



**Gifted and Talented Program
Information for Students and
Parents/Guardians**



New Jersey Gifted and Talented Requirements

On June 1, 2005 the State Board of Education readopted with amendments N.J.A.C. 6A: 8, Standards and Assessment for Student Achievement, which includes more specific requirements for gifted and talented programs. In addition to the definition on the previous page, a summary of the regulations are highlighted below.

- All public schools must have a board-approved gifted and talented program.
- Students are to be compared with their peers in the local school district.
- District boards of education shall make provisions for an ongoing K-12 identification process for 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 and/or teacher recommendation, and other appropriate measures.
- The regulations do not establish state-level criteria for giftedness (such as an IQ score or grade point average). Specific tests are not required to be used to identify gifted and talented students.
- Local school districts should ensure that the identification methodology used is developmentally appropriate, non-discriminatory, and related to the programs and services offered (e.g., use math achievement to identify students for a math program).
- N.J.A.C. 6A: 8-3.1(a)5 ii requires local 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.
- The rules require district boards of education to develop appropriate curricular and instructional modifications for gifted students. Programs must address appropriate content, process, products, and learning environment.
- District boards of education shall take into consideration the *Pre-K through Grade 12 Gifted Program Standards of the National Association for Gifted Children* (NAGC) in developing programs for gifted and talented students. The NAGC standards establish requisite and exemplary gifted program standards and can be accessed at NAGC Standard.
- Each curriculum framework developed by the department provides general as well as content-specific information on gifted education (e.g., terminology, examples of appropriate practices). The frameworks can be accessed at <http://www.nj.gov/education/archive/frameworks/> <http://www.nj.gov/education/aps/cccs>.
- Local school districts will continue to be monitored as part of the regular school district evaluation process. Board-approved policies and procedures must be made available.



In January, 2020, the State of New Jersey Passed a new law (CHAPTER 338) governing Gifted and Talented Education.

An Act concerning gifted and talented students and supplementing chapter 35 Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

Be It Enacted by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey: C.18A:35-34
Short title.

1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act."

2. As used in this act:

"Gifted and talented student" means a student who possesses or demonstrates a high level of ability in one or more content areas when compared to his chronological peers in the school district and who requires modifications of his educational program if he is to achieve in accordance with his capabilities.

"Instructional adaptation" means an adjustment or modification to instruction enabling a student who is gifted and talented to participate in, benefit from, and demonstrate knowledge and application of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in one or more content areas at the instructional level of the student, not just the student's grade level. C.18A:35-36 Instructional adaptations, educational services for gifted and talented students.

3. a. A board of education shall ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations and educational services are provided to gifted and talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 to enable them to participate in, benefit from, and demonstrate knowledge and application of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at the instructional level of the student.

b. A board of education shall:

(1) ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations are designed for students who are gifted and talented;

(2) make provisions for an ongoing kindergarten through grade 12 identification process for gifted and talented students that includes multiple measures in order to identify student strengths in intellectual ability, creativity, or a specific academic area. School districts shall ensure equal access to a continuum of gifted and talented education services. The identification process shall include consideration of all students, including those who are English language learners and those with Individualized Education Plans or 504 plans;

(3) develop and document appropriate curricular and instructional modifications used for gifted and talented students indicating content, process, products, and learning environment, and including, but not limited to, additional education activities such as academic competitions, guest speakers, and lessons with a specialist;

(4) take into consideration the Gifted Programming Standards, Position Statements, and White Papers of the National Association for Gifted Children in identifying and serving gifted and talented students;

(5) provide the time and resources to develop, review, and enhance instructional tools with modifications for helping gifted and talented students acquire and demonstrate mastery of the required knowledge and skills specified by the standards at the instructional level of the student; and

(6) actively assist and support professional development for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders in the area of gifted and talented instruction.



4. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a coordinator for gifted and talented services. The coordinator shall have teaching experience and specialized knowledge in gifted and talented education. The coordinator shall be responsible for providing support by identifying and sharing research and resources to school districts as they develop, implement, and review their local gifted and talented services. The coordinator shall be responsible for reviewing the information about gifted and talented services provided by each school district to support implementation of the provisions of this act.
 - b. Each school district shall file with the coordinator a report by October 1, 2020 and thereafter on a schedule that coincides with the school district's New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum review pursuant to section 11 of P.L.1975, c.212 (C.18A:7A-11). The report shall include, but not be limited to:
 - (1) the gifted and talented continuum of services, policies, and procedures implemented in the school district;
 - (2) the total number of students receiving gifted and talented services in each grade level kindergarten through grade 12 disaggregated by race, gender, special education designation, and English language learner designation;
 - (3) the professional development opportunities provided for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders about gifted and talented students, their needs, and educational development; and
 - (4) the number of staff employed by the school district whose job responsibilities include identification of and providing services to gifted and talented students. C.18A:35-38 Complaint for noncompliance.
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5. a. An individual who believes that a school district has not complied with the provisions of this act may file a complaint with the board of education. The right to file a complaint shall be set forth in the board's policy on gifted and talented education. The policy shall be linked to the homepage of the board's Internet website. The board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the district's action in the matter.
 - b. The individual may then file a petition of appeal of the board's written decision to the Commissioner of Education through the Office of Controversies and Disputes in accordance with N.J.S.18A:6-9 and the procedures set forth in State Board of Education regulations.
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6. A school district shall make detailed information available on its website regarding the policies and procedures used to identify students as gifted and talented and the continuum of services offered to gifted and talented students. The information shall include the criteria used for consideration for eligibility for the gifted and talented services, including the multiple measures used in the identification process to match a student's needs with services, and any applicable timelines in the identification process.
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7. This act shall take effect in the 2020-2021 school year.



Deerfield Township Board of Education Policies

Below are excerpts from Board of Education policies that pertain to Gifted and Talented. The policy in its entirety can be found on the DTS website under Board of Education, Policy Manual. https://www.deerfield.k12.nj.us/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=325644&type=d&pREC_ID=613747

Policy 5120: The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to identify gifted and talented pupils. The Chief School Administrator/designee shall develop procedures to implement a program of individual pupil needs assessment that shall include but not limited to:

- Identifying district needs as the basis for development of mandated goals, development of staff in-service programs, selecting and approving instructional material, staffing.
- Identifying and determining the needs of gifted and talented pupils.
- Disseminating the results of such assessments to parents/guardians, staff, state and federal agencies as required.

Policy 6140 & 6171: The Board shall provide a comprehensive instructional program to serve the needs of the children of this district and shall annually adopt the existing courses of study. The board directs that the curriculum of this district provides educational opportunities for exceptionally gifted and talented pupils. When necessary, the regular program shall be altered or supplemented or other means used to provide for the identified needs of the gifted and talented.

Policy 6171.2: The district shall provide a program of study for exceptionally gifted and/or talented students in grades K - 8 who display outstanding intellectual abilities, academic aptitudes, unique creativity, productive thinking, leadership traits or exceptional talent in visual and performing arts and in psychomotor skills. Students will have opportunities to enhance/expand their basic education and gain further knowledge and proficiency in areas of special interest and abilities.

A variety of instructional methods, grouping and schedules shall be used to provide programs designed to encourage creative thinking, abilities, interests, and independent learning.

Acknowledging that special abilities and skills appear at different times in the development of many children, the district will carry out a broad-based screening of all students at all grade levels (K-8). This screening will identify exceptionally able students using multiple indicators of academic and creative potential, including but not limited to tests of academic achievement, aptitude and creativity, samples of student work, nominations from teachers, parents, community members and students themselves. The screening process will take place each Spring in preparation for the following academic year.



Gifted and Talented Continuum of Services

Deerfield Township School believes that gifted and talented students have a wide range of needs and abilities. The variety of methodologies are intended to encourage creative thinking, problem solving, and research skills in an effort to further develop higher order thinking skills, abilities, interests, and independent learning.

Differentiated Instruction: Differentiated instruction is used to meet the academic needs of our gifted and talented students within the classroom. Our teachers understand that not every child must be doing the same activity at the same time as every other student in his/her class. Different learners have different needs, and teachers design learning opportunities for students according to each student's needs, readiness, and interests. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to provide those opportunities without labeling or obviously isolating individual learners in the classroom.

Curriculum: The curriculum for every course at Deerfield Township School District provides educational opportunities for exceptionally gifted and talented pupils. These opportunities are delivered in the classroom through the use of differentiated instruction, including but not limited to, higher leveled resources, alternate assignments, flexible grouping, and independent studies.

Resources: Classroom teachers are provided with advanced level resources to challenge our gifted students. The resources included but not limited to leveled text, higher level questions, extension activities and application opportunities. Deerfield Township School District provides students with digital access to programs that determine their current academic levels and provides individualized instruction based on that data. These resources provide the gifted and talented students the opportunity to work on skills and standards that are above grade level and beyond the capabilities of their peers.

Course acceleration: Deerfield Township School District offers an accelerated math program for gifted and talented 7th and 8th grade students. Students are carefully selected for this program at the end of their 6th grade year. The students will take an Accelerated 7th grade math course their 7th grade year. The Accelerated 7th grade math students will be re-evaluated and carefully selected to take Algebra their 8th grade year.

Enrichment activities: Deerfield Township School District offers in school and after school enrichment opportunities to our gifted students. Depending on interests and abilities students may sign up for private music lessons, STEM courses, Lego League Competition, Student Council, and various afterschool clubs.

Community Partnerships: Deerfield Township School encourages gifted and talented students to expand their knowledge through programs hosted throughout the year by Cumberland Regional High School, 4H, YMCA, Rowan College of South Jersey, and various 21st Century Summer Enrichment Programs in summer months.



Professional Development

Teachers: The teaching staff has been involved in several professional development opportunities to learn about different learners, including gifted and talented students, and ways to support them in the classroom. The teachers at DTS have attended training on differentiated instruction, accelerated learning, curriculum specific strategies/resources for advanced students, sensitivity training, Guided Reading, Guided Math, small group instruction, stress and anxiety in students, and creating an inclusive environment. In addition to these training, the teachers have the opportunity to meet with their grade band teachers to share resources and best practices. This is also a chance to discuss the challenges of meeting the needs of our gifted and talented students and strategies they have found successful in the past.

Educational services staff: The educational services staff are provided the opportunity to attend professional development sessions, including but not limited to, differentiated instruction, sensitivity training, small group instruction, stress and anxiety in students, and creating an inclusive environment.

School leaders: School leaders attend all the training sessions available to teachers and educational services staff.

Identification Process

Acknowledging that special abilities and skills appear at different times in the development of many children, the district will carry out a broad-based screening of all students at all grade levels (K-8). This screening will identify exceptionally able students using multiple indicators of academic and creative potential, including but not limited to tests of academic achievement, aptitude and creativity, samples of student work, nominations from teachers, parents, community members and students themselves. The screening process will take place each Spring in preparation for the following academic year.

Students moving into the district during the year will be reviewed for participation based on the program criteria from their previous district. As with all Deerfield students, students new to the district may be recommended to participate in the Spring for the following year.

Complaint Process

An individual who believes that a school district has not complied with the provisions of this act may file a complaint with the board of education. The board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the district's action in the matter.

The individual may then file a petition of appeal of the board's written decision to the Commissioner of Education through the Office of Controversies and Disputes in accordance with N.J.S.18A:6-9 and the procedures set forth in State Board of Education regulations.



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

The **American Association for Gifted Children** is affiliated with Duke University and has resources related to gifted education and students. www.aagc.org

The **Association for the Gifted (TAG)** is a division of the Council for Exceptional Children. They promote scholarly research, advocacy and professional development. www.cectag.org

The **Belin-Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development** is sponsored by the University of Iowa and conducts talent searches and educational programs for gifted students. www.education.uiowa.edu/belinblank/



College Admissions Services - Resources and information about college admissions including financial aid, scholarships, studying for the SAT, writing application essays, and the college admissions process.
<http://www.go4ivy.com/resource.asp>

Davidson Institute for Talent Development - Supports profoundly gifted young people and opportunities for development of talents. <http://www.ditd.org/public/>

Kids Links – Gifted and Talented Education Program - Resources for students to use. Web resources, games and activities for students in elementary and middle school are posted on this site. There are links for parent resources as well.
www.stockton.k12.ca.us/gate/kids-links.htm

Stanford University Education Program for Gifted Youth (EPGY) - Computer-based distance-learning courses for high-ability students of all ages in an individualized educational experience in a variety of subjects from kindergarten through advanced-undergraduate. <http://epgy.stanford.edu/>

Jacob K. Javits Fellowships Program - U.S. Department of Education sponsored programs for gifted and talented education funding for elementary, high school, and college students; local educational agency grant programs, and university research.
www.ed.gov/programs/jacobjavits/index.html

National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRCGT) - The NRCGT promotes and publishes research on gifted education related to current and emerging issues in education of gifted and talented students, including GATE students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic groups.
<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt.html>

Odyssey of the Mind - An international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students from kindergarten through college; involving regional, state, and international competitions. <http://www.odysseyofthemind.com/>

Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG) - Fosters education and research to support the unique social and emotional needs of gifted individuals.
<http://www.sengifted.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/>



Websites

Academy of Achievement: <http://www.achievement.org/>

Belin and Blank Center: www.education.uiowa.edu/belinblank

Blue Ribbon Learning Sites: <http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn/index.cfm>

Chem4kids.com: <http://www.chem4kids.com/index.html>

Creative Learning Press: <http://www.creativelearningpress.com/>

EduHound: Everything for Education K12: <http://www.eduhound.com/>

Filamentality "Learning Web": <http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/index.html>

Future Problem Solving Program <http://www.fpspi.org/>

Hoagie's Gifted Education Page: www.hoagiesgifted.org

International Baccalaureate Organization <http://www.ibo.org/>

Johns Hopkins University (including center for talented youth (CTY): <http://cty.jhu.edu/>

Mensa for Kids, <http://www.mensaforkids.org/>

Odyssey of the Mind, <http://www.odysseyofthemind.com/>

Prufrock Press (publisher of *Gifted Child Today*): <http://www.prufrock.com/>

Science News for Kids: <http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org/>

SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted), <http://www.sengifted.org/>

Underachievement www.sylviarimm.com

Young Writers Workshop: <http://www.meddybemps.com/9.700.html>