

Descriptor Term:

IDDD

**INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED
EDUCATION PROGRAMMING**

ISSUE DATE: **5-14-07**
REVISED: 5-12-14

The Mississippi Gifted Education Act of 1989, as amended in 1993, mandates that each public school district within the state provide gifted education programs for intellectually gifted students in grades 2-6.

The Jackson County School District provides programming for students who meet the criteria for intellectually gifted in the second through sixth grade. The intellectually gifted program is known as "WINGS", Winning Instruction for Gifted Students.

MISSION:

The mission of the Jackson County School District is to allow students that have been deemed intellectually gifted to reach their fullest potential based on their exceptional abilities. Students will be provided a differentiated program designed to address their individual needs. We will provide learning experiences through self-motivated discovery learning, and empower students with the knowledge and skills to create their own futures; therefore becoming contributors to a diverse and changing world.

PHILOSOPHY:

The Jackson County School District is committed to an education program that recognizes individual student differences, abilities, interests, and needs. Our goal is to enrich the education of all students through events and activities designed to expose them to a variety of challenging and higher order critical and creative thinking experiences.

A multi-dimensional curriculum will take into consideration the interests and social/emotional needs of each student in order to encourage the development of the total individual and his/her relationship to the group. Methods, materials, and media used by the teacher will be varied and challenging in order to add dimension to thinking and to accommodate different learning styles. Providing students with enhanced differentiated instruction will enable us to nurture the diverse talents and abilities of the intellectually gifted student.

GOALS:

1. To create a learning environment that facilitates and encourages thinking, creativity, metacognition, healthy relationships, appropriate expectations, understanding of self, the development of communication skills, and self-directed learning for students in grades two through sixth who have been identified as intellectually gifted.
2. To offer the intellectually gifted a qualitatively different educational experience that is not available in the general education classroom.
3. To develop a differentiated program designed to address the needs of the intellectually gifted student.
4. To provide intellectually gifted students with an opportunity to maximize their personal potential.

STATE DEFINITION:

"Intellectually Gifted Children" shall mean those children and youth who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of intelligence as documented through the identification process. The needs of these students should be addressed based on the program options provided in the *Outcomes for Intellectually Gifted Education Programs Grades 2-8 in Mississippi*.

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PURPOSE:

To ensure that gifted children who demonstrate unusually high potential as described in the above definitions are identified and offered an appropriate education based upon their exceptional abilities. Because of their unusual capabilities, they require uniquely qualitatively different educational experiences not available in the regular classroom. These uniquely different programs are required to enable gifted students to realize their abilities and potential contributions to self and society.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS:

All data collected as part of the identification process are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Parents must be notified of their rights under FERPA. It is the obligation of the local district to ensure that parents understand these rights. All information/data collected as part of the identification process shall be placed in an individual eligibility file for each student. These files and the information contained therein shall not be placed in the student's cumulative record folder. The files shall be maintained in a separate locked storage facility/file cabinet, and access to the information shall be restricted to those personnel working directly with the identification process, working directly in the gifted education program, or that have a documented need to know.

Once the referral process begins, parents must be informed of the information/data that is collected. Parents shall have access to these records. Each district shall have a policy that establishes the process that parents shall adhere to when requesting to access these files. Parents shall be made aware of their rights to an explanation of the results of the Assessment Team Report.

LOCAL SURVEY COMMITTEE (LSC):

Each district shall establish an LSC for the Gifted Education Program (GEP). The LSC shall be involved in determining a student's eligibility for an intellectually gifted, artistically gifted, creatively gifted, and/or academically gifted program. The LSC shall include, but is not limited to, gifted education teachers and administrators. It may include regular education teachers, school psychologists or psychometrists, and parents. It should include a special education teacher when a student is being considered for eligibility under the twice-exceptional criteria. The LSC may be a building level committee which is responsible for students enrolled at that school, a district level committee which is responsible for student enrolled in the entire district, or a combination of the two.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESSES

The student identification processes are separated into six stages for the Intellectually Gifted category: The six stages are: referral, (LSC) review of referral data, parental permission for testing, assessment, assessment report, and the eligibility ruling by the LSC.

The Jackson County School District identification procedures shall consider the following:

- The identification process shall consist of a combination of subjective and objective measures to determine eligibility for the gifted programs. No single evaluation method or instrument adequately identifies students who are gifted. Thus, a multi-

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factored identification process must be followed to insure a fair evaluation of each individual student.

- The identification process shall provide an equitable opportunity for the inclusion of students who are culturally diverse, underachieving, disabled under IDEA guidelines, physically handicapped, ADD/ADHD, as well as students who exhibit classroom behavior such as extreme shyness, short attention spans, disruptiveness, continual questioning, and anxiety. Throughout the identification process, close attention and careful consideration shall be paid to all information available and collected on each individual student and how that information dictates the kinds of instruments and measures that should be used to correctly assess that student.
- All instruments administered and measures must have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are being used.
- The assessment criteria and minimal acceptable criteria to be used shall be documented in writing in the district's Gifted Education Program Proposal submitted to the Office of Gifted Education Programs at the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and approved by the State Board of Education (SBE).
- All instruments and measures administered must have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are being used. Hearing, vision, and general physical examinations are suggested but are not required.

REFERRAL FORM:

The Referral Form is completed by the person initiating the referral process. In the case of blanket screening, the referral form will be completed by the classroom teacher. Once the referral form has been initiated, signed and dated, only the Local Survey Committee (LSC) or parent(s) can stop the identification process.

IDENTIFICATION OF INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED STUDENTS:

NOTE: Throughout the identification process, district personnel shall be careful to select measures that target the student's strengths.

STAGE 1: REFERRAL:

There are two types of gifted referral processes:

Type One - Mass Screening Referral Process addresses those students who are mass screened for gifted eligibility. Mass screening will be done each year at the first grade level using a group measure of intellectual ability assessment.

Type Two - Individual Referral Process addresses those students who are individually referred for gifted eligibility.

Mass Screening Referral Process

This process requires all Mississippi districts to screen all students in at least one grade level each year. Districts should use a normed group measure of intelligence in the Mass Screening Referral Process. This process should assist in identifying students in underrepresented populations. Students who obtain a full-scale score at or above the 90th percentile on the normed group measure of intelligence shall move forward in the referral

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process. Students who scored at or above the 85th percentile but lower than the 90th percentile on the normed group measure of intelligence shall be subjected to an Emerging Potential for Gifted Referral Checklist. If these students meet the criteria on the checklist, they shall move forward in the referral process.

The next step in the process will consist of the collection of substantiated student data obtained through the use of other objective and subjective measures. District personnel shall make decisions as to which measures will be used during this step of the Mass Screening Referral Process. A student shall satisfy two of the following additional criteria before moving forward to the LSC Review of Referral Data Stage:

1. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published characteristics of giftedness checklist,
2. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of creativity,
3. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of leadership,
4. a score at or above the 90th percentile on an existing measure of individual intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months, and/or
5. other measures that are documented in the research on identification of intellectually gifted students.

Individual Referral Process

This process involves students who are individually referred for gifted eligibility. A student may be referred by a parent, teacher, counselor, administrator, peer, self, or anyone else having reason to believe that the student might be intellectually gifted. The person initiating the referral shall sign the referral form and date it. Once the student is referred, the district personnel shall collect the data required to satisfy the referral criteria. Once a referral form has been initiated, signed, and dated, only the LSC or parents can stop the identification process. Students participating in the Individual Referral Process shall satisfy three of the following criteria before moving forward to the LSC Review of Referral Data Stage:

1. a score at or above the 90th percentile on a group measure of intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months,
2. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published characteristics of giftedness checklist,
3. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of creativity,
4. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of leadership,
5. a score at or above the 90th percentile on an existing measure of individual intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months, and/or
6. other measures that are documented in the research on identification of intellectually gifted students.

Documentation of measures shall be maintained in a written document approved by the local school board indicating that the district is using the state minimal scale/percentile score criteria on all referral measures. This document shall be distributed to district administrators, school counselors, and teachers and shall be available to parents at each school site.

NOTE: Any student who does not meet the minimum acceptable criteria (score in the 90th percentile) on the normed group measure of intelligence during the Mass Screening Referral Process and does not qualify for the Emerging Potential for Gifted criteria, can be referred by anyone for the Individual Referral for Screening Process. The individually referred

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student shall not be excluded from the referral process by their performance on the normed group measure of intelligence administered during the Mass Screening Referral Process.

STAGE 2: LSC REVIEW OF REFERRAL DATA:

Once the referral data have been collected, the LSC shall review all data and make one of the following recommendations:

1. The student has satisfied minimal criteria on at least three measures and should move forward to the assessment stage, or
2. The student has not satisfied minimal criteria on at least two measures, however, the LSC feels strongly that additional data should be collected and the student reconsidered at that time, or
3. The student has not satisfied minimal criteria on at least two measures and the identification process should stop.

Provisions for Emerging Potential for Gifted Populations

At this point the LSC shall make the decision as to the possibility that the student could be eligible for consideration as a candidate for an emerging potential for gifted assessment. If it is believed that the student might have emerging gifted potential, then the Emerging Potential for Intellectually Gifted Assessment Checklist should be completed for possible use during the assessment process. The Emerging Potential for Gifted category makes provisions for certain factors that exist that may put the student at a disadvantage when inappropriate instruments are used during the assessment process.

STAGE 3: PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR TESTING:

At this time, district personnel shall obtain written parental permission for testing. District personnel shall also notify parents in writing about their rights under FERPA.

STAGE 4: ASSESSMENT:

Once the LSC has determined that a student has satisfied minimal referral criteria in order to move forward to the assessment stage, district personnel shall review and compile all data available on the student. This data shall also be made available to a licensed examiner. If parental permission for testing has not been obtained, district personnel shall obtain written parental permission for testing. The district personnel shall obtain written parental consent for testing through the Gifted Pupil Personnel Data Sheet (GGPDS). Parent will be informed of FERPA at this time. The assessment stage is the individual test of intelligence, which shall be administered by a licensed examiner. In no case will the examiner be related to the student being tested. The examiner shall review all available data on the student, whether or not it satisfies minimal identification criteria, and use that information to select the most appropriate test of intelligence. Standard operating procedures should be followed during the selection and administration of all assessments as reflected in the examiner's manuals. The examiner shall provide a signed and dated report of the test administration to include testing conditions, scores on all subtests or subscales, and the strengths and weaknesses of the student. A student must score at or above the 91st percentile composite/full scale or the 91st percentile on approved subtests (as per publisher) in order to satisfy eligibility criteria.

District personnel shall make decisions as to whether the minimal acceptable criteria set in regulations will be used, or if a higher minimal acceptable criteria will be used. The assessment criteria and acceptable minimal scale/percentile scores to be used shall be

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documented in writing in the district's Gifted Education Program Proposal submitted to and approved by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at the MDE. If a district decides to raise its minimal acceptable scale/percentile score for gifted eligibility above the state minimum scale/percentile score, justification shall be provided to the MDE in writing. Included in the justification must be documentation that the district continuously addresses the Emerging Potential for Gifted guidelines as outlined in the regulations.

Emerging Potential for Gifted

Students who have satisfied criteria on the Emerging Potential for Gifted Checklist who did not satisfy minimal acceptable criteria on an individual test of intelligence, but, did score at least at the 84th percentile or have a scale score that falls within the range of the 90th percentile confidence interval of the state minimum scale/percentile score, may be administered one of the following additional measures to determine eligibility:

1. A test of cognitive abilities with a minimal score at the 90th percentile,
2. A group intelligence measure with a minimal score at the 90th percentile, or
3. A district-developed matrix approved by the MDE.

Identification criteria, as approved by the MDE on the local district's Gifted Education Program Proposal, must be satisfied for a student to be ruled eligible by the LSC for the intellectually gifted education program.

Potentially Twice-Exceptional Students

Students who already have an eligibility ruling under IDEA and are being assessed for an intellectually gifted eligibility, and who did not satisfy all of the required minimal acceptable referral criteria but did meet at least one referral criterion shall have their results reviewed by the LSC and a licensed examiner. If the student scores at or above the 91st percentile on the individual test of intelligence (composite score or approved subtest score) or in the opinion of the reviewing committee, would benefit from participation in the intellectually gifted program, the student may be granted a provisional eligibility for the intellectually gifted program for a period of one year. At the end of that year, the student's teacher of the gifted shall meet with the review committee to discuss the student's performance in the program. If the student has demonstrated success in the program, the LSC shall change the eligibility status from provisional to regular eligibility. If the student has not been successful in the program, the provisional eligibility shall be revoked.

STAGE 5: ASSESSMENT REPORT:

District personnel shall write an Assessment Report, which must contain the following components:

1. Student's name,
2. Name of at least three measures from Stage 1 that were used to determine the need to administer an individual test of intelligence,
3. Results of each measure,
4. Name of individual who administered or completed each measure and the date administered or completed,
5. Test behaviors for any individually administered test(s),
6. Interpretation of the results of each individually administered test(s),
7. Name of the person who administered the individual test of intelligence and date test was administered,

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8. Qualifications of the individual who administered the individual test of intelligence,
9. Results of the individual test of intelligence to include scores on all subtests and identified strengths and weaknesses,
10. Name of the person responsible for writing the Assessment Report, his/her signature and position, and
11. The date of the Assessment Report.

STAGE 6: LSC ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION:

Once the Assessment Report is finished, the LSC shall meet to review all data and determine if eligibility criteria has or has not been satisfied. The LSC shall rule that the student is or is not eligible for the intellectually gifted program.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION:

District personnel shall notify in writing the parents of each student tested for the intellectually gifted program about the assessment results. District personnel shall offer to explain any of the results about which the parents have questions. District personnel shall also notify parents in writing about their rights under FERPA.

PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR PLACEMENT:

After a student has been ruled eligible for one of the gifted programs, written parental permission for placement shall be obtained before the student is placed in the program.

GIFTED RECORD FOLDER:

The gifted record folder may contain, but is not limited to the following items: referral packet, assessment protocol, assessment report, Gifted Personal Pupil Data Sheet, parent permission for placement, Instructional Management Plan, and annual reviews. The gifted record folder is a confidential document and is to be treated as such. Access to the gifted record folder will fall under the same requirements as the Mississippi Department of Education standards for cumulative record folders (MDE, Revised Edition 2002, Cumulative Folders and Permanent Records Manual of Directions: Section II, Page 1). The local agency shall keep a current list of employees by name and position who are authorized to have access to the gifted record folders. This list of current employees must be available for public inspection. The local agency will keep a record of the names of individuals granted access to the gifted record folder, date on which the person viewed the record, and for what purpose. This rule does not apply to parents or authorized employees of the local agency. The gifted record folder may be destroyed by order of the Jackson County School District in not less than five (5) years after the exiting level for the Intellectually Gifted Program. The Gifted Personal Pupil Data sheet shall not be destroyed and will be retained at the Board of Education Building for the Jackson County School District.

OUT OF STATE ELIGIBILITIES:

As each state has a unique set of eligibility criteria for placement in a gifted program, a student moving to Mississippi with a gifted eligibility from another state must satisfy Mississippi eligibility criteria before being considered for placement in the gifted program. The eligibility ruling form another state may be used to initiate the referral process in Mississippi.

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There is no temporary placement in the gifted program while a student goes through the eligibility process within the Jackson County School District.

NOTE: *Students who have a valid Mississippi gifted eligibility ruling do not have to be reevaluated. See the annual reassessment statement for information on continued placement in a gifted program. A Mississippi eligibility determination in any of the four areas shall be accepted by all school districts within state provided the district has a program in the particular area for which the student has eligibility.*

ANNUAL REASSESSMENT:

A committee shall meet at least annually to reassess each gifted student's continuation in the gifted program. The committee must include at least the student's teacher of the gifted and a designated administrative representative. Documentation of the meeting must be maintained and must include the name(s) of the student(s) discussed, a list of the committee members present, and the date of the meeting. Since participation in the gifted program is an entitlement under law, students should remain in the gifted program as long as they are being successful in the program. Grades and/or success in the regular education program is the responsibility of the regular classroom teachers and should not be considered as a reason for removal from the gifted program. Should the committee determine that a student should exit the program due to lack of progress in the program and/or unsatisfactory participation in the program, the student's parents must be notified and given the opportunity to discuss the decision with the committee before the student is removed. Should the parents not agree to the removal of the student from the program, the local district shall grant the parents a hearing. Each local school district should have a policy in place as to how this hearing will be conducted and how the lack of agreement will be resolved.

INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (IMP):

Each local school district shall have a written IMP for the intellectually gifted program and for all other gifted programs (academically gifted, artistically gifted, and/or creatively gifted) that the district offers. The IMP shall include, at a minimum, the following components:

1. District mission/philosophy statement, including goals and objectives;
2. The components of the Mississippi Gifted Education Program Standards:
 - a. Differentiated activities,
 - b. Scope and sequence of program process skills (outcomes),
 - c. Career exploration and life skills,
 - d. Exposure to and appreciation for the visual and performing arts,
 - e. In-class counseling/guidance for gifted students,
 - f. Social-emotional needs of gifted students,
 - g. Affective needs of gifted students, and
 - h. Needs of gifted at-risk students; and
3. Program outcomes for the specific gifted program(s) offered.

PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED PULL-OUT (GRADES 2-8):

A group of all intellectually gifted students is provided services by a properly endorsed teacher in a self-contained room for a recommended 300 minutes per week, or a minimum of 240 minutes per week. The activities in the gifted class should develop and enhance the

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process skills in the outcomes document, the teaching strategies notebook, and required components of the gifted program standards document. Some of the activities should be short-term exploratory activities that introduce students to ideas and concepts not normally covered in the regular education program. The activities should enhance the integration of advanced content and individual student's interests utilizing higher-level thinking skills, creative problem solving, critical thinking skills, research skills, personal growth and human relations exercises, leadership skills, and creative expression. Activities should also create an appreciation for the multicultural composition of the school and community.

HOMEWORK/CLASSWORK:

Gifted students in grades 2-6 may not be required to make-up class work missed when they are scheduled to be in the gifted classroom. Gifted students shall be held accountable for demonstrating mastery of concepts and information on regularly scheduled tests. Intellectually gifted students may or may not consistently perform on classroom activities including graded daily work and tests at the 90thile or above. The best predictor of intellectual ability is their ability to reason and use information in unusual ways, not their classroom performance. It should be noted that some gifted students will not be high academic achievers for a variety of reasons. It is not reasonable to expect intellectually gifted students, artistically gifted students, and/or creatively gifted students, by virtue of having been granted one of those gifted eligibility rulings, to make all A's and B's.

TIME AND MAKE-UP PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS IN GIFTED/TALENTED PROGRAM:

It shall be the policy of this school district to comply with the guidelines of the Mississippi Department of Education for the Gifted/Talented program. Therefore, the following procedures will be utilized:

- A group of all intellectually gifted students is provided services by properly endorsed teacher in a self-contained room for a recommended 300 minutes per week, or a minimum of 240 minutes per week.
- The Mississippi Gifted Education Act of 1989 requires teachers of the gifted to provide a gifted program that meets the individual needs of the gifted students being served. The size of each class in grades 2-6 will be in the range of ~~4-9~~ 8-12 students. Once a class reaches 13 or more students, the integrity of the program could be negatively impacted.
- It is not recommended that elementary students be mixed with middle school students due to scheduling problems, unless this mixture is a result of a prearranged field trip for all students.
- If a daily grade is taken during that hour, a G is placed in the grade book. The student's grades are then averaged by the total number of grades actually taken. No penalty is given for having a G rather than a grade.
- When the regular classroom teacher introduces new materials while the student is in the Gifted/Talented class, the teacher will provide the student with the information in the form of a handout or by posting the page numbers covered in a designated place in the classroom.
- The Gifted/Talented student must accept the challenge of reviewing and learning the information given to him or her. The student must be responsible for checking the designated area for posted information or hand-out information. The student must learn this information independently as he or she will be responsible for mastery when the content is tested.

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- Gifted/Talented class is a required part of the student's academic day. Students may not be held in the regular class until work is completed. Students may not be held from the Gifted/Talented class as a punishment for behavior, incomplete assignments, etc.

HEARING PROCESS:

Parent(s) who are not in agreement with the school based committee decision to remove the student from the gifted program will present their concerns, orally or in writing, to the principal of the school. The principal and parent will attempt to resolve the matter informally. If the parent(s) is not satisfied with the action taken by the principal, the parent(s) shall, within five (5) school days after the meeting with the principal, put their concerns in writing and present them to the contact person for the gifted programming for the district. The gifted contact person will schedule a meeting of the District Local Survey Committee (LSC) within five (5) school days or a timeframe agreed upon by the parent(s). Parent(s) will be extended an invitation to attend the District LSC meeting. The District LSC will render a decision based on information shared during the meeting.

REINSTATEMENT PROCEDURES:

Students will be considered for reinstatement in the gifted program at the request of the parents and with the recommendation of the classroom teachers. Consideration and arrangements for reinstatement in the program will be made through the LSC, with parent(s) in attendance, and documented in the minutes. Parent's signatures on the minutes will provide documentation of parental permission to reinstatement of the student in the program.

GIFTED TEACHER UNITS:

The gifted education program is an add-on program funded by the state legislature through the Mississippi Adequate Education Program. Gifted teacher units in grades 2-6 shall be calculated as follows:

1. The first teacher unit shall be funded on the basis of a minimum of 20 identified and participating students.
2. The second gifted teacher unit shall be funded when there are 41 identified and participating students.
3. Additional gifted teacher units shall be funded based on the 40 + 1 formula.
4. The teacher serving fewer than 20 students, more than 60 students, or working less than full time in the gifted program shall be prorated.
5. No student may be counted more than once for the purpose of justifying funding of a gifted teacher unit.
6. The data entered into the Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) shall be the official numbers for the purposes of funding gifted teacher units.

NOTE: If funds are available for permissible programs in grades 7-8, the teacher unit funding formula shall be the same as it is for grades 2-6.

If funds are available for permissible programs in grades 9-12, gifted teacher units in grades 9-12 shall be funded as follows:

1. If a teacher serves at least 7 identified and participating students and no more than 14 identified and participating students, that class period shall be funded.
2. If a teacher serves fewer than 7 identified and participating students or more than 14

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identified and participating students, that class period shall be considered for prorated funding.

3. If a teacher serves at least 7 identified and participating students and no more than 14 students (some of whom are not identified), the class period shall be prorated based upon the percentage of identified students in the class.

ASSESSMENT TIME:

One teacher of the gifted may be assigned an average of one 60-minute period per day of assessment time to perform the duties related to referral, assessment, and LSC meetings. If the time is combined, it may not exceed one-half day per week. Additional teachers of the gifted may be assigned assessment time based upon the following formula:

- 1-300 gifted students district wide = 1 assessment teacher
- 301-600 gifted students district wide = 2 assessment teachers
- 601-900 gifted students district wide = 3 assessment teachers

Additional assessment time is earned on multiples of 300 + 1 gifted students.

GEP CONTACT PERSON:

The district superintendent shall appoint at least one, but no more than two GEP Contacts. These individuals are the link between the district and the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at the MDE. At least one of the GEP Contacts in the district shall hold a valid gifted endorsement. It is the responsibility of these individuals to keep the superintendent informed about the local gifted education program and all communications from the MDE regarding gifted education programs.

NON-COMPLIANCE:

Districts must comply with the requirements of the Mississippi Gifted Education Act of 1989 (MS Code 37-23-171 through 181), the requirements of the Mississippi Gifted Education Program Standards, the requirements of these gifted program regulations, and the requirements of the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards related to gifted education programs. If a district does not comply with the above requirements or fails to correct a problem identified during a program monitoring visit, the district accreditation status may be downgraded and state funds for the gifted program may be withheld until such time that compliance occurs. The hearing and appeals procedures related to accreditation are outlined in Accreditation Policy 6.0 as indicated in the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards.