Tyrone Area SD

Gifted Education Plan Assurances (Chapter 16) | 2025 - 2028

Profile

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Gifted Education Plan Assurance

1. Describe your district's Child Find public notice procedures conducted annually to inform the public of the gifted education services AND programs offered (newspaper, student handbooks, school website, etc.).

In order to inform the public about the identification process and the continuum of gifted services to meet identified students' needs, we offer the following public notices: • A section on our district website under student services narratively describes the purpose and philosophy of gifted education, the use of differentiation, and the screening process. The Notice of Parental Rights is also provided. In 2022, the contact information for the district Coordinator of Gifted Education, the anecdote "Is it a Cheetah?" and a chart comparing the difference between the characteristics of a gifted student versus a high-achieving student was added. We have also posted the PDE Gifted Guidelines (2014 version) and the PDE FAQ about Gifted Services. • Each Year the budget is publicized, including a line item for gifted education. • We also annually publish information in our district publication, TyNotes, which goes out to every household in the district as a supplement to the local Newspaper. • Each year information about Chpt. 16, the district philosophy, and the purpose, identification, and services for gifted students is in each building's Student/Parent Handbook. This information is reviewed annually by the Coordinator of Gifted Services to maintain accuracy. • A letter is sent home to parents of 2nd grade students prior to the administration of the CogAt test, which the district uses as a Child Find measure.

2. Describe your district's screening process for locating students who are thought to be gifted and may need specially designed instruction. Use district specific details including the data sources used in the process as well as the titles for those staff who have an active role in screening. If the district uses a matrix/rubric, include the matrix in this section.

In Tyrone Area School District, students can be referred for potential gifted identification in three ways – by teacher/staff, by parent/guardian, or because of district testing. If a teacher/staff member or parent/guardian observes characteristics and/or academic/intellectual traits that lead them to believe a student may potentially be gifted, they can contact the Coordinator of Gifted Services (CGS), the child's teacher or school counselor, the building principal, the district's Special Education Director, and/or the district's School Psychologist. If they do not contact the GG? directly, the information from the referring party will be forwarded to the CGS. Results of district testing, including benchmarking, progress monitoring, classroom assessments, and diagnostics can also result in a student being referred for potential gifted identification. Assessment results are shared with the CGS at data team meetings held three times a year at the K-8th grade level. Additionally, each November the CogAt is used as a Child Find measure of all 2nd grade students. A committee comprised of the CGS, Special Education Director, School Psychologist, Elementary and Middle School Principals, and selected teachers review the results of that cognitive ability test (K-Bit2), along with all assessment data given at the beginning of the year through the mid-year point. Beginning, middle, and end of year assessments may include, but are not limited to: iReady diagnostic CDT Benchmarks, Direct Reading Assessment (for all K students and select students 1-4), DAZE, writing sample, phonological awareness and phonics screeners, letters/sounds/sight words, IXL screener, PSSA longitudinal scores, and reading and math series content specific unit tests, summative test average (in lieu of overall grade

in the class). Specific to potentially gifted students, the committee looks for students who are showing skills and knowledge beyond their grade level benchmarks, as well as students whose progress from beginning of the year assessments to mid-year assessments shows an ability to learn large amounts of material to a mastery level and at a pace that exceeds the grade level pacing. Depending on the data, students may be out-of-level tested in content areas to see how far beyond their grade level they are able to achieve. Once a referral of any kind is made, the CGS begins the district's process for identifying potentially gifted students. 1) If not already done as part of a data team review, all current and past data is collected on the student to review for the indicators described in the above paragraph. 2) Within 10 days of referral, the Coordinator of Gifted Services (CGS) contacts the parents to explain the screening and evaluation process, to provide general information about gifted services, and, f not referred by the parents, the reason for referral. If the parents referred their child, they are informed that their child will complete the entire process of screening and the CGS will contact them after the screening process to discuss the results of the screening. At that time, they have the option to rescind, in writing, their request for a full GMDE. 3) If the parents have not requested the referral and decline the student's participation, a waiver stating the reasons for the referral and the parent's decision to not move forward with the process is sent home for the parent's signature. 4) A parent input form is sent home to gather the parents' observations about developmental milestones, their concerns and goals for their child, and anecdotal information about their child's thinking. 5) A teacher input form is sent to every teacher who teaches the child. If the referral is prior to the first semester, the child's previous year content area teachers also receive a form. The form used is a Performance and Ability Indication Scale (adapted from Gifted Rating Scales by Pfeiffer and Jarosewich). This asks the teachers to rank the student as normed to the Top 1%, Top 10%, Top 25%, Top 50% of all the students they have taught in four areas: Intellectual, Academic, Motivation, and Affective. 6) The GCS meets with the student and explains the purpose of the testing to assuage any concerns the student may have before administering the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test - 2nd ed. (K-Bit2). If the student appears apprehensive, the administration is delayed until a parent can be contacted. 7) Once the KBIT2 has been given and scored, a committee meets to discuss all the data gathered about the student. The parents are notified by phone call or letter that the screening step has been completed and a summary of information gathered. Unless the request for evaluation is rescinded in writing, the School Psychologist will issue a Permission to Evaluate. 9) If the parent/guardian does not want to pursue the evaluation, the CGS contacts the parents to describe possible steps to meet the student's needs in the classroom (regardless of identification). 10) All steps of the process, and dates completed are tracked by the CGS. A note about equity of identification – because dfferent factors can mask giftedness, special consideration is given to the district's EL, minority, low socio-economic, and SPED population in regard to screening and identification. These populations may require testing accommodations, re-testing in the event appropriate accommodations were not provided at the time of district academic testing, classroom observation by the CGS, translated materials, multiple testing sessions, and/or any other provision necessary to get an accurate, unbiased look at the student's needs.

3. Describe your district specific process for determining ELIGIBILITY (through MULTIPLE CRITERIA) and NEED (based on ACADEMIC STRENGTH) for potentially mentally gifted students (EVALUATION). Use district specific details including the data sources used in

the process as well as the titles for those staff who have an active role in the evaluation process. If the district uses a matrix/rubric for evaluation that is different from the one described in Question 2, include the different matrix in this section.

Once the Permission to Evaluate is returned, the School Psychologist administers a comprehensive battery of assessments, including individual achievement and cognitive assessments, to assess students via nationally normed, standardized assessments. Our School Psychologist uses the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test | Fourth Edition (WIAT-4) and the WISC-V Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - Fifth Ed. She also uses the Gifted Rating Scales (standardized rating scales). Once the School Psychologist-administered assessments are complete, the School Psychologist contacts the participants of the Gifted Multi-Disciplinary Team to complete the Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE). This team include the School Psychologist, the CGS, a gifted support teacher, a regular teacher, and the parents/guardians. In Tyrone Area School District, much of the data that is part of the GMDE is collected during the screening step, as described in the above section. Additional input is received from parents and teachers, along with a review of records and the student's curriculum-based scores. The GMDT considers all parts of the GMDE and completes a Gifted Written Report to determine whether the student is gifted and in need of SDI. If the student is identified as gifted, the GIEP team writes the initial Gifted Individualized Educational Plan (GIEP), using academic strengths and instructional levels shown in the data collected to write goals. Once the GIEP has been drafted, reviewed, and accepted by all parties, a Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA) is signed and implemented within five days (if the meeting was in-person, otherwise within ten days).

4. Describe the gifted programs* that are offered to provide opportunities for acceleration, enrichment, or both. *The word "programs" refers to the CONTINUUM OF SERVICES, not one particular option. Describe what acceleration means and how it is applied in each of the grade spans (EL, MS,HS). Describe what enrichment means and how it is applied in EL,MS,HS. (i.e. there are 20 forms of acceleration- which ones are offered in the district and at which grade spans are they offered).

The TASD is committed to providing gifted education services that are designed and implemented in order for gifted students to demonstrate growth and progress. We believe that gifted programming must be integrated into the regular school program so that there is challenge throughout the school day, not just during a few hours a week. To best serve our gifted population, our district: • Provides an appropriately differentiated instructional program responsive to student ability and learning needs. • Assists students in achieving maximum use of potential to achieve personal success. • Provides a continuum of program service options. • Addresses the social and emotional needs of diverse gifted students. • Supports an educational environment that challenges gifted learners and enables students to perform at levels of excellence. • Facilitates the development of self-directed learners. Program Goals We believe that our best chance to provide instruction that challenges all students to perform at individual levels of excellence will come from cultivating the common ground between gifted education and general education. 1. To integrate gifted education into the total school program through service options that are flexible, dynamic, and inclusive. 2. To create a learning environment that values and nurtures intellectual ability, creativity, and decision making by providing an array of service options which supports individual growth at varying levels of abilities, needs, and interests. 3. To develop an

identification procedure using multiple criteria to appraise student need for differentiated services and the kind of services needed. 4. To provide a comprehensive staff development program to enable teachers to more appropriately serve the needs of advanced learners. 5. To involve parents and other community members in the effort to enrich and extend the learning opportunities for advanced learners inside and outside the school. 6. To differentiate and enrich the core curriculum to challenge the advanced learner. We endorse the following working definition of differentiation (Carol Tomlinson, 1995): "...consistently using a variety of instructional approaches to modify content, process, and/or products in response to learning readiness and interest of academically diverse students." 7. To provide opportunities for acceleration to allow high ability students to move through material at the pace appropriate for their abilities. 8. To use flexible grouping options to give advanced learners peer support and chances to work together without separating them from the rest of their classmates. 9. To progress-monitor student growth as a means of both student and district accountability. 10. To encourage collaboration among teachers in the same and different schools through flexible schedules, staff development, and administrative support. The Tyrone Area School District Gifted Program is based on the following tenets: • Students should be enrolled in rigorous courses that reflect authentic and genuine advancement. • Students should be active, thinking participants in the world around them. • Students should be exposed to ideas that challenge and affirm their own beliefs. • Students should engage in thinking and activities at a level that challenges and expands their limits. • Because most gifted students come equipped with the tools to fluently read, write, and speak the materials they encounter, the pursuit of these activities must be engaging, while encouraging higher order thinking and value judgments. • Coursework and activities should focus mainly on the upper levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, while always reinforcing and assessing the basics. • Learning activities should reach across curricula and subject areas to allow students to make meaningful connections in their learning. • Students should encounter a wide range of reading, writing, and speaking activities similar to those they will encounter after high school. • Classes should be taught in an environment that encourages expression, creativity, discussion, and debate. All students who are identified as gifted are assigned to a gifted support case manager. This professional educator is trained by the CGS, attends state-approved trainings at our Intermediate Unit (or others, if not offered at ours), and attends the Gifted Network meetings at our IU when possible. The gifted support teacher is responsible for working with GIEP team to annually (and as needed) review and revise GIEP, collaborate with regular education teacher(s), arrange career exploration (High School) with local businesses, and be an advocate for the students' needs. At all grade levels, GIEP goals are written to the PA standards at the students' instructional levels, with measurable progress objectives. Gifted services are all integrated into a student's classes/coursework and school day, unless the GIEP team determines that pull-out enrichment is necessary to meet the student's needs (this is rare). In grades K-6, all gifted students are cluster-grouped for content area classes with students who are either identified as being gifted with strengths in that area or non-identified peers who demonstrate significant strengths, similar retention and acquisition rates, and high motivation to learn. Within those classes and groups, students are taught skills, concepts, and knowledge that is aligned to the same learning outcome as other groups but at a higher grade level or standard. Beyond this differentiation, gifted students' Specially Designed Instruction is individualized to the student. Examples of SDI previously used with students include

unit/skill/topic pre-testing to compact curriculum, blended learning, or independent/paired inquiry-based learning projects to allow a student to dive deeper into a topic or skill when they can demonstrate skills/knowledge at their instructional level, individualized direct instruction specific to gaps resulting from acceleration, and reduction of practice when mastery is demonstrated. In grades 7-12, gifted students are served much the same as in grades K-6, with the primary differences being the career exploration (beyond the state-required artifact completion), and focused long-term schedule mapping to ensure time in the late high school years is available for Dual Enrollment (DE), Concurrent Enrollment (CE), and online advanced coursework. The GIEP is not written to dictate curriculum or scope and sequence options, as Honors, DE, CE, and online advanced coursework are available to all students. Neither does the GIEP team overrule requirements to permit a gifted student to be scheduled into a course they have not met the requirements for; however, if a gifted student is not demonstrating expected academic performance and/or motivation, the GIEP team explores root causes and may refer the student for intervening services. Regardless of placement in any particular course, differentiation, acceleration, and enrichment through SDI continue similarly to the K-6 grade.

5. Look at the district's most recent PIMS October 1 snapshot in field 80. How many students are identified in each area GY (gifted with or without a 504 and receiving services on a GIEP); GS (dually exceptional/twice exceptional and receiving services through an IDEA IEP); GX (gifted and does not require specially designed instruction). Provide the numbers for each category in PIMS. Are all the district's gifted students accounted for in PIMS. If not, how are they different and how will you address the discrepancy?

GY: 5 GS: 1 GX: 0 All of our gifted students are accounted in these figures.

6. Review the district data for gifted identification proportionality. Is the district identification proportionately reaching the underrepresented populations? If the answer is yes, how did you address the issue. If the answer is no, how will you address the issue.

Over 50% of our students qualify for free/reduced lunch, but two of our identified gifted students are part of that population. Our percentage of students who are classified as minority is negligible, so the fact that none of our gifted students are minority is not disproportionate. Our screening process is thorough and comprehensive, using unbiased, standardized data, a Child-Find test, and input from parents and teachers.

7. 22 Pa. Code § 16.5 (related to personnel) requires that a school district and intermediate unit shall provide, under section 1205.1 of the School Code (24 P.S. § 12-1205.1), in-service training for gifted and regular teachers, principals, administrators, and support staff persons responsible for gifted education. Describe how the district is addressing this mandate, including information related to how and when general education teachers are trained and held accountable for delivering gifted services.

Each year, the Coordinator of Gifted Services determines the focus of PD for staff based on observation, referral, survey, and gifted goal progress data. Typically the training takes place in February or March, with specific training at the beginning of the year for teachers who are working directly with gifted students. Our on-going and greatest need for PD has been how to differentiate instruction for gifted students. We

have used micro-courses, live presentations, and book studies to provide information about how to differentiate. As part of goal progress monitoring, the gifted support educator and the Coordinator of Gifted Services use assessment data, observation, input from parents and the student, and a progress monitoring template every six-nine weeks.

Training for general education teachers	0
Staff costs	$8,000
Training for gifted support staff	$150
Materials used for project-based learning	$0
Transportation	$0
Field Trips	$0

Signatures and Quality Assurance

Chief School Administrator	Date
Leslie A Estep	2025-03-13