



Mt. Evans BOCES - 64053

## 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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Parents, educators, and community members will be informed about components of the Early Access, including: criteria, process, time frames, portfolio referral, tests, final determination, and ALP development through the following methods:

The Mt. Evans BOCES's website will contain information on the Early Access process and procedures of three three member districts. A link will be sent to each district gifted education coordinators and elementary principals. Additionally, the website will contain general information on highly gifted characteristics of young children.

Brochures will be made available for interest parents that will provide first steps contacting the district BOCES, portfolio requirements and the testing and assessment process. Brochures will be available in each elementary office and all preschool and Kindergarten classrooms.

BOCES gifted education staff will present Early Access information to school district personnel, including: elementary principals, preschool directors, kindergarten, and first grade teachers on an annual basis.

Professional development on topics relating to Early Access and Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) development will be site specific and individualized according to need and will involve parents, gifted education early childhood and school based staff. In addition, there will be individual conversations with interested parents and school district personnel. The Assistant Director of Gifted Education will be available to answer parent and staff questions though email, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings.

Information regarding fees to cover cost of testing will be included in the communication. Students/families qualifying for free lunch will not be assessed a fee. Students'/families qualifying for reduced will be assessed an adjusted fee. The fee will be charged if the gifted education team (elementary principal and either the preschool teacher or Kindergarten teacher of school of residence, district gifted education coordinator, and BOCES Assistant Director of Gifted Education) moves forward with an Early Access evaluation.



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## Criteria

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**Aptitude:**

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The current version of WPPSI will be the cognitive screening tool used. Full Scale and Index scores at the 97th% or higher will be noted for Early Access to Kindergarten for four-year olds and Early Access to First Grade for five year olds.

Other measures from outside sources will also be considered and may be included in the body of evidence.

Qualified Mt. Evans BOCES staff will administer the assessment based on availability, or member districts will also have the option of contracting with qualified outside agencies to administer the assessment.

**Achievement:**

Achievement data will be collected and reviewed. The *Test of Early Mathematics-3* (TEMA-3) and the *Test of Early Reading Ability-3* (TERA-3) will be the tools used to assess mastery of early developing skills in these academic areas. Scores in the 97th% or higher will provide adequate support for student achievement. Special Education testing and private testing often includes achievement data and will be accepted as part of the portfolio, if available.

When applicable, preschool teachers and/or home-school teachers will be asked to complete checklists thinking of the student's current achievement relative to the kindergarten or first grade standards. (Adapted from Cherry Creek School District's *Early Access to Kindergarten Academic Progress Information* and *Early Access to First Grade Academic Progress Information*).

**Performance:**

A student's performance will be documented through Portfolio Assessment compiled by parents and previous teachers and caretakers, as applicable. Parents will be asked to complete the *Kingore Observation Inventory (KOJ)* and follow the *Kingore Guidelines for Developing a Portfolio*.

**Readiness, social behavior and motivation:**

A student's readiness, social behavior, and motivation will be documented through parents or other caregivers completion of the *Checklist of My Child's Strengths* from the *Teaching Young Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom* resource and any other anecdotal information that parents, educators or caregivers deem important. The *Early Access to Kindergarten Academic Progress Information* and *Early Access to First Grade Academic Progress Information* checklists, adapted from Cherry Creek School District, include behavioral information under the subsections titled "Self Help Skills" and "Social Skills."

**Support system:**

Mt. Evans BOCES Gifted Education personnel will work with each receiving building level team, including; the principal or appointee, the district gifted education coordinator, the preschool director, the classroom teacher and other personnel as determined by need, as well as the parents/guardians to create the initial ALP. The ALP will be created before September 30th and will contain an initial profile of the student strengths and needs to inform and guide instruction in a responsible and challenging manner. (Note: The student must have an ALP on file as of September 30th to be verified in October enrollment count. The ALP must contain the phrase "grade acceleration" in a prominent highly visible place during kindergarten and first grade.)

The team will also set progress monitoring dates and facilitate ALP revisions as needed. Progress monitoring of the ALP goals will be completed every 5 weeks, uploaded to the student information system under the ALP



documents, and sent in written form to the parent/guardian. ALP progress will be formally documented in a written progress report at least once each quarter to be shared with parents/guardians and teacher(s). The transition of each child will be monitored by ongoing conversations and observation of the students through involved personnel. Ongoing communication to monitor and discuss the transition and the student progress will occur as needed between parents, teachers, gifted education coordinators, principals, and Mt. Evans BOCES Gifted Education personnel in an effort to meet the needs of the individual child.

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## Process

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### Timelines:

The application period for Early Access to Kindergarten and First grade will open on January 15th and close on March 15th of each year. Portfolio screening will occur the first full school week in April. Testing and final determination of placement will be made no later than the last day of May. Considerations of applications completed after April 1 will include family relocation.

#### Early Access Timeline

- Screening of portfolios will occur during the first week of April for each school year
- *Please note:* The districts, may, at their discretion, and after discussing with the BOCES assistant director, consider a screening portfolio after April 1 based on information that would indicate potential.
- After receipt of the screening portfolio, the determination to either obtain permission to evaluate, decline to evaluate, or suggest a strength-based intervention will be made by the third week in April and communicated to the parent for each school year.
- Testing will be completed by the second week in May for each school year.
- Final Early Access decision will be made by May 20th and communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s) within five days of the decision.

### Personnel:

District gifted education coordinators will collect referrals and portfolios which will then be submitted to the Mt. Evans BOCES Gifted Education office. The Assistant Director of Mt. Evans BOCES in charge of Gifted Education is endorsed in Gifted and Talented Education and is qualified to collect this information based on education and experience.

While private testing will be considered in the collection of the body of evidence, the screening with the WPPSI will be required. A qualified Mt. Evans BOCES psychologist will administer the assessment. Member districts will also have the option of contracting with qualified outside agencies to administer the assessment. The *Test of Early Mathematics-3* (TEMA-3) and the *Test of Early Reading Ability-3* (TERA-3) will be administered by either the district gifted education coordinator or Mt. Evans BOCES gifted education personnel based on gifted endorsement. The body of evidence may include observations by trained preschool personnel, the gifted coordinator and assistant director of the BOCES, child caretakers, Special Education personnel and others in a position to support and observe the child in multiple settings.

BOCES-wide Determination Team The determination team will include:

- Mt. Evans BOCES gifted education personnel
- District gifted education coordinator
- Preschool director and/or kindergarten teacher
- Test Administrators, including psychologist who administered cognitive testing
- Other personnel as determined by need

#### Support Team

The support team will include:

- Evans BOCES gifted education personnel



- District gifted education coordinator
- School administrators
- Classroom teachers
- School support staff
- Parents and outside caregivers
- Others deemed necessary to ensure the child's success will be included

### **Evaluation:**

#### Implementation Steps

##### Step 1: Inquiry/Information

Information/brochures made available with contact and process information. A parent/guardian submits a letter requesting a referral for Early Access. Inquiries are forwarded to Mt. Evans BOCES' Gifted Education office for processing and tracking. The district gifted education coordinator will keep a copy and begin to track dates. Information packet will then be provided to the parent/guardian that includes all documents and guidelines for the Early Access process. Per Mt. Evans BOCES, a parent, care giver, and/or preschool teacher can refer a child for Early Access consideration.

##### Step 2: Application/Portfolio Submission & Review

Application/Portfolio is submitted by the parent/guardian to district and forwarded to BOCES' Gifted Education office. The documentation included must verify the child's age. The Early Access Portfolio/Assessment Review Team reviews the completed portfolio and determines if the child needs further assessment and would benefit from Early Access. The Early Access team will make one of three decisions after reviewing the child's portfolio:

- Request permission to evaluate for Early Access
- Decline to evaluate the child for Early Access
- Suggest strength-based intervention to foster potential

The team includes:

- Mt. Evans BOCES gifted education personnel
- District gifted education coordinator
- Preschool director
- Other personnel as determined by need

(One member of the team must have a current endorsement in gifted education.)

##### Step 3: Assessment/Testing

BOCES After the determination is made to move forward with the Early Access evaluation, the district gifted education coordinator will coordinate an assessment schedule with gifted team. The areas to be assessed and tools used include:

- Cognitive ability - WPPSI
- Academic achievement - The *Test of Early Mathematics-3* (TEMA-3) and the *Test of Early Reading Ability-3* (TERA-3) used to assess early developing skills in these academic areas
- *Early Access to Kindergarten Academic Progress Information* and *Early Access to First Grade Academic Progress Information* (adapted from Cherry Creek SD)
- Motor and social/emotional skills - *Checklist of My Child's Strengths* from the *Teaching Young Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom* resource and any other anecdotal information - observations

##### Step 4: Assessment/Portfolio Review, Determination, and Notice of Eligibility

Mt. Evans BOCES-wide Early Access Determination Team reviews portfolio and assessment data. A consensus by all involved parties will need to be confirmed for early access placement to occur. If a consensus cannot be formed, additional data will be collected and reviewed by the team. The child must score at the 97th



percentile or above on the cognitive and achievement assessments as part of the qualification for Early Access determination.

- Parents contacted with the decision of the placement team by Mt. Evans BOCES Gifted Education personnel or District Gifted Education Coordinator via an initial phone call - Formal notification of the determination mailed to parents -For students who were declined, suggestions will be offered to support and assist parents in next steps for their child - If a student is deemed gifted but not suitable for early access, the principal of the child's home school is contacted by phone and a copy of the child's portfolio is provided to the school - If the child is placed in the program, a conference is scheduled with the parents/guardians and the gifted education coordinator to develop an ALP by September 30 of enrollment year - Final decision to accept or not to accept a student is at the discretion of the district.

#### Step 5: Record Keeping

Files with original copies of all documentation, including: request letter, portfolio, assessments/tests and results, review team determination of eligibility will be kept in the Mt. Evans BOCES office. District/school of attendance will maintain working files with copies of all pertinent information.

#### **Monitoring:**

The Mt. Evans BOCES' expectation is that the student will show at least one year of commensurate growth from the beginning of the school year. School measurements will include site-based district/school formative assessments being used to assess the growth of the general population, consistent progress monitoring of ALP goals at least every 5 weeks, and teacher report of classroom progress.

Social and emotional needs will be monitored through observations and conversations with parents, child and teacher. Due to the unique nature of each child, the monitoring process may be individualized but must be done at least every five weeks. The ultimate goal is to ensure the child has a productive, appropriately challenging and successful year of school.

Progress monitoring of the ALP goals will be ongoing, completed at least every five weeks and shared with the parent and teachers, and will be formally documented in a written report at least once each quarter and shared with parents/guardians and teachers. ALP goals are monitored and revised as the early access student shows growth and meets those goals.

**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.**