



## **IDENTIFICATION AND PROGRAMING FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS**

### ***SECTION I BACKGROUND***

#### **A. PURPOSE**

To ensure the provision of appropriate services to identified gifted and talented students, as per N.J.A.C. 6A: 6-1.3 and P.L. 1975,c.212 (C.18A:7A-11).

#### **B. INTRODUCTION**

There have been many separate studies conducted that have demonstrated both the need for and the benefits of gifted education programs. Weymouth Township supports the documented benefits that occur for gifted students, and in addition the benefits that all children experience when gifted education strategies and programs are extended to other students, as well. The district recognizes and utilizes the resources available from the Renzulli Center for Creativity, Gifted Education, and Talent Development, at the University of Connecticut.

#### **C. THE GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM IN NEW JERSEY**

*New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:8-3.1* defines students who are gifted and talented as those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability in one or more content areas when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

### ***SECTION II SERVICES FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED***

#### **A. PROGRAMATIC IMPLICATIONS**

The provision of a variety of program options has been found beneficial for learners who are gifted and talented in this broader definition. Just as educational programs for the disabled optimally provide a continuum of services ranging from in-class support to placement in self-contained classes, such are the needs of gifted and talented students. Recognizing that not all people have the same interests and abilities, nor do all students learn in the same way, the goal of the Weymouth Township School is to nurture all of the varied human intelligences through a broad variety of program options. As per N.J.A.C. 6A: 8, the Weymouth Township School shall ensure that curriculum and instruction are designed in such a way that all students are able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified by the NJ Student Learning Standards and shall ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations are designed and delivered for all students.

Students enrolled in the Weymouth Township School will be identified by professionally qualified persons through the use of multiple criteria as having potential or demonstrated abilities and as having

evidence of high performance capabilities, which may include leadership, in one or more of the following areas:

- 1. General Intellectual Aptitude:** Students whose advanced aptitude or conceptual development is accelerated beyond their age peers as demonstrated by advanced skills, concepts, and creative expression in multiple general intellectual ability or in specific intellectual abilities.
- 2. Specific Academic Aptitude:** Students who have an aptitude in selected academic areas: mathematics, the sciences, and/or humanities as demonstrated by advanced skills, concepts, and creative expression in those areas.
- 3. Technical and Practical Arts Aptitude:** Students with specific aptitudes in selected technical or practical arts as demonstrated by advanced skills and creative expression in those areas to the extent that they need and can benefit from specifically planned educational services differentiated from those provided by the general program experience.
- 4. Visual or Performing Arts Aptitude:** Students with specific aptitudes in selected visual or performing arts as demonstrated by advanced skills and creative expression who excel consistently in the development of a product or performance in any of the visual or performing arts to the extent that they need and can benefit from specifically planned educational services differentiated from those provided by the general program experience.

As per N.J.A.C. 6A: 8 gifted education services are provided for Weymouth Township students in kindergarten through grade 8. Students identified as potentially gifted in kindergarten receive services in the regular classroom. Students identified as potentially gifted in an academic area in grades 1 through 3 in any of the four areas of aptitude are provided with appropriately differentiated instruction as determined by the classroom teacher. The instruction is classroom-based and is supported by a gifted education resource teacher. At the end of grade 3, students are identified formally in the category of aptitude.

## **B. SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT PROCEDURES**

### **1. IDENTIFICATION and SCREENING:**

- Aptitude/Achievement/ or local benchmarks
- Teacher nomination for SEM
- Survey of Interest

### **2. PLACEMENT:**

Students identified as gifted and talented in any of the four areas in grades 4-8 will have a ***SPECIFIC PROGRAM PLAN (SPP)*** developed that specifically outlines the instructional strategies or services necessary to optimize student learning. A copy of this **SPP** will be provided to the parents and all teachers that have contact with the student.

## C. RANGE OF SERVICES AND EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS

**1. OBJECTIVE:** In order to provide the most appropriate and optimal education for students exhibiting a variety of exceptional abilities and outstanding talents, a range of services and educational options must be available.

**2. PERSPECTIVE:** Educational services should be selected and implemented on the basis of the identified characteristics and needs of students identified by the district established criteria. Gifted and talented students should not be confined by age-level expectations in their learning progress. These students should be permitted to begin instruction earlier and advance at a faster pace.

**3. RATIONALE:** A comprehensive approach to facilitate the development of programming for gifted learners will uncover, encourage, and nurture their talents. Since there is no one best way to meet the needs of highly able students who may have very different talents and abilities, the following exemplary educational strategies for meeting the needs of advanced learners may be utilized:

- **School Wide Enrichment** – opportunities for students to self-nominate for participation in small-group pull-out study groups exploring a variety of topics
- **Flexible Pacing** -allowing students to advance as they master content and skills.
- **Acceleration** -allowing students to be placed at the level of a discipline that is appropriate to their talent and knowledge, which may include:
  - advanced placement** in a subject (without being assigned to a higher grade, the student is placed for part of the day with students at more advanced grade levels for one or more subjects);
  - curriculum compacting** (the student is given reduced amounts of introductory activities, drill, and review so that the time saved maybe used to move more quickly through the curriculum;
  - telescoping curriculum** (the student spends less time than usual in a course of study; e.g., completes a one-year course in one semester);
- **Enrichment** -giving students the opportunity to go deeper and wider into subject matter depending on their interest and motivation.
- **Instructional Strategies and Modification** -focusing on instructional techniques that are open-ended and that create multiple opportunities for students' expression of talents and abilities.
- **Curriculum Modification** -focusing on three variables: the content of the lesson, the process by which students are to learn, and the product the students are to produce.

- **Mentor Programs** -allowing students to pursue advanced-level investigations with a professional at the workplace.
- **Independent Study/Research Investigations** - providing students with opportunities to conduct a research investigation where they identify a real problem or question, use appropriate methodologies to conduct the research, and develop a product to communicate their findings to an authentic audience.
- **On-line Course Completion** – participation in a computer generated course/curriculum program.

### **C. PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Parents of elementary students receiving gifted services are kept informed about these services through a variety of methods, including newsletters, progress reports and the school web-site. Parents are always encouraged to volunteer or participate in the education of the gifted learners. Parents may contact the Gifted & Talented supervisor for questions, concerns or to file a complaint for noncompliance.

### **D. EVALUATING INSTRUCTIONAL RESULTS**

Various forms of assessment tools are used to evaluate the results of receiving instruction in the gifted program. These include standardized test results, portfolios, teacher/student rubrics, differentiated products, anecdotal records, administrative observation, as well as formal and informal teacher evaluations.