

Identifying GT students - Q's&A's

Q What is the mission of the GT program?

The mission of gifted education is to maximize the potential of gifted/talented students by providing programs and services that match the unique characteristics and needs of these students.

Q Who are gifted/talented students?

The description below of the identification process reflects the South Carolina definition of gifted and talented and is in keeping with the National Excellence Report (1995) which states:

“Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

“These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.

“Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.”

Q What are characteristics of a GT student?

- ✓ Learns easily and rapidly
- ✓ Thinks clearly, recognizes implied relationships, comprehends meanings
- ✓ Reads above grade level
- ✓ Retains what she/he hears or reads without appearing to need much rote or drill
- ✓ Possesses a large vocabulary
- ✓ Exhibits independence, individualism, self-sufficiency
- ✓ Demonstrates a curious and investigative nature
- ✓ Asks penetrating, searching questions
- ✓ Focuses intently on areas of interest
- ✓ Produces original products or ideas
- ✓ Prefers complex ideas

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Q How do I nominate my child for GT evaluation?

Parents with students who have demonstrated ability or potential for high performance in academic areas may refer their child for screening by completing a referral form available at local schools. To obtain a form, parents should contact their building principal or guidance counselor.

Q How does a student qualify for GT programs?

Gifted/talented students may be found within any racial, ethnic, or socio-economic group; within any nationality; within both genders; and within populations with disabilities.

Identification is a multi-step process, which consists of referral, screening and assessment of eligibility by a district evaluation and placement team. The state of South Carolina has established three dimensions of giftedness as criteria for placement in the academically gifted program. In order to qualify for placement in gifted/talented programs, a student must meet the eligibility criteria in two out of the following three dimensions

Dimension A– Reasoning Abilities

Students must score 93rd national age percentile on a nationally normed aptitude test.

Students may be eligible for placement on the basis of aptitude scores alone if they score 96th national age percentile on the composite score of a nationally normed aptitude test.

Dimension B– Achievement

Students must score 94th National percentile on approved subtests (reading comprehension and/or mathematical concepts and problem solving) on a nationally normed achievement test, or advanced status score on Reading and/or math on the South Carolina statewide assessment instrument (SC PACT).

Dimension C– Academic Performance

For placement in grades 3-6, a student must achieve an appropriate performance standard on either verbal or non-verbal performance tasks.

For placement in grades 7-10, a 3.75 grade point average in the academic disciplines is required.

Q Why are GT students identified?

Purposes of the identification process are

- ✓ to find students who display characteristics of the gifted/talented (i.e., ability or potential for high performance in academic areas);

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- ✓to assess the aptitudes, attributes, and behaviors of each student; and
- ✓to evaluate each student for the purposes of placement.

Q How are gifted/talented students served?

The approved program models below are used by school districts:

Resource Room/Pull-out Model

In this model, gifted/talented students are removed from the regular classroom for a specified period each week to receive differentiated instruction. The curriculum involves advanced problem-based interdisciplinary units of study. Multi-grade grouping may be used.

Special Class

This model is a gifted/talented class organized around one or more academic subjects. The special class delivers services to identified students through a rigorous and often accelerated curriculum.

Q When are screenings & who do I call for info?

Screening for academic gifted programs begins in Fall of Grade 2 for 3rd grade placement. For specific information regarding the program in our district, contact Tom McDuffie (803) 285-8430.

Referrals must be made by Oct. 31.

No private testing is accepted, but those results may be used for referrals.