

# GIFTED IDENTIFICATION 101



FEBRUARY 7, 2019

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “GIFTED”?

“Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.” (*Elementary and Secondary Education Act*)

“Outstanding intellectual and creative ability, the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the general education program.” This applies to “school age” children, grades K-12. (*PA Chapter 16*)

Gifted learners are found in all cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic groups.

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “GIFTED”?

Per *PA Chapter 16*, your child may be eligible for gifted education if your child:

- Is a year or more above grade achievement level in one or more subjects
- Demonstrates an observed or measured rate of acquisition/ retention of new academic content or skills that reflects gifted ability
- Demonstrates achievement, performance, or expertise in one or more academic areas
- Shows early and measured use of high level thinking skills, academic creativity, leadership skills, intense academic interest areas, communication skills, foreign language aptitude, or technology expertise
- Has documented, observed, validated, or assessed evidence that intervening factors such as English as a second language, disability, gender, race bias, or socio/cultural deprivation are masking gifted ability

## WHY IS GIFTED EDUCATION IMPORTANT?

“Bright kids go to school and never encounter anything that makes them extend effort. They grow up thinking being smart means they don’t have to work very hard. The first time they encounter something difficult they think they are not smart enough.” *(Sally Reiz Renzulli)*

- Gifted students need to be challenged and supported to fully develop their abilities.
- Gifted students who are not challenged by the material in a traditional classroom often develop poor self-esteem, or overly-inflated self esteem. They may also act out, use alcohol or drugs as they get older to "fit in", or otherwise make destructive behavioral choices.

# THREE PATHS TO GIFTED IDENTIFICATION

Talk with your child's teacher(s) and/or Principal!

- Path 1 - Teacher recommendation for gifted screening
  - Guidance Counselor administers the KBIT-2 and reviews results with your school's Child Study Team, who determines if a full gifted evaluation should be conducted
- Path 2 - Byproduct of a Special Ed evaluation
  - Sometimes an evaluation for special ed also indicates giftedness – 2E/Dual Exceptionality
- Path 3 - Parent request for gifted evaluation
  - Chapter 16 requires any reasonable parent request for gifted evaluation to result in a full Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) – NOT a screening

## PARENT REQUEST PATH

- Parent submits a written request for gifted evaluation (sample letter available on our website). One request may be made “per term”.
- District sends Permission to Evaluate (PTE) for parent signature, along with several forms/questionnaires for parent input – BASC, SIGS, developmental history. You may also share any additional info which you would like to see considered. Your child’s teachers will also provide input.
- Within 60 calendar days from return of the PTE (excluding summer vacation) School Psychologist administers IQ test – currently using the WISC-V
- Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMDT) meets to conduct the GMDE, which results in the Gifted Written Report (GWR) and a determination is made
- Parents are notified of the determination and receive the GWR

# CRITERIA FOR GIFTED EVALUATION

- IQ of 130 or higher or other factors (listed below) that indicate gifted ability (§16.21(d))
- Gifted ability cannot be based on IQ score alone. If the IQ score is lower than 130, your child may be admitted to gifted programs when other conditions strongly indicate gifted ability.
- Other factors to be considered include:
  - Achievement test scores that are a year or more above grade level in at least one subject
  - Observed or measured acquisition/retention rates of new academic content that reflect gifted ability
  - Achievement, performance, or expertise in one or more academic areas that demonstrates a high level of accomplishment
  - Higher level thinking skills, academic creativity, and intense academic interests
  - Documented or observed evidence that intervening factors are masking gifted ability

## CRITERIA FOR GIFTED EVALUATION

No one test or type of test may be used as the only measure to determine giftedness. Multiple criteria is required for determining eligibility for gifted services for *all* students. (§16.22(g)(3)(i)).

## IF YOUR CHILD IS FOUND *NOT GIFTED*

- Review the GWR
- If you think the determination is in error – know that it is acceptable to ask questions, and have a follow up discussion(s). DO NOT sign the Notice of Recommended Action (NORA) unless/until you understand and agree.
- Contact the District Office for further information.
- If you feel that Chapter 16 was not followed, contact the State's Office for Dispute Resolution at <https://odr-pa.org/> or 1-800-879-2301 to get advice and support. Additionally, you may have legal recourse via a due process hearing.
- Remember you can still expect to work with your child's teachers to address any concerns and discuss ways to meet the child's needs in the regular classroom.

## IF YOUR CHILD *IS* FOUND GIFTED

- You will receive a written request to attend a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) meeting, to be held within 30 days of receiving the GWR.
- Attendees should include: parent(s), current teacher(s), the gifted teacher, and typically the Supervisor of Special Ed (or other District rep). The Principal, your child, or others may also attend.
- The purpose of the GIEP meeting is to discuss the plan – the purpose of the plan is outline how the district intends to provide education that:
  - Is based on the unique needs of the gifted student, not just on the student's classification.
  - Enables the gifted student to participate in acceleration or enrichment programs, or both, as appropriate, and to receive services according to the student's intellectual and academic abilities and needs.

## KEY COMPONENTS OF A GIEP

- Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP) – current test scores and metrics
- Annual Goals - what your child can be expected to learn during the year
- Short-term learning outcomes - the sequential steps your child must take in order to reach these goals

The GIEP will also include specially designed instruction and support services that will be provided to your child, ways for determining whether the goals and learning outcomes are being met, the names and positions of the GIEP team participants, the date of the meeting, projected dates for initiation, anticipated frequency, locations, and anticipated duration of gifted education.

The GIEP should apply to all subjects, not just the “gifted program” or SIP/GT.

## NOTES ON EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT

The placement must:

- Enable the provision of specially designed instruction based on the student's need and ability.
- Ensure the student is able to benefit meaningfully from the rate, level, and manner of instruction.
- Provide opportunities to participate in acceleration or enrichment, or both. These services must go beyond the program the student would receive as part of his or her general education.

## NOW THAT YOU HAVE THE LABEL... 5 KEYS TO SUCCESS

1. Know that gifted parenting is like regular ol' parenting – the job is never done!
2. Talk with your child and his/her teachers – listen often, and build partnerships.
3. Don't be afraid to ask questions of the gifted (SIP/GT) teacher!  
Our district has EXCELLENT gifted teachers who are happy to provide guidance and expertise. They can help bridge gaps between parents and regular classroom teachers and pull in other district resources when needed.
4. Remember that "gifted" doesn't always mean easy As – sometimes academic strength exceeds executive function or social/emotional skills. When a gifted child is struggling, he/she needs support, not less challenge.
5. Join BADGE! Go to [www.bensalemgifted.org](http://www.bensalemgifted.org) or email [bensalemgifted@gmail.com](mailto:bensalemgifted@gmail.com)

## Q&A

We are so thankful to have these two great district resources here tonight!

- Mr. Brian Cohen, Director of Special Services
- Dr. Andrea Hiralall, School Psychologist