

Gifted and Talented Students

DEFINITIONS

Gifted and Talented Students – that category of students who are identified as possessing demonstrated or potential ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, creative or divergent thinking, psychosocial or leadership skills, or in the visual or performing arts.

Primary Talent Pool - a group of primary students informally selected as having characteristics and behaviors of a high potential learner and further diagnosed using a series of informal and formal measures to determine differentiated service delivery needs during their stay in the primary program.

Students with Disabilities – Those students who are identified as disabled according to definitions used by the state department of education shall be considered for dual identification.

Disadvantaged – operating under conditions detrimental to normal cognitive or affective growth due to socioeconomic limitations, cultural factors, geographic isolation, or various combinations of these factors to a degree that requires special considerations.

Underachieving – development of a gap between a student's potential ability and demonstrated achievement to a degree that there is an overall diminished ability to achieve at expected levels.

Gifted Student Services Plan (GSSP) – an educational plan that matches a formally identified student's interests, needs, and abilities to differentiated service options and serves a communication vehicle between parents and school personnel.

Informal Selection – process by which a student in the primary program is documented as having the characteristics and behaviors of a high potential learner in one (1) or more categories using a series of informal measures for the purpose of determining eligibility for the Primary Talent Pool.

Formal Identification – process by which a student in grades 4-12 is identified and diagnosed as having gifted characteristics and behaviors using a combination of criteria specific to one (1) or more categories of giftedness and by which may be determine eligible for various of services in each category in which the student meets eligibility.

IDENTIFICATION

Annually, teachers will be asked to submit data listing characteristics of students they believe to be gifted or talented. The District shall systematically collect data that will provide the target population of candidates for services in the following grade span groupings:

Primary Talent Pool (Kindergarten – Grade 3)

Each school having primary students shall establish a talent pool of students who qualify for instruction in the gifted program. School personnel shall take into consideration environmental, cultural, and disabling conditions which may mask a child's true abilities that lead to exclusion of otherwise eligible students, such as:

- a. any student who qualifies as an exceptional child as defined in KRS 157.200;
- b. any student who qualifies as disadvantaged; and
- c. any student who qualifies as underachieving.

Gifted and Talented Students**IDENTIFICATION (CONTINUED)**

The students in the primary talent pool shall be identified in the following manner and shall include a minimum of three (3) of the following indicators of student performance:

- a. Diagnostic data;
- b. Collection of evidence and data demonstrating student performance
- c. Behavioral checklists specific to gifted categories;
- d. Anecdotal records;
- e. Classroom observations;
- f. Available formal test data; and
- g. Other valid and reliable documentation

Primary Talent Pool (Kindergarten – Grade 3)

Normed measures shall not be used for the purpose of eliminating eligibility for services to a child in the talent pool. However, normed measures may be used for diagnosing the level of instructional service needed by a student and for evaluation of student progress.

In the event assessment data is needed, the parent or guardian will receive a permission slip requesting authorization for identification of the child prior to administering any normed measure. The permission slip must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the school.

Gifted & talented Program (QUEST) Grades 4 – 12

To qualify for the gifted and talented program in grades four (4) through twelve (12), the student shall meet the criteria in a minimum of one (1) gifted and talented category. Leadership (at the high school level only) and Visual and Performing Arts may be considered on their own merits.

To qualify for consideration in grades four (4) through twelve (12) shall be as indicated below. A minimum of three (3) indicators of student performance must be considered.

INDICATORS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

General intellectual ability means possessing:

- a. Either the potential or demonstrated ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in general intellectual ability, which is usually reflected in extraordinary performance in a variety of cognitive areas, such as abstract reasoning, logical reasoning, social awareness, memory, nonverbal ability and the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information; and
- b. A consistently outstanding mental capacity as compared to children of ones age, experience, or environment.
- c. If a student scores low on a formal group measure of academic strengths, yet other factors show potential, the District shall administer an individual mental ability test.

Gifted and Talented Students**INDICATORS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)****I. General Intellectual Ability**

Evidence of general intellectual ability must include:

- a. A composite/full scale score of 129 or higher on a test of intellectual ability on two (2) administrations. The General Ability Index may be considered in the event of discrepancies.

AND at least two (2) of the following;

- b. continuous progress data;
- c. observation of applied advance reasoning ability as documented by teacher recommendation;
- d. inventory checklists of behaviors specific to gifted categories;
- e. anecdotal records, including work samples.

II. Specific Academic Aptitude

Specific academic aptitude means possessing either potential or demonstrated ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in a specific academic area (math, language arts, science, social studies) significantly beyond the age, experience or environment of one's chronological peers.

If a student scores low on a formal group measure of academic strengths, yet other factors show potential, the District shall administer another standardized achievement test.

Evidence of specific academic ability must include:

- a. A score at or above the 97th percentile consistently for at least two (2) (consecutive or non-consecutive) years on a nationally normed or standardized achievement test, in one (1) or more subject test scores and at the 95th percentile consistently for at least two (2) (consecutive or non-consecutive) years on local norms. When considering benchmark assessments such as Star Enterprise, MAP, etc., scores must be at the 97th percentile and the 95th percentile on local norms in Reading/Language and/or Math on two (2) out of three (3) District-wide administrations within a school year;

AND at least two (2) of the following:

- b. continuous progress data as documented;
- c. observation of applied ability as documented by teacher(s) recommendation;
- d. inventory checklist of behaviors specific to gifted categories;
- e. anecdotal records, including work samples.

Gifted and Talented Students**INDICATORS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)****III. Creativity**

Creative or divergent thinking ability means possessing either potential or demonstrated ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in creative thinking and divergent approaches to conventional tasks as evidenced by innovative or creative reasoning, advanced insight and imagination, and solving problems in unique ways.

Creativity shall be determined through the use of informal or formal assessment measures which focus on determining a child's capacity for originality of thought, fluency, elaboration, and flexibility of thought.

Evidence of creative thinking ability must include:

- a. checklists and/or documented observations targeting creative behavior;
- b. documentation and samples of original ideas or products and problem solving;
- c. observation of applied ability as documented by teacher(s) recommendation;
- d. anecdotal records, including work samples.

IV. Leadership or Psychosocial Abilities

Psychosocial or leadership ability means possessing either potential or demonstrated ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in social skills and interpersonal qualities such as poise, effective oral and written expression, managerial ability, and the ability, or vision, to set goals and organize others to successfully reach those goals.

Leadership or psychosocial abilities shall be determined by a variety of informal measures and the documentation of the willingness of a student to assume leadership roles in class, in a student organization, and in a community activity.

Evidence of psychosocial or leadership ability must include:

- a. observation of applied ability as documented by the teacher's recommendation
- b. behavioral checklists and/or observations targeting leadership behavior;
- c. portfolio of leadership roles in class, student organization and community service that are validated by the regular classroom teacher(s);
- d. offices held by the student in extracurricular activities and class government;
- e. observation of applied ability as documented by teacher(s) recommendation; and
- f. anecdotal records.

V. Visual and Performing Arts

Visual or performing arts ability means possessing either potential or demonstrated ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in the visual or performing arts and demonstrating the potential for outstanding aesthetic production, accomplishment, or creativity in visual art, dance, music, or drama.

Gifted and Talented Students**INDICATORS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)****V. Visual and Performing Arts (continued)**

Visual and performing arts talent shall be determined through evidence of performance which includes:

A student must meet the appropriate criteria through the audition process for a specific area (visual art, music, dance, drama) AND at least two (2) of the following

- a. awards or critiques of performance, if available;
- b. portfolio of visual or performing arts ability;
- c. letters of recommendation;
- d. rating scales;
- e. observation of applied ability as documented by teacher(s) recommendation.

General

If scores on standardized testing are not consistent over multiple assessments, the student shall not be identified until additional data is obtained and the student scores consistently at the 97 percentile for academic performance or a score of 129 for intellectual ability.

The Fort Thomas Independent Schools will honor identification from another Kentucky public school district upon receipt of documentation, verifying that the student meets the previous district's criteria for eligibility within a gifted category; however, service options may need to be adjusted for students enrolling from districts with less stringent qualifying criteria.

A student who moves from another state to Kentucky must meet the identification requirements according to Kentucky's regulations. Student records with evidence or qualifying test data may be considered, but identification does not transfer from another state to Kentucky.

Evaluation of new students entering the school system will follow the procedures as described for grades 4 – 12.

Once a student has met eligibility criteria and is accepted into the QUEST program, re-evaluation is not necessary for continuation within the program. Once a student is admitted, he/she remains in the QUEST program until the end of his/her 12th grade year.

School personnel shall take into consideration environmental, cultural, and disabling conditions which may mask a child's true abilities that lead to exclusion of otherwise eligible students, such as:

- a. any student who qualifies as an exceptional child as defined in KRS 157.200;
- b. any student who qualifies as disadvantaged; and
- c. any student who qualifies as underachieving

Gifted and Talented Students**ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES (K-12)**

Annually, teachers will be provided information on how to recommend new students for the program. New referrals shall be identified according to the standards established for each grade span.

The Fort Thomas Independent School District shall appoint a Selection and Placement Committee which shall have four (4) purposes:

1. To provide feedback on the adequacy of the District's identification and diagnostic procedure;
2. To ensure that a variety of views are heard during the selection and placement process;
3. To determine which students meet identification criteria and which services, at what level, shall be included in each identified student's gifted and talented student services plan; and
4. To help provide communication and support in the schools and community.

The Gifted and Talented Selection and Placement Committee, appointed by the Superintendent/designee, shall consist, at a minimum, of the Gifted/Talented Coordinator; gifted education teachers; one (1) principal; one (1) counselor; the District psychologist and at least five (5) certified teachers who represent all schools, grade levels and the arts. The Gifted/Talented Coordinator shall serve as the chairperson.

At the beginning of each school year, the Gifted and Talented Selection Committee will review and analyze the information collected, and recommend student placement.

The Gifted and Talented Selection and Placement Committee will accept new referrals at their regularly scheduled meetings.

SERVICE DELIVERY

With the exception of academic competition, performances, and extra-curricular offerings, services will be provided during regular school hours. Identified gifted and talented students are receiving services to meet their needs when they are not present in the classroom; therefore, they shall only be required to make up sample work and/or homework assignments that, if needed, reflect that day's activities.

Multiple service delivery options will be provided at all levels. Services shall also be provided by the regular classroom teacher which shall allow for continuous progress through a differentiated curriculum and flexible grouping and regrouping based on the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.

In the primary program, gifted program teachers will collaborate with teachers to implement cluster grouping and differentiated study experiences with the identified students.

Gifted and Talented Students**SERVICE DELIVERY (CONTINUED)**

In grades four (4) through twelve (12), multiple service delivery options shall include a minimum of three (3) options from the following list:

Mentorship	Distance Learning
Independent Study	Acceleration
Advanced Placement	Honors Programs
Collaborative Teaching	Resource Services
Counseling Services	Seminars
Extra-curricular Activities	Travel Study
Cluster Grouping	Consultation Services
Pull-out Services	Differentiation
Regular Classroom Enrichment	

Services selected may differ in each grade level and shall meet the needs, interests and abilities of identified students. For students in grades four (4) through twelve (12), the service delivery options for students identified as gifted and talented in language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science will at minimum include accelerated learning or advanced coursework AND resource service delivered in pull-out or other appropriate instructional setting.

Once a student is identified as eligible for gifted and talented services, the identification shall remain in effect throughout an educational placement Kentucky public school. However, services may change depending on grade level, recommendation of the classroom teacher(s)/school administrator/teacher of the gifted, or parental request. A parent declining services must submit a written statement or request.

Should a child experience difficulty in the gifted and talented program, parent(s) should communicate with the gifted program teacher, or the gifted program coordinator. If the situation is not resolved, the gifted program coordinator, the principal, the gifted program teacher and the child's regular teachers shall meet with the parent(s) to work toward an appropriate solution.

If the gifted student has a disability, the student's Admissions and Release Committee shall determine if placement is correct. The gifted teacher shall provide the Admissions and Release committee a description of the student's progress in the program.

CURRICULUM – ADVANCED COURSEWORK/ACCELERATED LEARNING

A comprehensive framework or course of study for children and youth who are diagnosed as possessing gifted characteristics, behaviors and talent shall be based on a district or school's curricula required to meet the goals established in KRS 158.6451. A teacher shall differentiate, replace, supplement, or modify curricula to facilitate high level attainment of the learning goals and to assist students identified and diagnosed as gifted and talented to further develop their individual interest, needs and abilities.

Curriculum content shall include instructional strategies related to both cognitive and affective learning consistent with the core content. Materials and activities shall be those designed to challenge the gifted learner, accommodate different learning styles, and match student identification.

Gifted and Talented Students**PERSONNEL**

The Gifted Education Coordinator designated by the Superintendent shall meet those certification requirements necessary for serving in that position and shall oversee the District's Gifted and Talented Program.

Teachers providing direct gifted/talented services to gifted students for more than one-half of the school day shall have appropriate certification.

All teachers shall be provided professional development training on identifying and working with gifted and talented students.

BUDGET/FUNDING

The District shall allocate seventy-five percent (75%) of the state gifted funding to the category of personnel, including salary and fixed charges.

The Gifted Education Coordinator shall be responsible for budget decisions concerning the state grant for the gifted and talented program and for ensuring that all statutes and administrative regulations are met as required to receive state funding for the gifted and talented program.

Funding for any services beyond the state allocation shall be from District allocations as determined in the District budget.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Data shall be collected for purposes of evaluating effectiveness of the gifted and talented program in the areas of student progress, community involvement, cost effectiveness, incorporation of gifted education into the regular school program overall quality of instruction, and attitudes of student, parents and teachers toward the program.

A Gifted/Talented Student Services Plan (GSSP) shall be developed for each identified student. The GSSP is an educational plan that matches a formally identified gifted student's interests, needs, and abilities to differentiated service options and serves as the communication vehicle between the parents and school personnel. A parent or guardian of an identified student shall be notified annually of services included in his/her child's gifted and talented student services plan and specific procedures to follow in requesting a change in services. School personnel shall report to a parent or guardian the progress of his/her child related to the gifted and talented student services plan at least once each semester.

Assessment of student progress shall be based on portfolios, special projects, classroom performance, and participation.

Gifted and Talented Students**PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS AND GRIEVANCES**

Parents/guardians may submit a written appeal regarding the identification or appropriate provision of services offered through the Primary Talent Pool (K-3) or the gifted and talented program (4-12).

1. The appealing party shall submit a letter to the Gifted and Talented Coordinator outlining why he/she believes that an exception should be made, an identification may have been missed, or services should be amended. The letter should provide a detailed explanation.
2. The Gifted and Talented Coordinator shall compile a student profile and present that along with the petition or appeal to the Selection Committee. The profile shall include a recommendation with substantiating evidence from the child's present and previous teachers.
3. The Selection Committee shall hear appeals as needed and make a recommendation. A written response shall be sent to the appealing party within one (1) week of the meeting.
4. If the Selection Committee does not uphold the appeal, the parent may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent, who must respond in writing within two (2) weeks of the appeal.
5. Should the Superintendent uphold the decision of the Selection Committee, the appealing party may petition the Board, which will have the final decision in the case.

PARENT PERMISSION

If the student is identified for the gifted and talented program, he/she may participate in the program as soon as the parent or guardian signs the permission to enroll form.