

School District 49

Early Access
for
Highly Gifted Students

SCHOOL DISTRICT 49

Office of Gifted Education
3850 Pony Tracks Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80922

Mrs. Diane Neff
Coordinator of Gifted Education
Phone: (719) 495-1149 ext. 3284
dneff@d49.org

Information
and
Application
for
2023-2024

EARLY ACCESS FOR HIGHLY GIFTED STUDENTS

General Information

- The Colorado Exceptional Children’s Act (ECEA) and District 49 School Board Policy IHBB, allows highly gifted students, who do not meet the age requirement for enrollment into kindergarten or first grade, to apply for Early Access into school.
- House Bill 1021 stipulates that districts may count in their enrollment and receive State Educational Funds for highly advanced gifted students who meet the criteria established by Colorado.
- The district must abide by the rules promulgated by the State Board of Education.
- The district may charge a reasonable fee for the Early Access process.
- District responsibilities:
 - o Provide early access information to parents
 - o Educate teaching staff and community about Early Access

Definition

Early Access is defined as a highly gifted four-year-old child entering kindergarten, or a five-year-old entering first grade. **A highly gifted child is defined as a gifted child whose body of evidence demonstrates a profile of exceptional ability or potential compared to same-age children. A child may be identified as gifted, but still not qualify for Early Access.** To meet the needs of highly advanced development, early access to educational services may be considered as a special provision.

Early entrance into school is regarded as a form of acceleration. The decision to accelerate a child can have a profound effect of the child’s academic and social performance for the remainder of his/her school career. Therefore, District 49 adheres to a thorough set of research-based procedures to determine if a child is eligible for Early Access.

Application Process:

1. Parent/Guardian accesses the Early Access Application packet through the D49 website>Gifted Education>Early Access>Early Access Application or may request a mailed copy by contacting D49 administration building. Early Access into kindergarten requires the student to be four years old by the first day of school or five years old by the first day of first grade. The parent/guardian must provide a copy of the birth certificate at the time of the application submission.
2. The parent/guardian must complete the entire application. The parent/guardian accompanied by the Early Access Candidate/Child, will return the application packet and the student portfolio to District 49

Gifted Education Department on Wednesday, February 22nd, 2022 between 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. **OR** Thursday, February 23rd, 2023 between 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

- Applications will **NOT** be accepted after the Thursday, **February 23, 2023** deadline.
 - Per the Military Interstate Compact Agreement, any applications submitted after this deadline are allowed **ONLY** for students who have relocated to District 49 due to parental/guardian military orders. Proof of orders are required and should be included in the application. Determination for Early Access with this agreement will be made no later than School District 49 start date. This is the only exception.
 - Child must be present when submitting the application. A question/answer session occurs.
3. A complete application must include the following:
- Initial Application completed and signed (see page 5)
 - Copy of child’s birth certificate (child must be 4 the first day of kindergarten, or 5 the first day of first grade)
 - Proof of residence (the child must be living within the District 49 boundaries)
 - A Letter of Request by legal parent(s)/guardian(s) stating why you believe Early Access is appropriate for your child, including any explanations and/or examples that give evidence of your child’s highly gifted abilities
 - District 49 Information Release Form (see page 7)
 - Any previous private/public school assessment data if applicable
 - Any other supporting anecdotal information (letters of recommendation from teachers, coaches, or mentors; report cards or evaluations; examples of observable behaviors)
 - Student portfolio of work
4. A student portfolio of work must include artifacts that the child has completed within the past year. Each document should be dated. The portfolio should include but is not limited to the following examples of student work:
- Knowledge of number sense
 - Knowledge of beginning alphabet sounds
 - Knowledge of shapes
 - Knowledge of colors
 - Examples of writing
 - Evidence of reading ability
 - Evidence of student interests
 - Samples of student drawings/artwork
 - Any other items the parent deems appropriate
5. Upon submission of completed application and student portfolio, the child will be administered a brief screener determining if your child will move forward in the Early Access process. If a child is

determined to be an appropriate candidate to move forward, then a team of educators knowledgeable of gifted education and early childhood development will evaluate the application and portfolio utilizing the Early Access rubric (see page 6). If it is deemed the child is not a candidate for additional testing, the parent/guardian will be notified of the team's decision.

6. The following procedure will be followed if the student moves to the next level of the Early Access process:
 - A licensed/trained professional will administer the Test of Early Mathematical Ability (TEMA), the Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA) and/or the Test of Early Written Language (TEWL) on **March 7, 2023** with appointments beginning at 8:00 a.m.
 - Parent/Guardian will be notified immediately if their child scored the minimum of 97th percentile on all given assessments. ***ALL three assessments: TEMA, TERA, and TEWL*** scores have to be at or above the 97th percentile. ***If one assessment does not meet the minimum, testing will not continue and the process will conclude indicating your child does not qualify.***
 - Early Access Team will collaboratively determine if the child is an appropriate candidate for the final level for Early Access into kindergarten or first grade.

7. The final level of Early Access Process:
 - District 49 school psychologist will administer the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI) between **March 8 – March 24, 2023**. Candidate must score a minimum of the 97th percentile to advance in the process.
 - Parent/Guardian will be notified of the committee's decision based on data from the entire process within one week of administration of WPPSI.

Early Access Team Members

Members of the Early Access team will consist of the following professionals:

- D49 Gifted Education Coordinator
- D49 Gifted Education resource specialist
- Primary School Teacher
- Psychologist
- Other members as deemed appropriate

Dispute of Findings

Parent/Guardian disputes may be made in writing stating reasons for dispute within five days of the most recent step completed in the Early Access Process.

- Meeting between D49 Gifted Education Coordinator and parents/guardians to review data is scheduled. Resolution achieved.
- If no resolution, meeting between Executive Director of Individualized Education and parent/guardians is scheduled. Resolution achieved.

Non-acceptance:

No further application for Early Access will be considered at any other school or institution within the school district. Student files are transferred to the receiving school within District 49 for instructional programming for the appropriate year and grade. All testing materials and results become the property of District 49.

EARLY ACCESS FOR HIGHLY GIFTED STUDENTS

Early Access Criteria Established by Colorado Exceptional Child Education Act:

Criteria established by Colorado and District 49 for the early identification of a highly gifted child include:

- Score of 3 or 4 on every portfolio submission utilizing the performance rubric
- Portfolio review and/or student observation demonstrated appropriate developmental social-emotional and motivational behaviors
- Reading achievement, writing achievement, math achievement and intellectual scores of **97th or above**

Application for Early Access for Highly Gifted Students

Student's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Today's Date: _____

Student's Address: _____

Requested School of Attendance: _____

Requested Grade: _____ Requested School Year: _____

Person making request: _____ Phone: _____

Relation to student: _____ Email address(es) _____

I hereby confirm that all information on this application submitted on behalf of this student is true and factual to the best of my knowledge.

Print Parent/Guardian Name

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature



EARLY ACCESS FOR HIGHLY GIFTED STUDENTS

Early Access Portfolio Rubric



Student Name: _____

Requested Grade: _____ Requested School: _____

Current Age: _____ Evaluator: _____

Portfolio items should be evaluated relative to the appropriate developmental and social-emotional level of students for the grade the student is requesting to enter. If there is not a portfolio sample for one of the designated fields, leave the scoring area blank.

<i>Demonstrates knowledge of or ability to:</i>	4	3	2	1
	Evidence of developmentally appropriate mastery of learning objective	Evidence supports some development towards learning objective	Evidence shows early attempt at developmentally appropriate learning objective	Evidence does not support developmental understanding of learning objective
Number Sense				
Alphabet Sounds				
Shapes				
Colors				
Write				
Read				
Specific Interest				
Drawing/Artwork				
Other				

Comments:

EARLY ACCESS FOR HIGHLY GIFTED STUDENTS

Early Access Consent & Release Form



By signing this form, you acknowledge all information contained in the completed application, portfolio and Early Access process will be property of School District 49.

The D49 Gifted Education Department would like to administer a brief battery of ability and/or achievement testing. These tests are assessments that will provide information to determine eligibility for early access into kindergarten or first grade.

By signing this form, you give permission for your student to be administered assessments including, but not limited to: Wechsler Preschool Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI), Test of Early Mathematics Abilities (TEMA), Test of Early Reading Abilities (TERA) and Test of Early Written Language (TEWL).

Please sign and return this form with the completed Early Access Application.

Our/my child, _____, has permission to be given the above listed assessments, consent to release information and I acknowledge all aspects of the Early Access Process becomes property of School District 49 upon submission.

Print Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Print Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date
