

2018-19

Gifted Education  
Handbook



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## GIFTED EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

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Georgia educators are committed to the belief that education is a means by which each individual has the opportunity to maximize his or her fullest potential. We believe that all students have a right to an educational experience that challenges their individual development and enhances their academic achievement. In accordance with this philosophy, the Pickens County School District provides educational programs that recognize and make provisions for the unique needs of gifted and talented learners.

### Definition

A gifted student is one who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability(ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities. A gifted student may demonstrate expertise and experience in the specific content area.

O.C.G.A 160-4-2-.38 Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.*

### Gifted Education Goals

- 1. Gifted students will develop and use advanced research skills and methods. Curriculum for gifted students should allow for the in-depth learning of self-selected topics within the area of study.**

**Rationale:** Gifted learners possess an extensive knowledge base, learn at an accelerated pace, and are capable of advanced levels of comprehension. In addition, many gifted students are highly curious and intrinsically motivated, especially to pursue topics that interest them. As compared to their age-peers, gifted learners tend to have longer attention spans, exhibit a stronger need to know, and can follow-through with assignments. If gifted students are to benefit fully from these abilities, the gifted program must emphasize the development of skills that enable them to become effective as independent learners. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.*

Because of the advanced nature of their abilities and interests, gifted students need to learn how to access advanced-level reference materials, including a variety of print and non-print references and information retrieval systems. They need learning tasks that allow them to explore personal interests through guided research, independent study, and community involvement. In order to conduct authentic research, students need instruction and guidance in learning to ask the right kinds of questions by looking at techniques used by experts in the specific field. They need instruction in the development of a written plan of research (with emphasis on how one gathers, categorizes, analyzes, and evaluates information in particular fields); assistance in evaluating their own work; and in considering implications for future research. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.*

- 2. Gifted students will develop and practice creative thinking and creative problem-solving skills with a variety of complex topics within the area of study.**

**Rationale:** Gifted learners have the ability to generate original ideas and solutions, and they characteristically see diverse and unusual relationships. Their instruction must allow opportunities to further develop and apply these skills in meaningful situations. Because gifted individuals often exhibit differential patterns of thought processing (e.g., divergent thinking, sensing consequences, making generalizations), a curricular need is to be able to explore alternatives and consequences of those choices and to draw and test generalizations. The original thoughts and ideas often expressed by gifted students may in some settings be perceived as odd or off-task by others, resulting in the inhibition of creative thinking. The gifted program must provide an environment in which students feel free and safe to stretch beyond the "right" answer that comes so easily for them. They should be encouraged to take risks and to experiment so that creativity can be developed. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.*

- 3. Gifted students will develop and practice critical thinking and logical problem-solving skills in the pertinent academic area.**

**Rationale:** It takes less time for gifted students to learn new material and master new skills. One strategy for differentiating instruction for gifted students is to structure lessons and units in such a way that capable students spend a larger proportion of their time on higher order thinking, using the content they have mastered

to further develop their understanding of the concepts and practice the skills of critical thinking. Source: Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.

- 4. Gifted students will develop and use advanced communication skills. Curriculum for gifted students should encourage the use of new techniques, materials, and formats in the development of products that will be shared with real audiences.**

**Rationale:** It is important to remember that throughout history we have recognized "giftedness" in individuals because of the impact they have made on other individuals and society at large through their products, whether the area of giftedness is art, science, leadership, literature, etc. Feedback from real audiences provides gifted learners with a chance to further improve their communication skills. Internal motivation develops when students pursue ever-increasing levels of excellence in their final products and receive confirmation from real audiences that others value their intellectual and academic talents. Source: Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.

- 5. Gifted students will develop an understanding of self and how their unique characteristics may influence interactions with others.**

**Rationale:** Many gifted children experience difficulty in accepting some aspect of their giftedness. Their heightened self-awareness, accompanied by feelings of being different, can result in low self-esteem and inhibited growth emotionally and socially. Consequently, there is a need to provide gifted students with time for interaction with other gifted students, reflection, and discussion for the purpose of self-understanding. A strong aptitude for solving problems allows gifted students to deal effectively with these concerns when given the opportunity and guidance needed. This type of involvement can also help provide students with a foundation for leadership development. Source: Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.

## **REFERRAL, SCREENING, AND TESTING**

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### **Student Referral**

Anyone – teachers, counselors, parents, peers, administrators, or the individual student – may refer students for consideration for the gifted program. For acceptance into the program, tests and procedures are used to determine eligibility for gifted services. These tests and procedures meet standards of validity and reliability for the purpose of identifying gifted students and are nondiscriminatory with respect to race, national origin, gender, disabilities or economic background.

School principals, counselors, and teachers shall also review the results of any norm-referenced testing that is available. Any student with a 90<sup>th</sup> percentile composite score, a 90<sup>th</sup> percentile total reading (including reading comprehensive), or a 90<sup>th</sup> percentile total math shall be considered.

School principals, counselors, and teachers shall also review the results of the Georgia Milestones. Any student who has at least the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on the reading and/or math for that grade level and/or a 4 on the reading and/or math portion will be considered. These criteria shall constitute an automatic referral procedure.

Appropriate referrals will be compared to the list of students evaluated the previous year. Students will only go into full referral every two years. In the second year, files may be reopened, and additional information added. Tests given the year of the initial referral will not be re-administered.

### **Screening**

Written consent shall be obtained from parents before the evaluation process is begun. Once parental permission for further evaluation has been secured, the current edition of the Cognitive Abilities Test shall be administered (or other approved norm-referenced test of cognitive abilities).

Classroom teachers shall complete appropriate rating scales (Creativity Characteristics and Motivation Characteristics for grades K—6 and the Hawthorne, Creativity and/or Motivation Characteristics for grades 7—12). Only one rating scale may be used for placement.

Scores that are available from an achievement test during the prior two years shall be entered on the referral form.

Teachers and/or counselors shall help the student in gathering any Product/Performance information to be submitted as evidence of giftedness.

Panels of two, composed of a gifted endorsed educator and a teacher based in the school that the child attends shall evaluate any projects/performance submitted. All evaluators must have expertise in the content area of the product/performance and experience working with children of the age level being evaluated.

### **Testing**

The Torrance Test of Creative Thinking will be administered in cases where the school eligibility team deems it necessary. Eligibility sheets will be used by the gifted education teacher to see if the student meets Georgia Department of Education criteria for placement in the Gifted Program and will be maintained on file for review. Parents shall be informed in writing of the student's eligibility status and shall be afforded an opportunity for a conference to discuss student eligibility criteria and placement.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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To be eligible for gifted education services, a student must either (a) score at the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile (for grades K—2) or the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile (for grades 3—12) on the composite or full scale score of a standardized test of mental ability and meet one of the achievement criteria described below, or (b) qualify through a multiple-criteria assessment process by meeting the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability (intelligence), achievement, creativity and motivation. To be eligible for gifted education services, a student must meet the criterion score on a nationally normed test and either has observational data collected on his or her performance or produced a superior product. Information shall be collected in each of the four data categories for all students who are referred for gifted program evaluation. Any data used in one area to establish a student's eligibility shall not be used in any other data category. Any test score used to establish eligibility shall be current within two calendar years. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

<b>Mental Ability</b>	Students shall score at the 96 <sup>th</sup> percentile or above on a composite or full scale score or appropriate component score on a standardized test of mental ability. Mental ability tests shall be the most current editions of published tests that measure intelligence or cognitive ability, have been reviewed for bias and normed on a nationally representative sample that included minority representation within a 10-year period (group tests) prior to administration. These tests shall yield percentile rankings by age(s). Source: <i>Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services</i> .
<b>Achievement</b>	Students shall (a) score at the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the total battery, total math or total reading section(s) of a standardized achievement test; or (b) have produced a superior student-generated product or performance, where the superior performance is one that can be translated into a minimum score 90 on a scale of 1—100 as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators. Standardized achievement tests shall be the most current editions of tests that measure reading skills, including comprehension, and shall give a total reading score and/or a total mathematics score based upon a combination of scores in math concepts and applications. These tests shall yield percentile rankings by age(s) or grade(s). Performances and products shall be judged by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators and must have been produced within the two years prior to evaluation. Source: <i>Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services</i> .
<b>Creativity</b>	Students shall (a) score at the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile or above on the total battery score of a standardized test of creative thinking, or (b) receive a score at the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile or above on a standardized creativity characteristics rating scale, or (c) receive from a panel of three or more qualified evaluators a minimum score of 90 on a scale of 1—100 on a structured observation/evaluation of creative products and/or performances. Standardized tests of creative thinking shall be the most current editions of tests that provide scores of fluency, originality, and elaboration. These tests shall yield percentile rankings by age(s) or grade(s). Rating scales used to evaluate creativity shall relate to the construct of creativity and differentiate levels such that judgments equivalent to the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile are possible. As evidence of creativity, students or individuals on behalf of students may submit products or evidence of outstanding performances completed during the two calendar years prior to evaluation. The products/performances submitted shall be reviewed by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators as part of a comprehensive portfolio of creative productivity. Source: <i>Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services</i> .



**Motivation**

Students shall (a) receive a score at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on a standardized motivational characteristics rating scale, or (b) receive from a panel of three or more qualified evaluators a minimum score of 90 on a scale of 1—100 on a structured observation/evaluation of student generated products and/or performances, or (c) have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale (as defined in Appendix A of the Georgia Department of Education *Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*), where a 4.0 = A and 3.0 = B, using an average of grades from the regular school program over the previous two school years if the student is in grades 3—12. Rating scales used to evaluate student motivation shall relate to the construct of motivation and differentiate levels such that judgments equivalent to the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile are possible. As evidence of motivation, students or individuals on behalf of students may submit products or evidence of outstanding performances made during the two calendar years prior to evaluation. The products/performances submitted shall be reviewed by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators as part of a comprehensive portfolio that demonstrates a high degree of motivation and consistent productivity. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

**Outside Test Data**

Assessment data that were gathered and analyzed by a source outside the student's school or school system must be considered as part of the nomination and evaluation process. However, these outside data shall not be substituted for data the school generates during the testing/evaluation process and may never be the sole source of assessment data. Systems shall never rely on them exclusively for determination of eligibility for gifted program services. Instead, outside test data may be used as part of a comprehensive profile of test and non-test evidence of advanced instructional needs. If any system elects to use outside test data to help establish student's eligibility, the local board of education shall collect and maintain statistical data that will allow the Department of Education to evaluate the impact of this practice on the identification of gifted students from all ethnic and socioeconomic groups. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

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State Board of Education (SBOE) Rule 160-4-2-.38 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS requires local boards of education to develop curricula for their gifted students. There are certain characteristics that generally differentiate gifted learners from more typical learners: the ability to learn at faster rates, their capacity to find, solve, and act on problems, their ability to manipulate abstract ideas and make connections, etc. Although it is recognized that not all gifted students exhibit identical behaviors and characteristics and, thus, have different needs, it is the unique behaviors and characteristics of gifted learners that must serve as the basis for establishing gifted program curriculum goals and then making decisions regarding specific curriculum units and activities. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

### Principles of a Differentiated Curriculum for the Gifted/Talented

- Present content that is related to broad-based issues, themes, or problems.
- Integrate multiple disciplines into the area of study.
- Present comprehensive, related, and mutually reinforcing experiences within an area of study.
- Allow for the in-depth learning of a self-selected topic within the area of study.
- Develop independent or self-directed study skills.
- Develop productive, complex, abstract, and/or higher level thinking skills.
- Focus on open-ended tasks.
- Develop research skills and methods.
- Integrate basic skills and higher level thinking skills into the curriculum.
- Encourage the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce new ideas.
- Encourage the development of products that use new techniques, materials, and forms.
- Encourage the development of self-understanding, i.e., recognizing and using one's abilities, becoming self-directed, appreciating likenesses and differences between oneself and others.
- Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion referenced and/or standardized instruments.

Source: *National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and Talented, Developed by the Curriculum Council* (James J. Gallagher, Sandra N. Kaplan, A. Harry Passow, Joseph S. Renzulli, Irving S. Sato, Dorothy Sisk, Janice Wickless)

## **PROGRAM DELIVERY MODELS**

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Source: Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.

### **Direct Services**

#### **Resource Class (K—12)**

1. All students must have been identified as gifted by GaDOE criteria.
2. The curriculum must have an academic content foundation based on the Georgia curriculum standards, but it should focus on interdisciplinary enrichment activities and not any one content area.
3. The content and pacing should be differentiated to the degree that the activities are clearly not appropriate for more typical students at that grade level.

#### **Advanced Content (K—12)**

1. Students are homogeneously grouped on the basis of achievement and interests (Career, Technical and Agricultural Education, English language arts, fine arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages).
2. The district may elect to include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. The Pickens County School District has an open access policy for AP and/or Honors courses. Enrollment in AP and/or Honors courses does not require gifted eligibility.

#### **Advanced Content Classes – Advanced Placement (AP) College Courses (9—12) and International Baccalaureate Courses (IB), College and Diploma Courses (11—12)**

1. Students are homogeneously grouped on the basis of achievement and interest in a specific academic content area (Career, Technical and Agricultural Education, English language arts, fine arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages).
2. The district may elect to include students who are not identified as gifted but who have demonstrated exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area.
3. The local board of education must maintain a description of the course curriculum which is based on the College Board or the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) framework. These frameworks very clearly show how the AP and IB advanced course content, teaching strategies, pacing, process skills and assessments differ from the courses more typical for students at that grade level.

#### **Cluster Grouping (K-12)**

Identified gifted students are placed as a group (recommended 6—8 students) into an otherwise heterogeneous classroom, rather than being dispersed among all of the rooms/courses at that grade level.

### **Indirect Services**

#### **Collaborative Teaching (K—12)**

A maximum of eight identified gifted students are placed as a group into an otherwise heterogeneous classroom. Direct instruction is provided by the students' regular classroom teacher who collaborates with a designated gifted teacher. There must be substantial, regularly scheduled collaborative planning between the regular classroom teacher and the gifted teacher.

Additional information may be secured from:

<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Gifted-Education.aspx>.

## **CONTINUED PARTICIPATION**

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Continued participation in the gifted program, according to Georgia SDE Regulations and Procedures, shall be based on a student's satisfactory performance in gifted classes.

1. Satisfactory performance in the gifted model shall be based on the recommendation of the gifted teacher, with such recommendation to be based on active participation, required products, and behavior in grades K—5, or an earned grade point average greater than or equal to 3.0 for all academic course work in grades 6—12.
2. Any student who fails to meet the continuation criteria (#1 above) will be placed on probation for an entire school year in grades K—8 or until the equivalent of one year's worth of coursework is completed in grades 9—12. At the end of the probationary period, the student's status regarding the continuation criteria will be reviewed.
3. A student is removed from the program when the terms of the Continued Participation policy criteria are not met.
4. A student may re-enter the program after completion of at least one semester following removal if the student demonstrated satisfactory performance in regular education classes with a semester grade point average of >3.5.
5. A student may withdraw with parent/guardian approval from the gifted program for reasons other than meeting the continuation policy criteria. In such cases, a student must meet criterion #4 above for re-entry.
6. Students who fail to demonstrate satisfactory performance gifted education models at the end of the probation period and for whom gifted services are no longer appropriate shall have a final review before removal of services. Parents shall be notified in writing of this review and that withdrawal is necessary.

## **RECIPROCITY**

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Any student who meets the state eligibility criteria for gifted education services shall be considered eligible to receive gifted education services in any school system within the state. However, a student transferring from one school system to another within the state shall meet the criteria for continuation of gifted services established by the local board of education of the receiving school system. There is no mandated reciprocity between states. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

## **CURRICULUM AND SERVICES PROVIDED**

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Local boards of education shall develop curricula for gifted students that incorporate the State Board of Education-approved student competencies and Georgia Performance Standards. Curriculum objectives shall focus on developing cognitive, learning, research and reference, and metacognitive skills at each grade grouping, using principles of differentiation, in one or more of the following content areas: mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, foreign language, fine arts and vocational/technical education. Local boards of education shall submit to the Georgia Department of Education a description of the differentiated curricula used for instruction of gifted students. The local system shall review and revise (if revisions are needed) its curricula for gifted students at least annually. An updated copy of the local program description shall be submitted to the Department of Education whenever changes are made. Students identified as gifted and whose participation has received parental consent shall receive at least five (5) segments per week (or the yearly equivalent) of gifted education services, using one of the approved models described in Appendix A of the Georgia Department of Education *Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*. Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

## **PROBATION AND TERMINATION OF SERVICES**

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According to State and Pickens County Procedures, continued placement in the Program for the Gifted shall be based upon satisfactory performance in gifted classes.

For elementary students, satisfactory performance in regular education shall be based on the student maintaining passing grades in all gifted education subjects and an overall 80 average. Satisfactory performance in the gifted resource class shall be based on the recommendation of the teacher of the gifted student, with such recommendation to be based on required products, active participation, and regular attendance. A child who fails to meet these criteria will be placed on probation for one entire grading period. At the end of the probationary period the student's status regarding continued placement will be reviewed.

For middle school, jr high, and high school students, satisfactory performance is defined as maintaining an academic grade point average of "80" or better in academic classes and a class average of "70" (not failing) in all academic classes. However, middle, jr high and high school students should not be removed from gifted level courses that they are passing without parent consent. Parents will be notified when a student's placement is in danger. A student who fails a gifted level class during the probationary period will not be allowed to continue to take gifted level classes in that content area during the following semester. Upon satisfactory performance in a subsequent honors level class in that content area, a student will be allowed to petition for reinstatement in a gifted level class.

After a period of academic probation, any student who has not demonstrated appropriate academic progress (80% or higher grade point average) in accordance with the Pickens County School District's policy for the continuation of gifted services will be terminated.

A student may re-enter the program after completion of at least one semester following removal if the student demonstrated satisfactory performance in regular education classes with a semester grade point average of >3.5.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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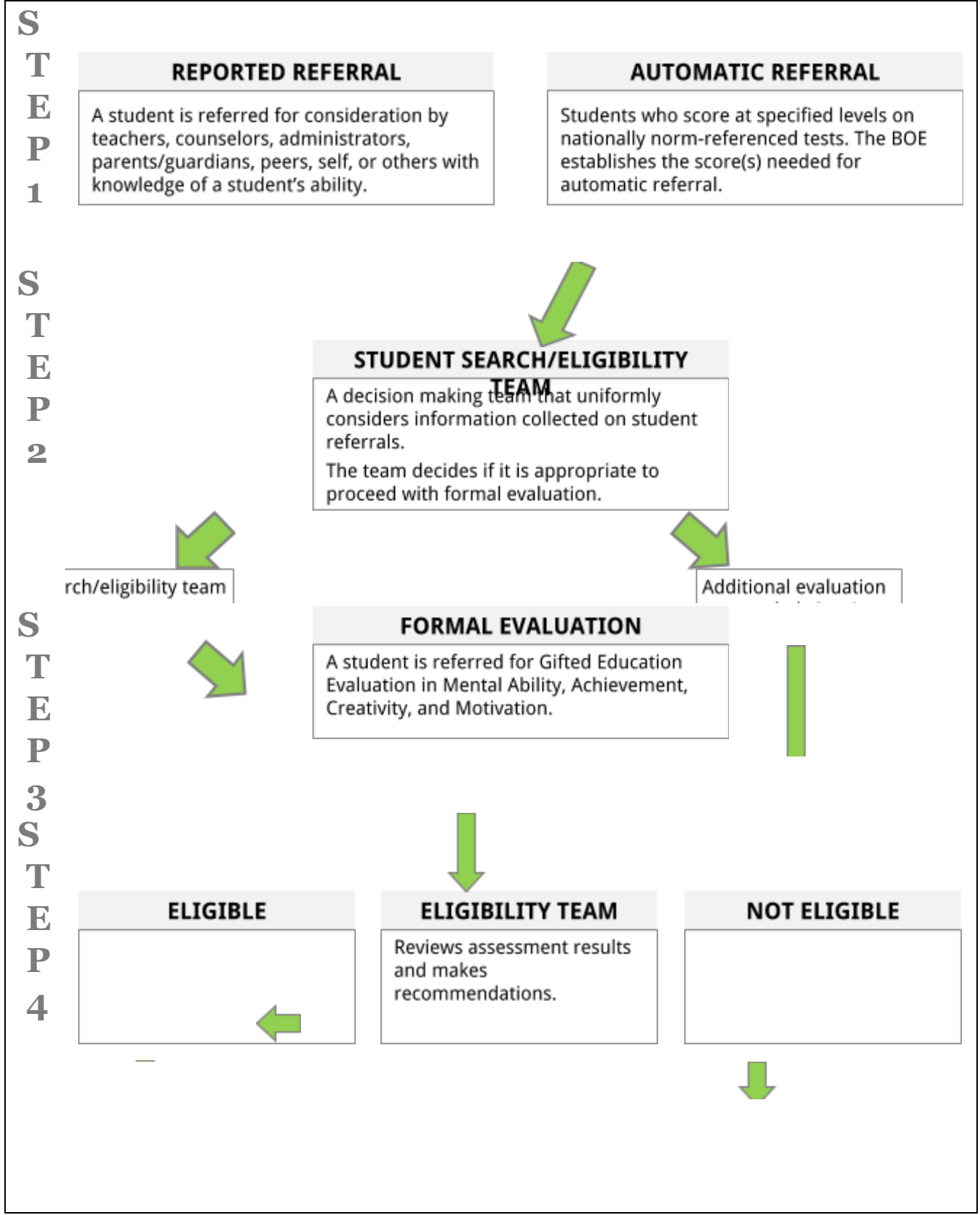
The Pickens County School District promotes participation of gifted education specialists and general education teachers in professional development activities designed to increase subject matter knowledge, improve the use of curricula and instructional strategies, and assessment measures that are appropriate for gifted and talented students. Professional learning opportunities are also provided to enable teachers to acquire gifted endorsement.

## **PROGRAM REVISION**

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All gifted program operations and services will be reviewed annually for compliance with state regulations and program changes.

**GIFTED REFERRAL AND ELIGIBILITY FLOW CHART**



**GIFTED SERVICES**

Options/recommendations.  
Student may need a RTI  
follow-up plan.

**REGULAR ED.**

Student may need a RTI  
follow-up plan.

**NOTE THE DIFFERENCE**

Source: Janice Szabos, Challenge Magazine, Tennessee Association for the Gifted: <http://www.tag-tenn.org>

**A Bright Child:      A Gifted Learner**

Knows the answers	Asks the questions
Is interested	Is highly curious
Is attentive	Is mentally and physically involved
Has good ideas	Has wild, silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well
Answers the questions	Discusses in detail, elaborates
Top group	Beyond the group
Listens with interest	Shows strong feeling and opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences
Completes assignments	Initiates projects
Is receptive	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates a new design
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Technician	Inventor
Good memorizer	Good guesser
Enjoys sequential presentation	Thrives on complexity
Is alert	Is keenly observant
Is pleased with own learning	Is highly self-critical



## **GIFTED EDUCATION FORMS**

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<b>Form Name</b>	<b>Form Number</b>
1. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Notification of Consideration/Permission for Testing	GS-1
2. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Education Eligibility Chart	GS-2
3. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Student Eligibility Report	GS-3
4. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Eligibility Status Letter	GS-4
5. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Notification of Eligibility and Parent Authorization	GS-5
6. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Delivery Models	GS-6
7. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Cluster Model/Individual Student Contract	GS-7
8. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Collaborative Model/Individual Student Contract	GS-8
9. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services – Annual Services Review	GS-9
10. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Voluntary Removal	GS-10
11. PCSD - Form - Gifted Services - Notification of Placement Review	GS-11
12. PCSD – Form - Gifted Services – Continued Participation	GS-12