

National Standards for Talented & Gifted Education

Description: The development of appropriate gifted education programming requires comprehensive services based on sound philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Rather than any single gifted program, a continuum of programming services must exist for gifted learners.	1.0M Gifted programming services must be accessible to all gifted learners.	1.0E Levels of services should be matched to the needs of gifted learners by providing a full continuum of options.
2. Gifted education must be adequately funded.	2.0M Gifted education funding should be equitable compared to the funding of other local programming.	2.0E Gifted education programming must receive funding consistent with the program goals and sufficient to adequately meet them.
3. Gifted education programming must evolve from a comprehensive and sound base.	3.0M Gifted education programming must be submitted for outside review on a regular basis.	3.0E Gifted education programming should be planned as a result of consultation with informed experts.
	3.1M Gifted programming must be guided by a clearly articulated philosophy statement and accompanying goals and objectives.	3.1E The school or school district should have a mission/philosophy statement that addresses the need for gifted education programming.
	3.2M A continuum of services must be provided across grades pre-K-12.	3.2E A comprehensive pre-K-12 program plan should include policies and procedures for identification, curriculum and instruction, service delivery, teacher preparation, formative and summative evaluation, support services, and parent involvement.

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| 4. Gifted education programming services must be an integral part of the general education school day. | 4.0M Gifted education-programming should be articulated with the general education program. | 4.0E Gifted services must be designed to supplement and build on the basic academic skills and knowledge learned in regular classrooms at all grade levels to ensure continuity as students progress through the program. |
| | 4.1M Appropriate educational opportunities must be provided in the regular classroom, resource classroom, separate, or optional voluntary environments. | 4.1E Local school districts should offer multiple service delivery options as no single service should stand alone. |
| 5. Flexible groupings of students must be developed in order to facilitate differentiated instruction and curriculum. | 5.0M The use of flexible grouping of gifted learners must be an integral part of gifted education programming. | 5.0E Gifted learners should be included in flexible grouping arrangements in all content areas and grade levels to ensure that gifted students learn with and from intellectual peers. |
| 6. Policies specific to adapting and adding to the nature and operations of the general education program are necessary for gifted education. | 6.0M Existing and future school policies must include provisions for the needs of gifted learners. | 6.0E Gifted education policies should exist for at least the following areas: early entrance, grade skipping, ability grouping, and dual enrollment. |

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Administration and Management

Description: Appropriate gifted education programming must include the establishment of a systematic means of developing, implementing, and managing services.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Appropriately qualified personnel must direct services for the education of gifted learners.	1.0M The designated coordinator of gifted education programming must have completed coursework or staff development in gifted education and display leadership ability to be deemed appropriately qualified.	1.0E The designated gifted programming coordinator must have completed a certification program or advanced degree program in gifted education.
2. Gifted education programming must be integrated into the general education program.	2.0M The gifted education program must create linkages between general education and gifted education at all levels.	2.0E Responsibility for the education of gifted learners is a shared one requiring strong relationships between the gifted education program and general education schoolwide.
3. Gifted education programming must include positive working relationships with constituency and advocacy groups, as well as with compliance agencies.	3.0M Gifted programming staff must establish ongoing parent communication.	3.0E The gifted education programming staff should facilitate the dissemination of information regarding major policies and practices in gifted education (e.g., student referral and screening, appeals, informed consent, student progress, etc.) to school personnel, parents, community members, etc.

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| 4. Requisite resources and materials must be provided to support the efforts of gifted education programming. | 3.1M Gifted programs must establish and use an advisory committee that reflects the cultural and socio-economic diversity of the school or school district's total student population and includes parents, community members, students, and school staff members. | 3.1E Parents of gifted learners should have regular opportunities to share input and make recommendations about program operations with the gifted programming coordinator. |
| | 3.2M Gifted education programming staff must communicate with other on-site departments, as well as other educational agencies vested in the education of gifted learners (e.g., other school districts, school board members, state departments of education, intermediate educational agencies, etc.). | 3.2E The gifted education program should consider current issues and concerns from other educational fields and agencies regarding gifted programming decision making on a regular basis. |
| | 4.0M Resources must be provided to support program operations. | 4.0E A diversity of resources (e.g., parent, community, vocational, etc.) should be available to support program operations. |
| | 4.1M Technological support must be provided for gifted education programming services. | 4.1E Gifted education programming should provide state-of-the-art technology to support appropriate services. |
| | 4.2M The library selections must reflect a range of materials including those appropriate for gifted learners. | 4.2E The acquisition plan for purchasing new materials for the school should reflect the needs of gifted learners. |

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling

Description: Gifted education programming must establish a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional development of gifted learners.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Gifted learners must be provided with differentiated guidance efforts to meet their unique socio-emotional development.	1.0M Gifted learners, because of their unique socio-emotional development, must be provided with guidance and counseling services by a counselor who is familiar with the characteristics and socio-emotional needs of gifted learners.	1.0E Counseling services should be provided by a counselor familiar with specific training in the characteristics and socio-emotional needs (i.e., underachievement, multipotentiality, etc.) of diverse gifted learners.
2. Gifted learners must be provided with career guidance services especially designed for their unique needs.	2.0M Gifted learners must be provided with career guidance consistent with their unique strengths.	2.0E Gifted learners should be provided with college and career guidance that is appropriately different and delivered earlier than typical programs.
3. Gifted at-risk students must be provided with guidance and counseling to help them reach their potential.	3.0M Gifted learners who are at risk must have special attention, counseling, and support to help them realize their full potential.	3.0E Gifted learners who do not demonstrate satisfactory performance in regular and/or gifted education classes should be provided with specialized intervention services.
4. Gifted learners must be provided with affective curriculum in addition to differentiated guidance and counseling services.	4.0M Gifted learners must be provided with affective curriculum as part of differentiated curriculum and instructional services.	4.0E A well-defined and implemented affective curriculum scope and sequence containing personal/social awareness and adjustment, academic planning, and vocational and career awareness should be provided to gifted learners.

5. Underachieving gifted learners must be served, rather than omitted from differentiated services.

5.0M Gifted students who are under-achieving must not be exited from gifted programs because of related problems.

5.0E Underachieving gifted learners should be provided with specific guidance and counseling services that address the issues and problems related to underachievement.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Student Identification

Description: Gifted learners must be assessed to determine appropriate educational services.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. A comprehensive and cohesive process for student nomination must be coordinated in order to determine eligibility for gifted education services.	1.0M Information regarding the characteristics of gifted students in areas served by the district must be annually disseminated to all appropriate staff members.	1.0E The school district should provide information annually, in a variety of languages, regarding the process for nominating students for gifted education programming services.
	1.1M All students must comprise the initial screening pool of potential recipients of gifted education services.	1.1E The nomination process should be ongoing, and screening of any student should occur at any time.
	1.2M Nominations for services must be accepted from any source (e.g., teachers, parents, community members, peers, etc.).	1.2E Nomination procedures and forms should be available in a variety of languages.
	1.3M Parents must be provided with information regarding an understanding of giftedness and student characteristics.	1.3E Parents should be provided with special workshops or seminars to gain a full meaning of giftedness.
2. Instruments used for student assessment to determine eligibility for gifted education services must measure diverse abilities, talents, strengths, and needs in order to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate any strengths	2.0M Assessment instruments must measure the capabilities of students with provisions for the language in which the student is most fluent, when available.	2.0E Assessments should be provided in a language in which the student is most fluent, if available.

	2.1M Assessments must be culturally fair.	2.1E Assessment should be responsive to students' economic conditions, gender, developmental differences, handicapping conditions, and other factors that mitigate against fair assessment practices.
	2.2M The purpose(s) of student assessments must be consistently articulated across all grade levels.	2.2E Students identified in all designated areas of giftedness within a school district should be assessed consistently across grade levels.
	2.3M Student assessments must be sensitive to the current stage of talent development.	2.3E Student assessments should be sensitive to all stages of talent development.
3. A student assessment profile of individual strengths and needs must be developed to plan appropriate intervention.	3.0M An assessment profile must be developed for each child to evaluate eligibility for gifted education programming services.	3.0E Individual assessment plans should be developed for all gifted learners who need gifted education.
	3.1M An assessment profile must reflect the unique learning characteristics and potential and performance levels.	3.1E An assessment profile should reflect the gifted learner's interests, learning style, and educational needs.
4. All student identification procedures and instruments must be based on current theory and research.	4.0M No single assessment instrument or its results denies student eligibility for gifted programming services.	4.0E Student assessment data should come from multiple sources and include multiple assessment methods.
	4.1M All assessment instruments must provide evidence of reliability and validity for the intended purposes and target students.	4.1E Student assessment data should represent an appropriate balance of reliable and valid quantitative and qualitative measures.

5. Written procedures for student identification must include, at the very least, provisions for informed consent, student retention, student reassessment, student exiting, and appeals procedures.

5.0M District gifted programming guidelines must contain specific procedures for student assessment at least once during the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.

5.0E Student placement data should be collected using an appropriate balance of quantitative and qualitative measures with adequate evidence of reliability and validity for the purposes of identification.

5.1M District guidelines must provide specific procedures for student retention and exiting, as well as guidelines for parent appeals.

5.1E District guidelines and procedures should be reviewed and revised when necessary.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Curriculum and Instruction

Description: Gifted education services must include curricular and instructional opportunities directed to the unique needs of the gifted learner.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. Differentiated curriculum for the gifted learner must span grades pre-K-12.	1.0M Differentiated curriculum (curricular and instructional adaptations that address the unique learning needs of gifted learners) for gifted learners must be integrated and articulated throughout the district.	1.0E A well-defined and implemented curriculum scope and sequence should be articulated for all grade levels and all subject areas.
2. Regular classroom curricula and instruction must be adapted, modified, or replaced to meet the unique needs of gifted learners.	2.0M Instruction, objectives, and strategies provided to gifted learners must be systematically differentiated from those in the regular classroom.	2.0E District curriculum plans should include objectives, content, and resources that challenge gifted learners in the regular classroom.
	2.1M Teachers must differentiate, replace, supplement, or modify curricula to facilitate higher level learning goals.	2.1E Teachers should be responsible for developing plans to differentiate the curriculum in every discipline for gifted learners.
	2.2M Means for demonstrating proficiency in essential regular curriculum concepts and processes must be established to facilitate appropriate academic acceleration.	2.2E Documentation of instruction for assessing level(s) of learning and accelerated rates of learning should demonstrate plans for gifted learners based on specific needs of individual learners.

	2.3M Gifted learners must be assessed for proficiency in basic skills and knowledge and provided with alternative challenging educational opportunities when proficiency is demonstrated.	2.3E Gifted learners should be assessed for proficiency in all standard courses of study and subsequently provided with more challenging educational opportunities.
3. Instructional pace must be flexible to allow for the accelerated learning of gifted learners as appropriate.	3.0M A program of instruction must consist of advanced content and appropriately differentiated teaching strategies to reflect the accelerative learning pace and advanced intellectual processes of gifted learners.	3.0E When warranted, continual opportunities for curricular acceleration should be provided in gifted learners' areas of strength and interest while allowing a sufficient ceiling for optimal learning.
4. Educational opportunities for subject and grade skipping must be provided to gifted learners.	4.0M Decisions to proceed or limit the acceleration of content and grade acceleration must only be considered after a thorough assessment.	4.0E Possibilities for partial or full acceleration of content and grade levels should be available to any student presenting such needs.
5. Learning opportunities for gifted learners must consist of a continuum of differentiated curricular options, instructional approaches, and resource materials.	5.0M Diverse and appropriate learning experiences must consist of a variety of curricular options, instructional strategies, and materials.	5.0E Appropriate service options for each student to work at assessed level(s) and advanced rates of learning should be available.
	5.1M Flexible instructional arrangements (e.g., special classes, seminars, resource rooms, mentorships, independent study, and research projects) must be available.	5.1E Differentiated educational program curricula for students pre-K-12 should be modified to provide learning experiences matched to students' interests, readiness, and learning styles.

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Professional Development

Description: Gifted learners are entitled to be served by professionals who have specialized preparation in gifted education, expertise in appropriate differentiated content and instructional methods, involvement in ongoing professional development, and who possess exemplary personal and professional traits.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. A comprehensive staff development program must be provided for all school staff involved in the education of gifted learners.	1.0M All school staff must be made aware of the nature and needs of gifted students.	1.0E All school staff should be provided ongoing staff development in the nature and needs of gifted learners and appropriate instructional strategies.
	1.1M Teachers of gifted students must attend at least one professional development activity a year designed specifically for teaching gifted learners.	1.1E All teachers of gifted learners should continue to be actively engaged in the study of gifted education through staff development or graduate degree programs.
	2.0M All personnel working with gifted learners must be certified to teach in the areas to which they are assigned and must be aware of the unique learning differences and needs of gifted learners at the grade level at which they are teaching.	2.0E All personnel working with gifted learners should participate in regular staff development programs.
2. Only qualified personnel should be involved in the education of gifted learners.	2.1M All specialist teachers in gifted education must hold or be actively working toward a certification (or the equivalent) in gifted education in the state in which they teach.	2.1E All specialist teachers in gifted education should possess a certification/specialization or degree in gifted education.

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| | 2.2M | Any teacher whose primary responsibility for teaching includes gifted learners must have extensive expertise in gifted education. | 2.2E | Only teachers with advanced expertise in gifted education should have primary responsibility for the education of gifted learners. |
| 3. | | School personnel require support for their specific efforts related to the education of gifted learners. | 3.0E | Approved staff development activities in gifted education should be funded at least in part by school districts or educational agencies. |
| 4. | | The educational staff must be provided with time and other support for the preparation and development of the differentiated education plans, materials, curriculum. | 4.0E | Regularly scheduled planning time (e.g., release time, summer pay, etc.) should be allotted to teachers for the development of differentiated educational programs and related resources. |
| | 3.0M | School personnel must be released from their professional duties to participate in staff development efforts in gifted education. | | |
| | 4.0M | School personnel must be allotted planning time to prepare for the differentiated education of gifted learners. | | |

Gifted Education Programming Criterion: Program Evaluation

Description: Program evaluation is the systematic study of the value and impact of services provided.

Guiding Principles	Minimum Standards	Exemplary Standards
1. An evaluation must be purposeful.	1.0M Information collected must reflect the interests and needs of most of the constituency groups.	1.0E Information collected should address pertinent questions raised by all constituency groups and should be responsive to the needs of all stakeholders.
2. An evaluation must be efficient and economic.	2.0M School districts must provide sufficient resources for program evaluation.	2.0E School districts should allocate adequate time, financial support, and personnel to conduct systematic program evaluation.
3. An evaluation must be conducted competently and ethically.	3.0M Persons conducting the evaluation must be competent and trustworthy.	3.0E Persons conducting the evaluation should possess an expertise in program evaluation in gifted education.
	3.1M The program evaluation design must address whether or not services have reached intended goals.	3.1E The evaluation design should report the strengths and weaknesses found in the program, as well as critical issues that might influence program services.
	3.2M Instruments and procedures used for data collection must be valid and reliable for their intended use.	3.2E Care should be taken to ensure that instruments with sufficient evidence of reliability and validity are used and that they are appropriate for varying age, developmental levels, gender, and diversity of the target population.

3.3M Ongoing formative and summative evaluation strategies must be used for substantive program improvement and development.

3.4M Individual data must be held confidential.

4.0M Evaluation reports must present the evaluation results in a clear and cohesive format.

3.3E Formative evaluations should be conducted regularly with summative evaluations occurring minimally every five years or more often as specified by state or local district policies.

3.4E All individuals who are involved in the evaluation process should be given the opportunity to verify information and the resulting interpretation.

4.0E Evaluation reports should be designed to present results and encourage follow-through by stakeholders.

4. The evaluation results must be made available through a written report.