month of school or September 30, whichever comes first. This deadline applies to early access students in both kindergarten and first grade.

**Personnel:**

**Application collection and referral:** CSI provides training on early access identification to each school's Gifted Coordinator who is a qualified teacher. While the School Leader or designee may collect Early Access Applications, the Gifted Coordinator will determine whether the applicant shall move forward in the process.

**Collection of body of evidence:** Gifted coordinators, school psychologists and/or Kindergarten teachers who are trained on administering early access assessments may administer tests to compile the body of evidence.

**Determination Team:** Members include School Leader, Gifted Coordinator (at least one person trained in gifted identification), and at least one teacher of early education. Additional personnel may include School Psychologist, ELD teacher, Special Education teacher, Preschool teacher. CSI schools determine composition of Team based on staff expertise in gifted education and early childhood education and unique needs of the child.



**Support Team:** Members of the support team for ALP development and monitoring transition include the receiving teacher, School Leader, parents, Gifted Coordinator. Additional members may include school counseling staff, ELD teacher, Special Education teacher. CSI schools determine composition of Team based on staff expertise in gifted education and early childhood education and unique needs of the child.

**Evaluation:**

1. Parent requests early access application from Gifted Coordinator who conducts an informational interview to learn more about the child. Applications are sent to parents who are fairly confident that their child is significantly above age peers. Clear timeline is provided with application, as well as a checklist for the portfolio, and a behavioral inventory for parent and preschool teacher.
  2. Upon receiving an early access application, the Gifted Coordinator, School Leader or other qualified person will make a decision to move forward with early access assessment. It is the discretion of the CSI school to offer initial screening, testing, or an interview to inform a decision to accept the screening portfolio and continue with the remainder of the implementation steps.
  3. If the portfolio is accepted, the Determination Team will review the portfolio and make a decision to move forward with testing.
  4. Personnel trained in administering assessments will administer approved assessments selected by the school in the areas of aptitude, achievement (math, reading, writing), and school readiness.
  5. Determination Team convenes to review the full body of evidence and comes to consensus on whether or not to offer early access. Written letter of determination is signed by Team and sent to parent. If the Team determines that the child is gifted, but will not benefit from early access. The team will provide ALP data to the home school indicated by the parent.
  6. Parent can accept or decline offer of early access. If the parent accepts, the letter of determination is signed by the parent and a copy is placed in the cumulative file. A date is set for the Support Team to convene and write the ALP.
  7. ALP development is the responsibility of the collaborative Support Team. The ALP will be created within the first 30 days of school or by September 30th.
  8. The Support Team will convene for progress monitoring reviews every 5 weeks for the first year of school.
- CSI schools develop their own forms for documentation. Attached is a template of a letter of determination that may be used.

**Monitoring:**

Teachers of early access students will monitor and document performance and progress throughout the first school year. The Gifted Coordinator will convene a meeting of the Support Team every 5 weeks to discuss performance, progress and social/emotional development. A written report will be included as an attachment to the ALP.

**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.**