

SEPTEMBER 2024



**GIFTED AND TALENTED
EDUCATION**

community's children.

- The understanding and acceptance of diversity contributes to the enhancement of society.
- Education is worth the investment.

Definitions

There are many different definitions of a gifted and talented student. The District's working definition of giftedness mirrors the state definition as well as that more recently cited in the *No Child Left Behind* legislation. Under these definitions, gifted students are those who:

"Those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities."

New Jersey Department of Education – N.J.A.C. 6A:8

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

United States Department of Education

"The term 'gifted and talented,' when used with respect to students, children, or youth, means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement in such areas as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities."

No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110 (Title IX, Part A)

Other complementary perspectives are provided by groups of respected professionals in the field of Gifted who suggest a definition based on the gifted child's difference from the norm below.

"Gifted individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as an exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10% or rarer) in one or more domains. Domains include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system (e.g., mathematics, language) and/or set of sensorimotor skills (e.g., painting, dance, sports.)"

National Association for Gifted Children

district evaluation process. Board-approved policies and procedures must be made available.

MTSD Board of Education Policy

2464- GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPILS (M)

Section: Program
Date Created: April 2010
Date Edited: June 2017

[See POLICY ALERT Nos. 95, 153, 161, 164, and 211]

2464 GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to identify gifted and talented students within the school district and to provide these students with appropriate instructional adaptations and services. To that end, the Board directs each such student in the school district be identified and offered an appropriate educational program and services.

For purposes of this Policy, “gifted and talented students” means students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability in one or more content areas when compared to their chronological peers in the district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

The Superintendent will develop appropriate curricular and instructional modifications used for gifted and talented students indicating content, process, products, and learning environments.

The Superintendent will develop procedures for an ongoing Kindergarten through grade twelve identification process for gifted and talented students that includes multiple measures. Multiple measures may include, but are not limited to: achievement test scores; grades; student performance or products; intelligence testing; parent, student, and/or teacher recommendation; and other appropriate measures. The identification methodology will be developmentally appropriate, non-discriminatory, and related to the programs and services offered by the district. The identification procedures will be reviewed annually.

The Superintendent will take into consideration the Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Twelve Gifted Programming Standards of the National Association for Gifted Children in developing programs for gifted and talented students. The educational program offered to gifted and talented students will encourage and challenge them in the specific areas of their abilities, but will not replace the basic instructional program of the various grades of this district. The program offered to gifted and talented students may include, but are not limited to: pull-out programs; classroom differentiated instruction; acceleration; flexible pacing; compacted curricula; distance learning; advanced classes; or individual programs infused into the student’s regular instructional program, provided that a written description of the infusion has been prepared and filed in the student’s record.

The Student will:

- acquire advanced competencies in:
 - higher level thinking skills
 - research skills
 - study skills
 - communication skills
 - college and career readiness

Programming Options

Listed below are potential programming options that may be implemented in the education of your child depending on their identification and/or grade level. The utilization of these programs is at the discretion of the district and/or building administration.

Accelerated/Honors classes: Advanced classes offered in any discipline at the middle or high school level.

Alternate assignments: Assignments given to a particular student or small group *instead of* the assignment given to the rest of the class. The assignments are designed to be more challenging and/or to capitalize on a student's special interests or skills.

Change in content/process: Modification of what is taught or studied, or how it is taught or studied, in order to better match the learning styles or needs of talent pool students.

Choice in the content, the process of learning or the product of the learning: Choice may be offered by varying according to different types of intelligence or levels of thinking.

Cluster groups/classes: An arrangement in which a group of students with similar talents and interests is assigned to a classroom teacher in order to facilitate modifications and extensions of the curriculum.

Compacting: Allowing students to spend less time learning a topic, chapter, or unit by either: 1) pretesting for mastery so some material can be eliminated, or 2) creating a study guide or other procedure for students to cover material at a faster pace or in less time than the rest of the class. The purpose of compacting is to move on more quickly to new material or to create class time for more challenging enrichment or accelerated activities.

Creative thinking skills: Specific instruction in techniques that encourage the development of fluency, flexibility, elaboration, originality, complexity, curiosity, imagination, and risk taking.

Pull-outs: Programming in which students meet once or twice a week over a period of several weeks to a year to participate in specific enrichment activities in their talent areas.

Research projects: Activities in which students may identify a topic or subject for study, narrow the focus of study, gather resources, locate information through reading or other means (e.g., surveys, interviews, audiovisual material) and/or create a product or presentation. Such projects may be used to pursue an area of interest either related or unrelated to the grade-level curriculum.

Social/emotional groups: A school-based discussion and/or counseling program that provides small groups of students with the opportunity to interact and discuss issues that specifically pertain to giftedness. These may be facilitated by a guidance counselor.

Youth options: Opportunity to access college classes once the student has exhausted the curricular opportunities the school has to offer.

School Based Programming

Elementary #1 and #2

The programming at Elem #1 and #2 is for students who demonstrate above grade level math and reading skills. The purpose of the program is to enhance math and ELA concepts. Students will be provided with the opportunity to build their math skills through participation in activities requiring higher level thinking skills. The purpose of the ELA programming is to expose students to a broad selection of literature, expand vocabulary, and stimulate critical thinking skills.

Middle School

The middle school offers differentiated curricula for gifted students. Students will be identified for their eligibility and will be cluster grouped with other identified students and placed in an exclusive accelerated class for English Language Arts (ELA) and/or Math based on their eligibility. Teachers have been extensively trained in differentiating instruction for all learners, including the accelerated learner. Their lessons and instruction will be differentiated and accelerated to meet the needs of the students.

High School

Students will be placed in Advanced, Honors or Advanced Placement (AP), and/or dual credit classes if they meet the District's placement criteria for those classes. For more information on those classes and their criteria, please contact your child's academic advisor at the high school. Other experiences and opportunities will be investigated and utilized as deemed appropriate by the staff and administration.

IS MY BRIGHT CHILD A GIFTED LEARNER?

"Talent is something rare and beautiful and precious, and it must not be allowed to go to waste."

– George Selden, said by Tucker Mouse in *The Cricket in Times Square*

Both parents and educators know that all children have special talents, but it can be difficult to determine whether a child is a bright, hardworking student who is being challenged effectively within his/her learning environment or a gifted child who would benefit from something beyond the level of their learning environment. Making all "A's" isn't always an indicator of giftedness- it indicates hard work and motivation and other factors but not necessarily what is recognized as "giftedness."

The following table of characteristics is helpful in distinguishing between bright learners and gifted learners. These descriptions may overlap and are not mutually exclusive. The bright learner may be more readily identifiable in the classroom setting and considered to be "gifted." The gifted learner may well be underachieving and not readily recognized. It is important to remember that no child will demonstrate all of the traits listed below nor will they demonstrate them all of the time. This table is meant to give you an idea of what these two types of learners are like.

their class. They tend to be satisfied with their knowledge and skills, but they will receive new information with willingness and interest when required. High achievers are usually emotionally and socially on track, and they relate well to peers of their own age.

Gifted Learners

Gifted learners are students that have a strong motivation to learn and expand their intellectual capacity. They prefer self-directed learning, may or may not be motivated by grades, are excellent at making inferences and connections, pose complex questions, generate abstract concepts and are beyond their class. They are not satisfied with a straightforward answer, preferring to examine a problem's intricacies and underlying implications. They tend to be self-critical and are constantly seeking to expand their knowledge. Gifted learners may be emotionally and socially behind, on track or advanced. Most tend to connect with peers on the basis of shared intellectual interest rather than similarity in age.

Traits, Aptitudes and Behaviors of a Gifted Child

It is important to remember that no child will demonstrate all of the traits listed below nor will they demonstrate them all of the time.

Motivation: Intrinsic desire to learn.

- Demonstrates persistence in pursuing and completing self-selected tasks.
- Expresses enthusiasm about learning.
- Aspires to be somebody or something.

Interest: Intentness, passion, concern, or curiosity about something.

- Demonstrates unusual or advanced interest in a topic or activity.
- Self-starts.
- Pursues an activity unceasingly.

Communication: Highly expressive and effective in use of words, numbers and/or symbols.

- Demonstrates unusual ability to communicate in one or more ways (verbally, physically, artistically, and symbolically).
- Uses particularly apt examples, illustrations, or elaborations.

Problem Solving: Effective, inventive strategies used to recognize and solve problems.

- Demonstrates unusual ability to devise or adapt a

- Heightened awareness of injustice and hypocrisy.
- High level of emotional energy.
- Heightened sensitivity to the environment. (e.g. light, noise, movement)
- High levels of empathy.
- Keen self-awareness.

The Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted Children

To a large degree, the needs of gifted children are the same as those of other children. The same developmental stages occur, though often at a younger age. Some needs and problems, however, appear more often among gifted children. It is helpful to conceptualize needs of gifted children in terms of those that arise because of the interaction with the environmental setting (e.g., family, school, or cultural milieu) and those that arise internally because of the very characteristics of the gifted child. Several intellectual and personality attributes characterize gifted children and should be noted at the outset. These characteristics may be strengths, but potential problems also may be associated with them.

Reality: While all children have relative strengths and weaknesses, some children have extreme strengths in one or more areas. Students who are gifted may require special education, just as students who have cognitive disabilities do. The belief that all children are gifted leads to a lack of identification and service to students who are gifted.

Misconception: Gifted kids have it made and will succeed in life no matter what. They can make it on their own because they're smart. They don't need any special help in school or anywhere else.

Reality: Gifted students may drop out of school because they don't find it challenging, interesting or relevant. They often feel "different" because of their unique thinking processes and thus become alienated from other students. Too many of them try to fit in and do not reach their potential.

Misconception: Gifted kids love school, get high grades, and greet each new school day with enthusiasm. The gifted student is the one who is most enthusiastic about school and schoolwork.

Reality: Most schools and classroom teaching methods are geared for average students which make it hard for gifted students to get excited about going to school. Some of the most capable students end up not using their academic potential unless they are appropriately challenged and their social and emotional needs are understood and addressed.

Misconception: Teachers love to have gifted students in their classes.

Reality: Some do, but some don't. Some teachers feel uncomfortable with the unique learning needs of gifted students and are unsure of how to meet the students' needs. They may also have the responsibility of meeting the needs of a very wide variety of student abilities.

Misconception: Gifted children have intellectual capabilities that allow them to be outstanding in all subjects and areas.

Reality: Academic giftedness is often concentrated in a

afford.

Misconception: Gifted children are destined to become eminent adults.

Reality: Many gifted children are more susceptible to emotional and physical problems from being "stressed out" and thus burn out early or choose to hide or deny their abilities. Some, while extremely successful as adults, never do anything genuinely creative. Besides a high level of ability, personality, motivation, family and school environments, opportunity, and chance play important roles. The Terman studies and the Stanford studies showed, however, that an unusual proportion of gifted individuals became lawyers, doctors, engineers, college professors, and leaders in government, business, and industry.

Misconception: Some people assert that gifted children are "made" by overzealous parents' intent on their children's stardom. Parents are cautioned not to push or label their children, to let them have a "normal" childhood. Otherwise, they are told, their children will resent them and lose interest in achieving.

Reality: Parents of gifted children are often highly involved in the nurturance of their children's gifts. A high degree of investment and involvement is not a destructive force. It is necessary for a child's gift to be fully developed. Emotional support and understanding from the family are also important for gifted children. Nature and nurture both play a role in determining whether there is the ability for high levels of intelligence to develop.

Identification Process

"District boards of education shall make provisions for an ongoing K-12 identification process of gifted and talented students that includes multiple measures, including but not limited to, achievement test scores, grades, student performance or products, intelligence testing, parent/student/peer recommendations, and other appropriate measures."

N.J.A.C., 6A: 8 - New Jersey
Department of Education

Instructions for Completing

Gifted Behaviors Rating Scale for Students

The gifted and talented program is an instructional program for high achieving students. Curriculum differentiation in the depth, breadth, and pace of instruction is designed to meet the needs of high-ability learners. When determining whether a student needs the services provided by gifted and talented placement, the selection committee uses a holistic approach. No one score on any one measure determines eligibility. The committee considers all data in the screening file, including the child's educational history, progress reports, test data, and observations of the student's classroom behaviors. The *Gifted Behaviors Rating Scale (GBRS)* and the recommended Content Area Rating Scales (CARS) are two of the instruments used in the screening process. It should be completed by a local school committee including at least one teacher who has recently worked with the student.

Please use the following guidelines in completing the *GBRS and CARS*:

- The *GBRS/CARS* should be completed by assigning a single whole number from 1-4 to each category. A rating of 4 should be given to a student who is consistently strong in a particular category. A rating of 2 describes a child who occasionally demonstrates the behaviors that are listed in a particular category. The total score is the sum of the numbers assigned to each of the four categories. **Fractions, decimals, and/or split numbers may not be used.**
- If more than one teacher works with the student, teachers should come to consensus in each category and merge the observations onto a **single GBRS/CARS** form. Only **one** completed GBRS/CARS may be submitted.
- A student working above grade level in reading consistently accesses reading materials suited for one or more grade levels above the current grade level. A student working above grade level in mathematics works consistently above grade level often knows the material being presented or is rapidly able to move on while others are still learning.
- In the Comments/Summary section, list examples, observations, and/or descriptions of observed behaviors. These may include instructional modifications, inclusion in special programs, or additional information profiling the student's strengths. The comments should support categorical ratings with specific examples illustrating the behaviors.
- The *GBRS/CARS* are a record of **observable classroom behaviors**. It is **not** a recommendation or favorable support for or against gifted and talented placement or for other advanced academic services.
- All screening file documents including the *GBRS/CARS* will be available to parents or guardians if requested.

Student Name _____ Grade _____

GIFTED BEHAVIORS RATING SCALE COMMENTARY

Accommodations provided for the student (check where applicable):	
Working at advanced level	Mathematics
	Reading
Current Status for Level of Service Received	

COMMENTARY (GBRS Rating completed by teacher(s) for student)

In a bullet format, please provide a profile of the student's academic strengths and abilities, citing specific examples.

Commentary should include specific examples to support the GBRS ratings

Please complete the attached scale for mathematics and/or English language arts.

ACADEMIC RATING SCALE: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

STUDENT: _____

GRADE: _____ DATE: _____

TEACHER: _____ SCHOOL: _____

Read each item and rate the student according to this scale:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Rarely, seldom or never | 3. Quite often or frequently |
| 2. Occasionally, sometimes | 4. Always or almost always |

DK Don't know or have never observed

	1. Interested in words, definitions, derivations; has an extensive vocabulary.
	2. Sees details, is a good observer, sees relationships, makes connections.
	3. Organizes ideas and sequences well in preparation for speaking or writing.
	4. Has a good sense of humor; uses and understands satire, puns, and second meanings.
	5. Reads widely for a period of time in a variety of types of literature; may focus on one type, then switch and focus on another.
	6. Original and creative; comes up with unique ideas in writing or speaking.
	7. Develops convincing characters and situations in writing.
	8. Withholds judgement while investigating a topic; willing to explore a topic in greater depth than other students, curious.
	9. Recognizes author's or speaker's point of view, mood or intentions.
	10. Elaborates well when speaking or writing, uses vivid expressions which make words "come alive".
	11. Visualizes and translates images into written or spoken forms.
	12. Likes to do independent study and research in areas of interest.
	13. Motivated to write even when writing is not assigned; writes stories, poems, or plays; keeps a journal or diary.
	14. Sees relationship between literature and other art forms.
	15. Uses words effectively in writing descriptions and communicating emotions.

Parent/Guardian Inventory Checklist

Please check one column after each of the following statements that best describes your child.

When have you observed this characteristic?	Seldom or never	Occasionally	Most of the time	Virtually all of the time
1. Imagines things to be different than the way they actually are. "Wonders what if?" or "What would happen if?"				
2. Has self-stimulated curiosity; shows independence in trying to learn more about something.				
3. Chooses difficult problems over simple ones.				
4. Is selected by peers for positions of academic leadership.				
5. Adapts readily to new situations; flexible in thought and action; not disturbed if the normal routine is changed.				
6. Organizes and brings structure to things, people and situations.				
7. Uses unique and unusual ways to solve problems.				
8. Displays a great deal of curiosity about many things, often going beyond known or conventional limits.				
9. Possesses a large storehouse of information about a variety of topics beyond the usual interests of this age.				
10. Reasons things out, thinks clearly, and comprehends meaning.				
11. Expresses interest in understanding self and others.				
12. Possesses the interest of an older child or adult in games and reading.				
13. Is alert and keenly observant and responds quickly.				
14. Strives toward perfection, is self-critical, is not easily satisfied with own speed or products.				
15. Makes generalizations and draws conclusions that summarized complex information easily.				
16. Can perform more difficult mental tasks than peers.				
17. Seems to sense what others want and helps accomplish it.				
18. Tends to direct others in activities.				
19. Is able to work through frustration and maintain focus.				
20. Sees flaws in things, including own work, and can suggest better ways to do job or reach an objective.				
21. Has many different ways of solving problems.				
22. Challenges authority when sense of justice is offended, structures alternative approaches.				
23. Display a mature sense of humor.				
24. Has unusually advanced vocabulary for age level, uses terms in a meaningful way.				

Briefly describe your child's major interests, hobbies and other creative endeavors.

What are your main reasons for referring your child to the gifted and talented? Share your insights about his/her talents, abilities, and learning needs. (Please Note: Teachers are expected to challenge every student according to his/her abilities. Therefore, a desire to have your child challenged is NOT a reason for a gifted program referral.)

Please attach any other information which you believe is relevant and would assist us in getting to know your child's interests and abilities. (Ex. exceptional work samples, academic accolades, outside testing results, evidence of participation in outside educational programs)

I understand that tests of ability, aptitude, or achievement may be administered to my child as part of the identification process.

Date _____

Parent or Guardian's Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Please submit completed form to your student's principal's office by

7. **Myth:** GIFTED STUDENTS IN SPECIAL PROGRAMS WILL HAVE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL ISSUES.

Many problems are brought on by the frustration of ability, although special classes for the gifted actually helps most adjust to these frustrations. Academically gifted students often feel bored or out of place with their age peers and naturally gravitate towards older students who are more similar as "intellectual peers." Studies have shown that gifted students tend to be happier with older students who share their interest than they are with children the same age. Acceleration placement options such as early entrance to Kindergarten, grade skipping, or early exit should be considered for these students.

8. **Myth:** GIFTED STUDENTS SHOULD REMAIN IN REGULAR CLASSES TO SERVE AS EXAMPLES OR ROLE MODELS. THEY MAKE EVERYONE ELSE SMARTER.

Average or below-average students do not look to the gifted students in the class as role models. Watching or relying on someone who is expected to succeed does little to increase a struggling student's sense of self-confidence.² Similarly, gifted students benefit from classroom interactions with peers at similar performance levels and become bored, frustrated, and unmotivated when placed in classrooms with low or average-ability students.

9. **Myth:** GIFTED STUDENTS ARE SELF-SUFFICIENT AND DO NOT NEED HELP. IF THEY ARE REALLY GIFTED, THEY CAN MANAGE ON THEIR OWN.

Research negates this myth on several accounts. They may perform at a level far below their intellectual ability and also suffer from anxiety, insecurity, and loneliness.

10. **Myth:** THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE GIFTED STUDENT IS AT THE SAME LEVEL AS HIS OR HER INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT, THEREFORE ARE MATURE AND WELL BEHAVED.

Gifted students are asynchronous. Their chronological age, social, physical, emotional, and intellectual development may all be at different levels. For example, a 5-year-old may be able to read and comprehend a third-grade book but may not be able to write legibly.

11. **Myth:** GIFTED STUDENTS ARE NERDS, SOCIAL ISOLATES, AND TEND TO NOT BE GOOD AT SPORTS.

There are many types of giftedness and many forms in which it can be expressed. Gifted students can be gifted in areas such as leadership, visual and performing arts and psychomotor. Many gifted students flourish in their community and school environment. However, some gifted children differ in terms of their emotional and moral intensity, sensitivity to expectations and feelings, perfectionism, and deep concerns about societal problems. Others do not share interests with their classmates, resulting in isolation or being labeled unfavorably as a "nerd." Because of these difficulties, the school experience is one to be endured rather than celebrated.

Appeal Process

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal a placement decision regarding admission or dismissal from the Gifted program. Appeals shall be made in writing and received within fifteen (15) days of the date the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance. Written appeals shall be sent to the building principal and must include the nature of the concern and contain supporting documentation attached. If the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) do not receive the relief requested at the building principal level, the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) may request (in writing) a conference with the Director of Curriculum to appeal the decision. If the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) do not receive the relief requested at the Director level, the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) may request (in writing) a conference with the Superintendent or designee to appeal the decision. At no time will any requests be accepted that circumvent the procedures above. Please note that the identification process is confidential and individual results will not be released. Therefore appeals will not be granted if they are asking to appeal results of any part of the identification process.

Please note that placement decisions are reversed only in instances where extensive documentation is presented providing significant evidence that the child's knowledge, skills and abilities are superior to those measured by school personnel.

While we will consider any external documentation that you may present, please remember that the ultimate decision regarding placement and services lies with the school district.

Exit Policy and Procedures

Probation

Probation is for any student failing to meet the identification process or to meet the expectations of the program. Students will maintain their status in the program during probation for a period up to one (1) year. If their performance improves and they meet the qualifications for identification for the next academic term then they will be fully reinstated. If they fail to meet the qualifications then they will be exited from the program.

Exit

The program exists to provide services to identified students that will develop their unique talents and abilities. Participation in an educational program that goes beyond the services provided by the regular classroom/school program should allow

testing for placement. In some instances, additional testing for placement may be required. In such an instance, the parent/guardian of record will be contacted before a subsequent round of testing.

Reassessment

All students will be reassessed annually for continuation. Assessments outside of the normal window for all students will not be accommodated and requests for further assessments or re-assessments will not be accommodated for any reason including for the appeals process.

Transfer Students

When a student identified as gifted by a previous public school district transfers into the District, the student's records shall be reviewed by the building principal. Students entering with a gifted/talented identification from another public school district shall receive services if appropriate documentation is provided. Upon receipt of documentation they will be placed in the program and will follow the normal course and timelines for the annual re-evaluation.

Continuance Procedures

Placement into the program during any academic year does not mean that the student will automatically qualify for services in subsequent years. Time in the school system is the only method for evaluating appropriateness of the placement into the program. All students will be reassessed annually.

Probation

Students that fail to maintain the academic expectations of the program will be placed on probation. In addition, any student that is currently in the program but fails to qualify for the program for the following year will maintain their status in the program for a probationary period of one (1) year. At the end of the probationary year the student will either qualify and be fully re-instated or will not qualify and will be exited from the program.

Exit Provisions

Student performance in the program shall be closely monitored. A student shall be removed from the program at any time that the District determines it is in the student's best interest and a probationary period has been ineffective. The teacher shall make a recommendation to the Principal for exiting the student.

Appeals

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal. All appeals will be sent to the building principal and must follow the appeals procedures outlines in this handbook.

Program Evaluation

Evaluation and assessment of the program is important to the success and development of
Middle Township School District

How Can I Be an Effective Advocate for My Child?

- Know the facts and be informed. If you're not sure, ask questions to learn what you need to know.
- Educate yourself on educational terminology, especially the vocabulary related to gifted education.
- Become familiar with the state guidelines and national guidelines to deepen your own knowledge base about giftedness.
- Be willing to give your child's school or classroom your time and talents - not just your critiques and suggestions.
- If you wish to talk with your child's teacher, make an appointment and tell the teacher in advance what you wish to discuss, being as specific as possible. Remember, in the hallway right after school is never the best time and place for a serious conversation. Help ensure that your advocacy will make the most difference by allowing your teacher to give you his/her full attention.
- Network with other interested parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers and community members to discover what has worked for them, what has not worked, and who in the community has been most helpful.
- Be willing to listen to other perspectives.
- Bring your sense of humor - everyone, including your child, will appreciate it.
- Be respectful of the professionals who are doing their best to educate every child, just as you are doing your best as a parent.
- Avoid becoming a hovering or "helicopter" parent - even gifted children need to develop their own sense of independence and the ability to speak for themselves in a tactful manner.
- Focus on your main issue and be willing to collaborate and compromise in order to move the conversation and next steps forward.
- Focus on your student's needs, not the "gifted" label. Teachers teach youngsters, and each student has a unique array of gifts and challenges.
- Be assertive, not adversarial - remember that you are modeling how to interact with the world for your child.
- Join gifted organizations, attend gifted education conferences, and subscribe to gifted education resources - all of these will help reassure and challenge you as well as move you in a constructive direction.

Supporting Your Gifted Child

There are many things that parent(s)/guardian(s)/guardians can do to encourage children with gifts and talents to grow more able, more curious, more compassionate and well-adjusted. You will see from these examples that these are things we want for all our children!

document that identifies the student's strengths and weaknesses, personal goals, indicators of academic growth, and avenues of parental support).

- Take time to thank your child's teacher and other school staff.

Organizations/References

The **National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)** is an organization of parents, educators, professionals, and community leaders to address the unique needs of gifted children and youth. www.nagc.org

The mission of **National Society for the Gifted and Talented** is to advance the development of gifted, talented, and high potential youth, in the United States and abroad, through opportunities, advocacy, and exemplary programs and practices. www.nsgt.org

The **Association for the Education of Gifted Underachieving Students (AEGUS)** provides a forum for ideas and interventions aimed at helping twice-exceptional students reach their full potential. www.aegus1.org

Hoagies' Gifted Education Page is a resource guide for the education of gifted children with links to many gifted education resources available on the Internet. www.hoagiesgifted.org

Montclair State University Academically Gifted and Talented Youth Program provides engaging courses designed to meet the unique intellectual and social needs of high-ability students. Gifted students in grades K-11 have an opportunity to enroll in courses delivered over nine weekends in the fall and spring, as well as a six-week summer camp. www.montclair.edu/GiftTalent/

John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth identifies and develops the talents of the most advanced K-12 learners worldwide. As part of Johns Hopkins University, CTY helps fulfill the university's mission of preparing students to make significant future contributions to our world. <http://cty.jhu.edu/>

The **Gifted Child Society** is a non-profit organization in northern New Jersey. Its mission is to provide educational enrichment and support services specifically designed for gifted children and to provide assistance to parents in raising gifted children. <http://giftedchildsociety.com/index.php>

The **New Jersey Association for Gifted Children** is the state affiliate to the National Association for Gifted Children. Its mission is to promote excellence and leadership in gifted education through appropriate programs, resource networks and community advocacy. www.njagc.org

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children - A worldwide network of educators, scholars, researchers, parents, educational institutions, and others interested in research and information on the gifted. <http://www.worldgifted.org/>

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How does *New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.)* define a student who is gifted and talented?

New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:8-3.1 defines students who are gifted and talented as those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability in one or more content areas when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

2. How should districts identify students who are gifted and talented?

The *N.J.A.C.* requires that students be compared to their chronological peers in the local school district. The New Jersey Department of Education has not established state-level criteria for identifying students who are gifted, such as mandated tests or assessments, grade point averages, or IQ scores. Local school districts must use **multiple measures** to identify students.

3. What does *N.J.A.C.* mean by "multiple measures?"

According to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:8-3., district boards of education must make provisions for an ongoing K-12 identification process for gifted and talented students that includes **multiple measures**. Some examples might include, but are not limited to, the following: achievement test scores; grades; student performance or products; intelligence testing; and parent, student, and/or teacher recommendation. Local school districts should ensure that the identification methodology is developmentally appropriate, nondiscriminatory, and related to the programs and services offered (e.g., using math achievement to identify students for a math program).

4. When should districts identify students for giftedness?

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)5 ii requires district boards of education to **provide appropriate K-12 educational services for gifted and talented students**. Therefore, the identification process and appropriate educational challenges must begin in kindergarten or upon entrance to the school or district. Local school districts are not obligated to identify students prior to their enrollment in the public

grades of that school district. Parents/guardians should contact their local school district to find out more information about the referral process.

Services / Programs

10. What services must a district provide?

According to *N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1*, all public school districts must have a board-approved gifted and talented identification process and provide services for identified students enrolled in the grades of that school district. The regulations require that identification and services be made available to students in grades K-12.

11. What types of instructional accommodations must be made for students identified as gifted and talented?

N.J.A.C. requires that district boards of education provide appropriate K-12 services for students identified as gifted and talented. This includes appropriate curricular and instructional modifications indicating content, process, products, and/or learning environments. District boards of education must also consider the [PreK-Grade 12 National Gifted Program Standards](#) of the National Association for Gifted Children in developing programs for gifted and talented students. The standards are available at www.nagc.org.

12. Does the state require districts to use a specific program or model for elementary or middle-level students?

The state does not require a particular program or model. Program models might include, but are not limited to, pull-out programs, classroom-based differentiated instruction, acceleration, flexible pacing, compacted curricula, distance learning, advanced classes, or individualized programs.

13. As part of an accelerated approach, can middle school students take high school courses and receive credit towards high school graduation?

This is a local district decision. Every school district in New Jersey is required to have an Option 2 policy. According to *N.J.A.C. 6A: 8-5.1 a (2) ii* district boards of education must establish a process for granting of credits through successful completion of assessments that verify student achievement in meeting or exceeding the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLs) at the high school level. Such

district. For information regarding services available in a particular district, please contact the district or check its website. Contact information on schools and districts is available in the [school directory](#). You may also find out more about gifted education in New Jersey on the [NJ Association for Gifted Children's website](#).

19. How should gifted services be documented on a student's transcript or report card?

Student performance should be documented as in any other course using grades, narratives, or other means.

20. What should a parent/guardian do if he or she is not satisfied with the services that his or her child is receiving?

A parent/guardian may want to begin by reviewing the information that the district has provided regarding the gifted and talented services that it offers. This information may be found in the student handbook or district website. To ask questions or discuss the services currently being provided, a parent/guardian may want to reach out to his/her child's teachers or school counselor. If there are further concerns, he or she can contact a school or district administrator. If the issues are still not resolved, a parent/guardian can put the concerns in writing to the district administration with a copy to the [county superintendent](#).

22. Does the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* provide specific funding for students who are identified as gifted and talented?

ESSA funding goes directly to districts. The NJDOE will provide guidance support to help districts use *ESSA* funds to better meet student and educator needs, which may include supporting or expanding gifted and talented programs or providing professional learning opportunities to teachers of students identified as gifted and talented.