

# GIFTED HANDBOOK

NORTH SCHUYLKILL  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

REVISED

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## -----Mission-----

The goal of the North Schuylkill School District's Gifted Program is to ensure that all gifted students are identified and provided with individualized and challenging programs. Aligned with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Chapter 16 guidelines, our program is designed to meet the diverse academic and intellectual needs of our gifted students. Using a comprehensive approach to identification, we employ multiple criteria to ensure a thorough assessment of each student's abilities. Through enriched and differentiated curriculum, we foster critical thinking, cultivate problem-solving skills, and ignite creativity, empowering our Spartans to excel both academically and personally. At North Schuylkill School District, we are committed to preparing students for lifelong success in an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

The North Schuylkill School District provides a full range of acceleration and enrichment options that include programs aimed at meeting the intellectual and academic abilities and needs of students. Gifted education for each identified student is based on the unique needs of the student, not solely on the classification.

Responsibility for the development, implementation, and plan revisions of each Gifted Individualized Education Plan is seen as a team effort between gifted support teacher, general education teachers, school psychologist, and administration.

The Gifted Education Program offered by the North Schuylkill School District tailors educational opportunities to cater to the distinct needs, abilities, and interests of identified students requiring Gifted Education Services. Using various criteria, our professional staff identifies gifted students in elementary and high school settings. We enhance the curriculum through acceleration and enrichment to nurture these abilities. Our objective is to challenge gifted students with educational programs that align with their academic and intellectual talents.

# Characteristics of Gifted Learners

Gifted learners prefer idea-mates rather than age-mates. They enjoy the company of peers when the peer group understands the shared ideas.

Gifted students are not always high-achieving students and may not always have the highest grades. It should be noted that characteristics may vary as a function of the student's cultural background.

## HIGH ACHIEVER:

- Knows the answers
- Is interested
- Is attentive
- Has good ideas
- Works hard
- Answers the questions
- Is in the top group
- Listens with interest
- Learns with ease
- Understands ideas
- Has synchronous development

## GIFTED STUDENT:

- Asks the questions
- Is highly curious
- Is mentally and physically involved
- Has wild silly ideas
- Plays around yet tests well
- Discusses in detail
- Is beyond top group
- Has strong feelings and opinions
- Already knows
- Constructs abstractions
- Has asynchronous development

## **The North Schuylkill School District's Gifted Services include:**

- Identifying candidates for the program and assessing their eligibility using a variety of tools and procedures.
- Emphasizing a positive working relationship between parents and school personnel.
- Creating an individualized, flexible, and appropriate program based on the measured strengths and needs of each eligible student.
- Providing counseling, transportation, and appropriate support services for eligible students, including those students who are low achieving or at risk.
- Providing professional development opportunities for all school personnel, including support for the preparation of differentiated educational plans, materials, and curriculum by regular education teachers.
- Promoting the use of strategies developed for challenging students' analytical and critical thinking skills in regular classrooms.
- Instruction that is responsive to the needs of all gifted learners, which includes pre-assessment, curriculum compacting, telescoping, acceleration, and rigorous enrichment.
- Access to accelerated instructional opportunities for all students specifically those with the capability, potential, and/or motivation to embrace the challenge.

## **Gifted Education Contacts at North Schuylkill School District**

Deneen Reese – Supervisor of Special Education who oversees Gifted Education

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# Gifted Timelines



## TIMELINE BEGINS

- A parent/guardian of a student sends in a written request for a gifted evaluation OR
- The district initiates an evaluation through a screening or referral process.



## PERMISSION TO EVALUATE

North Schuylkill will send a permission to evaluate for parent/guardian to sign within 10 calendar days of the request.



## IF A STUDENT DOES NOT QUALIFY

NSSD will issue a Notice of Recommended Assignment at the same time as the Gifted Written Report.



## MULTIDISCIPLINARY EVALUATION

The North Schuylkill GMDT Team will complete the evaluation within 60 calendar days from when the signed Permission to Evaluate was received from the parent/guardian. A Gifted Written Report must be completed and presented to the parents at this time.



## GIEP DEVELOPMENT

North Schuylkill SD will develop a GIEP within 30 calendar days after the Gifted Written Report is presented to the parent/guardian along with notice of parental rights.

**\*\*The GIEP implementation date must be set for 5 days after the GIEP meeting if signed at the meeting or 10 days after the meeting if sent home by mail.**



## ISSUE A NORA

NSSD will issue a NORA to parents/guardians at the GIEP meeting OR within 5 calendar days after the GIEP meeting by certified mail.

## IMPORTANT

Send an invitation to participate home to the parents 10 days before the meeting.

## ----- Gifted Referral Process -----

Chapter 16 requires that school districts use “multiple criteria” in the screening of students for eligibility in gifted programs. Students will enter into Gifted Support Services because they meet the selection criteria and also show a need for specially designed instruction as required by Chapter 16 regulations.

Students can be screened at any grade for the program and may be referred for a Gifted Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) through any of the following avenues:

**Gifted Review Team:** Gifted Review Team will review the level I data annually to identify students who may qualify for level II screening.

**Teacher Referral:** Upon review of data and if the teacher feels that a student may be in need of specially designed instruction, they will make the referral by completing the Gifted Referral Form.

**Parent Referral:** A parent can, at any time, request that his or her child be screened for Gifted Support. Parents may contact any school official regarding their interest in comprehensive screening. When a verbal request for a GMDE is made the school must provide the parents a copy of the Permission to Evaluate form within 10 calendar days of the oral request. District will issue a Permission to Evaluate and following parental consent on this form the District has 60 calendar days to complete a GWR followed by a GMDE meeting to discuss the outcomes of the GWR.

**Student Referral:** A student may ask, at any time, to be screened for the program. Pursuant to appropriate parental consent the district will initiate screening.

## Gifted Screening and Evaluation Guidelines

In accordance with the Board's philosophy to develop the special abilities of each student, the district shall provide gifted education services and programs designed to meet the individual educational needs of identified students. North Schuylkill School District Policy #114 (adopted September 29, 2010; revised April 19, 2023) and Chapter 16 of the Pennsylvania Code will guide this process.

The North Schuylkill School district's gifted education support services shall provide the following:

- 1) System to locate and identify all students within the district who are thought to be gifted and in need of specially designed instruction.
- 2) Screening and evaluation process that meets state requirements, to determine students' educational needs.
- 3) Procedures to determine whether a student is mentally gifted.
- 4) Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) developed, and subsequently modified, for each student based on his/her unique needs and the written report of the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMDT).
- 5) Safeguards for the due process rights of gifted students.
- 6) Notification to teachers of their responsibilities to each of their identified gifted students, as provided in the student's Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP).

The district shall provide all required notices and information to parents/guardians of gifted students, document all consents and responses of parents/guardians, and adhere to all established timelines.

In compliance with Chapter 16, (Pa. Code 16.21 (b)), the North Schuylkill School District is responsible for locating, identifying, and educating school-aged students requiring specially-designed programs or services:

Chapter 16 requires that "Each school district shall adopt and use a system to locate and identify all students within that district who are thought to be gifted and in need of specially designed instruction." (22 Pa. Code §16.21(a))

"Each school district shall determine the student's needs through a screening and evaluation process which meets the requirements of this chapter." (22 Pa. Code §16.21(c))

### **Definition of Giftedness**

Mentally gifted is defined as outstanding intellectual and creative ability the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the regular education program. (22 Pa. Code §16.1)

Intellectual ability is not equated with an IQ score alone. Intellectual ability is and should be a reflection of a range of assessments including a student's performance and potential.

### **Guidelines for Identification**

Each school district shall establish procedures to determine whether a student is mentally gifted. The North Schuylkill School District uses a multi-criteria process to determine whether students move to a gifted evaluation. "Mentally gifted" refers to a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher or when multiple criteria as set forth in this chapter and in Department Guidelines indicate gifted ability. Determination of gifted ability will not be based on IQ score alone. Deficits in memory or processing speed, as indicated by testing, cannot be the sole basis upon which a student is determined to be ineligible for gifted special education. A person with an IQ score lower than 130 may be admitted to gifted programs when other educational criteria in the profile of the person strongly indicate gifted ability. No one test or measure is sufficient to determine giftedness, and the evaluation and testing literature recognizes that there is a margin for error in any standardized testing. The standard error of measurement also applies when reporting IQ. Determination of mentally gifted must include an assessment by a certified school psychologist. Multiple criteria indicating gifted ability include:

- A year or more above grade achievement level for the normal age group in one or more subjects as measured by nationally normed and validated achievement tests able to accurately reflect gifted performance. Subject results shall yield academic instruction levels in all academic subject areas.
- An observed or measured rate of acquisition/retention of new academic content or skills that reflect gifted ability.
- Demonstrated achievement, performance or expertise in one or more academic areas as evidenced by excellence of products, portfolio or research, as well as criterion-referenced team judgment.
- Early and measured use of high-level thinking skills, academic creativity, leadership skills, intense academic interest areas, communications skills, foreign language aptitude or technology expertise.



- Documented, observed, validated, or assessed evidence of intervening factors.

**The team must also consider:**

- Are there any health (physical or mental) factors that impact this student's learning?
- Are there any familial variables that impact this student's learning?
- Is the student bi-lingual or is another language spoken in the home?
- Are there any concerns you have about this student's behavior in the classroom or school setting?
- Are there any concerns you have about this student's learning performance, output, and/or participation?
- Does the student currently receive any supports through Chapter 14 (IEP) or 15 (504)?

### **Universal Screening Process Levels of Assessment**

North Schuylkill School District utilizes a universal screening process using school benchmark data. Grade level data meetings are held monthly to review student data and analyze students' strengths. The student data review helps determine which students need enrichment within the curriculum and a gifted screen. The benchmark assessments reviewed at North Schuylkill include: DIBELS/Amplify for reading, DIBELS/Acadience for math, Spring Math, curriculum-based assessments, average grades, PSSA scores, PVAAS projections, IXL diagnostic scores, and Keystones. Students are referred for a gifted screening when benchmark data is consistently above benchmark, or they are above the 90th percentile when compared to same aged peers.

Additionally, the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT), a group administered screener, is administered in Grade 2 to all students during the spring semester. If a student scores above or near 125 on the OLSAT they are recommended for a Gifted screening.

**----- LEVEL I – UNIVERSAL SCREENING -----**

**Grades K-6**

Universal Layer	Data	Cut-Offs/Thresholds
Benchmark Data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grades 95% or above Kindergarten – <i>Always</i> score on standards-based report card.</li> <li>2. Reading/Math Benchmark assessments (DIBELs) above benchmark on fall, winter, or spring screenings.</li> <li>3. IXL current level – one grade level above or more</li> <li>4. PSSA: Advanced (Grade 4-6)</li> </ol>	<p>2/3 Data Points in Grades K-3</p> <p>3/4 Data Points in Grades 4-6</p>

**Grades 7-8**

Universal Layer	Data	Cut-Offs/Thresholds
Benchmark Data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PSSA: Advanced</li> <li>2. PVAAS Projections: one grade level above or more</li> <li>3. IXL current level – one grade level above or more</li> <li>4. Grades 95% or above</li> </ol>	3/4 Data Points

**Grades 9-12**

Universal Layer	Data	Cut-Offs/Thresholds
Benchmark Data	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keystone: 95th percentile or higher</li> <li>2. IXL current level – one grade level above or more</li> <li>3. PVAAS Projections: one grade level above or more</li> <li>4. Grades 95% or above</li> </ol>	3/4 Data Points

**----- Level II – SCREENING FOR A POSSIBLE EVALUATION -----**

*After meeting the criteria above (Level I) or scoring near or above 125 on the OLSAT, parents are notified in writing to conduct a gifted screening (Level II). A gifted permission screening form is sent to parents/guardians. Once approved, the School Psychologist and Gifted Support Teacher gather input from teachers, gather benchmark data, which was mentioned above, and the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test Second Edition Revised (K-BIT-2R) is administered. The (K-BIT-2R) provides a quick estimate of general intelligence and is based on the measurement of verbal and non-verbal abilities.*

The Gifted Screening also includes the following: AIMSweb benchmark for Mathematics and Reading, IXL diagnostic scores, and Identification of any potential masking traits. The school psychologist and gifted team provides a recommendation in regard to proceeding to a Gifted Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation (GMDE).

At North Schuylkill School District, the gifted screening process uses a point matrix described below. North Schuylkill School District determines that six or more points are needed in order to be referred for a full gifted evaluation. A permission will be issued by North Schuylkill to conduct an evaluation at this time.

Measure	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	0 Points
<b>K-BIT-2R</b>  Above 128  *Automatically goes to full evaluation.	124-127	119-123	115-118	114-↓
<b>AIMSweb</b>	Well above Benchmark	Above Benchmark	At Benchmark	Below
<b>IXL Diagnostic Score (Most Current)</b>		2 or more grade levels above	1 grade level above	
<b>Evidence of Masking Traits</b>	3 Masking Traits	2 Masking Traits	1 Masking Trait	No Masking Traits
<b>Cut-off/Threshold: 6/8 data points</b>				<b>Total</b>

### ----- Level III – EVALUATION -----

At North Schuylkill School District, when a student meets the criteria mentioned above (Level II), they will be referred for a full Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE). The GMDE will be conducted by a district school psychologist. Additionally, parents can request an evaluation at any time. This point is discussed with parents throughout the screening process. A Permission to Evaluate for Gifted Support (PTE) and Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards is sent to parents.

The process is initiated in one of the following ways:

1. A request for evaluation is made by the parents/guardians.
2. The professional team determines the student needs a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation.
3. The student is thought to be gifted and the screening procedure mentioned above indicates that the student should be referred for a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation.
4. A hearing officer or court decision orders the evaluation.

When consent is received, the district begins the evaluation process. The school psychologist requests input from parents and teachers utilizing the Scales for Identifying Gifted Students, 2nd edition (SIGS-2). The SIGS-2 provides rating scales for gathering trustworthy information in the process of selecting students for participation in gifted education. The SIGS-2 includes seven separate rating scales allowing for data collection in general intellectual ability (GIA) as well as each of the four core domains: mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. Additionally, the SIGS-2 includes rating scales in leadership and creativity. In addition to the SIGS-2, rates of acquisition are measured by the CHUSKA Scales, a set of rating scales filled out by the student's teacher. Next, the school psychologist administers an individual standardized cognitive ability assessment which may include the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Gifted Children, 5th edition (WISC-V), Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities, 4th edition (WJ IV), and/or the Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence, 2nd edition (CTONI-2). In addition to cognitive ability assessments, the district school psychologist will also administer individual standardized achievement assessments which may include the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, 4th edition (WIAT-4) and/or the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement, 4th edition (WJ IV ACH). Performance on AIMSweb benchmark assessments, classroom assessments, and universal screening data listed above are also reviewed in regards to student achievement. Additionally, potential masking traits such as a diagnosis that affects education, socioeconomic status, life stressors, English as a Second Language, etc., will be considered as part of the matrix for multiple criteria.

When assessing IQ to determine giftedness, confidence intervals are used to ensure a more accurate and reliable evaluation of a child's cognitive abilities. Confidence intervals account for the inherent variability in test scores, providing a range within which a child's true score is likely to fall. This approach helps us make more informed and fair judgments regarding giftedness, considering not only the precise score but also the potential variability. By employing this method, we aim to offer a comprehensive assessment that reflects a child's abilities more accurately.

Once data has been collected, the school psychologist will compile all data into a Gifted Written Report (GWR) summarizing the collected information. A student whose IQ is 130 or higher will automatically qualify for gifted services. For students whose IQs are less than 130, the district will utilize the following matrix, based on multiple criteria, to determine the student's need for gifted services:

**----- Level III – EVALUATION -----**

Measure	3 points	2 Points	1 point	0 Points	Totals
<b>*Test of Cognitive Ability</b>  <i>* automatic qualification 128-130</i>	125-127  FSIQ and/or GAI, verbal reasoning, or nonverbal reasoning index	120-124  FSIQ and/or GAI, verbal reasoning, or nonverbal reasoning index	115-119  FSIQ and/or GAI, verbal reasoning, or nonverbal reasoning index	114-↓	
<b>*Achievement Test (points per achievement area)</b>	130 ↑  Math, Reading, and/or Writing	122-129  Math, Reading, and/or Writing	115-121  Math, Reading, and/or Writing	114-↓	
<b>CHUSKA</b>			90%-100%  Acquisition and/or Retention Scale		
<b>Teacher Rating</b>  <i>Scales for Identifying Gifted Students – SIGS-2</i>			130 ↑ very likely  (any area)		
<b>Parent Rating</b>  <i>Scales for Identifying Gifted Students – SIGS-2</i>			130 ↑ very likely  (any area)		
<b>Evidence of Masking Traits (diagnosis that affects education, SES, life stressors, all underrepresented groups)</b>	3 Masking Traits	2 Masking Traits	1 Masking Trait	No Masking Traits	
<b>Cut-off/Threshold: 9 or Higher</b> - If a student scores 9 or higher, the student meets the first prong of eligibility.				<b>Total</b>	

## **Composition of Gifted Multidisciplinary Team**

The Gifted Multidisciplinary Team must include the following individuals:

- The student's parents.
- A certified school psychologist.
- Persons familiar with the student's educational experience and performance.
- One or more of the student's current teachers.
- Persons trained in the appropriate evaluation techniques.
- Person familiar with the student's cultural background when possible.
- A single member of the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team may meet two or more of the qualifications specified above. (22 PA Code § 16.22 (d))

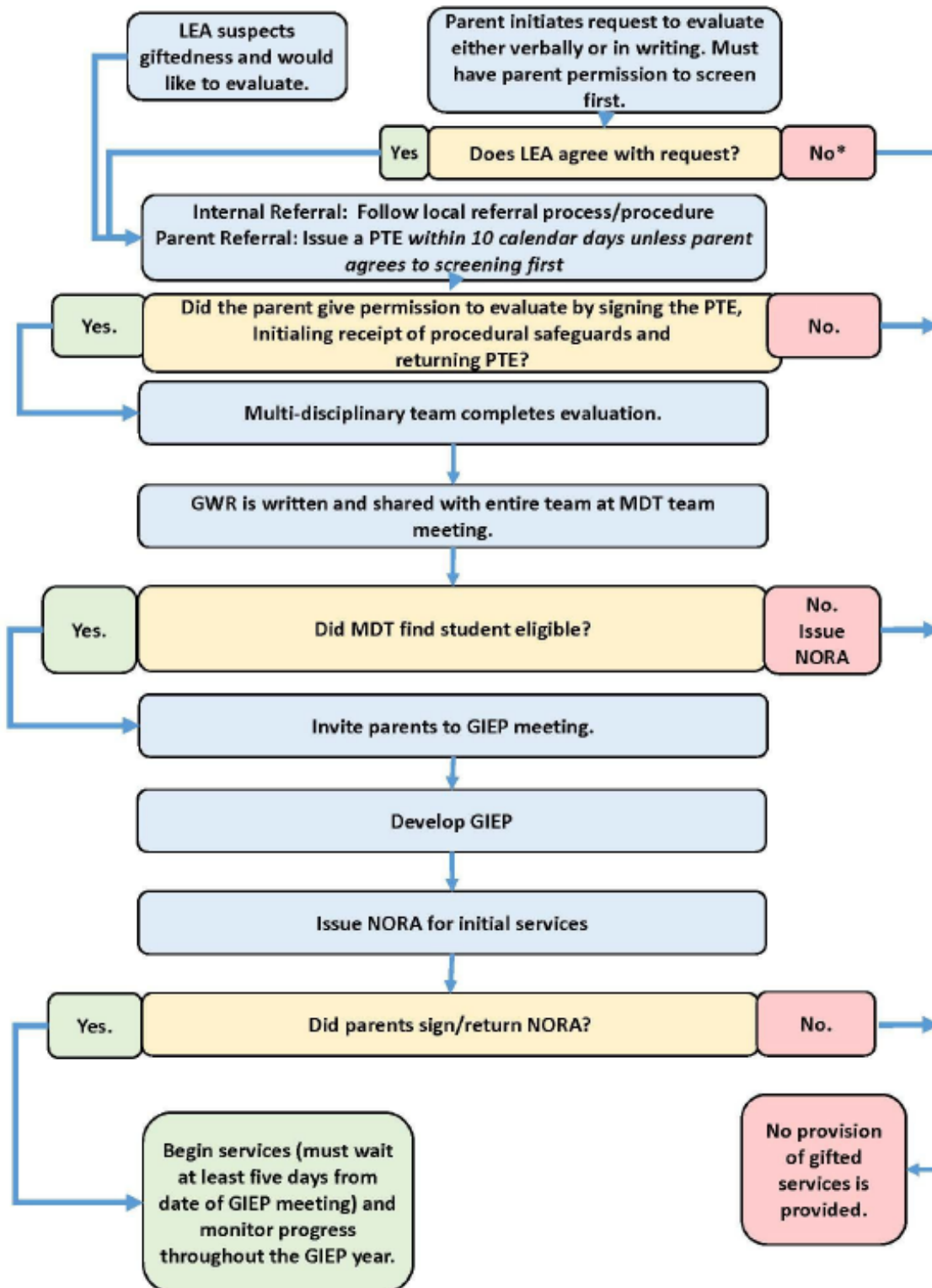
## **Gifted Multidisciplinary Team Meeting**

After the completion of the GMDE, a meeting may be held to discuss its contents. The school psychologist will either mail the GWR out to the parents/guardians via email/mail or schedule a meeting. The child's learning strengths and educational needs are delineated, and recommendations are formulated.

## **Gifted Evaluation Timeline**

- The allotted period of time to conduct the gifted evaluation and prepare the Gifted Written Report (GWR) is 60 calendar days from the date the signed consent is received by the school district. The Gifted Written Report brings together the information and findings from the evaluation or reevaluation concerning the student's educational needs and strengths. The report will then recommend as to whether or not the student is gifted and in need of specially designed instruction.
- If the student is determined to require a gifted education plan (GIEP), a meeting must be held within 30 calendar days after issuance of the written report.
- The GWR will be provided to parents and a meeting will be offered. There are three possible outcomes from the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team Evaluation, which are the following:
  - The student is not gifted and therefore is NOT ELIGIBLE for gifted placement and programming; or
  - The student is gifted but does not need specially designed instruction, and therefore is NOT ELIGIBLE for gifted placement and programming; or
  - The student is gifted AND is in need of specially designed instruction therefore is ELIGIBLE for gifted placement and programming.

# Chapter 16 Evaluation Flow Chart



## ----- Gifted Individualized Education Plan Process -----

A Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) is a written plan for the appropriate education of a mentally gifted student. After presented with the GWR, the GIEP team shall develop a GIEP for a student who is identified to be mentally gifted and arrive at a determination of educational placement, change in educational placement or continuation of educational placement for a student based upon the GIEP.

### What is a GIEP?

The GIEP is a yearly summary document that includes all curricular areas in which a gifted child is to receive education that is adapted and modified to meet his/her needs. Acceleration or enrichment, or both, are options to be included in the GIEP. These options allow a child who is gifted to learn at their own rates, material at different paces, to think at a level that is different from their classmates and shows a need for specially designed instruction.

- The Gifted Education Teacher will schedule the GIEP meeting at a time and place to accommodate parent and staff schedules. Written notice of that meeting will be sent on the fully completed Invitation to the GIEP. It should also be sent to the Special Education Administrator, Teacher of the Gifted, Regular Education Teacher(s), Special Teachers, and other school staff that may be involved with the student.
- The GIEP shall be developed from the data and information that are available prior to or at the GIEP Team meeting.
- A GIEP should be presented as a “Draft” until it is fully agreed upon by the members of the GIEP team. Draft GIEP's with a cover letter must be sent to parents 3 days prior to meeting.
- Baseline data will have been collected prior to the GIEP meeting to support the development of the annual goals and short-term learning outcomes. No one test or type of test may be used as the sole criterion for the development of the GIEP.
  - North Schuylkill Data could include: Grades, IXL benchmark, PVAAS, AP probability, PSSA, Keystone, DIBELS (Reading and Math K-6), and AIMSweb Benchmarks.
- At the GIEP meeting the following two questions are answered:
  1. Is the student mentally gifted?
  2. Is the student in need of specially designed instruction?

If the answer is yes to both of those questions, then a GIEP is written.

- The GIEP will be prepared using the Gifted Tab in IEPwriter.
- It is recommended that the following sequence be used during the assessment, implementation, and monitoring stages of the GIEP process:
  - Determine the student's current instructional levels in areas of the curriculum.
  - Determine student interests, aptitudes, career aspirations, and any other



- pertinent information.
- Identify appropriate annual goals and short-term learning outcomes. Goals must be based on the needs noted in the GWR and present levels of educational performance in the GIEP.
- Specify the rate of acquisition and retention of student performance relative to instructional goals and learning outcomes.
- Identify and implement individually designed strategies to meet the needs of the student.
- Compare progress made during instruction with annual goals and short term learning outcomes identified earlier to determine if intervention is working and whether a change in strategy is needed.
- Monitor student progress over time to establish whether the behavior, concept, or skill is being mastered.

The Gifted Teacher of the GIEP team shall issue a NORA and Notice of Parental Rights for Gifted Students.

### **How often are meetings held?**

A GIEP meeting must be held at least annually. In addition, a GIEP meeting must be held when a parent or teacher requests a meeting to develop, review, or revise a student's individualized education program.

### **How are parents invited?**

The school district must take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of the student attend the GIEP meeting or have the opportunity to participate. An invitation of the GIEP meeting must be provided to parents at least 10 calendar days in advance of the meeting, or as soon as the district knows about the meeting. The meeting should be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time and place. The teacher of the gifted should document 3 attempts to ensure parent participation in meetings. This could include the following types of attempts of communication: documented phone calls, letters and certified letters with return receipts.

### **Who is part of the GIEP team?**

The school district should ensure that the following people are included:

- One or both of the student's parents / guardians
- The student if the parents choose to have the student participate or if the student is of age 14 or older
- A representative of the school district who acts as the chairperson and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the district and who is authorized by the district to commit those resources
- Gifted education teacher
- One or more of the student's current regular education teachers
- Other individuals who are at the discretion of the parents

## **What should be written in the GIEP?**

- Present Levels of Educational Performance, which establish the extent of gifted potential, academic functioning levels, the child's rates of acquisition/retention, and performance levels. Information would include the child's intellectual/academic assessments, aptitudes, and abilities, strengths, interests, and needs.
- Annual Goals are to be developed from the present educational performance and be reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and student progress within one year's time.
- Short-Term Learning Outcomes are the actions and activities that will help the child reach the annual goals, evaluation criteria to determine when the child has achieved the annual goals, and the timelines. They should include what the student will produce, how he/she will apply the skills, or what real outcome will be achieved as a result of their engaging in a study, activity, or subject.
- Specially Designed Instruction is the adaptation or modification to the general curriculum, instruction, instructional environments, methods, materials, or specialized curriculum.
- Specially Designed Instruction consists of planning and implementing varied approaches to content, process, and product modification in response to the student's interests, ability levels, readiness, and learning needs.
- Support Services could include but are not limited to the following: career guidance, counseling, transportation, and technology education.
- Dates indicate when the services will begin and the anticipated duration, based on one year of the services.
- Students in grades K-12 receive appropriate levels of differentiation in the general education classroom. Students receiving gifted support will work through the general program with opportunities for subject acceleration, individual or small group enrichment, (or a combination of both acceleration and enrichment), and curriculum compacting as needed. The enrichment portion is based on the student's individual areas of strength. There is a small portion of the elementary gifted program that is a pull out/check in framework. In the upper elementary and middle school levels, the options for enrichment and acceleration are both pull out and subject centered acceleration. In some cases, gifted students may be served through grade level promotion.
- Also, in middle and high school, acceleration and enrichment is accomplished through a combination of course selection (the higher-level courses offered provide the majority of a gifted students' enrichment/acceleration) and meeting with the gifted instructor. In addition, students may choose dual enrollment in college courses and/or choosing a gifted annual goal that is career focused.

## **Procedures for NORA Preparation**

1. If the student qualifies for the Gifted Program, a Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA) needs to be issued at the initial GIEP and every annual GIEP meeting.
2. If the student does not qualify for Gifted Education, the Teacher of the Gifted will issue a NORA accordingly.
3. Check one of the seven options that apply for the recommendations or proposed changes section.
4. Complete the section for recommendations for assignment.

- ☐ General Education
- ☐ Gifted Support
  - ☐ Enrichment in the following area(s):
  - ☐ Acceleration in the following area(s):
  - ☐ Enrichment/Acceleration Combination in the following area(s):
- 5. Complete the reasons the recommendation is appropriate.
- 6. Complete the description of the options that were considered and rejected.
- 7. Obtain parent/guardian approval or disapproval and have them sign off.

### **Procedure for finalizing a GIEP**

1. A GIEP must be accompanied by a Gifted Routing Sheet, NORA with or without parent signature, GIEP, Parent Invitation, and separate Student GIEP Invitation if age 14 or older.
2. Any revision made without a meeting must be accompanied by the Gifted Routing Sheet, Revised GIEP pages, and attachment.

### **----- Procedures for Move-In Students -----**

#### **Gifted Student from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania**

Chapter 16.31 General (b)- if a gifted student moves from one school district in this Commonwealth to another, the new district shall implement the existing GIEP to the extent possible or provide the services and programs specified in an interim GIEP agreed to by the parents until a new GIEP is developed and implemented in accordance with this section and § § 16.32 and 16.33 (relating to GIEP; and support services) or until the completion of due process proceedings under § § 16.61—16.65 (relating to procedural safeguards).

1. Register the student. The special education secretary will contact the sending school for gifted education records.
2. Determine whether the student has an active GIEP. If a GIEP exists but is not present, obtain a copy of the aforementioned documents as part of the registration process.
3. If a GIEP exists and is present, the Special Education Administrator will complete a NORA to accept the current GIEP and/or revise the GIEP if needed. Additionally, the roster teacher will schedule a GIEP meeting within 30 calendar days from the date of the student attending school. The student shall be provided with gifted education services immediately.
4. Follow the established procedures for a GIEP meeting.

#### **Procedures for Out-of-State Move-In Gifted Education Students**

Every school district must honor a Gifted Individualized Education Plan from within the Commonwealth until the new Gifted Individualized Education Plan is completed (22 PA Code § 16.31 (b)). However, if a

student who has been identified as gifted in another state moves to Pennsylvania, the school district may conduct a Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation.

Gifted education students transferring from another state must be provided with comparable services upon their arrival. The following procedures apply:

1. Register the student. The special education secretary will contact the sending school for gifted education records.
2. Determine whether the student has an active GIEP. If a GIEP exists but is not present, obtain a copy of the aforementioned documents as part of the registration process. If a GIEP exists and is present, the Teacher of the Gifted will schedule a GIOP meeting upon registration.
3. The GIEP team and certified school psychologist will review records to determine appropriate assessments as outlined under Chapter 16.

### **----- Twice Exceptional or Dual Exceptionality -----**

- “If a student is determined to be both gifted and eligible for special education, the procedures in **Chapter 14 take precedence**. For these students identified with dual exceptionalities, the needs established under gifted status in this chapter must be fully addressed in the procedures required in Chapter 14” (22 Pa. Code §16.7b).
- “For students who are gifted and eligible for special education, it is not necessary for school districts to conduct separate screening and evaluations or use separate procedural safeguard processes to provide for a student’s needs as both a gifted and an eligible student (22 Pa. Code §16.7c).
- For students who are thought to be both gifted and disabled, care must be taken by the school district to assure that both giftedness and the disability are fully addressed as part of the student’s public education.

### **Gifted Support Services- IEP components**

- The gifted teacher becomes a mandatory member of the IEP team
- The gifted teacher will update Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP), write goals based on PLEPs, develop measurable Short Term Learning Outcomes (STLO), Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and support services. 22 Pa. Code § 16.7 (b) specifies the needs established under gifted status in this chapter shall be fully addressed through the procedures required in Chapter 14.
- The student will be counted on both the gifted caseload and the IEP caseload.

## **Procedures for Identification Twice Exceptional or Dual Exceptionality**

### **In cases when gifted and disabilities are jointly the reason for the initial referral:**

1. Complete a single Prior Written Notice (PWN) for Initial Evaluation and Request for Consent Form for an initial evaluation. The PWN will include gifted and the disability in:
  - a. The statement for the reason for the proposed evaluation section.
  - b. The section for the proposed types of tests and assessments.
2. The Evaluation Report (ER) will contain all the essential components of a Gifted Written Report (GWR) under Chapter 16 and all the essential components of an ER under Chapter 14.
3. The timelines to complete this single evaluation is 60 calendar days from the date of receipt of the signed PWN for Initial Request and Consent Form.
4. If the student is found to be dually exceptional, the teacher of gifted becomes a required member of the IEP team.
5. An IEP is developed within 30 calendar days from the issuance date of the MDT's written report.
6. The IEP will address all the essential components of the requirements in Chapter 14 and Chapter 16.
7. Cyclical re-evaluations required in Chapter 14 will be followed and all the essential components of a gifted reevaluation will be updated within cyclical reevaluation reports. It is not necessary to repeat IQ and Achievement testing in a gifted re-evaluation. Gifted re-evaluations are conducted by the GMDT team. It is necessary to include a review of records, updating Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP), identifying academic strengths, progress on previous goals, instructional needs based on the strengths of the student's GIEP, a determination of which instructional activities have been successful, and recommendations for the revision of the GIEP.
8. North Schuylkill SD will issue a single Notice of Recommended Educational Placement/Prior Written Notice (NOREP/PWN) and will include gifted support services in all the areas required in a Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA). Section #2 and #7 must include gifted support services on NOREP.

**In cases when a student is referred for a mentally gifted evaluation and is already an identified student with special needs under IDEA,** North Schuylkill SD will follow the re-evaluation process as required in Chapter 14. Items 2-8 above apply in this situation and item 1 is the issuance of a Prior Written Notice for a Reevaluation Form and Request for Consent for a Reevaluation Form.

**In cases when a student is already identified as mentally gifted and is now referred for an evaluation under special education,** North Schuylkill SD will issue a PWN for Initial Request and Consent Form following steps 1-8 as outlined above. We will incorporate current essential gifted information in the ER; however, we are not required to conduct gifted eligibility testing as it has been determined.

**Basic Education Circulars PA Code -Date of Issue:** March 11, 2020

## -----Gifted Websites-----

Gifted Education – Pennsylvania Department of Education

<https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Gifted%20Education/Pages/default.aspx>

Chapter 16 Regulations

<https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?file=/secure/pacode/data/022/chapter16/chap16toc.html>

Gifted Education Frequently Asked Questions

<https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Gifted%20Education/Pages/GiftedEducationFAQs.aspx>

### Resources for Parents

Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education - <https://www2.education.uiowa.edu/belinblank/>

Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University - <https://cty.jhu.edu/>

Davidson Institute - [www.davidsongifted.org](http://www.davidsongifted.org)

Duke University Talent Identification Program (DUKE TIP) – <https://tip.duke.edu/>

Hoagies Gifted Education: The “all things gifted” page - [www.hoagiesgifted.org](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org)

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) - [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education (PAGE) - [www.giftedpage.org](http://www.giftedpage.org)

Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) - [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us)

Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA) - [www.psea.org](http://www.psea.org)

Renzulli Center for Creativity, Gifted Education, and Talent Development - [www.gifted.uconn.edu](http://www.gifted.uconn.edu)

Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG) - [www.sengifted.org](http://www.sengifted.org)

### Teacher Resources for Gifted Students

The following information is helpful for Teachers of Gifted Students:

#### Teacher Tips

- Always remember that gifted children are similar in many ways to the average child in the classroom. Do not place unrealistic expectations and pressures on gifted children.

- Remember that gifted children may not excel in all areas. They may be ahead of other students in some areas and behind in some areas. Become aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the children in your class.
- Do not assign extra work to gifted children who finish assignments early. This is unfair and frustrating to them. Simply offering more of the same only restricts further learning. Instead, allow those children to work on independent projects or other unfinished work when they finish an assignment early.
- Establish and maintain a warm, accepting classroom. Teach your classroom community to embrace diversity and honor differences. Provide an environment in which the child can demonstrate his or her potential or aptitude to learn and perform. Teachers should strive to establish a noncompetitive, individualized, and open classroom, which allows all students to advance at their own rate of learning.
- Provide environments that are stimulating and address cognitive, physical, emotional, and social needs of gifted children in the curriculum. Remember that needs may be asynchronous. Some may need enrichment and some remediation.
- Organize resources to free yourself to work with individual children and give the children greater control of the learning situation. Supplementary books and learning tools, community resources, and the use of community members with specific skills as mentors can be helpful.
- Implement a multi-level and multi-dimensional curriculum. Differentiate the curriculum to address differences in the rate, depth, and pace of learning. This will enable all students in the class to learn about a specific area by creating projects at their own ability level. For example, if students are learning about the state of Delaware, students of different ability levels can be assigned to different types of tasks. At the conclusion of the class, all of the students can present what they have learned to the entire group.
- Make the curriculum student-centered. Engage gifted students in the curriculum decision-making process, giving them an opportunity to learn how to take responsibility for their own learning. Draw the curriculum from the students' interests and educational needs.
- Allow enrichment of content. An example of this would be encouraging the gifted child to pursue an in-depth study in each subject area. The assignments should be "tailor made" for his/her level of functioning.
- Allow students to pursue independent projects based on their own individual interests.
- Independent projects can be assigned based on ability level. Encourage creativity and original thinking among gifted students. Allow them to explore ways of connecting unrelated issues in creative ways.
- Allow gifted children to assume ownership of their own learning through curriculum acceleration. Instruct them to work ahead to problems or skills that they do not know. To help children learn the value of attaining knowledge in their lives, encourage learning for its own sake, rather than emphasizing the end results or accomplishments. Teach research skills for accessing information; higher level thinking skills for processing it; creative thinking and problem-solving skills for flexibility in approach and generation of information; and communication skills for sharing it.

- Try to maximize your students' potential by expecting them to do their best. Encourage them to advance as quickly as they can. Assist in developing projects that allow them to achieve success one step at a time.
- Teach interactively. Have students work together, teach one another, and actively participate in their own and their classmates' education. Note: This does not advocate gifted children being peer tutors in the classroom; the gifted student should be challenged as well. Emphasis should be on working together in the classroom. Cluster gifted children together at a table within the regular classroom and utilize advanced materials, as well as other suggested resources and modifications, to meet their exceptional needs.
- Consider team teaching, collaboration, and consultation with other teachers. Use the knowledge, skills, and support of other educators or professionals in the schools.
- Allow gifted children to create and publish a class newspaper to distribute. This consists of assisting students in understanding their special capabilities and the training necessary for them to reach their full potential.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for gifted children and average children to engage in social activities. Some gifted children may need help in developing social skills.
- Try to find the joy and uniqueness in each child. Children may exhibit their gifts on nontypical levels, rather than in general intellectual aptitude of specific academic abilities. Keep in mind that every child will have different needs.