

Titusville Area School District Gifted Education Services and Programs

Titusville Area School District's process for locating students who are thought to be gifted and may be in need of specially designed instruction (screening)

The Titusville Area School District uses multiple systems 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)). The district determines the student’s needs through a screening and evaluation process which meets the requirements of this chapter ((22 Pa. Code §16.21(c)). A formal screening process occurs for students during their second grade year district-wide. This formal screening process is done in each student’s traditional class and the CoGAT is used to determine possible gifted students. The CoGat is the Cognitive Abilities Test and is a group-administered assessment intended to estimate students' learned reasoning and problem solving abilities through a battery of verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal test items. Additional screening activities include internal reviews performed by the building administration and faculty during building level data analysis. If a student is consistently an outlier, the administration initiates the Child Study Process for a possible gifted evaluation.

The district has a procedure and criteria to screen all students and evaluate students who are thought to be gifted. Once screened and identified as a possible student eligible for gifted programming, the Titusville Area School District follows the established state guidelines for compliance. During this screening process, the Titusville Area School District uses data from a variety of sources. Possible sources include medical history, readiness, achievement tests, ability tests, group intelligence tests, anecdotal information from the parent, other educators and subject area teachers. These data sets are then compared to pre-determined multiple criteria for gifted potential/performance outlined in the TASD Gifted Programming handbook.

Titusville Area School District's Gifted Program and Services Process:

If a referral for the Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation is made when one of the following three areas occur:

1. Teacher or parent believes the student to be gifted;
2. Student is not receiving appropriate education under Chapter 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment); and
3. The student’s parents request an evaluation. (22 Pa.Code §16.22(c)) or the screening efforts of the student indicates high potential consistent with the definition of mentally gifted or a performance level which exceeds that of other students in the regular classroom ((22 Pa. Code §16.22 (b)(2)).

For students who are thought to be gifted, the Titusville Area School District will perform the following steps:

- (1) The Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMDT) conducts the Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation;
- (2) The GMDT compiles a written report based on the outcome of the Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation, using the form entitled Gifted Written Report (GWR);
- (3) If the GMDT identifies the student as a gifted student, the Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) Team uses the GWR to develop a GIEP. Parent Referrals

Parents may, in writing, request a GMDE once per school term. When a parent's request for a GMDE is received by the school district, regardless of the school's screening policy, the evaluation must be completed within regulatory timelines. The timeline begins from the date the school district receives the signed Permission to Evaluate from the parent. Under §16.22(c), if a parent makes a verbal request to any professional employee or administrator of the school district, that individual shall provide a copy of the Permission to Evaluate Form to the parents within 10 calendar days of the oral request.

The members of the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMDT) will include the following individuals at a minimum:

- 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
- Regular education teacher
- TASD Gifted Coordinator
- TASD Special Education Director

The GMDE shall be sufficient in scope and depth to investigate information relevant to the student's suspected giftedness, including academic functioning, learning strengths and educational needs. (22 Pa. Code §16.22(e)). Tests and similar evaluation materials that are used to determine giftedness are selected and administered in a manner that is free from racial and cultural bias and bias based on disability. The selected and administered evaluation materials test results will accurately reflect the student's aptitude, achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure. Each evaluation material is professionally validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and only administered by certified school psychologist under instructions provided by the producer of the tests and sound professional practice. The school psychologist selects and administers to assess specific areas of educational need and ability and not merely a single general IQ (22 Pa. Code 16.22(g)(3)(i),(ii),(iii),(iv), and (v)).

The following indicators of giftedness are drawn from a wide variety of sources. The GMDE is the process to gather the information that assists in determining if a child is mentally gifted according to the state's definition. The evaluation looks at information relevant to the student's suspected giftedness including academic functioning, learning strengths and educational needs. The GMDE may include, but is not limited to, information from:

- Ability tests
- Nationally normed individualized standardized achievement assessments
- Class-work samples
- Curriculum based assessments
- Cumulative review tests
- Performance based skills as demonstrated in portfolios, products, competitions or other demonstration of skills
- Teacher observation
- Noteworthy achievements
- Parental input (should include student's abilities, interests and needs as they relate to the instructional setting)

The GMDT assures that comprehensive data has been collected on the student to indicate academic instructional levels, thinking skills and other learning skill levels, rate of acquisition/retention for mastery of new content/skills, academic interests/strengths and, as appropriate, developmental levels (young students) and career goals. This approach provides clarifying information about the ability of children who score below IQ 130 (within the standard of measurement for the test) and have strong indications of gifted performance. This assessment determines if additional assessment, such as out-of-level academic testing, is needed. A clear explanation of the evaluation results is part of the Gifted Written Report. This explanation include the functional/instructional level and frustration level, grade level equivalencies, district performance criteria for competency, mastery and excellence of output, comprehensive developmental levels in subtests, implications in the learning process of the student, recommendations of whether a student is gifted and in need of specially designed instruction, and recommendations appropriate integrated programming for a student if there is more than one area of exceptionality. The report will also provide information about the student's adaptive and social behavior if this is appropriate. The GMDT will meet during the evaluation process to clarify the purpose of the evaluation or discuss details surrounding the evaluation.

Students who are identified with an **IQ 130 or more:** (Approximately 98th-99th percentile) are termed "mentally gifted". This includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher,

when multiple criteria as set forth in Department Guidelines indicate gifted ability. This identification cannot be held out due to deficits in memory or processing speed. The following additional criteria other than IQ Score will also be considered:

- **Achievement** – Year or more above grade achievement for the normal age group in one or more subjects. (DIBELS, Study Island, PSSA, WIAT)
- **Rates of Acquisition and Retention** - Approximately 1-3 repetitions of new knowledge/skills to achieve mastery. (Teacher Rating & Chuska Acquisition/Retention Scales)
- **Demonstrated Achievement** – achievement/performance/expertise in one or more academic areas as evidenced by permanent products, portfolios, demonstration of skills, awards, community involvements of others. (Teacher/Parent Nomination & Portfolio)
- **Early Skill Development** – high level thinking skills, academic creativity, leadership skills, intense academic interest areas, communications skills, foreign language aptitude or technology expertise. (Teacher/Parent Nomination ; Teacher/Parent Packet; Gifted Rating Scales)

The Titusville Area School District will follow the Alternative Gifted Identification Procedures for any student who is evaluated. There are three ways that a student can qualify for gifted support.

- A student who scores 130 or above on a nationally normed standardized cognitive assessment (minus the standard error of measure for the assessment given) and meets one other criterion from the other criteria list.
- A student who scores 125 full scale IQ score or above on a nationally normed standardized cognitive assessment (minus the standard error of measure for the assessment given) or scores over 125 on an additional area of identification and meets one of the other criteria from the other criteria list.
- A student who scores between 120 and 124 full scale IQ score or above on a nationally normed standardized cognitive assessment (minus the standard error of measure for the assessment given) or scores over 125 on an additional area of identification and meets two of the other criteria from the other criteria list.
- Students who score 119 or below do not qualify for gifted support.

Gifted Programs Offered to Provide Opportunities for Acceleration, Enrichment, or Both.

The Titusville Area School District provides a combination of acceleration and enrichment to provide the greatest opportunity for flexible programming to meet the needs of the gifted. An individualized program is provided for all identified students. This program establishes learning opportunities to insure meaningful progress (22 Pa. Code §§16.1(viii), 16.41(2)). The identified gifted student is provided with instruction that is at an appropriate

level of challenge and with adjustments that accommodate individual needs. The instruction is reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and student progress.

The district will provide program options chosen for each gifted student that are developed based on the strengths and needs identified within the GIEP and must be agreed to by the GIEP team. Programming options for the gifted students is offered through a variety of settings and selections such as:

- Curriculum compacting- This approach compresses curriculum into a shorter period of time than typically presented, allowing the gifted student to study related material while classmates master standard content.
- Cluster Grouping- This approach places a small group of identified gifted students in a classroom with other students of mixed abilities.
- Independent Study- This approach allows students to work independently under guidelines or a contract.
- Mentor ships, apprenticeships, and field experiences- This approach is designed to meet students' performance levels and career interests.
- Grade and/or Subject Acceleration- This approach allows the gifted student to progress through an educational program at rates faster or ages younger than is conventional.
- Field Experiences- This approach is an out-of-school educational experiences such as trips, workshops, and extracurricular activities.
- Tiered Assignments-This approach adjusts the same lesson or concept to accommodate high, middle, and low readiness levels.
- Honors Classes-This approach provides the gifted student with the traditional curriculum covered at a faster pace with greater depth, abstraction or complexity.
- Advanced Placement-This approach accelerates the gifted student and accelerates students with AP classes in high school and they take AP exams.
- Dual Enrollment- This approach provides students with the opportunity to take college courses while earning both high school and college credit.
- Pull-Out Program (SEEK)- This approach pulls the gifted student out of the regular classroom on a scheduled basis to go to a resource room staffed by the TASD Gifted Coordinator who is specially trained in the education of gifted children. This program is a special classroom area set up for advanced learning or enrichment opportunities.
- Enrichment-This approach offers curriculum that is modified to provide greater depth and breadth to the gifted student within the traditional school environment.
- Grade Acceleration- This approach accelerates the student to an advanced grade for part or their complete school experience.