



El Paso 20, Academy - 21080

## 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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Early Access is intended for the highly gifted child to enter kindergarten or first grade ahead of age peers. Early Access legislation (HB 08-1021) was established by the state of Colorado in 2008 to allow school districts the opportunity to include "highly gifted" underage learners into kindergarten and first grade programs as a way to better meet the advanced educational needs of these children.

An Early Access team evaluates all applications. The criteria for Early Access admission include: the submission of an application and a portfolio of student work samples, readiness checklists, ability measures and achievement measures at or above the 97th percentile in reading, writing and math. Observation and parent child interviews are part of the body of evidence used to make Early Access determinations.

The complete Early Access process and procedure is posted on the Academy District 20 website at:  
<https://asd20.org/departments/ls/tag/Pages/Early-Access.aspx>

An initial \$25.00 application fee is charged for Early Access. Considerations can be made for families with a demonstrated financial need.

Applications are accepted from January 2nd through April 15th. Parents are informed in writing of committee recommendations within sixty days of the start of the application submission.

The Academy District 20 Preschool web page and the Central Registry web page direct users to the Early Access information.



Professional development for and about Early Access is provided to central office personnel, central registry personnel, preschool staffs, elementary TAG teachers, and elementary principals annually.

<https://asd20.org/departments/Is/tag/Pages/Early-Access.aspx>

During the 2017-2018 school year, additional professional training will be developed regarding Early Access. The purpose will be to establish excellent rapport with private preschools who refer students to the Academy District 20 Early Access process.

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## Criteria

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### **Aptitude:**

Ability measures may include a complete WIPPSI, Kaufman Ability Test for Children (KABC), or other nationally norm referenced ability measure specifically designed for the young learner, seeking results at or above the 97% percentile.

The Test of Early Reading (TERA), The Test of Early Written Language (TEWL3), and The Test of Early Math (TEMA) are nationally norm referenced achievement measures designed specifically for the young learner, seeking results at or above the 97% percentile.

Draw-A-Person Test (DAP), Evaluated by a child psychologist. The test is norm referenced for children aged 3 and up, seeking results at or above the 97% percentile.

If a child is admitted to kindergarten or first grade based on meeting the criteria for Early Access, their progress is monitored every six weeks to ensure success academically and socially. Parents and teachers are partners and participants in the ongoing progress monitoring.

Each Early Access student will have a written Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) with academic and affective goals. Regularly scheduled ALP goal meetings will be established within the first six weeks of the start of the school year.

### **Achievement:**

TERA - The Test of Early Reading - seeking results at or above the 97% percentile.

TEMA - The Test of Early Math - seeking results at or above the 97% percentile.

TEWL3 - The Test of Early Written Language - seeking results at or above the 97% percentile.

### **Performance:**

Portfolio - Evaluated using the Kingore Rating Rubric (KOI) with inter-rater reliability. There are 4 members of the Early Access Team who review each applicant's portfolio and Body of Evidence (BOE).

### **Readiness, social behavior and motivation:**

Behavioral Scales (BASC) - Part 1 completed by the parents.

Behavioral Scales (BASC) - Part 2 completed by the current preschool teacher, if applicable.



The Early Access Team will be looking for evidence of exceptional ability in all areas; behavior, performance, ability, achievement, and motivation.

**Support system:**

Families are extremely important in the support of each Early Access candidate.

An Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) will be written for each admitted Early Access student no later than 30 days from the first day of the school year. The Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) is written to address the specific learning needs of each child. Input is taken from the classroom teacher, the TAG teacher, parents, school social worker, and the school principal or their designee when an Early Access student is enrolled. Each ALP will be specific to the child and will include:

- Academic goals
- Affective goals
- Scheduled progress monitoring, at least every six weeks, and more frequently if needed.

In the case of a kindergarten Early Access student, the progress monitoring will take place during the kindergarten and first grade years.

In the case of a first grade Early Access student, the progress monitoring will take place during the first grade year.

Plans for progress monitoring and support will be drawn from the MTSS process with input from the classroom teacher and the TAG coordinator.

ALPs focus on the child's academic needs, social and emotional needs, and transition from home to school needs. ALP development is a shared responsibility between home and school with student success at the forefront.

## Process

**Timelines:**

Each family who seeks Early Access will have a one to one conversation with the Assistant Director for Learning Services or her designee.

- A child for whom a parent seeks early access consideration for kindergarten, must be four years of age by October first.
- A child for whom a parent seeks early access consideration for first grade, must be five years of age by October first.
- Applications and portfolios are accepted between January 2nd and April 15th.
- Ongoing portfolio screening may be available as military families arrive in the area. (Military orders need this unique accommodation of time.)
- No Early Access applications will be considered for an academic year after October 1st.
- Portfolios and the BOE will be evaluated on a rolling basis using an Early Access team consisting of the Assistant Director for Learning Services, an elementary principal, a school psychologist, and an elementary TAG teacher. The KOI rating rubric will be used to rate each portfolio.



- An initial application fee of \$25.00 is charged. The fee is used to defray the cost of consumable protocol replenishment.
- A \$300.00 fee may be charged for full scale ability testing. (Families who cannot afford the fee may request the fee be waived or reduced.) The fee covers the cost of the consumable testing protocol replenishment, overtime pay for the school psychologist, and teachers working beyond their contract as members of the Early Access team.
- Individual placement meetings are held for each accepted Early Access student.
- Letters of admission are sent to families with copies to the neighborhood school within 60 days of the initial application submission.
- ALPs are written within 30 days of the start of school.
- A child admitted to kindergarten or first grade based on the Early Access process will be progress monitored every six weeks to ensure success academically and socially. Parents and teachers are partners and participants in the ongoing progress monitoring.

**Personnel:**

Academy District 20 uses an Early Access team to make student placement decisions. The team is made up of:

1. The Assistant Director for Learning Services - acts as the community liaison for Early Access conducting all communication with families seeking Early Access, providing professional development to preschool teachers, kindergarten and first grade teachers, and elementary school administrators. In addition, the Assistant Director for Learning Services will coordinate all testing, portfolio review, and placement meetings.
2. One elementary principal - serves as a member of the Early Access review team, reading files and reviewing the body of evidence for each young applicant and providing input for school placement.
3. One school psychologist - supports the Early Access team by administering the necessary ability measures and writing up the psychological report to be considered as part of the body of evidence.
4. One elementary TAG teacher - serves as a member of the Early Access review team, reading files, reviewing the body of evidence for each young applicant and providing input for school placement.

**Evaluation:**

Step 1. The Academy District 20 website is updated annually with the Early Access timeline. Contact information is maintained with complete accuracy.

Step 2. Professional development is scheduled for stakeholder groups, preschool teachers, kindergarten and first grade teachers, new elementary principals, and community based private preschool directors.

Step 3. Parents initiate the conversation about Early Access for their child.

Step 4. Assistant Director for Learning Services, or their designee, conducts a personal phone conversation about Early Access and shares the website and deadline information, explains the process, and provides an application to families.

Step 5. A complete application is submitted for review. Contents of the application may include:

- a. Letter from the parent requesting Early Access
- b. The Academy District 20 Application
- c. A letter of support from a current teacher outside the home, if applicable.
- d. A signed legal release
- e. Proof of residency within District 20 boundaries. (It is the determination of Academy District 20, that only children of families who reside within the Academy District 20 population area will be evaluated.)
- f. A copy of the child's birth certificate
- g. A completed BASC Parent rating scale
- h. A portfolio of dated work samples, art, writing, etc.
- i. Other supporting evidence of exceptional ability and achievement



\* Note - If a family, who is seeking an Early Access evaluation for their young child, needs second language support, the Assistant Director for Learning Services will work closely with the Assistant Director for ELL and with the contracted translation service to assist in the application and evaluation process.

Step 6. When a completed application is submitted, the Early Access Review Team will rate the contents using the KOI rating rubric. If the team sees significant evidence, the child and parent will be invited to come in for achievement testing. After the results of the achievement tests are scored, the child will be exited from the process if they fail to meet the 97%ile or will continue to the next step in the evaluation process; ability testing with a licensed school psychologist.

Step 7. After the ability testing is complete the Early Access Team will review the full body of testing evidence and observation notes as well as the portfolio contents. At this time a determination of acceptance and placement will be made or the child is exited from the evaluation process.

Step 8. Formal letters of acceptance or rejection are sent to the family. Copies of the score reports for achievement and ability measures are provided to the families. Score reports are maintained in the Office of Gifted Programs for one year. Schools and the Central Registry are informed of each Early Access acceptance. Kindergarten Early Access students are provided a half day placement, however a full day program is typically recommended. Parents are informed that they will be responsible for paying for a portion of the full day costs. First grade Early Access students are provided a full day seat at their neighborhood school. Academy District 20 does have school choice. If families wish to make choice to a non neighborhood school, that will be considered on an individual space available basis.

Step 9. Parents officially register their student for the recommended grade level and school.

Step 10. Within 30 days of the start of the school year, an ALP is written for each Early Access student. Progress monitoring continues throughout kindergarten and first grade.

#### **Monitoring:**

The ALP for each Early Access student will be written within 30 days of the start of kindergarten and first grade. Each six weeks the TAG teacher at the assigned school will progress monitor the student. The progress will include achievement benchmarks using grade level standards, and a check of the social and emotional well being of the child.

Each six weeks the Early Access student will be discussed in the site based MTSS meeting.

Parents will be informed of student progress each six weeks during semester one and twice during semester two.

**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.**