

# New London Public Schools Gifted and Talented Guidelines

2023-2024 School Year



**NEW LONDON**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## The Identification of Gifted and Talented Children in Connecticut: The Law and Its Implications

The identification of gifted and talented children is required under Connecticut special education law. Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 10-76d(a)(1) states “...each local or regional board of education shall provide the professional services requisite to the identification of school-age children requiring special education, identify each such child within its jurisdiction, determine the eligibility of such children for special education pursuant to sections 10-76a to 10-76h, inclusive, prescribe suitable educational programs for eligible children, maintain a record thereof and make such reports as the commissioner may require...”:

Section 10-76a(5) of the state statutes defines “children requiring special education” as follows:

*(5) “Children requiring special education” includes any exceptional child who...(B) has extraordinary learning ability or outstanding talent in the creative arts, the development of which requires programs or services beyond those ordinarily provided in the regular school programs but which may be provided through special education as part of the public school program.*

The state regulations define “gifted and talented”, “extraordinary learning ability”, and “outstanding creative talent” as follows. Regulations Concerning State Agencies (RCSA) at Sec. 10-76a-2 state:

*(b) “Gifted and talented” means a child identified by the planning and placement team as (1) possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of very superior intellectual, creative or specific academic capability and (2) needing differentiated instruction or services beyond those being provided in the regular school program in order to realize their intellectual, creative or specific academic potential. The term shall include children with extraordinary learning ability and children with outstanding talent in the creative arts as defined by these regulations.*

*(a) “Extraordinary learning ability” means a child identified by the planning and placement team as gifted and talented on the basis of either performance on relevant standardized measuring instruments, or demonstrated or potential achievement or intellectual creativity or both. The term shall refer to the top five per cent of children so identified. (Note: The term means 5% of the children so identified as gifted and talented within the district.)*

*(j) “Outstanding talent in the creative arts” means a child identified by the planning and placement team as gifted and talented on the basis of demonstrated or potential achievement in music, the visual arts or the performing arts. The term shall refer to the top five per cent of children so identified. (Note: The term means 5% of the children so identified as gifted and talented within the district.)*

While identification is mandated under state law, programming is permissive under Section 10-76d(c) of the state statutes: “(c) Each local or regional board of education may provide special education for children requiring it who are described by subparagraph (B) of subdivision (5) of section 10-76a and for other exceptional children for whom special education is not required by law.” The State Regulations further require that “each board of education provide identification, referral and evaluation for gifted and talented children”, see Section 10-76d-1(b).

### **What Does the Law Mean?**

(1) The provisions relating to the identification of gifted and talented children are found in the state special education laws. The procedures used to identify and evaluate children who may be gifted or talented are similar to those used to identify and evaluate children with disabilities. Only the state requirements are followed for the identification, evaluation and referral of gifted and talented children. The federal special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, does not provide for gifted and talented children.

(2) The parents must be notified in writing that a referral to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) has been made to determine a child’s identification as either gifted or talented. A PPT is a “group of certified and/or licensed professionals, who represent each of the teaching, administrative and pupil personnel staffs and who participate equally in the decision making process.... These shall be persons knowledgeable in the areas necessary...” (RCSA Sec 10-76a-1 (p)).

(3) The PPT must process the referral for an evaluation. The PPT must review existing data to determine if the child may be eligible as gifted and talented. If the PPT determines that sufficient information exists to determine eligibility, further evaluation is not necessary. The parents may challenge the refusal of the PPT to find a child gifted and talented by requesting due process, discussed further below.

(4) Parents must be notified in writing when their child is referred to the PPT for a consideration of identification of gifted and talented. After the PPT has reviewed the assessment information, parents must also be notified in writing if the student has met the criteria for eligibility as gifted or talented.

(5) If the district recommends further evaluations and uses an individual assessment procedure (e.g., an individual intelligence test), certain procedural safeguards must be followed. Individual assessment requires proper notice and informed consent as described in Section 10-76d-8 of the State Regulations. Parents must be notified that their child has been referred for evaluation and written consent for the evaluation must be obtained. Parents must be informed of the results of the evaluation and informed whether or not the child has been identified as gifted and talented.

(6) If group assessment procedures are used to identify gifted and talented students, consent to perform such assessments may not be required. Group assessments (e.g. achievement tests) given to all students within a school district are nonspecific and, therefore consent is not required. If a group of students are to be evaluated specifically to determine identification as gifted and talented, notice and consent are required.

(7) Parents have the right to review and inspect any educational records related to their child. This includes records related to the determination of a child's identification as gifted and talented.

(8) If at any time in the evaluation process the parents disagree with the decisions of the PPT, the parents have the right to challenge those decisions. For example, if the parents disagree with the district's refusal to evaluate the child, the parents may request either a mediation or due process hearing to challenge this refusal. If the PPT determines that the child is neither gifted nor talented, the parents may challenge this determination by requesting either mediation or a hearing. Parents may request an independent educational evaluation to challenge the evaluations conducted by the district.

(9) Parents have the right to obtain an independent evaluation of their child, conducted by a certified person not employed by the board of education (CGS Sec. 10-76d-9(c)(1)).

(10) Parents have the right to an independent evaluation at public expense if they disagree with an evaluation obtained by the board of education. "Public expense" means at no cost to parents. However, the board of education may initiate a due process hearing to show that the evaluation is appropriate (CGS Sec. 10-76d-9(c)(2)).

(11) School districts are not required to provide programming for children identified as gifted and talented. Instead, programming is permissive. Parents, then, can ask for educational services that accommodate the educational needs of their children, but districts are not required to provide such special educational services.

Resources Gardner, H. (1985). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.  
Sternberg, R. J. (1984). *Toward a Diarchic Theory of Intelligence*. *Behavioral and Brain*

## NLPS Identification Process

The guidelines below were developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education to ensure equitable and defensible identification procedures that foster open communication with parents.

1. Identification should be systematic and ongoing.
2. Identification instruments should match the district definition of giftedness. If a district proposes to identify students with both musical and mathematical ability or potential, then separate identification procedures need to be established in each of the domains.
3. The identification process should be based on the use of multiple criteria including, but not limited to teacher recommendations, student work samples, a portfolio review, teacher checklists, a parent-nomination, peer or self-nomination, parent-nomination, and/or standardized assessment scores.
4. Identification instruments need to be sensitive to underserved and culturally diverse populations. Standardized tests, used carefully and cautiously, can yield helpful data in assessing the potential of traditionally underserved or underachieving students. They should not be used exclusively, however. In these cases, especially, greater emphasis needs to be placed on parent, teacher, peer, or self-rating scales. Additionally, portfolios and performance rating scales may be more direct assessments of student potential or accomplishment.
5. Identification plans should be written and communicated to all parents in languages that reflect the demographics of the community.

New London Public Schools uses a “multiple criteria” process to identify gifted/talented students. The process will be as follows:

- A nomination (Appendix A) will be made by teachers, parents or others that have a direct knowledge of the child. Information required will include grades, academic performance on district and state assessments, differentiated work samples from the classroom, and other anecdotal information from other school personnel such as guidance counselors, social workers, etc.
- A PPT will be held to review the information. The team should include an administrator, regular education teacher, school psychologist, classroom teacher, and parent. A special education teacher will be asked to attend if the child is identified as having a disability or if there is question regarding one. An ESL teacher will be invited if English is the second language.
- At this meeting further information will be gathered and the team will determine if the student should have further evaluations for the purpose of determining if the child is Gifted/Talented.

- If further evaluation is needed, an evaluation plan is designed, presented to the parents, and the parents must agree to the evaluation. Evaluation tools must be sensitive to cultural and other factors. Information must be explained in the parent’s native language.

### Referral Procedures

- ON-GOING DATA COLLECTION is completed by all classroom teachers. Ongoing assessments include curriculum-based assessments, iReady, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) (elementary), SBA (Smarter Balanced Assessment), and SAT (secondary). Talented students in the area of vocal, instrumental, or visual arts are identified by their music or art teachers.
- Teachers can access the *Gifted/Talented Program Screening Form (Appendix A)* on Teams once decision for referral is made. Teachers return completed forms to the school psychologist once fully completed.
- GRADE LEVEL/DEPARTMENT MEETINGS are held throughout the school year at each school to evaluate data and recommend students to be referred to PPT for eligibility to be identified as gifted.
- Teachers may also review and consider the table located in *Appendix B* of this manual which highlights the characteristics of a gifted student versus a high achiever and a creative thinker.
- Parent referrals can also be requested at any point by making a verbal or written request to any teacher or administrator.

### PPT/Assessment

Once a referral is made, a PPT is scheduled to review the information. Further evaluation may be warranted and could include other assessments such as individual achievement tests and/or an IQ test may be determined appropriate. The team must be sensitive to EL issues and cultural bias of certain assessments. Bilingual instruments should be considered, if appropriate.

Assessments may include...

- Standardized Individually Administered Cognitive Assessments, such as the WASI-2 or KBIT-2.
- Standardized Individually Administered Academic Assessments, such as the WIAT-4, WJ-IV, or KTEA-3.

### Eligibility

Eligibility determination is based on the collection of data from multiple sources. Eligibility or ineligibility decisions should not be based on one test score alone. New London Public Schools recommends the team adhere to the following guidelines when determining eligibility:

- Cognitive assessments: Full-Scale IQ (FSIQ) must fall at or above a standard score of 125.

- SBA scores: Student scores must be at or above the upper 98<sup>th</sup> percentile in any subject area.
- DIBELS (K-3): Student is “Exceeding Benchmark”.
- iReady: Student scores must be at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- Additional scores to be considered at the high school level include GPA, AP scores, and SAT scores
- Teacher nomination for areas admissible for students that are “talented” that would not be measured by academic data (arts, music, etc).

### Identification

- Once eligibility determination is made by the PPT, the student is deemed identified as Talented/Gifted and appropriate paperwork is completed.
- While a student may be identified as Talented/Gifted, they are not eligible for special education services or an IEP.
- All documentation should be completed on paper forms (see Appendix A) and uploaded to PowerSchool Attachments.
- Upon eligibility determination, the school psychologist should notify Special Services and assign an alert in PowerSchool.

## Acknowledgements

New London Public Schools would like to acknowledge the leadership, best practice recommendations, model policies, and collegial support from the following national organizations that helped make this document possible:

- Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 10-76d(a)(1)
- East Hartford Public Schools
- Norwich Public Schools

# ***APPENDIX A***

NEW LONDON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
GIFTED & TALENTED IDENTIFICATION  
TEACHER SCREENING FORM

Date of Referral:	Grade:
Name:	Date of Birth:
School:	Gender:

Race:	Black or African American	Asian
Caucasian	Hispanic	Other

EL:	Yes	No
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Parent/Guardian Name:
Home Address:
Phone:
Arrival Date to District:
Teacher's Name:

Nominated	Principal	Teacher	Parent	Peer	Self
by:					

Form Completed by:	Title:
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Areas of Strength		
Language Arts	Mathematics	Writing
Social Studies	Science	Technology
Visual Arts	Performing Arts	Other (please specify)

SECTION A:  
SBA PERFORMANCE (if appropriate)

*Please disregard this section if screening for Talented only.*

Year	Math	Lang. Arts	Science

**SECTION B:**

**iReady**

*Please disregard this section if screening for Talented only.*

Please include printout of all scores from iReady Website.

**SECTION C:**

**DIBELS (if appropriate)**

*Please disregard this section if screening for Talented only.*

Please include printout of all scores from DIBELS Website.

**SECTION D:**

**OBSERVATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

(Please rate the student in the following areas by checking off the appropriate box)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree
has a positive attitude.			
does not give up easily.			
has leadership skills.			
works independently.			
works well in a group.			
welcomes challenges.			
is a good problem solver.			
is well organized.			
takes ownership for actions.			
is goal oriented.			
is cooperative.			
is motivated.			
shows follow through on projects.			
meets deadlines.			
remains focused.			
shows initiative.			
has good communication skills.			
has strong task commitment.			



**SECTION G:**  
**PORTFOLIO SUBMISSION/AUDITION**

*Please disregard if screening for Gifted only.*

(Check all that apply)

VISUAL ARTS	MUSIC	DRAMA/THEATER	BODILY KINESTHETIC
<p>__ Elaborates on other people's ideas as a jumping off point instead of copying from others</p> <p>__ Shows unique selection of art media for individual activity or classroom projects</p> <p>__ Has unusual and richly imaginative ideas</p> <p>__ Composes with detail and skill</p> <p>__ Displays compulsive artistic pursuit</p> <p>__ Demonstrates aesthetic awareness and describes art using rich detail</p>	<p>__ Matches pitches accurately</p> <p>__ Is able to duplicate rhythms correctly</p> <p>__ Demonstrates ability on an instrument including voice</p> <p>__ Has a high degree of aural memory/musical memory</p> <p>__ Displays compulsive music pursuit</p> <p>__ Creates/improvises music demonstrating an intuitive awareness about the musical elements</p> <p>__ Demonstrates natural ability to move to and be expressive when creating, performing, or responding to music</p>	<p>__ Readily shifts into the role of character, animals, or objects</p> <p>__ Communicates feelings by means of facial expression, gestures, and bodily movements</p> <p>__ Uses voice expressively to convey or enhance meaning</p> <p>__ Easily tells a story or gives a vivid account of some experience</p>	<p>__ Demonstrates physical balance</p> <p>__ Performs sequences of movement easily and well</p> <p>__ Communicates meaning and feeling with movement</p> <p>__ Responds appropriately in movement to various styles of music</p> <p>__ Creates expressive and creative sequential movement patterns appropriate to the sound source and/or music</p>

**\*\*Nomination in the area of Artistically Talented generally requires audition or portfolio evidence to support nomination.**

Portfolio Reviewed \_\_\_\_\_  
Audition Held \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

# ***APPENDIX B***

Note: This instrument is a synthesis of Renzulli's *Equity, Excellence, and Economy in a System for Identifying Students in Gifted Education* and Newtown Public School's *Parent Data Collection* and *Parent Input* sheets.

### Characteristics of Giftedness

A High Achiever...	A Gifted Learner...	A Creative Thinker...
Remembers the answers.	Poses unforeseen questions.	Sees exceptions.
Is interested.	Is curious.	Wonders.
Is attentive.	Is selectively mentally engaged.	Daydreams; may seem off task.
Generates advanced ideas.	Generates complex, abstract ideas.	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed.
Works hard to achieve.	Knows without working hard.	Plays with ideas and concepts.
Answer the questions in detail.	Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives.	Injects new possibilities.
Performs at the top of the group.	Is beyond the group.	Is in own group.
Responds with interest and opinions.	Exhibits feelings and opinions from multiple perspectives.	Shares bizarre, sometimes conflicting opinions.
Learns with ease.	Already knows.	Questions: What if...
Needs 6 to 8 repetitions to master.	Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master.	Questions the need for mastery.
Comprehends at a high level.	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas.	Overflows with ideas--many of which will never be developed.
Enjoys the company of age peers.	Prefers the company of intellectual peers.	Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone.
Understands complex, abstract humor.	Creates complex, abstract humor.	Relishes wild, off-the-wall humor.
Grasps the meaning.	Infers and connects concepts.	Makes mental leaps: Aha!
Completes assignments on time.	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments.	Initiates more projects that will ever be completed.
Is receptive.	Is intense.	Is independent and unconventional.
Is accurate and complete.	Is original and continually developing.	Is original and continually developing.
Enjoys school often.	Enjoys self-directed learning.	Enjoys creating.
Absorbs information.	Manipulates information.	Improvises.
Is a technician with expertise in a field.	Is an expert who abstracts beyond the field.	Is an inventor and idea generator.
Memorizes well.	Guesses and infers well.	Creates and brainstorms well.
Is highly alert and observant.	Anticipates and relates observations.	Is intuitive.
Is pleased with own learning.	Is self-critical.	Is never finished with possibilities.
Gets A's.	May not be motivated by grades.	May not be motivated by grades.

# ***APPENDIX C***

## Resources and Additional Information

Connecticut Association for the Gifted: <https://www.ctgifted.org/>

National Association for Gifted Children: <https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/gifted-state/connecticut>

Gifted Education: Connecticut Children's:  
<https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/health-library/en/parents/gifted-education/>

CT State Department of Education Gifted and Talented:  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Gifted-and-Talented/Identifying-gifted-and-talented-children-in-CT>

The Association of the Gifted (TAG): <https://cectag.com/>