



cde

Gifted Education Unit



Reference Series



**Early Access for Highly
Advanced Gifted Children
under Age Six**



Gifted Student Learning and Growth

Ensured by needed provisions and advocacy.

The Reference Series are small packets of information regarding topics relevant to statewide improvements in gifted program designs or gifted student achievement. The Series is a quick way for implementers of gifted programming and the public to gain an initial understanding of the topic.. Representatives of the gifted education directors' network select the topics based upon immediate need or legislation that requires a tutorial for building statewide understanding and implementation.

The overview of the gifted education topic will be described in terms of definition, description or characteristics, resources, assessments, common tips or evidence based practices in relation to the topic. Examples of methods or tools referenced in the series are not exclusive. If legislation is the topic, the purpose is to clarify the law and procedures for implementation. The authors encourage further study and application of the particular topic.

Early Access

for
Highly Advanced Gifted Children
under Age Six

Colorado Department of Education

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House Bill 08-1021

- An acceleration method in Colorado for highly advanced gifted children under age 4 for kindergarten; under age 5 for first grade.
- The Rules for implementation of HB 1021:
 - Provide guidance for components of early access identified in HB 1021.
 - Clarify provisions for administrative units to receive state education funds for early access children

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Highly Advanced

- **“Highly advanced gifted child”** means a gifted child whose body of evidence demonstrates a profile of exceptional ability or potential compared to same-age gifted children. To meet the needs of highly advanced development, early access to educational services may be considered as a special provision.

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Early Access

- Early access means early entrance to kindergarten or first grade for highly advanced gifted children under age six.
- Children for early access are exceptionally precocious and ready for school.
- Academic achievement, reasoning ability, performance and motivation are keen compared to other gifted children.

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Intent: 12.08(1) (C)

- Early access shall not be an acceleration pattern recommended for the majority of age 4 or age 5 gifted children who will benefit from preschool gifted programming that responds to the strength area.
- The purpose of early access is to identify and serve the few highly advanced gifted children who require comprehensive academic acceleration.

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A Careful Focus

- Many young gifted children are ready for advancement in one area of development. Grade level acceleration may be considered at another point in time.
- Regular public or private preschools or home schooling meet the needs of the majority of gifted 4 and 5 year olds.

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Early Access Findings

- Strong support for early access when students are evaluated to be exceptional in aptitude/cognitive reasoning, academics, school readiness and motivation.
- The process for early access must use varied indicators and a body of evidence.

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Early Access Findings

- An early access process requires a positive support system provided by teacher, administrator and family.
- Longitudinal studies report that early access children excel academically, participate in extra-curricular activities, exhibit strong positive concepts; some may require acceleration again (Individual exceptions may occur depending upon circumstances.)

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Early Access - Purpose

- Provides curriculum, instruction and assessment aligned with the child's level of challenge
- Fosters friendships and social-emotional growth closer to the child's developmental level
- Integration of early childhood and gifted instructional programs, and expansion of access to kindergarten or first grade (rule section: 12.08 (1) (B))

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Section 12.02 (1) (H)

- Early access is a local decision of the administrative unit.
- If permitted, provisions are embedded in the administrative unit's Program Plan for Gifted Education pursuant to rule section 12.08.
- If permitted, constituent schools or districts must abide by the requirements established in the Program Plan.

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Addendum to Program Plan

- An early access addendum is a supplement to the Program Plan provided to the Colorado Department of Education before the initial implementation of early access.
- Describes how an administrative unit will implement requirements for early access according to rule sections 12.02 (1) (H) and 12.08.

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Addendum Components

- Communication methods
- Criteria in a body of evidence
- Process and tools for evaluation
- Reporting
- Fee, if applicable

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Communication: 12.08 (2)

- In what ways will the administrative unit inform parents, educators, and community members about:
 - Criteria
 - Process
 - Time frames
 - Portfolio referral
 - Tests
 - Final determinations

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Broad Stakeholder Group

- People interested in early access might be from the public, private and home schooling learning environments.
- It will be important to have information readily available to the public for clarity of intent.
- Positive relationships among stakeholders and means for dialogue is critical in setting realistic expectations.

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Communication Methods

- How will the administrative unit increase the understanding of a highly advanced gifted child and his/her educational needs through professional development of educators?
- In what ways will personnel involved in the process be trained or “qualified” to facilitate early access (e.g., receiver of referral)?
- In what ways will collaboration in the early access process occur among preschool, general and gifted personnel, and parents?

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Communication Methods

- Who will facilitate and be involved in ALP, advanced learning plan, development for the early access child?
- Who will facilitate and be involved in ALP development when the child is gifted and not deemed appropriate for early access?
- Who will monitor the ALP for the early access child?

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Criteria: 12.08 (2) (D)

- The criteria or areas to be considered when making an early access determination include:
 - Aptitude
 - Achievement
 - Performance
 - Readiness, social behavior and motivation
 - Support systems

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Criteria

- The administrative unit will describe the methods and tools for evaluation.
- The body of evidence must address all criteria and data collected through evaluation.
- The standard for early access seeks indicators of exceptionality representing 98 percentile and above on standardized tests and functioning levels, typically, two years or more above peers.

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Criteria: Tools for Assessment

- Reliability of tools is fostered through training, discussion and ongoing use.
- Validity: Use tools appropriate for the age and area of measurement. See the handout on commonly used tools for each criteria.
- Select both qualitative and quantitative measures for the body of evidence.

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Criteria: Support Structures

- A cooperative attitude among teachers and parents will increase the likelihood of success.
- The learning environment should foster high expectations and positive relationships among teachers, classmates and parents.
- Transition through year one of early access requires the parents and teachers to monitor the child's progress collaboratively and on a regular basis.

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Process: 12.08 (2) (E)

- The process or components to be considered when making an early access determination include:
 - Timelines
 - Personnel
 - Determination team
 - Support team

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Process continued

- Evaluation
 - Screening portfolio
 - Referral
 - Body of Evidence
 - Decision making
 - Monitoring of student performance
- Dispute resolution

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Timeline for Addendum

- For implementation in 08-09 fiscal year, an early access addendum must be filed by September 10, 2008.
- After 9/10/08, an addendum to the Program Plan must be filed by January 1 preceding the initial fiscal year of implementation.
- Once implemented, early access provisions are embedded in the administrative unit's ongoing Program Plan.

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Process: Personnel

- Who will be participating and trained in the early access process?
- Who will be the main contact for the parent?
- Given the resources in your administrative unit, who are the "right" people to make determinations?
- What personnel along with the parents will be involved in the ongoing support system?

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Process: Screening Portfolio

- Parents collect information for the screening portfolio or referral.
- The screening portfolio contains:
 - Contact information
 - An observation/screening tool completed by the parent and the preschool teacher. (If no preschool teacher, then by an adult knowing the child in early childhood experiences)
 - Samples of work

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Process: Referral

- The parent makes a referral by submitting the screening portfolio according to the administrative unit's procedures.
- The person taking the referral, reviews the portfolio and makes a decision to continue with evaluation or not.

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Process: Body of Evidence

- Data providing information on each criteria is gathered in the child's portfolio.
- Tests are administered as needed; or parents provide private testing results.
- Data from classroom performance, embedded curriculum assessments, interviews, checklists and/or rating scales are collected as needed.

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Process: Decision Making

The determination team

- Reviews and analyzes data
- Discusses the child's strengths and comprehensive readiness for early access
- Collaboratively decides if the child will benefit from early access to kindergarten or first grade
- Informs the parents of the decision

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Determinations

- A determination letter describing the decision for early access (example on web site)
 - Signed by the determination team, parent and receiving school's principal and child's teacher
 - Placed in the child's cumulative folder
- An advanced learning plan, (ALP) is developed for early access children by September 30 after early access placement.

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Determinations

- If the child moves from the original administrative unit of early access, the placement is maintained in other administrative units statewide.
- When students are identified gifted but not deemed appropriate for early access, the team shall transfer the student data and portfolio to the child's school for appropriate instructional programming.

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Process: Monitoring

- Collaborative monitoring helps to create a positive support system for the child.
- Monitoring is a checkpoint between parents and the teacher/s at least every five weeks for academic data, social-emotional and ALP updates.
- Continue or adapt instruction and the learning environment based upon data gathered through monitoring and reflective dialogue.

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Dispute Resolution: 12.02 (E) (V)

- The administrative unit has a dispute resolution process that applies to gifted education identification and programming decisions.
- Dispute resolution requires that the parent has an opportunity to express his/her concern and that the designated AU personnel consider the dispute and make a final decision regarding the issue.

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Reporting: 12.08 (2) (C)

The administrative unit codes the early access child on the October enrollment count as:

- A kindergartner or grade one student
and
- A categorical gifted student

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Enrollment Audit Evidence

The Department's audit evidence includes:

- Early access provisions in the Program Plan filed with CDE or an approved addendum
- An ALP, advanced learning plan, for the early access child
- Gifted code for the child on the enrollment report to CDE
- The child is 4 years for kindergarten or 5 years for first grade by the start of school

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Fee: 12.02 (2) (B)

- Administrative units may charge a reasonable fee for the testing and early access process.
- No fee may be charged to families eligible for free and reduced lunch. Eligibility is a Federal income level standard (not age of child).
- Reasonability of fee takes into consideration cost of materials and additional staff time if applicable; economics of the community and family; testing results provided by parents within 3 months of the referral.
- Waivers may be granted by the AU.

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Getting Started

- Hold conversations with the superintendent/s, early childhood and gifted education staff about the meaning of early access, benefits to children, existing policy or procedures that support early access thinking
- Discuss local attitudes and issues about early access with stakeholder groups
- Decide if early access will be permitted in the administrative unit

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Steps toward Early Access

1. Verify structures for early access and needs for enhancements to the infrastructure
2. Review and identify personnel most capable to facilitate the testing, criteria and process for early access.
3. Ensure training and understanding of the early childhood sensitivities for personnel involved in the process

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Steps towards Early Access

3. With a team of local representation, determine the administrative unit's approach to communication, criteria, tools and process for making early access determinations using the ECEA rules section 12.08 as a guide.
4. Prepare and submit an early access addendum to the AU's Program Plan (example on CDE's web site)

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Information

For information or assistance with the early access process contact one of the following:

- Regional gifted education consultant
- Gifted Education Unit at the Colorado Department of Education
- Additional information is available on the Gifted Education Unit web site

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**Colorado Department of Education
 Gifted Education Program Plan: 2008 – 2011
 Early Access Addendum**

Date Submitted: _____

Administrative Unit's Name:	Region:
Name of Gifted Education Director/ Coordinator	
Director's e-mail	
Director's Address:	City: Zip
Director's phone number	Fax
Name of Superintendent/BOCES Director	
Superintendent's Signature	
Date: _____	
<p>The BOCES consolidated signature page is the last page of the template. It is also available on the CDE web page. Copy and mail with signatures from the BOCES' superintendents.</p>	



*Gifted students' learning and
 growth ensured by needed
 provisions and advocacy*

Early Access: Rule Section 12.02(1)(H) and 12.08

Directions:

In each section, describe the methods and/or tools that the administrative unit will implement for early access communication, criteria and process. Under the header in each section, questions or important points are provided as a guide to responses. Type your response in the white boxes referencing the topics.

Communication

In what ways will the administrative unit:

- Inform parents, educators, and community members about criteria, process, time frames, portfolio referral, tests, final determinations and ALP development.
- Provide professional development for educators and administrators about early access and ALP development, especially staff involved in the process

Communication:

Criteria

- Describe the method, the standard (level of results) and tool/s that will be considered to determine early access for a highly advanced gifted student using the following categories for criteria: aptitude, achievement, readiness for school, social behavior and motivation.
- Explain the support system that will assist the child during year one of transition into early access. How will parents, teachers, school administrators and the learning environment contribute to a positive support system? How will the transition goal be monitored? In what ways will parents, teachers, and the child communicate about progress?

Aptitude:

Achievement:

Performance:

Readiness, social behavior and motivation:

Support system:

Process

- Briefly summarize how the administrative unit will address each component in the early access process. Include specifics prompted by the questions or bulleted points that satisfy conditions of the law.

Timelines:

- Screening portfolios are due by April 1. What will be the application period for the AU?
- How many calendar days after receipt of the screening portfolio will the determination be made?
- AUs may, at its discretion, consider a screening portfolio after April 1. Will the AU or under what conditions will the AU consider applications after April 1?

Personnel:

- Identify personnel who will be involved in: collecting referrals and how that person is “qualified”; testing; collecting data for the body of evidence; the determination team; the support team; and any other personnel the AU deems helpful in the early access process.

Evaluation:

- What are the AU’s implementation steps or requirements for early access evaluation?
- In the description, summarize each factor related to evaluation: responsibility for and content of the screening portfolio; the screening tool for a referral; performance information; referral procedures; testing for a body of evidence; consensus decision making; method to inform parents; the resolve if the determination team cannot come to consensus; the ALP development responsibility; and the process to provide ALP data to the home school if the child is gifted, but not deemed appropriate for early access.
- Attach a copy of the determination letter that will be used in the process at the end of this addendum.

Monitoring:

- Describe what standards the AU will set for teachers and parents when monitoring student performance and progress during the first year of early access.

Dispute Resolution: This requirement is the same as already stated in the AU’s Program Plan.

Mark the box if the AU will be using the same dispute resolution process as in the main Program Plan. If the dispute resolution is different for early access type the policy here:

**The administrative unit’s program plan is due April 30, 2008.
Early Access addendums are due September 10, 2008 for fiscal year 08-09.
For fiscal years 09-10 and after, the initial addendum is due January 1
prior to early access implementation.**

E-mail the completed early access addendum and a copy of the determination letter to DeLinda Rose, rose_d@cde.state.co.us. Use the administrative unit’s name in the subject line of the e-mail. Label document files according to the following examples, starting with the name of the administrative unit:

File Name Example: Douglas County_Early Access Addendum_08-11

**E-mail the Early Access Addendum to
DeLinda Rose, Program Assistant
rose_d@cde.state.co.us**

CDE Mailing Address:

Colorado Department of Education
Student Support Services
Gifted Education Unit
201 East Colfax Avenue, Suite 300
Denver, Colorado 80203-1799

CDE Contact Person:

Jacquelin Medina
medina_j@cde.state.co.us

Gifted Education Regional Consultants
are also available for assistance

Matrix of Common Identification Tools for Young Gifted Children

Area Assessed	Title of Instrument	Group or Individual Administration	Age/Grade Range
Aptitude			
	Welchsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Third Edition (WPPSI-III)	Individual	2.6-7.3
	Cognitive Abilities Test, Form 6 (CogAT-Form 6)	Individual	K-12
	Differential Ability Scales (DAS)	Individual	2-17
	Draw-A-Person Intellectual Ability Test for Children, Adolescents, and Adults (DAP:IQ)	Group and Individual	4-89
	Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test Second Edition (KBIT-2)	Individual	4-90
	Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, Fifth Ed. (SB5)	Individual	2-85
	Woodcock-Johnson III Test of Cognitive Abilities (WJ III)	Individual	2-90
Achievement			
	Curriculum-Based Assessment (Above Level Testing)	Individual	K-2
	District Achievement Tests	Individual	K-2
	NWEA MAP for Primary Grades, Reading and Mathematics	Group and Individual	K-2
	Test of Early Mathematics Ability-Third Ed. (TEMA-3)	Individual	3-8
	Test of Early Reading Ability-Third Ed. (TERA-3)	Individual	3-8
	Test of Early Written Language-2nd Ed. (TEWL-2)	Individual	3-10
	Test of Mathematical Abilities for Gifted Students (TOMAGS)	Group and Individual	K-6
	Woodcock Johnson III Tests of Achievement	Individual	2-90
Performance			
	Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI)	Group and Individual	K-8
	Parent and Teacher Inventories	Individual	PreK-2
	Portfolio Assessment: Collection of work samples, observations, documentation of skills and abilities	Individual	PreK-2
	Renzulli Hartman Rating Scales (Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students)	Group and Individual	K-12
	The Creative Curriculum Developmental Assessment	Individual	3-5
	Work Sampling	Individual	PreK-2

Intellectual Ability, creativity, academic aptitude leadership ability, motivation, creativity and artistic talent	Gifted Rating Scales- Preschool/Kindergarten Forms (GRS-P) Gifted Rating Scales-Second Edition (GES-2)	Individual or group Individual or group	4-6 5-18
Readiness, Social Behavior, Motivation			
	Preschool/K District Readiness Checklists	Individual	PreK-2
	California Preschool Social Competency Scale		3-6
	Bracken School Readiness Assessment	Individual	PreK-2
Screening			
	Preschool and Kindergarten Gifted Rating Scales	Individual and group	4-6
	<i>Developmental Screening and Assessment Instruments with an Emphasis on Social and Emotional Development for Young Children Ages Birth through Five</i> (nectac) A list compiled by Sharon Ringwalt (May 2008)	Individual	Birth-5
	Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary Students 2 nd Ed. (SAGES-2) Aptitude and Achievement	Group and Individual	5-14
Acceleration Guidelines			
	Iowa Acceleration Scale Manual: A Guide for Whole-Grade Acceleration A good reference for comprehensive discussion and data collection.	Individual	K-8

Other Resources:

School Readiness indicators

<http://www.schoolreadinesscolorado.org/what-SR.htm>

www.centraliowachildcare.org/healthconsulting/kindergartenreadiness.doc

www.proctor.k12.mn.us/ecfe/SchoolReadinessChecklist.htm

http://www.arkansased.org/parents/pdf/kindergarten_indicators.pdf

Developmental Milestones

http://www.ecusd7.org/FACES/parent_milestone_9.asp

<http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/preschool/preschooldevelopment.html>

<http://family.go.com/parenting/ms-learning/article-gs-17856-resources-to-help-gifted->

CHECKLIST OF MY CHILD'S STRENGTHS

Child's Name: _____

Please check any items that *usually* or *often* apply to your child:

- _____ Is very aware of physical surroundings.
- _____ Asks questions about abstract ideas like love, feelings, relationships or justice.
- _____ Needs less sleep than other children of same age.
- _____ Moves around a lot. Is very active – sometimes seems hyperactive.
- _____ Talked early.
- _____ Has long attention span for activities that interest her/him.
- _____ Is extremely concerned, curious about the meaning of life and death.
- _____ Reacts intensely to noise, light, taste, smells or touch.
- _____ Craves stimulation and activity. Is rarely content to sit idle.
- _____ Is very emotional—cries, angers, excites easily.
- _____ Has an excellent memory.
- _____ Insists that people be “fair.” Complains when things are “unfair.”
- _____ Is extremely curious—asks “Why?” “How?” “What if?”
- _____ Becomes so involved that he/she is not aware of anything else--”lost in own world.”
- _____ Explains ideas in complex, unusual ways.
- _____ Is very interested in cause-effect relationships.
- _____ Reasons well. Thinks of creative ways to solve problems.
- _____ Is very interested in calendars, clocks, maps, structures.
- _____ Has vivid imagination and may have trouble separating real from unreal.
- _____ Is extremely creative—uses materials in unusual ways; makes up elaborate stories, excuses; sees many possible answers/solutions; spends free time drawing, painting, writing, sculpting, or singing.

MY CHILD'S STRENGTHS (CONTINUED)

- _____ Has spontaneous and/or advanced sense of humor.
- _____ Likes to play with words. Uses advanced sentence structure and vocabulary.
- _____ Is often singing, moving rhythmically; may tell stories or communicate by singing.
- _____ Memorizes songs.
- _____ Often prefers playing with older children or being with adults.
- _____ Creates complicated play and games.
- _____ Gives complex answers to questions.
- _____ Becomes extremely frustrated when body can't do what mind wants it to.
- _____ Has strong sense of self-control; wants to know reasons for rules.
- _____ Is eager to try new things.
- _____ Can concentrate on two or three activities at one time.

Describe and check any strengths that *usually* or *often* apply to your child.

Parent/Caregiver's Signature _____

Phone: _____

GETTING READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

**This is an example of a readiness chart for
parental communication used in Polk County, Iowa**

www.centraliowachildcare.org/healthconsulting/kindergartenreadiness.doc

Language & Literacy: Communication Skills

- Understands and can follow short, two- or three-step directions, such as, “Get your shoes, get your coat and go to the door.”
- Speaks clearly and in complete sentences so others can understand.
- Uses pencils, crayons, and paper. Can scribble and make letter-like shapes to express an idea.
- Holds and looks at a book correctly. Knows that words are what you read. Know words have meaning.
- Listens to a story and remembers events and characters. Tells you the beginning, middle, and end of story.
- Recognizes rhymes and word play. Can say or sing simple poems, nursery rhymes and songs.
- Can say or sing the alphabet.
- Recognizes first letter of own name. Recognizes other words that begin with that letter.
- Recognizes and names some letters of the alphabet and is beginning to recognize some upper- and lower-case letters.

Physical Health and Development

- Runs, jumps, and hops. Throws, catches, and bounces a ball.
- Uses hands and eyes together to put together puzzles, cuts with scissors, and uses tape.
- Can do some of these things without help, use the bathroom, wash hands, get dressed, tie shoes, zip coat, and button shirt.
- Visits the doctor and dentist regularly. Vision, hearing, dental, and physical health are checked and treated if needed.

Social & Emotional Development

- Shares and takes turns. Works well with adults and children.
- Can adjust to new people and places without parents being there.
- Able to sit still and take turns talking and playing. Waits to be called on, does not interrupt.
- Respects and shows concern for others. Works and plays without bothering others, and can change behavior when asked.
- Expresses basic needs and feelings appropriately.

Approaches to Learning: Problem-Solving Skills

- Is excited about learning. Asks questions about the world around him or her.
- Asks adults and friends questions.
- Shows joy in finishing activities and can handle frustration.

General Knowledge

- Knows and says full name and knows if they are a boy or girl.
- Recognizes colors and recognizes simple shapes, such as; triangle, square, circle, rectangle, oval, heart, diamond, etc.
- Completes simple puzzles of four to six pieces.
- Names things that go together, like a spoon and fork are for eating, a fish and a boat go in the water.
- Counts up to 20 and can count objects, such as bananas, up to at least five.
- Recognizes and makes new patterns and designs, such as red-blue-red-blue or 2-1-1 2-1-1 2-1-1.
- Shows ideas and feelings through play. Uses creative play like music, dance, and drama to express him or herself.
- Takes care of personal belongings and belongings of others such as, putting toys away, returning borrowed items and using toys with care.

*Remember that play is an important part of learning.
Your child learns best when he or she is spending time with you
and doing activities that are interesting and fun!
Practice these skills at home with your child!*



The Highly Advanced Gifted Child –

“A sensitivity to the special needs of young gifted children can make a significant difference to their future development and happiness” Joan Franklin Smutney

The highly advanced gifted child is a minority even among gifted children. Their capacity to learn is significantly advanced even beyond the average for the intellectually and academically gifted.

One strong indicator that a child may be highly gifted is the very early development of speech, coupled with an unusually speedy progression through the stages of speech development. In her study of exceptionally gifted children, Gross (1993) recorded linguistic precocity far beyond even that of moderately gifted. The gifted children were able to link words into meaning earlier and with greater degrees of complexity than were their age peers. Early and fluent speech was also linked to excellent memory. Children in the study could recite poetry, passages from books, and songs before the age of 2. The accelerated development of speech and language reflect not only a quickly growing vocabulary and knowledge base, but rapidly improving conceptual and abstract thinking abilities as well. Comprehension, retention, vocabulary, stored information, and logical abilities are often superior.

The highly advanced gifted child is a quick learner and can be passionate about learning. Often they are self directed, highly energetic and goal oriented. For this reason, it is difficult for them to be confined to a curriculum that doesn't meet their needs.

Parents typically note that their child seemed to catch on to things effortlessly, was insatiable curious and had extraordinary memory. Parents report that their child reads a wide range of books, fiction and non-fiction; and is fascinated with numbers. The highly advanced gifted child is also more likely than other children their age to have collections, especially scientific collections. Many parents reported their child to be well-rounded, socially adjusted and physically developed.

In early years, the highly advanced gifted child may show signs of alertness and long attention spans. Preference for novelty is seen as early as infancy in terms of frequent desire for visual changes. They often sit, crawl and walk several months earlier than normal. High energy sometimes leads to hyperactivity when they are insufficiently stimulated. Even at a young age, these children may be aware of their own problem-solving strategies and use them to solve new problems. Handwriting is often a struggle; and they are bored with the goal to be neat. Their friends are often older children or adults. Affectively, highly advanced gifted children may show intense reactions to noise, pain and frustration. They are interested in moral and political problems and may worry about evil in the world. (Ellen Winner, 1996)

Children who are highly gifted may have special problems of development which are correlated with social isolation. Most often age mates do not share their interests, vocabulary, or desire for more complex activities. These difficulties appear particularly acute at ages 4 through 9. When extremely gifted students are permitted to work and play with intellectual peers, loneliness and social isolation disappear and these children become accepted as a valued classmate and friend. (Hollingworth).

The Gifted Preschooler –

Research on gifted children reveals that even in early childhood they display significant differences from the developmental patterns observable in age-peers of average ability.

Early development of exceptional verbal ability is often considered to be a sign or characteristic of giftedness. At age 2, an extensive vocabulary and agile use of language in a young gifted child will be remarkably evident. Freeman (1985) found young gifted children to be verbally precocious in three skill areas: talking, reading, and writing. This high verbal ability was found to be present as early as 3 years of age.

Gifted preschoolers are able to convey their ideas more easily to their peers, to communicate their feelings, and to give directions. Often you will find these children sought out by peers for companionship, ideas and decisions.

Kitano (1985) found that in addition to demonstrating high levels of accumulated knowledge and thinking abilities, preschool gifted children also showed evidence of prelogical thinking, discomfort with ambiguity, creativity, and spontaneous incorporation of academic activities into free play. Perhaps as a reflection of the gifted child's greater language fluency, gifted preschoolers also talk about problems, rules, and goals to a greater extent than do their average ability peers

Berninger and Abbott (1995) found that kindergarten-age children who showed signs of math precocity, indeed, had more complex reasoning skills and memory skills such as verbal reasoning skills, ability to remember complex information, and ability to decode other symbolic systems such as maps and written language

Curiosity, concentration, memory, and a sense of humor are seen as areas of differentiation between gifted and nongifted preschoolers. They may respond to riddles and verbal associations because of their ability to think quickly and see relationships more than peers of the same age. One of the most outstanding characteristics of young gifted children is their high level of emotional sensitivity, which allows for the early development of values, empathy, and responsibility. Gifted preschoolers show more than average sharing and helping behaviors, more reactions to others' signs of distress, more sensitivity to the needs of others.

From the Harvard Preschool Project, B. White cited evidence for several intellectual abilities in preschool aged children:

1. sense discrepancies or differences in organized sequences and errors in logic
2. anticipate future events
3. deal with abstractions
4. take on the perspective of others
5. make interesting, original associations
6. plan and carry out complicated activities
7. use resources effectively
8. concentrate closely while still monitoring the surroundings



Early Childhood Resources

General Resources for Recognizing Potential

Bredenkamp, S., & Rosegrant, T. (Eds.) (1995). *Reaching potentials: Transforming early childhood curriculum and assessment*, Vol. 2. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

CDE Early Childhood Documents:

Building Blocks to the Colorado K-12 Content Standards

Building blocks to Colorado's Content Standards Reading & Writing

Building Blocks to Colorado's Content Standard Math

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Colorado Early Childhood Recommended Curriculum

Creative Curriculum (project based investigations)

"*The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool is a comprehensive, scientifically based early childhood curriculum that has been shown to improve cognitive and social/emotional outcomes in young children. It is linked with a valid and reliable assessment instrument, *The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5*, designed so teachers can assess child progress and guide program planning."

Gifted Education Unit Early Access to Educational Services for Kindergarten and First Grade

House Bill 1021

Signed: May 2008

Effective: July 2008

Rules: August 2008

What main points in HB 1021 impact administrative units/districts?

- House Bill 1021 reinstates a provision whereby districts may count in their enrollment and receive State Education Funds for highly gifted students who the administrative unit deems appropriate for early access to kindergarten or first grade.
- HB 1021 allows administrative units to decide whether early access will be permitted in the administrative unit.
- If an administrative unit permits early access, the district/s must abide by the rules of administration promulgated by the State Board of Education.
- The administrative unit makes the determination for early access placement based upon the Rules that will establish *criteria and a process that an administrative unit shall use to make determinations regarding the advanced placement of highly advanced gifted children.* 22-20-104.5
- The administrative unit may charge a fee to parents for early access assessment; except that, no fee will be charged to free and reduced lunch families.

If an administrative unit permits early access does it have to happen by fall 2008?

No. Administrative units (AU) may provide early access when the AU is ready to implement the conditions of HB-1021. For example, an AU may use the 2008-2009 school year to plan policy and procedures that align with the Rules; and, to implement professional development for educators and parents regarding the forthcoming early access requirements and procedures.

What child will benefit from HB 1021?

House Bill 1021 defines the 4 or 5 year old child who may benefit from early access as a “highly advanced gifted child”. This child is academically gifted, socially and emotionally mature, in the top 2% or less of the gifted peer group, motivated to learn, ready for advanced placement, and has exhausted the resources of preschool or home schooling.

The intent of HB 1021 is to meet the unique needs of the “highly advanced gifted child”. It does not permit early access to all gifted 4 or 5 year olds. Quality preschool programs will meet the needs of most gifted children. Acceleration is an option that may also be considered in future years.

How will preschool and kindergarten educators and parents learn about HB 1021?

Communication is a shared responsibility. The Colorado Department of Education will post information on the CDE web site and provide information to superintendents, gifted education directors, and public and private preschools. Administrative units will need to: 1) provide access to information; 2) educate members of its teaching staff and community about the district’s policy and procedures for the implementation of early access.

What criteria will the Rules address?

House Bill 1021 requires the Rules to consider: aptitude, achievement, performance, readiness for advanced placement, observable social behavior, motivation to learn, and support from parents, teachers, and school administrators.

What elements of an early access process will the Rules include?

House Bill 1021 requires the Rules to include: time line, involved personnel, evaluation, a body of evidence, decision making, and monitoring of student performance after early access.

If an administrative unit is considering early access, what are a few suggestions to begin the process?

- Initiate conversation with a key stakeholder’s group about early access policy, delineating purpose and link to quality instruction, learning, growth and self-esteem.
- Clearly define and provide examples of the student who would benefit from early access.
- Determine what the administrative unit’s current status is for students with demonstrated exceptional abilities in the early years.
- Review the administrative unit’s existing assessment tools for kindergarten and first grade readiness.
- Become aware of tools that are commonly used in a body of evidence for early access.
- Discuss how preschool teachers and parents will screen for readiness; and what personnel would be responsible for early access assessment and decision making.
- Consider how information will be communicated to private and public preschool staff and families in the community; and to the district’s educators.

What resource would offer background information for an early access procedure?

The Iowa Acceleration Scale is a guide for making decisions about grade level acceleration that may be adapted for preschool to kindergarten acceleration. The whole child (aptitude, achievement, motivation, social-emotional readiness), learning environment and family support systems are taken into consideration. Gifted Education directors and coordinators, most likely, have this resource in the administrative unit.

What are examples of assessment tools that the district might include in a body of evidence for early access determinations?

- A screening tool used by preschool teachers and/or parents to initiate a referral to the district (e.g., Gifted Rating Scales; district’s kindergarten and first grade screening tools)
- An ability test that is an indicator of a student’s potential to be successful in a school setting (e.g., Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence, Woodcock-Johnson Cognitive Ability Scale, Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children)

- An assessment of achievement that will demonstrate a student’s learning in specific content areas (e.g., Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement, Kaufman Tests of Educational Achievement, Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, curriculum-based assessment)
- Response to intervention (RtI) data from instructional and curriculum evidence-based strategies and assessments for students above grade level
- Observation or rating scales that will provide information about social-emotional, physical and motivational factors contributing to school readiness and maturity (e.g., Iowa Acceleration Scale, Behavioral functioning rating scales)
- Interview data that considers relationships with peers and adults, attitudes about school and learning
- Information that provides evidence of parent and school system support for early access; and time line for additional data to determine success of placement

Where will the Rules be found after they are approved by the State Board of Education?

Early access requirements will be integrated into the Gifted Education section of the Rules for the administration of the *Exceptional Children’s Education Act (section 12.00)*.

Rules are posted on the Secretary of State’s web site: www.sos.state.co.us; The Colorado Code of Regulations for the Exceptional Children’s Education Act is: 1 CCR 301-8.

What other factors are implied in an early access policy?

- Early access procedures will require communication among preschool and general education teachers, parents and gifted education personnel.
- Personnel resources will be required to implement early access assessment and decision making.
- Parents and early childhood teachers will need to understand the meaning of “highly advanced gifted child” and the purpose of HB 1021.
- Quality preschool programs will meet the needs of most gifted preschoolers.

The following subset of requirements in gifted education pertains specifically to definitions and to early access provisions in the Rules for the implementation of the Exceptional Children’s Education Act.

2220-R-1.00 STATEMENT OF BASIS AND PURPOSE

- 1.00 (10) The statutory authority for the amendments to these Rules is found in Article 20 of Title 22, C.R.S., Sections 22-20-103(12)(b) and (13), 22-20-104.5, and Sections 22-54-103(10)(a)(IV)(B) and (10)(b)(I). The purposes of the amendments are to: address new requirements in legislation for early access to educational services for children who are less than six years of age; provide an outline of the criteria and process for making early access determinations by administrative units who choose to permit early access; and, clarify the provisions that will allow administrative units to receive state education funds for early access students.

2220-R-12.00 GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENT PROGRAMMING

12.01 Definitions.

- 12.01 (1) **“Administrative Unit”** or “AU” means a school district, a board of cooperative services, or the state Charter School Institute that: oversees and/or provides educational services to exceptional children; is responsible for the local administration of Article 20 of Title 22, C.R.S.; and meets the criteria established in Section 3.01 of these Rules.
- 12.01 (2) **“Advanced Learning Plan”** OR “ALP” means a written record of gifted and talented programming utilized with each gifted child and considered in educational planning and decision making.
- 12.01 (3) **“Affective Development”** means social and emotional programming intended to:
- 12.01 (3) (a) assist gifted and talented students in understanding themselves as gifted learners, and the implications of their abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment (intrapersonal skills); and
- 12.01 (3) (b) assist gifted and talented students in developing and/or refining interpersonal skills.
- 12.01 (4) **“Aptitude”** means abilities or behaviors that can be monitored, evaluated, or observed to determine potential or a level of performance in problem solving, reasoning, and other cognitive functions (e.g., memory, synthesis, creativity, speed in problem solving). Aptitude or general ability assessments predict potential in an area of giftedness and/or academic school success.
- 12.01 (5) **“Aptitude Test”** means an ability test to determine potential or level of performance in problem solving, reasoning and other cognitive functions. Aptitude or ability tests predict potential in an area of giftedness and/or future academic school success.
- 12.01 (6) **“Articulation”**, for purposes of this Rule 12.00, means the communication that occurs as students move or transition through the school system, grade by grade and school level to school level.
- 12.01 (7) **“Board of Cooperative Services”** means a regional educational services unit created pursuant to Article 5 of Title 22, C.R.S., and designed to provide supporting, instructional, administrative, facility, community, or any other services contracted by participating members.
- 12.01 (8) **“Commensurate Growth”** means the academic and affective progress that can be measured and should be expected of a gifted student given the student’s level of achievement, learning needs, and abilities matched with the appropriate instructional level.”
- 12.01 (9) **“Early Access”** means early entrance to kindergarten or first grade for highly advanced gifted children under the age of six.

- 12.01 (10) **“Early Childhood Special Educational Services”** means those instructional strategies, curriculum, affective and programming options that nurture and develop exceptional abilities or potential for gifted students, including but not limited to an early entrance strategy or advanced level pre-school interventions.
- 12.01 (11) **“Early Entrance”** means a gifted student is placed in a grade level above other same aged peers based upon the following conditions:
- 12.01 (11) (a) the student is formally identified as gifted as specified in 12.01(12); and
- 12.01 (11) (b) the student meets requirements for accelerated placement as determined in an auditable body of evidence (e.g., achievement, ability, social-emotional factors, school learning skills, developmental characteristics, and family and school support).
- 12.01 (12) **“Gifted and Talented Children”** means those persons between the ages of four and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Gifted and talented children are hereafter referred to as gifted students. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services. Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic and ethnic, cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:
- 12.01 (12) (a) General or Specific Intellectual Ability.
- 12.01 (12) (a) (i) Definition
- Intellectual ability is exceptional capability or potential recognized through cognitive processes (e.g., memory, reasoning, rate of learning, spatial reasoning, ability to find and solve problems, ability to manipulate abstract ideas and make connections, etc.).
- 12.01 (12) (a) (ii) Criteria
- Intellectual ability is demonstrated by advanced level on performance assessments or ninety-fifth percentile and above on standardized cognitive tests.
- 12.01 (12) (b) Specific Academic Aptitude
- 12.01 (12) (b) (i) Definition
- Specific academic aptitude is exceptional capability or potential in an academic content area(s) (e.g., a strong knowledge base or the ability to ask insightful, pertinent questions within the discipline, etc.).
- 12.01 (12) (b) (ii) Criteria
- Specific academic aptitude is demonstrated by advanced level on performance assessments or ninety-fifth percentile and above on standardized achievement tests.
- 12.01 (12) (c) Creative or Productive Thinking
- 12.01 (12) (c) (i) Definition
- Creative or productive thinking is exceptional capability or potential in mental processes (e.g., critical thinking, creative problem solving, humor, independent/original thinking, and/or products, etc.).

- 12.01 (12) (c) (ii) Criteria
Creative or productive thinking is demonstrated by advanced level on performance assessments or ninety-fifth percentile and above on standardized tests of creative/critical skills or creativity/critical thinking.
- 12.01 (12) (d) Leadership Abilities.
- 12.01 (12) (d) (i) Definition
Leadership is the exceptional capability or potential to influence and empower people (e.g., social perceptiveness, visionary ability, communication skills, problem solving, inter and intra-personal skills and a sense of responsibility, etc.).
- 12.01 (12) (d) (ii) Criteria
Leadership is demonstrated by advanced level on performance assessments or ninety-fifth percentile and above on standardized leadership tests.
- 12.01 (12) (e) Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Musical or Psychomotor Abilities.
- 12.01 (12) (e) (i) Definition
Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities are exceptional capabilities or potential in talent areas (e.g., art, drama, music, dance, body awareness, coordination and physical skills, etc.).
- 12.01 (12) (e) (ii) Criteria
Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities are demonstrated by advanced level on performance talent-assessments or ninety-fifth percentile and above on standardized talent-tests.
- 12.01 (13) **“Highly Advanced Gifted Child”** means a gifted child whose body of evidence demonstrates a profile of exceptional ability or potential compared to same-age gifted children. To meet the needs of highly advanced development, early access to educational services may be considered as a special provision. For purposes of early access into kindergarten or first grade, the highly advanced gifted child exhibits exceptional ability and potential for accomplishment in cognitive process and academic areas.
- 12.01 (14) **“Parent”** for purposes of this Rule 12 means the natural or adoptive parent, or legal guardian, unless the gifted student is also a child with a disability in which case parent shall be defined consistent with federal special education law.
- 12.01 (15) **“Performance Assessment”** means systematic observation of a student’s performance, examples of products, tasks, or behaviors based upon established criteria, scoring rubric or rating scale norms.
- 12.01 (16) **“Pre-Collegiate”** means a variety of programs to help students plan, apply and pay for college. Programs may be offered through middle and high schools, colleges and universities or community organizations and businesses.
- 12.01 (17) **“Pre-Advanced Placement”** means a variety of programs and strategies that prepare students to take advanced placement courses beginning in the early grades, through middle school and high school. “Advanced Placement” means college-level courses and/or exams offered and certified through the College Board.

- 12.01 (18) **“Qualified Personnel”** or **“Qualified Person”** means a licensed, content endorsed teacher who also has an endorsement or higher degree in gifted education; or who is working toward an endorsement or higher degree in gifted education.
- 12.01 (19) **“Screening”** means an assessment method that uses a tool(s) to determine if the resulting data provides evidence of exceptional potential in an area of giftedness. Screening tools may be qualitative or quantitative in nature, standardized and/or normative. Screening data are one component in a body of evidence for making identification and instructional decisions.
- 12.01 (20) **“Special Educational Services”** or **“Special Educational Programs”** means the services or programs provided to exceptional children including children with disabilities and gifted students.
- 12.01 (21) **“Special Provisions”** means the programming options, strategies and services necessary to implement the gifted student’s ALP.
- 12.01 (22) **“Twice Exceptional”** means a student who is:
 - 12.01 (22) (a) Identified as a gifted student pursuant to Section 12.01(9) of these Rules; and
 - 12.01 (22) (b) (1) Identified as a child with a disability pursuant to Section 4.02 of these Rules; or
 - 12.01 (22) (b) (2) A qualified individual pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C.A. §794.

12.02 (1) (H) **Early Access.**

If early access is permitted in the AU, an AU shall include in its program plan provisions to identify and serve highly advanced gifted children pursuant to Section 12.08 of these Rules. Constituent schools or districts within the AU shall abide by the requirements established in the program plan.

12.08 Early Access

12.08 (1) **General Provisions**

- 12.08 (1) (a) Early access shall be provided by the AU to identify and serve highly advanced gifted children who are:
 - 12.08 (1) (a) (i) Four years of age and for whom early access to kindergarten is deemed appropriate by the AU; and
 - 12.08 (1) (a) (ii) Five years of age and for whom early access to first grade is deemed appropriate by the AU.
- 12.08 (1) (b) If the AU permits early access, early access provisions shall be included in its early childhood and gifted instructional programs, and the AU shall expand access to kindergarten through grade one for students deemed appropriate for early access.
- 12.08 (1) (c) Early access shall not be an acceleration pattern recommended for the majority of age 4 or age 5 gifted children who will benefit from preschool gifted programming that responds to the strength area. The purpose of early access is to identify and serve the few highly advanced gifted children who require comprehensive academic acceleration.
- 12.08 (1) (d) When an AU permits early access, its program plan shall describe the elements of an early access process and how those elements, criteria and components will be implemented. Determinations made by the AU shall be made after consideration of criteria required by Section 12.08(2)(d) of these Rules.

12.08 (1) (e) In 2008, an AU may submit an early access addendum to its program plan by September 10, 2008. Thereafter, AUs shall submit an addendum for early access by January 1 preceding the initial school year in which early access will be permitted, thus early access assessment may occur after the addendum is approved by the Department.

12.08 (2) **Elements of an Early Access Process**

An early access process shall include the following elements:

12.08 (2) (a) **Communication**

The AU shall communicate with parents, educators and community members as specified in Section 12.02(1)(a) of these Rules. Early access communication is:

12.08 (2) (a) (i) Information about the criteria and process for identifying a highly advanced gifted child for whom early access is deemed appropriate, time frames, portfolio referral, deadlines, specific tests and threshold scores used to make final determinations concerning such a student;

12.08 (2) (a) (ii) Professional development of educators, or other means to increase the understanding of a highly advanced gifted child and the educational needs of such a student;

12.08 (2) (a) (iii) A method for collaborative efforts among preschool, general and gifted education personnel and parents; and

12.08 (2) (a) (iv) An advanced learning plan for the highly advanced gifted child determined appropriate for early access.

12.08 (2) (b) **Optional Fee Condition**

12.08 (2) (b) (i) The AU may charge parents a reasonable fee for assessment and other procedures performed for the purpose of identifying a highly advanced gifted child and making determinations for early access. The AU shall describe the fee related to the implementation of the referral, testing and/or decision making processes.

12.08 (2) (b) (ii) No charge shall be assessed if the child who is the subject of such assessments is eligible for a reduced-cost meal or free meal pursuant to the federal "National School Lunch Act", 42 U.S.C. §1751, et seq.

12.08 (2) (b) (iii) When evaluating the need for fees, the AU will:

12.08 (2) (b) (iii) (A) Integrate the costs of assessment and decision making into the ongoing general instructional and assessment practices conducted by early childhood and gifted education personnel to the maximum extent possible;

12.08 (2) (b) (iii) (B) Take into account the economic circumstances of the community and applicant's family; and

12.08 (2) (b) (iii) (C) Consider test results within three months of application from outside licensed professionals paid by the parent.

12.08 (2) (c) **Funding and Reporting**

Administrative units that permit early access shall receive funding from the state education fund created in Article IX, Section 17(4) of the Colorado Constitution. To receive funding the AU shall abide by the Rules in this Section 12.08, and:

- 12.08 (2) (c) (i) Support integration of early access in early childhood and gifted programming;
- 12.08 (2) (c) (ii) Report age four gifted children provided early access using date of birth, grade level placement and gifted student designations on the October Enrollment Count and the End-of-Year Report; and
- 12.08 (2) (c) (iii) Report age five gifted children provided early access using date of birth, grade level placement and gifted student designations on the October Enrollment Count and the End-of-Year Report.

12.08 (2) (d) **Criteria for Early Access**

The AU shall evaluate a child referred by the parent for early access using the following criteria. The evaluation will lead to a student profile of strengths, performance, readiness, needs and interests, and a determination of appropriate placement. All criteria must be considered in making the determination – test scores alone do not meet the standards of a determination.

- 12.08 (2) (d) (i) **Aptitude**
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (i) (A) Aptitude supporting early access is indicated by a highly advanced level of performance compared to age-peers on cognitive abilities rating scales or 97th percentile and above on standardized cognitive ability tests. Every child with a score above 97th percentile may not benefit from early access to kindergarten or first grade.
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (i) (B) The AU shall describe the method(s) and the developmentally appropriate tools for assessment that will be used to determine potential in general cognitive abilities and school success (e.g., individualized ability test, such as the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence or Woodcock Johnson Cognitive Ability Scale, or Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test).
- 12.08 (2) (d) (ii) **Achievement**
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (ii) (A) Achievement supporting early access is indicated by a highly advanced level of performance compared to age-peers on achievement rating scales, performance assessment, or 97th percentile and above on standardized achievement tests. Typically, early access children function two or more years above their age peers.
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (ii) (B) The AU shall describe the method(s) and tools for assessment that will be used to determine knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics (e.g., curriculum-based assessment, above-level testing, and individualized achievement tests, such as the test of early math ability/reading ability, Woodcock Johnson III Tests of achievement, or Iowa Tests of basic skills).
- 12.08 (2) (d) (iii) **Performance**
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (iii) (A) Performance supporting early access is indicated by work samples and informal teacher and/or parent data indicating demonstrated ability above age peers.
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (iii) (B) The AU shall describe the method(s) and tools for assessment that will be used to determine actual demonstration of the student's work (e.g., work samples, independent reading, advanced vocabulary, observational data).

- 12.08 (2) (d) (iv) Readiness, Social Behavior and Motivation
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (iv) (A) Readiness, social behavior and motivation for early access are determined by the child's ability to demonstrate the indicators deemed necessary for kindergarten or first grade by the district's standards or national standards (e.g., district readiness checklist, normed-checklists and rating scales, such as the California Preschool Competency Scale or the Preschool/Kindergarten Behavioral and Social Scale or Bracken School Readiness).
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (iv) (B) The AU shall describe the method(s) and tools for evaluation that will be used to determine a child's readiness for kindergarten or first grade, social maturity, and eagerness to learn.
- 12.08 (2) (d) (v) Support Systems
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (v) (A) The AU shall define and implement a support system to assist in a child's success in and transition through early access by evidence of:
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (v) (A) (I) A letter of determination of the early access decision signed by the parent, gifted education staff, early childhood staff, the receiving teacher and building administrator indicating recognition and support of the child's placement (determination letters will be placed in the child's cumulative file);
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (v) (A) (II) A transition goal in the child's advanced learning plan for the first year of early access;
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (v) (A) (III) Methods of communication with the student about school success; and
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (v) (A) (IV) Methods for parent-teacher communication.
 - 12.08 (2) (d) (v) (B) The AU will describe how parents, teachers, school administrators and the learning environment will contribute to a positive support system.

12.08 (2) (e) **Process for Early Access**

The AU shall establish a collaborative process among parents, preschool, general and gifted educators and school administration for evaluating early access referrals. The process implemented shall include the following components:

- 12.08 (2) (e) (i) Timelines
 - 12.08 (2) (e) (i) (A) Applications for early access are due by April 1 for the next school year. Each AU shall declare when it will begin accepting applications.
 - 12.08 (2) (e) (i) (B) Determinations shall be made within 60 calendar days of the AU receiving the child's portfolio submitted by the child's parent in accordance with Section 12.08(2)(e)(iii)(A) of these Rules.
 - 12.08 (2) (e) (i) (C) For referrals received after April 1, the AU may, at its discretion, consider the child's information, provided the determination is

made by September 1 or by the start of the upcoming school year, whichever is earlier.

12.08 (2) (e) (i) (D) A student shall be age 4 by the district's start date for kindergarten; and, age 5 by the district's start date for first grade.

12.08 (2) (e) (ii) Personnel

The AU shall identify personnel at the AU, district, and/or school level who will be involved in the early access process based on the following list. Designated personnel may serve in multiple capacities during the early access process.

12.08 (2) (e) (ii) (A) A person designated to collect portfolio referrals;

12.08 (2) (e) (ii) (B) Educators designated to collect data used in a body of evidence including the test examiner(s), early childhood teacher(s), a gifted education resource person, and others as identified by the AU (e.g., a performance assessment team, principal);

12.08 (2) (e) (ii) (C) A determination team consisting of an AU level or school level gifted education resource person, a teacher in early childhood, and others as identified by the AU (e.g., principal, psychologist, counselor, parent);

12.08 (2) (e) (ii) (D) A support team during transition including the receiving teacher and school administrator, parents, and gifted education/early childhood personnel; and

12.08 (2) (e) (ii) (E) Other persons helpful in collecting data or making determinations, including the person who assisted in developing the screening portfolio.

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) Evaluation

The AU shall describe the implementation steps for early access evaluation. The steps shall include, but not be limited to:

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (A) Screening Portfolio

Parents are responsible for collecting the information required for an early access portfolio application, and for submitting the portfolio to the appropriate AU personnel. The AU must describe the requirements for an application portfolio that shall include:

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (A) (I) Applicant contact information;

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (A) (II) A screening tool completed, individually, by the parent and the child's current teacher; or, if the child is not in school, by the parent and another adult who knows the child from other early childhood experiences (developmentally appropriate screening tools are district-developed tools and/or standardized tools, like the Gifted Rating Scales for Preschool and Kindergarten or the Kingore Observation Scale); and

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (A) (III) Information about the performance of the child that provides evidence of a need for early access evaluation (e.g., work samples, data from the child's current

teacher or an adult from early childhood experiences, or indicators of early access readiness factors).

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (B) Referral

The AU shall designate the gifted education director/coordinator, principal, or other qualified person, to accept the referral portfolio provided by the parent, and make an initial decision as to whether early access assessment should continue.

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (C) Testing and a Body of Evidence

The AU shall conduct the necessary tests and collect student information, including test results accepted pursuant to Section 12.08(2)(b)(iii)(C) of these Rules, regarding the criteria and factors for early access outlined in Section 12.08(2)(d) of these Rules. The body of evidence is complete if data regarding all criteria, and other considerations deemed necessary by the AU, are compiled for data analysis and decision making.

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (D) Decision Making

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (D) (I) Early access decisions will be a consensus process within the determination team that analyzes multiple criteria from a body of evidence resulting in a student profile of strengths, needs and interests of the child. Test scores alone will not determine early access. If the team cannot reach consensus, the building principal or the gifted education director/coordinator shall make the final decision in accordance with the AU's early access program plan.

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (D) (II) A determination letter will be signed by members of the determination team and the parent; and, forwarded for signature of the receiving teacher and principal if they are not on the determination team. Parents may accept or decline the offer of early access. When a child is deemed appropriate for early access, an advanced learning plan (ALP) shall be developed according to the AU's procedures, but no later than the end of the first month after the start of school. The ALP shall include academic and transition goals.

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (D) (III) If the determination team finds the child gifted, but does not find that the child meets the criteria for early access, the team will provide the child's school with the child's assessment portfolio for serving the area of exceptionality in the child's public preschool or public kindergarten program.

12.08 (2) (e) (iii) (D) (IV) If the student transfers during the first year of an early access placement the new AU shall maintain the placement.

12.08 (2) (e) (iv) Monitoring of Student Performance

The student's teacher shall monitor student performance at least every five weeks during the student's first year of early access. The monitoring process shall be based on the advanced learning plan and performance reports shared with the parents and child.

12.08 (2) (e) (v) Dispute Resolution

A dispute resolution process for early access shall be in accordance with Section 12.06 of these Rules.

Determination for Early Access - Example

Name of Student:	Date:
Address:	Age of Student:
City:	Zip Code:
Parents:	
E-mail	Phone:

The educational evaluation of (name of child) indicated a performance level that was highly advanced in academic content areas and reasoning skills. Readiness and motivation for an accelerated challenging learning environment was evident.

The determination team supports the placement of (name of child) into kindergarten (or first grade). Placement for next school year will be:

Fairview Elementary
 2683 East 32nd Avenue
 Merryvale, Colorado 80409
 (970) 444-4444

School Contact Person: _____

Placement involves a commitment of parents and school personnel to work together for a successful transition into the new learning environment and to conference on a regular basis regarding school progress and advanced learning plan, ALP, goals.

Placement for early access is accepted.

Placement for early access is declined.

 Parent

 Classroom teacher of placement school

 Parent

 Principal of placement school

 District Representative, Title

 Gifted Education Representative

 Name, Title

 Name, Title