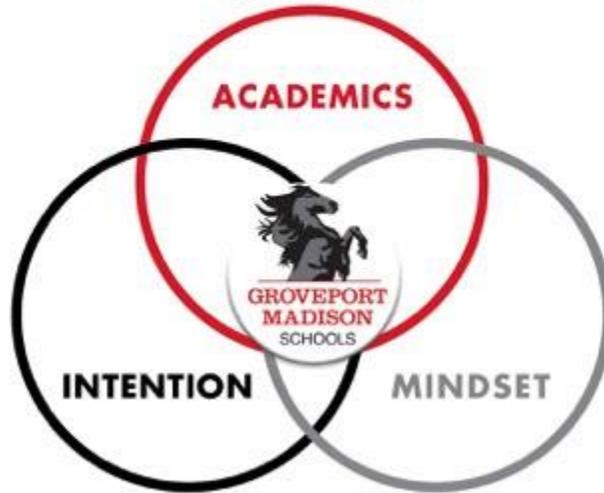


Groveport Madison Gifted Handbook
Parent Edition

A.I.M.



Groveport Madison Gifted Parent Handbook

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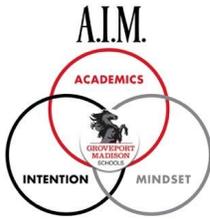
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Statement of Purpose

Dear Parents,

In alignment with our district mission to “build a community of learners, leaders and responsible citizens” the Groveport Madison gifted department strives to provide opportunities for our gifted learners to grow and succeed through a robust continuum of services beginning in the first grade and continuing to graduation.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide further explanation into the nature and needs of gifted learners, as well as the district specific information surrounding our program of services. Through this resource parents are provided with everything from the definition of giftedness in Ohio to specific activities and resources to specific services at each educational level.

We appreciate your continued support and dedication to the growth of our students. Please don’t hesitate to reach out with additional concerns and questions.

Sincerely,

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Gifted Identification in the State of Ohio

State of Ohio Gifted Identification Criteria

Superior Cognitive Ability

A child shall be identified as exhibiting "superior cognitive ability" if the child performs in the following ways:

1. On nationally normed abilities test, (in GMLS, this is the In-View Abilities Test), must score a 128 or above or;
2. Performed at or above the ninety-fifth percentile on an approved individual or group standardized basic or composite battery of a nationally normed achievement test or;
3. Attained an approved score on one or more above grade-level standardized, nationally normed approved tests.

Specific Academic Ability

A child shall be identified as exhibiting "Specific Academic Ability" if the child performs in the following ways:

1. Scored at or above the 95th percentile on an approved individual or group administered nationally normed, standardized Achievement test in one or more of the following areas: Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies
2. Attained an approved score on one or more above grade-level standardized, nationally normed approved tests.

Creative Thinking Abilities

Identification for Creative Thinking Ability involves a two-pronged process because the student is evaluated for cognitive abilities and for creative characteristics. Evaluations of this kind can occur in conjunction with the referral/screening process for Superior Cognitive Abilities.

A child shall be identified gifted in "Creative Thinking Abilities" if the child performs in BOTH of the following ways:

1. Scored at or above one standard deviation above the mean on an approved individual or group standardized intelligence test administered by a qualified professional, AND
2. Exhibited sufficient performance, as established by the department of education, on an approved checklist by a trained individual of creative behaviors.

Visual and Performing Arts Ability

Section 3301-51-15 of the Ohio Administrative Code provides the following definition of "visual or performing arts ability" as the ability in areas such as drawing, painting, sculpting, music, dance, drama. A student shall be identified as exhibiting "visual or performing arts ability" superior to that of children of similar age if the student has done both of the following:

1. Demonstrated through a display of work, an audition, or other performance or exhibition, a superior ability in a visual or performing arts area;
2. Exhibited sufficient performance, as established by the Department of Education, on an approved checklist of behaviors related to a specific arts area.

Gifted in Groveport Madison

The Ohio Department of Education publishes Gifted Operating Standards that all Ohio districts must follow when identifying and designing services for gifted children. While gifted identification is required by law, gifted services are not mandated.

Through the use of Ohio's Content Standards, gifted programming is focused on evidence-based practices, which increase the rigor of instruction, strengthen cognitive abilities, increase creativity, and foster the social and emotional development of gifted learners. Emphasis is placed on enhancing interpersonal and technical communication in the 21st Century for gifted youth to realize their potential.

The Groveport Madison Gifted and Talented Team is dedicated to providing appropriate and challenging services for our gifted youth. Students must meet gifted identification criteria set forth by the State of Ohio and then must meet the requirements set by the GMLS to qualify for specialized programming.

Current Programming Options

**We are consistently examining the needs of our students and programming can change to ensure opportunities align to gifted needs.*

GMLS is dedicated to expanding opportunities for all students to reach their potential; with this goal in mind we work to serve our students through a strong continuum of services, which begins in the second grade and continues until our students graduate.

Elementary Services

Our team of Gifted Intervention Specialists, housed at Sedalia Elementary, teaches all of our elementary students in grades 2-5. These are educators who have received specialized training in order to meet the needs of gifted learners. Students will be in special course sections that will include only other students with their same areas of identification who are at similar levels of understanding. Through these groupings our specialists are able to work with both the academic and social-emotional needs of our gifted students. Students who are identified in reading, math receive services in their area of identification. Superior cognitive students receive services in both reading and mathematics. More specific information about our programming is explained below.

Grades 2-5 Reading

Our elementary reading service includes the William and Mary Literature Units created specifically for gifted learners, as well as additional novel study aligned to both the grade level standards, as well as above level standards. Gifted learners will gain exposure to a variety of genres and work on their ability to think critically, provide evidence from reading, and analyze what they read. They will engage in rich discussion with like minded peers on a daily basis. Fourth and fifth grade students will also enhance their grammatical understanding through our Caesar's English program. By the end of their elementary career 5th grade students will extend their understanding by beginning work with the 6th grade standards.

Grades 2-5 Math

The Gifted Specialists will adjust the instructional level for our gifted math students by using resources appropriate for young gifted math learners, including our gifted math text adoption, M3 Mentoring Mathematical Minds. Through this math instruction students will be exposed to content above level and will prepare for their path of acceleration in gifted services. The use of hands on learning and exploration aids our students in their growth and development as mathematical thinkers. If successful on this path through the elementary years, these students will have the opportunity to take 6th grade math while still at the elementary school.

Middle School

GMLS middle school gifted programming, housed at Groveport North Middle School, continues through grades 6, 7 and 8, for math, reading and science. Gifted identified students in each of those areas, as well as those with superior cognitive abilities participate in honors level courses for each identified subject area every day. The Gifted Intervention Specialist may be the full-time instructor for the service. Students will work at a faster pace in these specialized courses with curricular materials created specifically for gifted learners.

High School

Our high school services involve a variety of both Honors and Advanced Placement Courses (AP) in which students may earn college credit while still in high school. Gifted students may also pursue College Credit Plus, credit flex, courses taken through the career center as well as other opportunities that enable them to earn credits in non-traditional ways, graduate early, accelerate through content, or advance their understanding of specific content. Teachers of these courses receive specialized professional development to aid them incorporating rigor, depth and complexity into coursework.

The district ensures equal opportunity for all district students identified as gifted to receive any services offered by the district for which the student meets the criteria.

District Name for Service	Service Setting	Grade Level	Criteria for Service	Service Provider
Gifted Single Subject Self Contained	Self-Contained Classroom <i>(Single Subject)</i>	2-8	<u>2-5</u> gifted math sections: superior cognitive or Math ID for math courses <u>2-5</u> gifted reading sections- superior cognitive or reading ID for reading course sections <u>6-8</u> : superior cognitive or math OR reading OR science ID for corresponding areas of service.	All Gifted Specialists
6-12 Honors Courses	Regular Classroom <i>Honors</i>	6-12	Gifted identification in mathematics, reading, S.S. or science; OR superior cognitive ability	Regular Classroom Teachers with GIS and Gifted Coordinator as support and providing PD.
Single Subject Acceleration with GIS as the teacher of Record	Self-Contained Single Subject	5, 8	Meets district single subject acceleration and data requirements Acceleration Committee Agreement	GIS 5/6 compacted math 8 Algebra 8/9 Compacted ELA
AP Coursework	Regular Classroom <i>AP</i>	11-12	Gifted identification in superior cognitive ability or SA/M, or Reading, or Science, or SS (the subject area corresponding with the course of enrollment)	AP-trained teacher with authorized AP course and training by Gifted Coordinator or Specialist
CCP Approved course (varies)	Regular Classroom <i>CCP</i>	7-12	Gifted identification in superior cognitive ability or any SA/M,R,Sci., SS in the subject area corresponding with the course of enrollment	CCP Trained teacher with authorized course

Referring a Student for Gifted Services

Parents have the right to request that their child be screened for possible gifted identification. This request is known as a referral. Parents should receive information on making a referral upon request or can find the referral form within the handbook appendix as well as on the district website. Students can receive up to two opportunities per year for testing. Testing will take into account accommodations that may include students learning English as a second language or with disabilities so that results accurately reflect aptitude or achievement levels.

Children may be referred to the Gifted Coordinator in writing on an ongoing basis, based on the following:

- Child request (self-referral);
- Teacher recommendation;
- Parent/guardian request;
- Child referral of peer; and
- Other (e.g., psychologist, community members, principal, gifted coordinator, etc.)

Out of District Scores

The district accepts scores, completed within the preceding 24 months on assessment instruments approved for use by the Ohio Department of Education, provided by other schools and/or trained personnel outside the school district.

Transfer

The district ensures that any child transferring into the district will be assessed within 90 days of the transfer at the request of the parent. Parents shall contact the building principal.

Services for Transfer Students

A transfer student who meets the criteria for service will be eligible for gifted services. If a student enters the district and space is not available in a class they will be invited to begin services the following year.

Procedures to Ensure Equal Access within Services

- Students who meet identification criteria are invited to service
- Transportation is guaranteed within the district to district programming which is only in certain schools
- As new students transfer in or are identified during the year the district evaluates enrollment and in cases where students can be placed in service where equal access can be given across the district placement will be made.

Reassessment

When the screening assessment has been completed, if the data is from an approved screening instrument or from an identification instrument on which the student is within a district-specified range below the identification score, re-assessment for possible identification occurs.

IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

The district shall provide at least two opportunities each year for assessment in the case of children requesting assessment or recommended for assessment by teachers, parents or other children.

The district ensures there are ample and appropriate scheduling procedures for assessments and reassessment using different types of assessments and in accordance with the state operating standards for identifying and service students who are gifted. Types of tests and grade levels are listed below.

Type of Assessment	Content Area(s)	Grade Level(s)
Whole-grade test	Superior Cognitive , Creativity Specific academic — Reading, Math, Science, S.S.	Math, Reading : K-10 Superior Cog & Creativity: 2,5 Science: 5,,7 Social Studies: 5,7
Individually-administered tests	Sup Cog, Reading, Math, Science, S.S., Creativity	All (as requested) K-12 and as reassessment
Audition, performance	Drama, Dance, Music (instrumental and vocal)	K-12 by referral
Display of work	Visual Art	K-12 by referral
Checklists	Drama, Dance, Music, Art, Creativity	K-12 by referral

Screening

The district ensures equal access to screening and further assessment of all district children, including culturally or linguistically diverse children, children from low socio-economic backgrounds, children with disabilities and children for whom English is a second language.

The Identification Process for Creative Thinkers

The Creative Thinking Identification process takes place in two phases as described below.

1. A cognitive test is given by a qualified educator or psychologist. Students who score one standard deviation above the norm (approximately 115) move on to the next phase of assessment.
2. A checklist of behaviors from the Ohio approved list of assessments is given to an educator who works with the student on a regular basis and allows for the most opportunities for creative thinking.

Students scoring at the appropriate score on both parts of the according to the Ohio list of approved assessments are then identified as gifted in the area of creative thinking.

The Identification Process for Visual and Performing Arts

The screening and identification process for identifying students gifted in the visual arts includes the following components:

1. Nomination of the student for screening/assessment (except when every student in a given grade will be screened)
2. Evaluation of the student using an approved behavioral checklist
3. An evaluation of the student's display of work/portfolio/performance using an approved scoring rubric completed by professionals in the field

Display of Work/Portfolio/ Performance

Visual Art - This includes five or more pieces of artwork showcasing the talents of the nominated student. Full explanation of the possible portfolio components can be found at the following link:

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Other-Resources/Gifted-Education/Gifted-Screening-and-Identification/Visual-and-Performing-Arts-Identification/VISARTSHANDBOOK.pdf.aspx>

Performing arts - This category includes instrumental and choral music, dance and drama. Students will be asked to prepare a piece which will be rated by a professional trained in the area of nomination. In addition to their prepared piece students will be asked to participate in improvisation activities as one aspect of the evaluation process. Additional information can be found on the following links.

Drama

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Other-Resources/Gifted-Education/Gifted-Screening-and-Identification/Visual-and-Performing-Arts-Identification/DramaTheatre-Identification-Handbook.pdf.aspx>

Dance

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Other-Resources/Gifted-Education/Gifted-Screening-and-Identification/Visual-and-Performing-Arts-Identification/Dance-Identification-Handbook.pdf.aspx>

Music

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Other-Resources/Gifted-Education/Gifted-Screening-and-Identification/Visual-and-Performing-Arts-Identification/Music-Identification-Handbook.pdf.aspx>

Note: In Ohio testing is reviewed by a state designated committee; approved assessments are then placed on a common list for district use. Approved assessments can be found at the website listed below:

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Common-Application-for-Requests-for-Qualifications/2019-2020-Approved-Assessment-List.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>

Written Education Plan (WEP)

Students who receive gifted services require a Written Education Plan (WEP). The purpose of a WEP is to communicate the service setting and goals for the gifted learner. Goals indicate the specific areas where focused learning will occur, be it in an academic area, or in regards to social emotional needs of the gifted learner. The service matches the child's area(s) of identification. WEPS are written and sent home at the end of the first grading period for students involved in services outlined in the district plan. Progress toward the WEP goals is part of the course grades and comments each quarter.

Appeal Procedures

An appeal by the parent is the reconsideration of the result of any part of the identification process which would include:

- Screening procedure or assessment instrument (which results in identification);
- The scheduling of children for assessment;
- The placement of a student in any program; and
- Receipt of services.

Parents should submit a letter to the superintendent or designee outlining the nature of the concern. The superintendent or designee will convene a meeting with the parent/guardian, which may include other school personnel. The superintendent or designee will issue a written final decision within 30 days of the appeal. This written notice should include the reason for the decision(s).

Withdrawal from Service

Occasionally service does not properly meet the needs of the gifted learner and a parent may request that a student may be withdrawn from service. This must be done in writing using the gifted withdrawal form found in Appendix B and online. Withdrawal or refusal of service is in effect for the school year in which it was requested. Students who are removed from gifted services may participate in gifted services in future years provided they meet the eligibility criteria in place for services at that time.

Acceleration Information

Acceleration Policy ORC 3324.10 requires all school districts to implement a student acceleration policy. This statute allows districts, among other things, to place a student in a higher grade level than is typical given the student's age for the purpose of providing student access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in one or more subject areas.

The Process

- Acceleration Begins with a referral from a parent or teacher who believes the student is prepared for above level content.
- Student is consulted in regards to their willingness to be accelerated
- Data is gathered related to the area/areas of acceleration. This includes assessment in the areas of aptitude and achievement as well as cognitive ability.
- A team meeting occurs in order to determine placement. In addition to the academic areas social/ emotional functioning and work skills are also taken into account to allow for a holistic view of the student and ensure that they are prepared for above grade level content in one or more areas.
- If an acceleration is to occur an acceleration plan will be created by the acceleration team which will include a transition period during which time the placement will be monitored.
- Placements become permanent after a successful transition period. * A change in setting at a later time in the students schooling to return to a previous grade is then viewed as a retention.

The types of acceleration and examples are explained below. The acceleration referral form can be found in the appendix of this handbook.

Acceleration Types

Early Admission to Kindergarten: The practice of admitting a student to kindergarten who has not yet reached the typical age at which students are admitted to kindergarten for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities. The cut off for Groveport Madison is August 1st.

Example:

- A child who can read independently, has strong number sense, and is socially similar to typical five year-olds are admitted to kindergarten, although he will not reach his fifth birthday until the middle of the school year.

Whole Grade Acceleration: Students are placed in the grade level above their age based grade. (grade skipping)

Examples:

- After completing the first grade year, a student is placed in a third grade classroom (rather than a second grade classroom) on a full-time basis at the beginning of the next school year.
- After completing the fall semester of the fifth grade year, a student is placed in the sixth grade at the start of the second semester of the same school year.

Individual Subject Acceleration: The practice of assigning a student to a higher grade level than is typical given the student's age for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in one or more subject areas.

Examples:

- A third grade student performing above grade level in reading and math goes to a fourth grade teacher every morning for instruction in these subjects and returns to the third grade classroom for instruction in other subject areas.
- A musically gifted sixth grade student is enrolled in a high school instrumental music course and returns to the sixth grade classroom for instruction in other subject areas.

Early High School Graduation: The practice of facilitating completion of the high school program in fewer than four years for the purpose of providing earlier than typical access to post-secondary educational opportunities.

Example:

- An advanced student is granted a diploma after spending only five semesters in high school by accumulating credits on an accelerated basis through "dual-credit" coursework taken while in middle school and by satisfying some high school graduation requirements by completing "educational options" rather

Acceleration Guidance Related to State Testing

- 1) In any subject, students will participate in all testing, including end-of-course tests, at their accelerated-subject grade level;

2) If there is no test or end-of-course test at the student's accelerated-subject grade level, the student will not be tested;

a) Exception to rule 2: students accelerated into a high school physical science course are not permitted to take the high school physical science test; these students must take the grade 8 science test or no test if the grade 8 science test has already been taken.

Written Acceleration Plans (WAP)

Any student referred for and is placed in an accelerative placement (early entrance to kindergarten, single subject acceleration, whole-grade acceleration, or early graduation) MUST have a Written Acceleration Plan on file for the first year of the accelerated placement. Since a child is not required to be identified as gifted in order to accelerate, non-identified students are included in the WAP process. This is not a reference to gifted service or gifted programming; it is a document that specifies the placement of the student in an accelerated setting and strategies to support a successful transition to the setting.

Components within a WAP:

A. placement of the student in an accelerated setting;

B. strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting;

C. An appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for grade-level accelerated students and students accelerated in individual content areas.

Appeal Process for Acceleration Recommendations

All acceleration decisions are made as a team along with the parents. This team may consist of a principal, counselor, psychologist, receiving teacher, current teacher, gifted specialist, gifted coordinator, or other qualified personnel. Even though this process is based on a group decision, there may be times that a parent disagrees with the final recommendation. In these cases, the parent must complete the Appeal Document. Appeal decisions are made by the district superintendent or his/her designee and all decisions at that level are final. A sample form for Appealing Academic Acceleration can be found in Appendix B.

The Early Entrance Process Examined

The early entrance process assesses a child's readiness for kindergarten and his/her intellectual and developmental progression relative to future success as the youngest student in his/her class in subsequent grades. The comprehensive process evaluates aptitude, achievement, ability, interpersonal skills, and developmental maturity of the child. Early entrance is considered a grade-level acceleration and impacts a student's entire academic career.

If your child turns five-years-old between August 1 and December 31, and you feel that he/she may be ready for kindergarten for the upcoming school year, you may have him/her tested for early entrance. Please review [A Parent's Guide to Early Entrance to Kindergarten](#) under the kindergarten tab on our website for valuable information to help you determine if your child is ready for kindergarten.

After reading the guide, if you feel your child is ready to start kindergarten, complete an [Early Entrance to Kindergarten application](#) found on the website and submit it before August 1.

Testing Phase

Once the early entrance packet has been turned in your child will be scheduled for an IQ test given by a school psychologist as the preliminary phase of testing. This screening typically takes one to two hours. The child must score a 115 on the IQ test to continue in the process.

If the child passes the IQ test with a score of 115 or better, the administrative assistant working with early entrance or the school psychologist will contact parents/guardians to schedule academic assessments in all academic areas. These assessments typically take one to two hours. Students will be scored as related to the peers one grade level above and are expected to score in the top quarter of the class to ensure success at the accelerated grade level.

Team Meeting

After all assessments are complete the gifted coordinator will analyze the results as they align to the IOWA acceleration scale and contact parents with detailed information regarding the results. A phone conference or team meeting could be scheduled depending upon if the child has met the required scores as related to both their cognitive and academic test. The [Iowa Acceleration Scale](#) will be used to evaluate all assessments and information and obtain a recommendation related to whether the student will be accepted for early entrance.

Decisions on Early Entrance

Decisions related to early entrance are not usually finalized until June or July. If applications are turned in after May 1, the decision can be delayed until as late as August. The entire process, from application to the committee meeting, can take between 30 to 90 days, depending upon availability of assessment appointments.

Students who are accepted for early entrance spend the first semester of the school year in a transitional period to determine if kindergarten is truly the best fit for their social, emotional,

behavioral, and academic needs. During this time the student will be required to pass additional kindergarten beginning of the year assessments per their written acceleration plan. Exemplary attendance during kindergarten is necessary so that Early Entrance students can transition into the academic school environment with as few disruptions as possible. At the end of the first semester, the final evaluation of their readiness for whole grade acceleration is determined.

At the end of this transition period, a final placement decision is made. If a student is successful in this transition period, he/she becomes a general education kindergarten student. If concerns arise during the transition period, the kindergarten teacher will communicate with and work with the parents/guardians to resolve any issues in an effort to support the student.

Parents who are considering applying for early entrance are strongly encouraged to secure a position in a pre-kindergarten program simultaneously in the event the student is not accepted into Early Entrance.

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents of Gifted Students

What areas can my child be identified in?

Students can be identified as gifted in the area(s) of:

- **Superior Cognitive Ability** (Scoring at least two standard deviations above the mean (100) +/- the standard error of measure on a state-approved, nationally-normed abilities test - i.e. CogAT, Inview, OLSAT, NNAT, etc)
- **Specific Academic Achievement** Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies (Scoring at or above the 95th percentile on a state-approved, nationally-normed achievement test – i.e. MAP, Iowa, Stanford)
- **Visual and Performing Arts** – Visual Arts, Music, Drama, Theatre, Dance (Demonstrated superior ability through a display of work, an audition, or other performance or exhibition, in a visual or

performing arts area and exhibited sufficient performance on a state-approved checklist of behaviors related to a specific arts area

- **Creative Thinking Ability** (Scoring at least one standard deviation above the mean on a state approved test of creative ability – i.e. CogAT, OLSAT, NNAT and exhibited sufficient performance on a state- approved checklist by a trained individual of creative behaviors.

When will my child be tested for gifted identification? What instruments will be used?

Groveport Madison schools assess students in reading and mathematics in grades K-10 using the Measures of Academic Progress test 3 times a year (fall, winter, spring). Students are also tested in the area of cognitive ability & creative thinking ability in grades 2 & 5 using the Inview assessment. Testing in science & social studies occurs in grades 5 & 7 using the Terra Nova assessment. A referral for testing can be made no more than two times per year.

How will I know my child has been identified as gifted?

Once a student has met the criteria established by the state for gifted identification in any area, you will be notified with a Letter of Gifted Identification. This letter will notify you of the area(s) of gifted identification and the qualifying score and test. Letters should be kept for your records.

At what grade levels can my gifted student be served?

Groveport Madison schools have a full continuum of services which begins in 2nd grade and continues until students graduate. The full continuum can be found in this handbook.

I have received a letter for gifted identification. Can my child immediately enter services?

While students are identified with each round of testing, changes in placements are only made (if space is available) after the fall round of testing. Each spring service letters are sent which list services for which your child has qualified. Service can then be accepted by returning the letter if it is a new service. Students who are currently in service need not return letters unless they are looking for a change in service.

My child consistently scores high on nationally-normed assessments (i.e. MAP, CogAT) and has a teacher who has provided extensive enrichment and extensions to the grade level curriculum so why does my child continue to complain that he/she is bored? Can I accelerate my child?

It is important to understand that being “bored” can have a number of meanings. It does not always have to mean that the curriculum is not challenging enough. In some instances, it can actually mean that

something may be a little too challenging for the student, so the student is using avoidance to engage in the task.

Sometimes, however, despite numerous enrichment and extension opportunities provided, it is possible that your child needs the additional challenge of a subject or whole grade acceleration. This intervention is for a small percentage of the population, and a student need not be identified as gifted in order to be referred for acceleration.

A subject acceleration would require that a student go to the next grade level for instruction in one or more content areas. With a subject acceleration a student then is assessed at that grade level for any state testing. A whole grade acceleration will address the needs of a student who demonstrates readiness academically, socially, and emotionally in all areas to support a move to the next grade level.

Both qualitative and quantitative information is utilized in order to make an informed decision in regards to acceleration. This becomes a permanent placement following a transition period. An ideal candidate will demonstrate a high level of success on above level assessments (typically the top 10% of a class).

Can my child become “Ungifted”?

In the state of Ohio students are “once identified, always identified” so they will never lose their gifted designation. A student can be counseled out of service if a parent and teacher agree the placement is not meeting the needs of the student. In this case a withdrawal from services form should then be completed by the parent and teacher. A student can return to services the following school year should they desire to do so.

Portrait of a Gifted Classroom

Teachers trained in the best practices for gifted learners

All of our gifted specialists have received specialized coursework as well as ongoing professional development related to working with this unique population. Our general education teachers working with gifted learners receive 60 hours of initial training related to the 9 competencies set forth by the Ohio Department of Education and ongoing training throughout their time serving these students.

Higher Level Thinking

The gifted classroom is not only about the type of work being done by our students, but also about the level of thinking being required of our students. Our teachers utilize the highest levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Thinking and Kaplan’s Depth and complexity model to ensure that our students are working and thinking at a higher level.

Differentiated Instruction

As in all of our classrooms throughout the district curriculum is differentiated to meet the diverse needs of our students. Differentiation occurs not only in the products students create but also in the process through which they learn and pacing of the instruction itself. Even within our classrooms created for gifted learners there is a wide range of understanding and our teachers ensure their needs are met through this differentiation.

Interactive Learning

Our classrooms are extremely interactive in nature and involve work with collaborative learning, reciprocal teaching and meaningful discussions which affords each student an opportunity to share their understanding.

Independent Practice

In addition to collaboration students are given time to practice all they have learned and show what they know. This time allows students to work at the pace necessary for them to best grow and learn while the teacher is guiding other groups or individuals. Our desire is to have our gifted learners feel comfortable to move forward and extend their thinking during this time.

Project Based Learning

Oftentimes the best way for our students to truly understand a group of standards is through creating something which demonstrates their understanding using their personal learning styles. Project based learning allows for our students to follow multi step directions, read and understand a set of criteria and demonstrate the depth of their thinking related to a concept or set of concepts.

Specialized Curriculum for Gifted Learners

Many of the units we utilize in our gifted programming come from companies who specialize in gifted curriculum including the M squared and M cubed mathematics curriculum, Caesar's English and The William and Mary Literature units which infuse novels, stories and critical thinking components to bring literature to life.

Differences Between High Achievers, Gifted Learners, and Creative Thinkers

Created by Bertie Kingore

A High Achiever...	A Gifted Learner...	A Creative Thinker...
Remembers the answers	Poses unforeseen questions	Sees exceptions
Is interested	Is curious	Wonders

Is attentive	Is selectively mentally engaged	Daydreams; may seem off task
Generates advanced ideas	Generates complex, abstract ideas	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed
Performs at the top of the group	Is beyond the group	Is in own group
Learns with ease	Already knows	Questions: What if...
Needs 6 to 8 repetitions to master	Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master	Questions the need for mastery
Enjoys the company of age peers	Prefers the company of intellectual peers	Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone
Completes assignments on time	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments	Initiates more projects that will ever be completed
Enjoys school often	Enjoys self-directed learning	Enjoys creating
Is highly alert and observant	Anticipates and relates observations	Is intuitive
Is pleased with own learning	Is self-critical	Is never finished with possibilities
Gets A's	May not be motivated by grades	May not be motivated by grades

One important thing to understand is that **a child can belong to more than one group**. That is, it is possible for a high achiever to also be a gifted child. It's just that not every high achiever is gifted. In that same vein every gifted learner is also not a high achiever. There is actually a large percentage of gifted learners who are underachievers. In the same way, not every gifted learner is also a creative thinker, but it is unlikely that a creative thinker would not also be a gifted learner.

Common Social Emotional Concerns for Parents of Gifted Learners

Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities

by Stephanie S. Tolan

Dabrowski talked about OE's - overexcitabilities ("superstimulabilities"), and how the gifted were extremely sensitive in a variety of areas. It's a stimulus-response difference from the norms. It means that in these 5 areas a person reacts more strongly than normal for a longer period than normal to a stimulus that may be very small. It involves not just psychological factors but central nervous system sensitivity.

The five areas are:

Psychomotor

This is often thought to mean that the person needs lots of movement and athletic activity, but can also refer to the issue of having trouble smoothing out the mind's activities for sleeping. Lots of physical energy and movement, fast talking, lots of gestures, sometimes nervous tics.

Sensual (as in the senses)

Here's the "cut the label out of the shirt" demand, the child who limps as if with a broken leg when a sock seam is twisted. Also a love for sensory things -- textures, smells, tastes etc. or a powerful reaction to negative sensory input (bad smells, loud sounds, etc.) The kids tend to be sensitive to bright lights (squinting in all the family photographs, etc.), harsh sounds. A baby who cries when the wind blows in his face, for instance; a toddler who cries at the feel of grass on bare legs and feet. Another important aspect of this is aesthetic awareness -- the child who is awed to breathlessness at the sight of a beautiful sunset or cries hearing Mozart, etc.

Imaginational

These are the dreamers, poets, "space cadets" who are strong visual thinkers, and use lots of metaphorical speech. They day dream, remember their dreams at night and often react strongly to them, believe in magic (take a long time to "grow out of" Santa, the tooth fairy, elves and fairies, etc.).

Intellectual

Here's the usual definition of "giftedness." Kids with a strong "logical imperative," who love brain teasers and puzzles, enjoy following a line of complex reasoning, figuring things out. A love of things academic, new information, cognitive games, etc.

Emotional

This includes being "happier when happy, sadder when sad, angrier when angry," etc. Intensity of emotion. But also a very broad range of emotions. Also a need for deep connections with other people or animals. Unable to find close and deep friends (Damon and Pythias variety) they invent imaginary friends, make do with pets or stuffed animals, etc. Empathy and compassion. A child who needs a committed relationship will think herself "betrayed" by a child who plays with one child today and another tomorrow and refers to both as "friends." This is also the OE that makes the kids susceptible to depression.

Dabrowski believed emotional OE to be central -- the energy center from which the whole constellation

of OE's is generated.

Highly gifted people tend to have all 5 of these, but different people lead with different OE's. The engineer types lead with Intellectual, the poets with Emotional and Imaginational, etc. But variations in the levels of the individual OE's explain a great deal about the temperamental differences we see!

These five describe the unusual intensity of the gifted as well as the many ways in which they look and behave "oddly" when compared to norms.

Resource: <http://www.stephanietolan.com/dabrowskis.htm>

Perfectionism

It's not uncommon for high-ability children to also be perfectionists. Whether they worry about getting a drawing exactly right, earning all A's in school, or feeling helpless in fixing society's downfalls, approximately 20% of gifted children suffer from perfectionism to the degree it causes problems.

All perfectionism is not bad. Setting personal standards and pursuing excellence is important and healthy in many life situations. However, perfectionism can become unhealthy when it causes stress, pain, illness, procrastination, and underachievement. While not inclusive, some causes of perfectionism include a desire to please others, early successes and no failures at a young age, and difficulty setting realistic goals.

Healthy perfectionism

- Doing the best you can with the time and tools you have--and then moving on
- Setting high personal standards with a gentle acceptance of self
- Managing behaviors to not interfere with daily life

Unhealthy perfectionism

- Emphasizing and/or rewarding performance over other aspects of life
- Perceiving that one's work is never good enough
- Feeling continually dissatisfied about one's work--which can lead to depression, anxiety, and other physical symptoms
- Feeling guilty if not engaged in meaningful work at all times
- Having a compulsive drive to achieve, where personal value is based on what is produced or accomplished

Tips for Parents & Teachers in Managing Perfectionism

- Watch for signs of unhealthy perfectionism and intervene if necessary
- Adults should model a healthy approach and be aware of their own predispositions toward compulsive excellence
- Refrain from setting high, non-negotiable standards
- Emphasize the effort and process, not the end-result
- Do not withhold affection, support, or encouragement if goals are not met
- Teach your gifted child to manage perfectionistic behaviors and focus on positive self-talk

Resource: <https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents/social-emotional-issues/perfectionism>

Asynchronous Development

By Colleen Kessler

What is asynchronous development?

Asynchronous development is one of the hallmarks of giftedness. While most children develop in a relatively uniform manner, gifted learners are asynchronous in their development. **And the more gifted the child, the more asynchronous that child may be.** There can be *huge* differences between a gifted child's physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development. A gifted child can have the intelligence of an adult with the social-emotional development of a child. It is often said that gifted children are "many ages at once", they are quite literally out-of-sync.

Tips for Parents of Asynchronous Kids

Understand asynchronous development

- **Familiarize yourself** with [asynchronous development in gifted children](#). Share this information with those close to your child: grandparents, coaches, teachers, etc.
- **Become acquainted** with your child's "many ages", his unique asynchronous development. Understand that asynchrony may not be normal for most children but it is a *completely normal* aspect of giftedness.
- **Adjust your expectations.** One of the most difficult things about having an asynchronous child is managing expectations- both your own expectations and those of others.
 - I don't know about you guys, but I often find myself getting frustrated with my son. He speaks like a mini-adult and can have amazing conversations. And yet, when frustrated or overwhelmed, he can dissolve into a mushy mess in seconds. I have to constantly remind myself of his asynchrony and think of Leo in terms of his many different ages.

- Other adults may expect too much too soon from gifted children. Many mistakenly assume that a gifted child will easily secure As in school and behave well in class. Giftedness and achievement are two entirely separate entities.

Think outside the box when it comes to your child's education

- We live in a society that, sadly, values sameness. Those who are different, especially those *children* who are different, often face a harder road. Advocate for your child early and often.
- Meet your child where he is at, based on his current levels of development. Maybe your third grader is reading at a college level, doing seventh grade math, and writing at a second grade level. That's okay. Allow your child to soar, but provide support for any areas of weaknesses.
- It can be difficult to find reading material for gifted children. Many are capable of reading at a high school or college level, but the themes and content of books may be too much for the child's social-emotional level.
- It is challenging to educate asynchronous children in the public education setting. Think outside of that proverbial box! Your child may benefit from an alternative educational placement. Acceleration, online learning, homeschooling, and even unschooling often work better for this population.
- Asynchrony is often displayed in a gifted child's lagging executive functioning skills (attention, organization, behavior, and self-regulation skills). Your child may need additional support and scaffolding in this area.

Intellectual peers are important

- Remember that it is normal for gifted children to have difficulty relating to their peers. Your child may need social support and scaffolding.
- These kids need intellectual peers. Allow your child opportunities to interact with other gifted children.
- Provide opportunity for your child to interact with older children and adults. Find a mentor in your community.

Help your child work through and manage frustration

Your child's asynchronous development is frustrating to deal with, isn't it? Just imagine for a moment how incredibly frustrating it must be to *be* your child.

- Everyone has unique strengths and weaknesses. We all have things we are good at and things we need to work upon. Talk about this with your child and use your child's passions to address weaknesses.
- Teach your child to manage frustration. Coping skills are among the most important of life skills.
- When the going gets rough, do not be afraid to seek help. When doing so, be sure to find care providers who specialize in gifted and twice exceptional learners.

Find a community

Parenting an asynchronous gifted child can be a lonely venture. Parents often feel that they cannot speak openly about their struggles for fear of being judged harshly. [Find a community of parents and educators of similar children](#). Seek out these individuals both online and in your community.

Resource: <https://raisinglifelonglearners.com/asynchronous-development/>

Anxiety

by Dr. Barbara Swicord, CEO National Society for Gifted and Talented

We often associate anxiety with giftedness but whether there is a causal relationship is not definitive. Because gifted children experience the world intensely, they may show a heightened level of behaviors that are associated with anxiety. Children who are acutely aware of the world around them may develop anxiety over worrying about global and local problems, perfectionism in themselves, and general fears regarding situations out of their control.

A 2009 study from Hungary's Semmelweis University found an association between high academic performance, creativity, and the T/T genotype, a gene that's been linked to an increased risk of psychosis – all of which may help to explain why we often associate anxiety and stress with gifted children. Anxiety affects about 18% of Americans, according to the National Institutes of Mental Health. Certainly, the care of mental health professionals should be sought if anxiety issues are a concern at school or home. But, as parents and educators, we can be aware of behaviors that suggest anxiety is a problem and be aware of ways we can assist in reducing anxiety.

Here are just a few of the common ways that anxiety in gifted children might manifest:

- Tension
- Irritability
- Separation from peers
- Health complaints, seemingly to avoid situations or tasks
- Changes in temperament or attitude
- Unprompted or inappropriate outbursts, tantrums or withdrawal
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Lack of enthusiasm or carelessness

- Inability to concentrate, fidgeting and other “hyper” behavior
- Persistent worrying

If your student is dealing with anxiety or stress, consider contacting a professional, and be aware of these potentially supportive suggestions:

1. **Teach coping and relaxation skills** such as deep breathing, muscle tension and relaxation, and practice techniques for overcoming fears.
2. **Encourage positive social interactions** by role playing social situations, teaching positive affirmations, and preparing students ahead of time for anticipated events and presentations.
3. **Stimulate creativity** to help students find tools for feeling successful, self-expressive, and stress-free. Encourage exploration in creative arts fields, teaching the skills of creative problem solving, modeling creative thinking and engaging in imaginative activities, and deferring judgment of the students’ ideas and products.

Depression

Experts don't agree whether gifted children become depressed more frequently than children in general. Some say that gifted children are more prone to depression and suicide because of their heightened sensitivities, perfectionism, introversion, overachieving behaviors, existential concerns, and feeling like they don't fit in. Others contend that no research proves that gifted children are more depressed than others their own age.

About 10% of gifted adolescents experience clinically significant levels of depression.* Suicide attempts occur more frequently among youths who are artistic and creative, unusually sensitive, and who attend highly competitive and selective schools.**

Signals, Symptoms & Strategies

Resources: <http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents/social-emotional-issues/depression>

*Baker (2004) in Chapter 7 Parent’s Guide to Gifted Children, Webb et al.

**Kerr(1991); Piirto (2004); Silverman (1993).

Why Gifted Children Fail and How to Prevent It

by Dr. Judy Willis, Neurologist and Educator

While a great deal of emphasis is placed on helping students with low grades improve their academic performances, those who are considered gifted are often overlooked. Gifted children are accustomed to succeeding in their studies, but this doesn't mean that they won't make mistakes or struggle with their

schoolwork, just like any other student. “Failure” for gifted children is not limited to failing grades alone. The brain registers failure when repeated efforts do not achieve the desired goal. Failure can be experienced when a straight “A” child begins to get frequent “A-” grades in a subject and, despite high effort, fails to regain the “A”. Mistakes in front of classmates are another form of failure for gifted students and this can have negative consequences, leading them to doubt their own intelligence. The key is to help gifted children deal with failure and thrive through challenges and teach them that effort and setbacks are part of the learning process. Many gifted students do well in elementary school without the need to study as much as their classmates and they may lack the organization, prioritization, and planning skills that their friends learn and practice during those foundational years. As a result, they tend to suffer self-doubt, frustration, and eventually give up, stymied because they never had the opportunity to develop the fundamentals ultimately needed in the upper grades. Here is some advice on how you can help boost your gifted child’s confidence and help her build the organizational and planning skills that she will need for her continued success.

Build and nurture your gifted child’s resilience and perseverance. Many gifted children are not used to challenges, mistakes, and setbacks because they may not have previously experienced them. When the idea of failure does present itself, they may not be adequately prepared to handle it. This can cause gifted children to lose self-confidence, stop participation in class discussions, and avoid challenges of advanced homework or project options. These children can become so convinced of their lack of ability that they stop studying for exams and choose not to take the highest-level courses, despite ample intelligence to succeed. Here are some tips on how you can help your gifted child turn this mindset around:

Praise effort

Acknowledge your child’s efforts rather than outcomes achieved easily, and encourage them to try new things and take risks of making mistakes. Remind her that she will inevitably make mistakes, and that’s alright, as she shouldn’t see them as failures, but rather opportunities to learn and grow. Tell her that there is always another chance to do well, and that all she can do is prepare, do her best and keep trying, and success will eventually follow.

Discuss the challenges faced by historical figures or innovative thinkers

Give your child examples about the failures that lit the path of renowned iconic innovators on route to their own advances, discoveries and breakthroughs in knowledge, technology, arts and culture. This will show your child that mistakes can often be turned into opportunities and it can help prepare him to confront his own eventual mistakes and failures more effectively.

Model your mistakes

If children believe that making mistakes means they are not really gifted and hold themselves up to unrealistic standards, they will miss out on developing their creativity and discovering new ways to apply their knowledge. Provide opportunities for your child to sustain effort when faced with challenges and help her understand that asking for help can be the wiser choice, and not evidence of lesser intelligence. A good way to do this is to model the behavior you wish to see in your child. If you make mistakes, struggle with tax forms, or are frustrated by complex instructions for setting up a new computer system, let your child know how you are feeling and how you overcame the challenge.

Show your child that there is not one 'right way' for everything

Mistake fear is reduced when children have opportunities to discover that there are alternative perspectives and ways to solve problems. Explore examples where the same events are reported quite differently in history books from different eras, or a variety of news media, or how artists interpret the same scene or still life in very different, but equally valid ways. Encourage your child's cognitive flexibility by encouraging him to find another way to sort buttons from a mixed bag, an alternative way of reaching the correct solution to a math problem or to create different endings for a story.

Help your child break down challenges

It's good for children to realize that "breaking them down" challenging questions, problems, or assignments into achievable segments can help them be successful in their studies. One way to do this is to save your broken clocks or safely handled appliances, and invite your child to tell you how the item works. If she doesn't know or is unsure, encourage her to take it apart. Without giving her specific instructions, allow her to explore and she will be delighted to discover parts of the complex item she recognizes such as a spring, battery or gear.

Build skill sets so they are available when needed

Gifted children, who didn't learn organization, planning, or prioritizing skills in elementary school, can build them with you. Challenge your child with inquiry and projects that hook his interests and that require using advance planning and ongoing adjustments during the course of reaching the goal. For example, when planning family vacations, home improvements, or deciding which car to purchase, engage your child in the decision. He will build skills of prioritizing, planning, and analyzing when he feels he can influence your decisions. If your child finds a side trip to a special theme park, hall of fame or boat adventure that can be added to the family's vacation plans, let him evaluate the possibilities and practicalities, as the personal relevance of the task can help challenge and motivate him. His research

and critical thinking skills will be enhanced as he seeks documentation, uses thoughtful estimation, makes comparisons, prioritizes and makes adjustments in budgeting and scheduling.

With help, your children won't deny or doubt their abilities when they confront setbacks, mistakes or difficult challenges. When children find ways to turn their boredom around, develop resilience to setbacks, take the risk of making mistakes and apply the effort to make revisions, they will be prepared to apply their gifts throughout life and to push boundaries with their creative problem-solving and game-changing innovations.

Resource: <https://www.parenttoolkit.com/academics/news/parental-involvement/why-gifted-children-fail-and-how-to-prevent-it>

Keys to Help Gifted Kids Have a Successful School Year

By Judy Galbriath from the Davidson Institute for Talent Development 2010 Seminar Series

Have a conversation before school starts to discuss your expectations, and your child's.

- What are the academic goals for the year? What grades do you expect, and why? Does your child expect a perfect report card—and if so, why? Many gifted kids report getting A's, but also say that they're not learning much of anything new. If that was true for your child last year, request a meeting early on with your child's teacher(s) to find out what can be done to ensure the curriculum offers enrichment, challenges, and an appropriate level of learning.
- What extracurricular activities will your child be involved in? How will that impact time for homework, family and friends, chores or jobs, and R&R? What will happen if your child gets overscheduled and anxiety ridden? Gifted kids, like all kids, need help coping with stress, managing their time, and leading a balanced life.
- What does your child most hope will happen this school year? Are there any special concerns related to peers, teachers, or subjects? How can you help your child realize his or her academic goals and thrive socially and emotionally? Two helpful sources of information are the [National Association for Gifted Children](#) and [Hoagies Gifted Education Page](#). Check them both out for background on supporting gifted kids at home and at school.

Find out if there's a gifted and talented coordinator in your school district.

- Arrange a meeting to learn what the district commitment is for gifted education services. Be ready with information about your child's abilities, test scores, strengths and weaknesses, social and emotional maturity, interests, and prior experiences in school -- good and bad. Present yourself as a willing partner to help meet your child's needs.

- If you need to be more informed about gifted education options and issues (and most parents do), many, many books are available on the topic. Ask if there's a resource room and for specific resources the coordinator recommends.

Arrange to meet with the teacher(s) early, and as often as is needed.

- Again, present yourself as a partner. Parents often wait too long before bringing up concerns or questions. Teachers, rightly, find it frustrating to learn months after the fact that a parent or student has had an issue. Waiting only exacerbates problems. You can start by saying, "Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me. I know how busy teachers are. I appreciate the opportunity to introduce myself and learn about your expectations of parents and students. I'm also interested to hear about how you support the needs of students with different ability levels, including those of gifted kids. My son/daughter is an eager learner, and I want very much to keep that interest in learning alive. What is most important to me is . . ."
- When you want something different in terms of your child's education, be as specific as you can. Focus on what's most important; teachers have too many students in a class to differentiate the curriculum for all students in every subject area. If what your child needs most is more interesting and advanced reading material, address that first. If your child is bored in school, find out what, specifically, is boring. Communicating specifics helps teachers identify where they might be able to make adjustments.
- Give positive feedback to let educators know what you appreciate about their efforts. Sending a thank-you card or a friendly email can make a teacher's day. Again, specifics really matter here. You can say, "Melanie was thrilled that you allowed her to test out of the spelling assignments. The option to go to the library more often instead meant so much to her. I really appreciate how you've gotten to know her. Thank you for your flexibility and willingness to accommodate Melanie's abilities!"

Your child's teacher can be an ally. With a positive, proactive, informed, and helpful mindset, you can help ensure the relationship you have is positive and helps your child within the classroom. .

Online Resources for Parents of Gifted Students

1. [National Association for Gifted Children](http://www.nagc.org) - (www.nagc.org) - The National Association for Gifted Children is one of the best places for parents of gifted children to find resources, reading, help, and advice on raising an exceptional child.
2. [Ohio Association for Gifted Children](http://www.oagc.com/) - (<http://www.oagc.com/>) - The Ohio Association for Gifted Children is just one of many state-centered organizations for gifted kids. Divisions for parents, teachers and coordinators help to connect like minded people with events and resources related to helping gifted children in the state of Ohio.
3. [Gifted Child Society](http://giftedchildsociety.com) - (<http://giftedchildsociety.com>) - The Gifted Child Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to furthering the cause of gifted children. Through their website, parents can find helpful information and learn about seminars and workshops they can attend.
4. [SENG](http://www.sengifted.org/about-seng) - (<http://www.sengifted.org/about-seng>) - SENEG is short for Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted and is an organization that wants to help ensure that gifted children are understood, accepted, nurtured, and supported by their families, schools, and workplaces.
5. [Mensa for Kids](http://www.mensaforkids.org/) - (<http://www.mensaforkids.org/>) - Mensa embraces younger members through this fun website, offering up monthly themes to get kids reading and learning at an advanced level.
6. [Institute for Research and Policy on Acceleration](http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/Default.aspx) - (<http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/Default.aspx>) - Find out more about the latest research being done into academic acceleration through this organization's site.
7. [Center for Talented Youth](http://cty.jhu.edu/) - (<http://cty.jhu.edu/>) - Located at Johns Hopkins, this organization engages gifted kids and their families through programs, summer classes, and even a bi-monthly magazine.
8. [The Davidson Institute](http://www.davidsongifted.org) - (<http://www.davidsongifted.org>) - A non profit organization who serves profoundly gifted young people 18 and under. Profoundly gifted students are those who score in the 99.9th percentile on IQ and achievement tests.

9. [Raising Lifelong Learners Blog](https://raisinglifelonglearners.com/) - (<https://raisinglifelonglearners.com/>) - Extremely informative blog by GIS Colleen Kessler. Many Social Emotional issues are explained in greater depth at this site.
10. [The National Society for Gifted and Talent](https://www.nsgt.org/about-the-society)t - (<https://www.nsgt.org/about-the-society>) - The National Society for the Gifted & Talented (NSGT) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization created to honor and nurture gifted and talented (G&T) children and youth. It is committed to acknowledging and supporting the needs of G&T children and youth by providing recognition of their significant academic and performance accomplishments and access to educational resources and advanced learning opportunities directly related to their interests and talents.

Subject Area Activities and Tips for Sparking Interest & Growth in Your Gifted Child

Reading

- Read with your child and ask guiding questions about what they are reading to increase comprehension. Appropriate questions would require them to think critically about the characters and plot such as:
 - How would the story be different if (this event or that event didn't happen) for example: How would Harry Potter's character be different if he were raised by Wizards? Would we like him?
*These types of questions give a deeper understanding of the understanding the child has for the story as a whole.
- Engage your child in a reading challenge be it a summer reading challenge from the local library or one online such as at the website Mensa for kids where challenges will open readers to a range of literature and levels starting as young as preschool. Students who complete challenges by reading and rating the books from the challenge. As they complete the challenge they even receive a tee shirt and certificate.
Link: <https://www.mensaforkids.org/achieve/excellence-in-reading/>
- Ask your child to look up information about the author and other books they have read. This may help them to find other books they will enjoy or gain insight as to how the author came up with their ideas.
- Ask your child to retell a story as one of the characters
- Extend your child's reading by asking them to draw their favorite scene or create a visual online that shows what they visualize when they read
- Take regular visits to the library, especially when there are guest authors; go to different libraries within the area to get exposure to new books.

Tips for making book choices

- Allow children to read above their designated age level, but scrutinize content carefully. Consider having your child read the classics.
- Help your child choose high quality literature that challenges, but doesn't overwhelm them. Use the five finger rule where they read a page.
*The five finger rule - If they have five words they do not know the book is too difficult as an independent reading book, but may be great for a parent to read aloud to their child.
- Encourage your child to read literature in a variety of genres and by different authors.

Writing

- Encourage your child to put their thoughts on paper when they express interest in writers.
- Encourage real life writing such as letters, and homework answers as well as writing for fun including stories and poems
- Provide your child with a journal so they have a place to record their personal thoughts and feelings.
- Encourage your child to write in poetry formats as well as in prose.
- Read your child's writing with them and show your enthusiasm for their creativity.
- Create your own "Mad Libs" to practice parts of speech and have your child write a "Mad Lib" for you to solve.

Tips for working with young writers

- Concentrate first on letting your child get their thoughts on paper and then help with the revision process. Be careful not to overcorrect writing, especially when it is done for recreational purposes.
- When you are working with your child to correct them focus on one area at a time.
- Encourage your child to include as many details as possible when they write.
- When working on answering questions in written form encourage your child to rewrite the question to frame their answer.

List of Books with Gifted Characters

- Things not Seen by Andrew Clements
- Yolanda's Genius by Carol Fenner
- Catching Genius by Kristy Kiernan
- Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes
- Here's to You, Rachel Robinson
- Millicent Min, Girl Genius by Lisa Yee
- Maizon at Blue Hill by Jacqueline Woodson
- The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky
- Welcome to the Ark by Stephanie Tolan
- Maniac Magee by Jerry Spinelli
- Gifted by Beth Evangelista
- Gifted: A Novel by Nikita Lalwani
- Looking for Alaska by John Green

- The View from Saturday by E.L. Konigsburg
- I Hate Being Gifted by Patricia Hermes

Science

- Develop Scientific Attitudes by giving age appropriate explanations to topics in science your child is exploring.
- Balance structured activities such as experiments with independent explorations.
- Encourage your child to follow hunches and form hypotheses which they can test.
- Provide opportunities to explore science at home through using kitchen chemistry, using magnifying glasses, taking rock walks, and taking apart old appliances (with supervision).

Math

- Make your child aware of the math in their world by using concrete examples which will also allow students to see how they can use what they are learning.
- Help your child make connections with how basic facts and simple concepts can tie to more complex learning.
- Take complex problems in small bites to ensure all steps are followed.
- Encourage students to explain how they came to the solution for a problem; gifted children often “just get” a concept. The more they can explain their thinking the more they will achieve higher levels of success when faced with complex multi-step problems.
- Use manipulatives to make complex concepts more concrete.
- Allow your child to have personal interactions with math by doing things like making a budget, balancing a checking account with their allowance, or determining statistics. related to sports.

Social Studies

- Use Inquiry and exploration through project based learning.
- Have your child engage with relatives through creating a family history project where they conduct interviews, create a family tree, or produce a scrapbook.
- Allow your child who loves geography to plan a route or a trip for your family using maps.
- Introduce your child to local or national government through visiting government buildings, reading newspaper articles related to recent legislation, or visiting websites such as www.congresslink.org
- Read biographies of famous figures from history or help your child research a time period, or topic of interest.

Glossary of Terms Used in Gifted Education

Ability Assessment: An ability assessment measures a student's performance on a nationally-normed intelligence instrument. There are group ability assessments (e.g., Cognitive Ability Test, Terra Nova) and there are individual ability assessments (WISCIV, WNV, Stanford-Binet V). Ability measures the capacity to do something. Ability is different from achievement. Ability measures how a student learns while achievement measures what a student has learned.

Acceleration: Faster presentation of content to more closely match the speed at which gifted students learn. Acceleration options include early entrance to Kindergarten or 1st grade, subject acceleration, whole-grade acceleration, dual enrollment programs, and early entrance to college.

Achievement Assessment: An achievement assessment measures how much a student has learned or acquired learning. There are group achievement assessments (e.g. ITBS, MAP) and individual achievement assessments (Woodcock-Johnson-III NU). Achievement is different from ability. Achievement measures what a student has learned while ability measures how a student learns.

Advanced Placement: This refers to a program of college-level courses offered through CollegeBoard. Many high schools throughout the country offer AP courses in various subjects. Students may take a test in that subject in May to potentially earn college credit. Some colleges accept AP credit while some do not.

Asynchronous Development: Differing rates for physical, cognitive, and emotional development. For example, a gifted child may be chronologically 13 years old, intellectually 18, emotionally 8, and physically 11. The discrepancies are greatest for children at the chronological age of about 13, but the extremes displayed by gifted children have led some experts to define giftedness itself as asynchronous development.

Bloom's Taxonomy: Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy (1956) is often used to develop curriculum for students. Bloom's levels of thinking include: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Gifted students typically need instruction at the highest levels of Bloom's taxonomy which promote higher level thinking skills.

Cluster Grouping: Placing a group of five to ten identified gifted students in a classroom with other students of mixed abilities. Instruction can be targeted to the cluster groups within the classroom.

Creative Thinking Ability: Ohio recognizes creative thinking as a category of giftedness. A child with creative thinking ability is one who consistently engages in divergent thinking that results in unconventional responses to conventional tasks to the extent that s/he needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program.

Curriculum Compacting: Adapts the regular curriculum to meet the needs of advanced students by eliminating work that has already been mastered or condensing work that may be mastered at a pace more appropriate for the student's ability level.

Differentiated Curriculum: Refers to a process by which the standard curriculum is modified in content, process, product, and/or environment to meet the needs of high ability students. Modifications relate to the quality of work as opposed to the quantity.

Dual Enrollment: Taking upper-level coursework concurrently with grade-level coursework.

Early Entrance to Kindergarten/1st grade: Some children need to start Kindergarten or 1st early because they are ready. Early entrance is designed for the exceptional child who is both academically ready as well as developmentally mature when compared to others his or her chronological age.

Full Scale The Full Scale IQ refers to the sum of the parts on an intelligence test. For example, the full scale IQ on the WISC-IV is a composite of these parts: Verbal Comprehension, Perceptual Reasoning, Working Memory and Processing Speed. IQs between 85 and 115 are considered within the "average range" in that they are one standard deviation above and below the mean (100).

Giftedness Giftedness refers to distinctly above-average competence in intellectual, creative, socioaffective (leadership, empathy, self-awareness) sensory motor ability (strength, fine motor control, endurance), or other areas (extrasensory perception, healing) [Gagne].

Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) This is the instrument that is required to be used in evaluating whole-grade acceleration candidates (early entrance as well as other whole-grade candidates). The assessment involves school history, evaluation of a student's ability, aptitude and achievement, developmental factors, interpersonal skills, parental/school attitude and support, as well as critical items.

IQ Intelligence Quotient. This is a numerical representation of intelligence. IQ is derived from dividing the mental age (based on an intelligence test such as the WISC-IV or the Stanford-Binet V) by the chronological age; times 100. An average IQ is considered to be 100 (the mean).

Post-Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) Provides students with the opportunity to attend college courses while earning both high school and college credit. Tuition for the college courses is paid for with state education funds.

Pre-assessment An assessment given at the beginning of a unit or lesson to determine how much content the student has already mastered. Instruction is then differentiated to meet student needs.

Pull-Out Program Program in which students are pulled out of the regular classroom on a scheduled basis to go to a resource room staffed by a teacher(s) trained in the education of gifted children.

Reliability This refers to the “repeatability” and stability of scores. Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure. A test is considered reliable if we get the same result repeatedly. For example, if a test is designed to measure a trait (such as introversion), then each time the test is administered to a subject, the results should be approximately the same. Synonym: Precision.

Self-contained classroom A self-contained classroom is a classroom where the district places students in a classroom with other gifted students full-time, everyday. The teacher is a Gifted Interventional Specialist. The state of Ohio limits self-contained classrooms to no more than 20 students.

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Services Services for gifted students are determined by the local education agency or school district. Services vary among the Ohio school districts. A service must conform to the Operating Standards for Identifying and Serving Gifted Students (OAC 3301-51-15). Districts are to apply service placement criteria consistently. Services typically involve a differentiated curriculum. A setting (AP course, resource room, Honors class) is not service without curriculum modifications that are specified in the Written Education Plan.

Socio-Emotional Needs Many gifted students have affective needs that include heightened or unusual sensitivity to self-awareness, emotions and expectations of themselves or others, and a sense of fairness. Typical issues with gifted students include perfectionism, depression, underachievement, interpersonal relationships and career planning.

Specific Academic Ability Ohio recognizes that some children have an aptitude in a specific subject or several subjects. A student who has specific academic ability is typically identified using an achievement test. Ohio requires performance of 95% or above at the national level on a standardized achievement test. The four areas recognized by Ohio are: reading and/or writing, mathematics, social studies and science. A student may be identified as a specific academic but not superior cognitive. The reverse may also be true.

Standard Error of Measures (SEM) The SEM is essentially the reliability of an instrument. For example, the SEM on the WISC-IV is 3.0. This means a child who scores 144 on the WISC-IV would most likely score between 141 and 147 if that instrument is used again. The higher the SEM, the less reliable the instrument.

Standardized Test A test taken by many students under identical conditions which allows results to be compared statistically to a given standard. Popular standardized assessments include the ACT, SAT, PSAT, GRE, LSAT, MCAT, Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and the Cognitive Ability Test.

Superior Cognitive In Ohio, a student must score two standard deviations above the mean (minus the standard error of measure) on an intelligence test (e.g., WISC-IV, WNV or Stanford-Binet V) or perform at or above the 95th percentile on a basic or composite battery of a nationally-normed achievement test (e.g., ITBS), or attain an approved score on an above grade level standardized, nationally-normed test (e.g., ACT, SAT or EXPLORE)

Tiered Assignments In a heterogeneous classroom, a teacher uses varied levels of activities to ensure that students explore ideas at a level that builds on their prior knowledge and prompts continued growth.

Twice Exceptional This is a term used to describe a child who has two or more exceptionalities. For example, a student who is both gifted and hearing impaired.

Validity Validity is the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure. It is vital for a test to be valid in order for the results to be accurately applied and interpreted. Validity isn't determined by a single statistic, but by a body of research that demonstrates the relationship between the test and the behavior it is intended to measure. There are three types of validity: content, criterion-related and construct.

Appendix A:

District Identification Tools

In our district we use a variety of tools from the Ohio Department of Education’s list of approved assessments to assess our students. Assessments listed below are those currently utilized by the district.

Superior Cognitive Ability Assessments

Instrument Name	Grade administered	Reassessment Score	Identification Score
In-View	2,5,6,7	126	128
Otis Lennon School Ability Test	K-12	124	126
Woodcock Johnson Test of Cognitive Abilities, 4 th Ed.	K-12	126	127
Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test – Multilevel Version	K-12	123	124
WISC IV	K-12	123	125

Specific Academic Assessments

Instrument Name	Grade administered	Reassessment Score	Identification Score
Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) (3 times per Year)	(K-1) MAP Primary (2-10) MAP	94 th percentile	95 th percentile
Terra Nova, 3 rd Edition, Multiple Assessments	2,5,6,7	94 th percentile	95 th percentile

<i>Woodcock Johnson IV Achievement Test</i>	<i>K-12</i>	94 th percentile	95 th percentile
PSAT Assessment Program (PSAT/NMSQT)	10-11*	94 rd percentile	95 th percentile
ACT Assessment Program (AAP)	10-12*	94 th percentile	95 th percentile
SAT I Reasoning Test (SAT)	10-12*	94 th percentile	95 th percentile
<i>Stanford Achievement Test (10th Edition)</i>	<i>K-12</i>	94 th percentile	95 th percentile

Creative Thinking Ability Assessments

Assessments the district administers that provide for creative thinking identification (provide at least two for assessment and reassessment purposes):

Instrument Name	Grade Administered	Reassessment Score	Identification Score
<i>Otis Lennon School Ability Test</i>	<i>K-12</i>	109	110
<i>Woodcock Johnson Test of Cognitive Abilities, 3rd Ed.</i>	<i>K-12</i>	111	112
<i>Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test – Multilevel Version</i>	<i>K-12</i>	108	109
<i>Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test – Individual Administration</i>	<i>K-12</i>	109	110 (ages 5-11) or 111 (ages 12 and up)
In-View	2,5,6,7	111	112
<i>Scales for Rating the Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS)</i>	<i>K-12</i>	32	51

<i>Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales (GATES)- Creative Thinking Section IV</i>	K-12	65-82	83
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Visual and Performing Arts

Assessments the district administers that provide for visual and performing arts identification (provide at least two for each arts area for assessment and reassessment purposes):

Instrument Name	Grade Administered	Reassessment Score	Identification Score
<i>Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales Artistic Talent Section, Questions 41-50 (GATES 2)</i>	K-12	Standard Score 90-100	Standard Score 111
<i>Scales for Rating the Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS),</i>	K-12	Artistic V Criteria: 59, Musical VI Criteria: 37, Dramatic VII Criteria: 54	Artistic V Criteria: 61, Musical VI Criteria: 39, Dramatic VII Criteria: 57
<i>ODE Rubrics for display of work, audition and performance</i>	K-12	Art: 16 Dance: 20 Drama: 16 Music: 14	Art: 21 Dance: 26 Drama: 20 Music: 18
AP Art Placement Scoring Guidelines	10-12*	4	5

Italicized tests are given only as requested by referrals in the grade levels as they are requested.

Appendix B:

Sample Forms

- I. Gifted Assessment Referral Form
- II. Visual and Performing Arts Nomination for Gifted Education
- III. Referral for Academic Acceleration Form
- IV. Acceleration Appeal Request Form
- V. Gifted Service Discontinuation Consent Form