

EARLY ACCESS FOR HIGHLY GIFTED STUDENTS

The Colorado Education of Exceptional Children Act as amended in July 2008 provides early access to educational services for kindergarten and first grade students to meet the unique needs of the highly advanced gifted child. It does not permit early access to all gifted four or five year olds. Quality preschool programs will meet the needs of most gifted children. The child who may benefit from early access is academically gifted, socially and emotionally mature, in the top 3% of the gifted peer group, motivated to learn, and ready to begin school.

Parents/Guardians begin the process for early entrance to kindergarten or first grade by completing the district application. This application includes samples of student's work in math, writing, and drawing. An early access survey should be completed by the parent/guardian and preschool teacher or other adult who knows the child well.

District personnel will contact parents/guardians to arrange testing for their child. The district will use the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (K-BIT) to assess students in the cognitive area. Additionally, students will be tested with the Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA) and the Test of Early Mathematics Ability (TEMA). Students who meet the criteria will be eligible to enter kindergarten or first grade one year early.

Early Access Criteria:

- Application completed by parent with student work samples
- Observations of student behavior in preschool by preschool teacher
- High ability as measured by 97th percentile or higher score on K-BIT
- High achievement as measured by 97th percentile or higher score on TERA-3 and TEMA-3

To determine eligibility, the early access committee will review all applications and testing to make all final decisions. All applications will be due by April 1, or if April 1 is a school holiday, the first school day after April 1. Screenings will be completed within four weeks from the application deadline and further testing will be completed to allow for a decision before the end of the school year. Families who move into the district after April 1 will be able to complete an application and turn it in by August 1 for review prior to the start of school. All decisions on late applications will be made before the start of school so appropriate placement can be made.

Criteria and Process

- Identification will be based on best practices for identifying gifted learners with guidance from CDE and will include a body of evidence to determine a child's need for early access.
- Criteria will identify highly advanced gifted children who are age four by the start of school for kindergarten or age five by the start of school for first grade.
- The child who may benefit from early access is academically gifted, socially and emotionally mature, in the top 3% of the gifted peer group, motivated to learn, and ready to begin school.

Required components will include:

Step 1

- Obtain an application from the gifted and talented office. Applications will be available beginning the first school day in March of each school year. Applications should be returned before the deadline.

Step 2

- Students will be screened using the K-BIT

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Step 3

- If the K-BIT scores are above the 97th percentile, the TERA and TEMA will be given.

Step 4

- Body of evidence will be reviewed by the designated review committee including the gifted and talented administrator, the gifted and talented parent liaison, a gifted and talented elementary school teacher, and an early childhood teacher or administrator.

Step 5

- Notification of the early access decision will be provided to the parent/guardian and the school.
- Testing from outside sources will not be considered in the body of evidence.
- Decisions regarding acceptance and early access will be made collaboratively by the designated review committee including an administrator, gifted and talented staff, and early childhood educators. All decisions will be relayed prior to the start of the school year.

Timeline	Portfolio Submission Due Date	District Testing Window Begins	Body of Evidence Review by Committee	Notification calls and Letters of Acceptance Sent to Parent/Guardian
For those residing in the district prior to April 1	April 1 or the first school day after April 1 if April 1 is a holiday	Week following application deadline	By end of second week in May)	No later than last week of school
For those moving into the district between April 1 and August 1	First Monday in August	First Tuesday in August	First Friday in August	Second Monday in August

Student Placement

A meeting will be arranged in the fall at the designated school or other district site to be agreed upon by school personnel and the parent/guardian. The purpose of the meeting will be to develop an advanced learning plan (ALP) and to transition the student to complete the gifted and talented identification process. ALPs are required by state rules for all identified gifted and talented students and must be completed by September 30 of the enrollment year. An annual meeting will take place between the gifted and talented designee, current teacher and parent/guardian.

Appeal Process

If a student does not meet the criterion for early access, the parent/guardian may appeal the decision in writing to the gifted and talented administrator within 10 school days of receiving the letter of recommendation. The letter of appeal must request a district level review meeting to seek a resolution. The parent/guardian should present data showing the need for gifted identification or gifted programming options. The decision will be mailed to the parent/guardian within five school days of the meeting.

If the parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the recommendation from the gifted and talented

administrator, he/she may appeal in writing to the Director of Language, Culture, and Equity within 10 school days of receiving the letter of recommendation. The Director Language, Culture, and Equity will review the process and evidence and will respond in writing to the parent/guardian within 10 school days of receiving the letter of appeal.

If the parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the recommendation from the Director of Language, Culture, and Equity, he/she may appeal in writing to the Chief Academic Officer within 10 school days of receiving the letter of recommendation. The Chief Academic Officer will review the process and evidence and will respond in writing to the parent/guardian within 10 school days of receiving the letter of appeal.

If the parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the recommendation from the Chief Academic Officer, he/she may appeal in writing to the Superintendent within 10 school days of receiving the letter of recommendation. The Superintendent will review the process and evidence and will respond in writing to the parent/guardian within 10 school days of receiving the letter of appeal. The decision of the superintendent is final.

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