



# Academy of Arts and Knowledge

## Early Admittance Policy

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**Purpose and Scope:** The Academy of Arts and Knowledge (AAK) Early Admittance Policy is intended to provide documented guidelines to the operations contractor for the allocation of available seats at The Academy of Arts and Knowledge for Acceleration into Kindergarten.

**Non-Discrimination/Eligibility:** AAK welcomes all students and strives to create and maintain a diverse student population. Enrollment in AAK is open to all students residing in the state. Student recruitment and enrollment decisions shall be made in a nondiscriminatory manner as outlined in C.R.S. § 22-30.5-507(3). In all cases, student recruitment and enrollment decisions shall be made without regard to disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, ancestry, need for special education services, on any other protected class.

**Distribution:** This policy shall be available for public viewing and acknowledgement of such viewing shall be made part of the application process when submitting an application for Early Admittance to AAK.

**Declaration:** By applying for Early Admittance into AAK all persons involved in the application process declare that they have read and understand the Early Admittance policy of AAK and will abide by this policy.

### **Definitions:**

#### *Early Admittance:*

Early Admittance means early entrance to kindergarten or first grade for highly advanced children under the age of six, and means a student is placed in a grade level above other same aged peers.

Early Admittance shall be provided by AAK to identify and serve highly advanced children who are:

1. Four years of age and for whom early admittance to kindergarten is deemed appropriate.
2. Five years of age and for whom early admittance to first grade is deemed appropriate.
3. Early admittance shall not be an acceleration pattern recommended for the majority of age 4 or 5 children who will benefit from preschool programming.
4. The purpose of early admittance is to identify and serve the few highly advanced gifted children who require comprehensive academic acceleration.

Early admittance 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 admittance. Parents may accept or decline an offer of early admittance.

*Early Admittance eligibility:*

Applicants that wish to apply for kindergarten but are not five (5) years of age by October 1st in the school year enrollment is being applied for must apply for Early Admittance prior to the lottery.

Applicants that wish to apply for first grade but are not six (6) years of age by October 1st in the school year enrollment is being applied for must apply for Early Admittance prior to the lottery.

**General:**

**Criteria for Early Admittance:**

All criteria must be considered in making the determination - test scores alone do not meet determination.

*Aptitude:*

Aptitude supporting early admittance is indicated by a highly advanced level of performance compared to age-peers on cognitive abilities rating scales or 97<sup>th</sup> percentile and above on standardized cognitive ability tests which are conducted by licensed and/or trained staff.

*Achievement:*

Achievement supporting early admittance is indicated by a highly advance level of performance compared to age-peers on achievement rating scales, assessment, or 97<sup>th</sup> percentile and above on standardized achievement tests. Typically, early admittance children function two or more years above their age peers.

*Performance:*

Performance supporting early admittance is indicated by work samples and informal teacher and/or parent data indicating demonstrated ability above age peers.

*Readiness, Social Behavior and Motivation:*

Readiness, social behavior and motivation for early admittance 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.

### **Application Process:**

#### *Step 1:*

1. Applications are initiated by a parent or legal guardian by filling out the online application for enrollment at <https://www.aakelementary.org/enroll/>. Applications for Early Admittance must be submitted by January 15<sup>th</sup> in order to allow enough time to determine if the student will be eligible for the lottery.
2. The GT Coordinator or Registrar contacts parents and obtains information about student and reason for request. Parents are informed about the process.
3. If the parent decides to continue with the process, the parent collects information and creates a portfolio about the child, including the necessary forms provided by the school. In order to be considered for eligibility for the lottery, portfolios must be turned in **no later than January 31<sup>st</sup>**.

#### **Information to be included in the portfolio:**

- i. Letter from parent requesting early admittance into kindergarten or first grade including reason for request (ie observations of advanced behavior, aptitude and achievement).
- ii. The Behavior Assessment filled out by both the parent/guardian and the preschool teacher.
- iii. Any supporting anecdotal information (example: doctor's observations/reports, outstanding accelerated achievements which could include reading ability, musical ability, etc).
- iv. Any available test data, which may include private testing.
- v. Student performance-work samples
- vi. Any other items the parent may deem appropriate.

#### *Step 2:*

1. The parent sends the portfolio to the GT Coordinator **no later than January 31<sup>st</sup>** for potential inclusion in the lottery.
2. Should the initial review of the portfolio demonstrate that the applicant is a strong candidate for early admittance, the GT Coordinator will contact the parent to schedule a time for further screening and gain permission to evaluate applicant.
  - a. Should the initial review of the portfolio demonstrate that the applicant is not a strong candidate for early admittance, the parent will be contacted and notified of the school's decision not to pursue further screening, and consequently the applicant will not be granted early admittance. Parents may dispute the school's decision to deny early admittance by following the school's grievance policy.

3. Parents must pay a \$200 testing fee for Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI-III) test administration. Scholarships or fee waiver *may* be available based on financial situation.
4. If the decision is made to pursue testing, the GT Coordinator will schedule a testing date to administer the WPPSI-III and NWEA Measures of Academic Progress administered by qualified school personnel. To be considered for eligibility in the lottery, all testing must be scheduled and completed with the school prior to February 28<sup>th</sup>.

*Step 3:*

1. A body of evidence will be used to determine placement. Early admittance decisions will be a consensus process within the school 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 admittance. This will include the student portfolio, information from the teacher, the results from the WPPSI-III testing as well as the NWEA MAP Assessment and Behavior Assessment.
  - a. Results on behavioral, cognitive and achievement assessments need to fall at or above the 97<sup>th</sup>ile. For achievement testing, the score must be at or above the 97<sup>th</sup>ile in two grade levels about the applicant (eg. 1<sup>st</sup> grade for early admittance kinder applicants and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for early admittance first grade applicants). Results in this range do not guarantee the applicant will benefit from early admittance. Final placement is at the discretion of the school early admittance team.
2. The Early Admittance Team will review the portfolio, testing results and additional body of evidence results to determine potential eligibility for early admittance. A school team may include the GT Coordinators, the school principal, the receiving kindergarten teacher, and any other school personnel that may be appropriate to the situation.
3. Parents will be contacted with the decision of the placement team by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Students qualifying for early admittance will then be eligible to take place in the lottery.

**Eligibility for early admittance does not guarantee the applicant will receive a spot during the lottery process.** If the child is accepted for both early admittance and the lottery, an Advanced Learning Plan written by the teachers, parents and GT Coordinator will be developed.
4. Parents may accept or decline the offer by the school of early admittance.
  - a. If the application takes place during the open enrollment period, the child would then enter the lottery with corresponding priority status.
  - b. If the application takes place after the open enrollment period has closed, the child will be placed accordingly on a wait list and will be given a seat following the AAK Enrollment Policy.