

# Toms River Regional Schools



## K-12 Gifted and Talented Program Guide

## Table of Contents

Toms River Regional Schools Mission and Vision Statements.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Elementary Gifted and Talented Program Description and Structure.....	6
Referral, Screening, and Identification Procedures and Indexes.....	8
Toms River Regional Schools Gifted and Talented Policy.....	21
Toms River Regional Schools Gifted and Talented Appeals Process.....	22
NJDOE FAQs.....	23

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## **Toms River Regional Schools Mission**

Toms River Regional Schools is a community of dedicated students, professional staff, and supportive community members. Together we are committed to providing an innovative and rigorous educational experience that:

- aligns with and exceeds New Jersey Student Learning Standards
- respects the dignity and safety of every person in the school community
- recognizes and nurtures the unique talents, interests, and experiences of each individual
- develops students into lifelong learners who are socially responsible, confident, value diversity, and are able to adapt to the present and future challenges of a complex world.

## **Toms River Regional Schools Vision**

Toms River Regional Schools are, above all, student centered. We recognize the classroom as a place where all students:

1. feel safe to learn, work together, and express themselves respectfully;
2. are encouraged to discover and develop their interests and abilities, no matter what their present level of performance;
3. are offered experiences in new and wider fields of knowledge that can make life richer and more satisfying.

We understand that all of a person's experiences influence that person's development. The curriculum of Toms River Regional Schools, therefore, embraces pupil opportunities-- classroom instruction, extracurricular activities, field experiences, social functions, and community projects-- that embrace the whole child. Recognizing and encouraging student choice and voice are fundamentally to achieving this vision.

Being a lifelong learner means not only developing habits of mind that include analysis, introspection, critical thinking, and problem solving, but also applying a mindset that ensures personal future readiness and becoming a socially responsible citizen: adaptability, flexibility, mindfulness, empathy, tolerance, open-mindedness, and grit. The district is committed to helping students strengthen these traits through authentic learning opportunities that connect them with their community and the larger world.

Many closely interrelated factors determine the degree to which we can create a positive learning environment. We acknowledge the importance of physical surroundings, but even more important are human relationships. Supportive, caring, and professionally bound connections between students and staff help promote growth and a sense of belonging.

## Introduction

Toms River Regional Schools is committed to nurturing every student’s unique talents, interests, and abilities. In order to fulfill our mission, our staff members get to know every student both academically and personally. We integrate our students’ interests into the learning experiences that our students participate in within our classrooms. Our staff members utilize formal and informal assessment data to plan meaningful learning activities that allow our students to reach just beyond their current level of understanding, which creates a strong academic foundation while also fostering the development of strong self-confidence in our learners.

Our students show us their unique talents and abilities each day. For students that demonstrate specific academic strengths, our elementary curriculum contains enrichment suggestions and increasingly complex questions and activities that are utilized by our faculty members within our elementary instructional model to provide students with differentiated learning opportunities in all content areas each day. Our comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of our diverse learners allows us to maximize the academic, social, and emotional growth of each student as they participate in appropriate academic challenges in our classrooms. Bright learners thrive in the differentiated classroom, whereas truly gifted learners, who make up about 5% of the school population, may require additional modifications to the academic program to meet their unique needs.

<b>Bright Child</b>	<b>Gifted Learner</b>
Knows the answers	Asks the questions
Is interested	Is highly curious
Is attentive	Is mentally and physically involved
Has good ideas	Has wild, silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well
Answers the questions	Discusses in detail; elaborates
Is in the top groups	Functions beyond the group
Listens with interest	Shows strong feeling and opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
6-8 Repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences
Completes the assignments	Initiate projects
Is receptive to instruction	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates a new design
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Technician	Inventor
Good at memorization	Good guesser
Enjoys straightforward instruction	Thrives on complexity
Is alert	Is keenly observant
Is pleased with own learning	Is highly self-critical

By: Janice Szabo

This program guide has been developed to provide our community with information about the enrichment and accelerated learning opportunities that exist for Toms River Regional elementary students, but we continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum, instructional model, and programs to ensure that we are responsive to student needs in order to maximize our students’ achievement and personal growth.

**Elementary Gifted and Talented  
Program Description and Structure**

<b>Tier 1</b> <b>Schoolwide Enrichment and Differentiation for ALL students</b>
<p><b>English Language Arts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gradual Release Instructional Model</li> <li>● Leveled Classroom Libraries</li> <li>● Daily “On-Level” Reading/Writing and Application of Grade Level Skills</li> <li>● Small Group Differentiated Learning Activities and Centers</li> <li>● Guided Reading</li> <li>● K-2 Primary Education Thinking Skills</li> <li>● K-1 Reading Eggs</li> <li>● K-5 Exact Path</li> <li>● K-5 MobyMax</li> </ul> <p><b>Mathematics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Small Group Differentiated Learning Activities and Centers</li> <li>● K-2 Primary Education Thinking Skills</li> <li>● K-5 iReady</li> </ul> <p><b>STEM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Differentiated Learning Activities During Science Instruction</li> <li>● Science and Engineering Problem-Based Learning Activities</li> <li>● K-2 Primary Education Thinking Skills</li> <li>● Computer Coding and Activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Fine Arts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Differentiated Learning Activities in Music and Arts Classes</li> <li>● K-2 Primary Education Thinking Skills</li> <li>● Chorus</li> <li>● Band and Orchestra</li> <li>● Art Club</li> <li>● Youth Art Month</li> </ul>
<b>Tier II</b> <b>Enrichment and/or Acceleration for Academically Advanced Students</b>
<p><b>Kindergarten through Second Grade:</b> Enrichment is provided for all of our students in kindergarten and grades 1 &amp; 2 through the use of the resource, Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS). PETS consists of three lesson types that provide us with an objective means for identifying students’ strengths. Each sequence of lessons focuses on one of three types of</p>

thinking skills: convergent, divergent, and visual/spatial perception. All of our kindergarten and grade 1 teachers, with support from their building's gifted and talented teacher, teach two PETS lessons per trimester. Grade 2 teachers teach three PETS lessons per trimester. Students that exhibit strengths in one of the thinking skills work with our gifted and talented teacher in a small group to further develop their strength(s). Our classroom teachers utilize the information gathered within these lessons to plan for differentiated learning activities in all subject areas.

**Third and Fourth Grade:** Qualified students are invited to participate in small group English Language Arts and Mathematics enrichment courses. Each course is offered one period per week for approximately 10-12 weeks. English Language Arts enrichment is offered for the first half of the school year, and Mathematics enrichment is offered during the second half of the school year.

- **Grade 3 English Language Arts Enrichment:** Students work in a small group with our gifted and talented teacher to develop speaking and listening skills, learning how to apply public speaking skills, active listening, and the art of debate using text evidence.
- **Grade 4 English Language Arts Enrichment:** Students participate in a small group book club, reading and responding to both literature and informational texts as they learn to defend their thinking about current topics. Participants will also learn how to determine the validity of websites and online news while interacting in the digital world.

**Grades 3 and 4 Mathematics Enrichment** begins with an introduction to growth mindset, learning that mistakes are part of the learning process which help us to be competent mathematicians. Qualified students will participate in project-based learning activities that provide opportunities to deeply explore and apply both grade level and above grade level mathematics standards.

**Grade 5 English Language Arts Book Club:** Qualified fifth grade students are invited to participate in a small group English Language Arts book club that is offered one period per week for the first half of the school year. Students will independently read an above level literature text as well as paired informational texts and will engage in online and face to face dialogue with their peers demonstrating understanding of the vocabulary, theme, characterization, and structure of the texts.

**Grade 5 Advanced Math:** Qualified students will participate in a replacement mathematics course which compacts both the grade 5 and the major work of the grade 6 mathematics curricula. This course is rigorous, fast-paced, and designed for students that exhibit mathematical talent, perseverance, and intrinsic motivation. Participation may support readiness for advanced math courses in grades six through twelve and pave the way for careers in science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics.

## **Secondary (6-12)**

In English Language Arts (ELA), Toms River's gifted and talented (Pinnacle) students' reading and writing skills are honed in a variety of ways. The availability of high level materials, such as classroom library texts, is paramount to reading growth; therefore, Pinnacle teachers' classroom libraries are likely to include classic as well as contemporary titles that are challenging both qualitatively as well as quantitatively. High level questioning is implemented before, during, and after reading while in whole group instruction or during one-on-one reading conferences.

Pinnacle instruction facilitates critical thinking among students, and activities may include literature circles, choice boards, cooperative learning with flexible grouping, and independent projects. Spelling, grammar, and word usage is studied and remediated through the context of students' writing. Students are provided opportunities throughout the year to write for different purposes, in various writing styles, and for diverse audiences.

**Our Advanced Math program** at the intermediate schools offers students the opportunity to accelerate in mathematics through the exploration of all 6th grade and half of the 7th grade standards in Grade 6, the remainder of the 7th grade and all of the 8th grade standards in Grade 7 and then Algebra 1 in Grade 8. Students in Grade 8 are expected to take the HS Algebra 1 NJSLA as a result of enrollment in this content at that level.

**Our Pinnacle Math program** at the intermediate schools offers the same mathematics opportunity as Advanced Math with the addition of acceleration in all other core academic subjects.

**Our Geometry track program** provides an extremely small number of students who exhibit exceptional aptitude in the mathematics field the opportunity to learn 7th & 8th grade standards in Grade 6, Algebra 1 in Grade 7 and HS Geometry in Grade 8. Students in Grade 7 are expected to take the HS Algebra 1 NJSLA as a result of enrollment in this content at that level.

## **Advanced Placement (AP) Courses**

Advanced Placement courses are college-level courses designed for students who are academically advanced, self-motivated, and have a desire to be challenged. At each college's discretion, students may earn college credit or advanced standing based upon the successful completion of the AP course and its examination. AP exams are prepared and scored by the College Board. The following courses are offered in Advanced Placement:

- English (2): AP Language and Composition; AP Literature and Composition;
- Math (3): AP Calculus; AP Statistics; AP Computer Science;
- Science (5): AP Biology; AP Chemistry; AP Environmental Science; AP Physics; AP Seminar
- Social Studies (2): AP United States History; AP United States Government and Politics;
- Art (1): AP Art Studio;
- Business (1): AP Micro/Macroeconomics

## **Dual Enrollment**

The Toms River Regional Schools/Ocean County College Partnership Toms River Regional Schools offers several courses as part of a College Academy program that gives any student the opportunity to earn high school and college credits concurrently. These may be applied towards an Associate's Degree of Liberal Arts through nearby Ocean County College and many are transferable to 4-year colleges.

The following course are available\* for dual enrollment:

- AP Language and Composition (ENG 151)
- AP Literature and Composition (ENG 152)
- Precalculus Honors (MATH 191 and MATH 192)
- Introduction to Computer Science, Programming, and Applications CP (CSIT 110)
- Introduction to Computer Science, Programming, and Applications H (CSIT 165)
- STEAM Biology (Biol 161)
- Marine Science I (Biol 265)
- Honors Principles of Accounting I & II (ACCT 161 & 162)
- AP Economics (micro and macro) (ECON 151/152)
- Anatomy and Physiology (Biol 130)
- Multimedia (CSIT 131)
- Web Design (CSIT 131)
- Advanced Digital Design (CSIT 115)
- Intro to Digital Design (ENGR 181)

## **Career Academies**

Toms River Regional offers three Career Academies--“schools within schools”--at each of its high schools. Each academy has a unique curriculum that provides students with access to challenging experiences, rigorous career-oriented coursework, and exclusive resources, many of which are found nowhere else in the state. The Academies have been designed to prepare students for both specialized college programs and careers by providing high-quality experiences in nine areas, many of which allow students to earn dual credit and industry valued credentials (see CTE above). The primary function of the Academies is to model practices, pilot new courses and activities, and build teacher capacity, with the ultimate goal of rolling out career pathways from these pilots at all three high schools.

At High School North, the Arts Academy builds on a strong culture of arts-infused education, leading students to careers in the visual, digital, and performing arts, the latter of which is further subdivided into music, theatre, and video production. Students will learn not only art techniques and perspectives and connect with the regional arts community, but discover ways to effectively apply creative skills to other disciplines, a mindset much in demand in today’s job market.

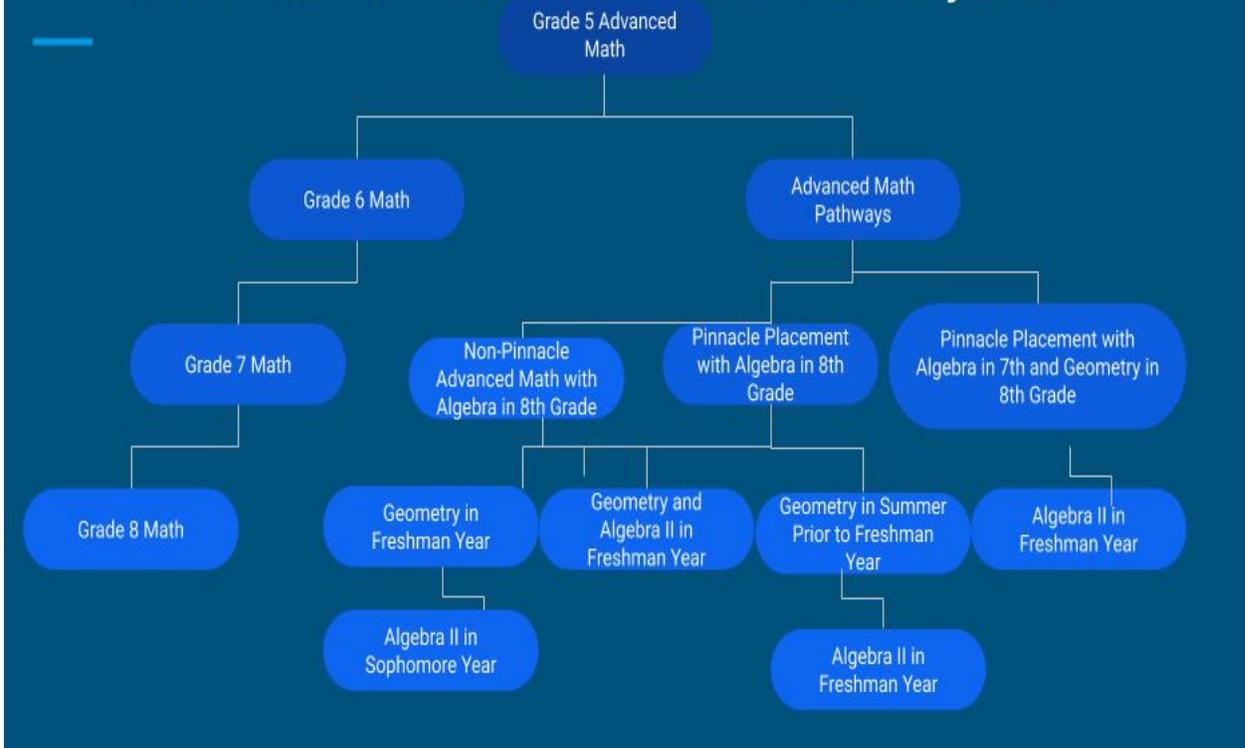
High School South is host to the district Business Academy, which offers Schools of Finance, Entrepreneurship, and Real Estate. High-level, high-earning jobs await those with 21 st -century skills in economics, finance, marketing, real estate, and entrepreneurship. This academy is a launching pad for students interested in the Wall Street big leagues, selling and marketing

products and services, or starting their own business. Most classes are housed in our Business & Real Estate Incubator, a learning space with state of the art presentation tools and financial information technology. Students learn through authentic field experiences involving real-world problem solving tasks and interactions with guests from various business industries.

The STEAM Academy (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) at High School East provides courses of study in Engineering, Biomedicine, and Environmental Sustainability. The STEAM academy focuses on careers in marine science (in the newly renovated Poseidon Lab in downtown TR), environmental studies, medicine, engineering, and advanced manufacturing, to name a few. Components of the School of Biomedicine are supported by a partnership with RWJ Barnabas Health.

## What are the opportunities that exist for students at middle school and beyond?

# What are the opportunities that exist for students at middle school and beyond?



\* AP Courses

\*\* Dual Enrollment

\*\*\* Career Academies

## **Referral, Screening, and Identification Procedures**

Toms River Regional Schools utilizes multiple measures when identifying students for participation in gifted and talented enrichment and acceleration opportunities. Qualification for each program is determined independent of previous participation.

Kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 2 students are screened for talents with specific thinking skills through implementation of the Primary Education Thinking Skills program. Additionally, students' academic abilities are continuously measured using district-wide assessments and rubrics.

Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 are identified for participation in small group pull-out gifted and talented programs using a combination of factors including habits of mind, standardized test scores, classroom performance, as well as district assessments.

Students that are new to Toms River Regional Schools will be assessed to determine eligibility for gifted and talented programming within the first trimester of enrollment. This time frame allows our new students to become acclimated to the new school environment while our teachers get to know their interests and academic abilities. New students who previously participated in gifted and talented programming in another district may be invited to participate in Toms River's gifted and talented program after a review of the records and the collection of assessment data.

### **Kindergarten PETS Identification Criteria**

**CONVERGENT/ANALYTICAL THINKING** During each lesson, look for students who demonstrate logical reasoning by identifying and using clues to determine the correct solution to a problem. They tend to see the interrelationships between clues and defer judgment until all clues have been collected. Many times they will display outside knowledge about a topic that will help them discover the solution. The ability to intuitively see the correct answer is another characteristic of students who excel at deductive/convergent thinking. Students who display much enthusiasm during the activity should be observed carefully as well.

**DIVERGENT/CREATIVE THINKING** During each lesson, look for students who can list many responses to questions or brainstorm many ideas. Not only are they fluent in their thinking, but they are also very flexible. They may have many unusual, off-beat, and creative ideas that are sometimes very humorous. These students can elaborate on their own ideas or ideas of others, often displaying an advanced vocabulary. Students who display much enthusiasm during the activity should be observed carefully as well.

**VISUAL/SPATIAL THINKING** During the whole class lesson, look for students who are able to manipulate shapes mentally in order to achieve a solution. These students have good memories for visual details. They often enjoy activities involving hands-on building of three-dimensional objects. Since these students may not be as verbal as their classmates, they may not have as much opportunity to demonstrate their talents during traditional classroom activities. They often respond best to visual images such as graphic organizers and instructional computer programs. Students who display much enthusiasm during the activity should be observed carefully as well.

## **Grades 1 and 2 PETS Identification Criteria**

**CONVERGENT THINKING** The ability to see intuitively the correct answer is one characteristic of students who excel at deductive convergent thinking. They tend to see the interrelationships between clues and defer judgment until all clues have been collected. Many times they will display outside knowledge about a topic that will help them discover the correct solution.

**DIVERGENT THINKING** Those students who excel at divergent thinking are able to list many responses to questions or brainstorm many ideas. Not only are they fluent in their thinking but are also very flexible. They tend to be original, giving off-beat and sometimes very humorous responses. These students can elaborate or expand upon an idea and because of this the flow of ideas may be interrupted. An advanced vocabulary is sometimes displayed during the divergent thinking activities.

**VISUAL/SPATIAL PERCEPTION** These students demonstrate a good memory for detail. They may not be as verbal as their classmates and therefore may not have as much opportunity to demonstrate their talents during traditional classroom activities. These students often enjoy activities involving hands-on building of three-dimensional objects from two-dimensional drawings. During class work, these students often respond best to visual images such as graphic organizers and instructional computer programs.

### **Grade 3 Mathematics Enrichment Index**

- Mid Year iReady Math Scale Score (Grade 3)
- District Benchmark(s)
- Teacher Feedback and Scoring on the Habits of Mind Rubric

\* Identified in the winter of 3rd grade

### **Grade 3 ELA Enrichment Index**

- Fountas and Pinnell Mid Year Independent Reading Level (Grade 2)
- Grade 2 ELA Content Standard Mastery
- Teacher Feedback and Scoring on the Habits of Mind Rubric

\* Identified summer prior to 3rd grade

### **Grade 4 Mathematics Enrichment Index**

- Mid Year iReady ELA Scale Score (Grade 4)
- District Benchmark(s)
- Teacher Feedback and Scoring on the Habits of Mind Rubric

\* Identified in the winter of 4th grade

### **Grade 4 ELA Enrichment Identification Index**

- Fountas and Pinnell Mid Year Independent Reading Level (Grade 3)
- Mid Year iReady ELA Scale Score (Grade 4)
- NJSLA-ELA Score (2018-2019)

\* Identified summer prior to 4th grade

### **Grade 5 ELA Enrichment Identification Index**

- Fountas and Pinnell Mid-Year Independent Reading Level (Grade 4)
- Verbal National Stanine Level and Score
- Mid Year iReady ELA Scale Score (4th Grade)
- Mid Year iReady ELA Lexile (4th Grade)
- NJSLA-ELA (2018-2019)

\* Identified summer prior to 5th grade

### **Grade 5 Advanced Math Entrance Matrix**

- Mid-Year iReady Math Scale Score (4th Grade)
  - New 5th Grade Students will take the iReady Assessment upon entry to the district
- NJSLA-Math Score (2018-2019)
- Non-Verbal SAI

\* Identified summer prior to 5th grade

### **Grade 5 Advanced Math Exit Matrix**

- BOY Math Report Card Benchmark Rubrics
- iReady Lessons Passed
- iReady Weekly Minutes

### **Secondary 6-12 Pinnacle, Advance Math and Geometry Track**

- Fountas and Pinnell Independent Reading Level
- Verbal and Non verbal National Stanine Level and Score
- iReady ELA and Math Scale Score
- iReady ELA Lexile
- NJSLA-ELA and Math
- Leadership participation
- Teacher recommendation

### **Grades 9-12 Career Academies**

- Verbal and Non verbal national stanine level and score
- Written performance tasks
- Auditions (where applicable)
- Teacher recommendation

### **Advanced Placement Courses and Dual Enrollment**

- Meet required prerequisites
-

## **District Policy 2464- GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPILS (M)**

**Date Created: January 2015**

**Date Edited: May 2017**

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.

Programs for gifted and talented students will be periodically evaluated for their continuing efficacy and adjusted accordingly.

The parent of any student identified as gifted or talented shall be consulted regarding any program designed to address the student’s particular needs.

N.J.S.A. 18A:61A-2; 18A:35-4.16

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-1.3; 6A:8-3.1(a)5

P.L. 108-382, Sec. 10201 et seq.

## **Appeal Process for Gifted & Talented Programming Participation**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal a placement decision regarding admission or dismissal from the G&T 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/or designee in accordance with Board of Education Policy 5710 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. If the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) do not receive the relief, one provision of the law states that an individual may lodge a formal complaint if he/she feels the district is not in compliance with this mandate. A complaint submitted to the executive county superintendent pursuant to this section may only allege noncompliance that has occurred within one year prior to the date that the complaint is submitted. The complaint shall include: (1) a statement that the identified school district is not in compliance with the provisions of this act, and the specific facts on which the allegation of noncompliance is based; and (2) the name, address, and contact information of the complainant. Should you wish to lodge such a complaint, please contact the Executive County Superintendent at [this](#) contact information.

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.

**New Jersey Student Learning Standards  
Gifted and Talented  
Frequently Asked Questions**

**Identification of Students who are Gifted and Talented**

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 school (e.g., three-year-olds, students enrolled in community early childhood programs or private kindergartens) or students attending nonpublic schools.

5. Since standardized assessments are not administered until grade three, how can we identify students in grades K-2?

District boards of education are required to identify students in grades K-12. The state does not require the use of standardized tests as part of the identification process. Local districts should use multiple measures to identify students who are gifted and talented (refer to question 3).

6. Must pre-k students be identified? Must a district identify students who are not age-eligible for school entrance?

The regulations are applicable to students in grades K-12 who are enrolled in a public school.

7. How can we learn more about the identification of English language learners who are gifted and talented?

The identification of English language learners as students who are gifted and talented may present some challenges. Districts should use multiple measures to identify all students who may be gifted and talented (refer to question 3). The National Association for Gifted Children has published a position statement regarding the identification of culturally and linguistically diverse students that might provide useful guidance for districts.

8. How can we learn more about the identification of students with unique learning needs who are also gifted and talented?

Students who are identified as "twice-exceptional" may have learning disabilities that mask their giftedness. These students may require different identification methods and program modifications to reach their full potential. It should not be assumed that students with disabilities cannot participate in gifted and talented programs. The National Association for Gifted Children has published a position statement regarding the twice-exceptional students.

9. Can parents/guardians refer their child for gifted and talented services?

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. 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](http://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 programs or assessments may occur all or in part prior to a student's high school enrollment.

14. Can honors, Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses be used to satisfy the requirements at the high school level?

Honors, Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes typically move at a faster rate than other classes, and they tend to have more advanced content. Enrollment in an IB, AP or honors class does not automatically show that a student's level of learning is being addressed. Whether a specific honors, AP or IB course meets the needs of a student identified as gifted in a district should be based on the student's unique needs and interests. The NJDOE does not define what constitutes an "honors" course.

15. Must gifted services be offered during the school day?

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. Afterschool programs or clubs may provide exciting opportunities for students who are identified as gifted and talented but do not fulfill the expectations put forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1.

16. Does the state or federal government provide funding for gifted programs?

The state does not provide specific, dedicated funds for gifted programs. However, district boards of education are required to provide identification and services using state aid and local revenues.

17. Are local school districts obligated to accept the evaluation of a student's giftedness from another state, school district, or independent service?

N.J.A.C. does not set requirements regarding the identification of gifted and talented students. The measures that are used for the identification process are determined by the local school district. Therefore,

a school district is not obligated to accept the evaluation from another state, school district, or independent service.

18. If I am moving to New Jersey from another state, how can I find out what programs are offered in a specific school or district?

All public school districts in New Jersey are required to identify gifted and talented students and provide services. The types of services may differ from district to 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.