



**TROUP COUNTY  
SCHOOL SYSTEM**

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**2025-2026**

**Resource Manual for  
Gifted Education Services**

## Foreword

Georgia has a long history of serving intellectually and creatively gifted students, beginning in the 1950s under the direction of Ms. Margaret Bynum. Ms. Bynum's leadership led the way for Georgia to become the first state to pass legislation requiring all public-school systems in the state to offer programs for gifted students. In 1994 and 1995, legislative and rule-making initiatives led to the adoption of Georgia's multi-criteria rule for the identification of gifted students. The multiple criteria approach enables districts to assess students in the four categories of mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. Using this approach allows local districts to look at students' strengths and interests when they are determining the students' educational needs. These procedures offer local school districts the opportunity to identify a diverse group of talented students for gifted education programs and services. Gifted education programs can both extend and accelerate the pace and depth of the Georgia approved standards. Our Gifted Education and Advanced Academics team seeks to serve and support; communicate and collaborate; plus engage and connect with our stakeholders to better meet the needs of our gifted and advanced students.

This *Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services* is a companion document to [State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS](#) adopted by the State Board of Education on May 10, 2012. The guidelines included in this manual provide assistance to local boards of education, local school districts, administrators, and teachers. Moreover, parents and other interested parties can use the manual as a guide to gifted education in Georgia. This guidelines document is frequently updated and should be viewed as a "living" document.

Please review the Georgia Department of Education [website](#) or the Troup County School System [website](#) for additional information about gifted education. If persons using the TCSS website have questions, please contact Jana Austin, Educational Enhancement Curriculum Specialist, at (706) 812-7900.

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## Purpose Statements

### **Purpose of Gifted Education**

- To maximize intellectual, academic and/or creative abilities in students who demonstrate these qualities at a high degree
- To impact performance at a level commensurate with their capabilities on classwork and assessments through rigorous specialized instruction and/or ancillary services

### **Purpose of Advanced Placement**

- To develop critical thinking and study skills through rigorous instruction and evaluation of advanced content while helping students earn college credit for highly selective post-secondary institutions through success on AP exams

### **Purpose of International Baccalaureate**

- To develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect

## Definitions

- (a) **Differentiated Curriculum** - courses of study in which the content, teaching strategies, and expectations of student mastery have been adjusted to be appropriate for gifted students
- (b) **Full-time Equivalent (FTE)** - a method of accounting for students in schools for funding purposes
- (c) **Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE)** – the agency charged with the fiscal and administrative management of certain aspects of K-12 public education including the implementation of federal and state mandates
- (d) **Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC)** - sets and applies guidelines for the preparation, certification, and continued licensing of public educators
- (e) **Gifted Student** - a student who meets the eligibility criteria as identified in this rule and as defined in the GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services
- (f) **Gifted Rating Scale (GRS)** - A comprehensive tool that, in conjunction with other sources of information, aids in the identification of gifted and talented individuals
- (g) **Local Board of Education (LBOE)** – agency charged with adopting policies to govern educational entities within the local educational agency
- (h) **Local Educational Agency (LEA)** – local school system pursuant to LBOE control and management
- (i) **Panel of Qualified Evaluators** - experts in relevant fields appointed by the LEA who evaluate student products/performances to determine gifted program eligibility
- (j) **Qualified Psychological Examiner** - a psychologist licensed by a state licensing board in the United States and having training and experience in school psychology or child psychology
- (k) **State Board of Education (SBOE)** – the constitutional authority which defines education policy for public K-12 education agencies in Georgia
- (l) **Troup County School System (TCSS)** - public school district in Troup County, Georgia which serves the communities of Hogansville, LaGrange, and West Point

## Requirements

(a) **Notification.** The LEA shall notify parents and guardians of identified gifted students being considered to receive gifted education services in writing of information related to the gifted education program including, but not limited to the following:

1. Referral procedures and eligibility requirements adopted and applied by the LEA
2. Notification of initial consideration for gifted education services
3. Evaluation guidelines and documentation of training procedures utilized and maintained by the LEA
4. The type(s) of gifted services to be provided, academic standards to be met, the teaching methods employed, and the manner in which students will be evaluated annually
5. Performance standards gifted students are to meet to maintain their eligibility and receive continued services in the program
6. A description of the probationary period applied to students in jeopardy of losing their eligibility for services. The description shall include the length of the probationary period and the criteria.
7. Termination of services when students on probation have failed to meet criteria for continuation of services

(b) **Referrals.** The consideration for gifted education services may be reported or automatic as defined in the *GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

1. **Reported Referral.** A student may be referred for consideration for gifted education services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities.
2. **Automatic Referral.** Students who score at specified levels on a norm-referenced test as defined in the *GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*, for further assessment to determine eligibility for gifted program services.

i. The LBOE shall establish the criterion score needed on norm-referenced tests for automatic consideration for further eligibility assessment.

ii. The LBOE shall ensure that tests or procedures used in the referral process and to determine eligibility for gifted education services meet standards of validity and reliability for the purpose of identifying gifted students and shall be non-discriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex.

(c) **Consent.** The LEA shall obtain written consent for testing from parents or guardians of students who are being considered for referral for gifted education services. The LEA shall obtain written consent from parents or guardians before providing gifted education services to students determined to be eligible for services.

(d) **Eligibility.** The LBOE shall adopt eligibility criteria that are consistent with this rule and as defined in the *GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

1. To be eligible for gifted education services, a student must either (a) score at the 99th percentile (for grades K-2) or the 96th percentile (for grades 3-12) on the composite or full scale score of a norm-referenced test of mental ability and meet one of the achievement criteria described in paragraph (2)(d) 5.(ii) Achievement (for Option A), or (b) qualify through a multiple-criteria assessment process by meeting the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation (Option B).

2. To be eligible for gifted education services (for Option B), a student must meet the qualifying score on at least one nationally norm-referenced test and must have qualified in two other categories by either assessment, observational data collected on his/her performance or production of a superior product(s) as described below. Information shall be collected in each of the four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation.

3. Test scores used to establish eligibility shall have been administered within the past two calendar years.

4. Any data used in one area to establish a student's eligibility shall not be used in any other data category.

5. Data shall be used for eligibility in the four areas according to the following:

i. **Mental Ability.** For Option A, students in grades K-2 shall score at the 99th percentile on a composite or full-scale score, and students in grades 3-12 shall score at or above the 96th percentile on a composite or full-scale score on a norm-referenced test of mental ability. For Option B, students in grades K-12 shall score at or above the 96th percentile on a composite or full-scale score or appropriate score, as defined in the approved list of assessments, on a norm-referenced test of mental ability.

a. Mental ability tests shall be the most current editions, or editions approved by GaDOE, of published tests that measure intelligence or cognitive ability, which have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.

b. Mental ability tests that were designed to be administered individually shall be administered by a qualified psychological examiner.

ii. **Achievement.** Students shall score at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery, total math or total reading section(s) of a norm-referenced achievement test or have produced a superior student-generated product or performance, where the superior performance is one that can be translated into a numerical score at or above 90 on a 100-point scale as evaluated by a panel of qualified evaluators.

a. Norm-referenced achievement tests shall be the most current editions of tests, or editions approved by GaDOE, that measure reading skills, including comprehension, and shall yield a total reading score and/or a total mathematics score based upon a combination of scores in mathematics concepts and applications. These tests shall have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.

b. Performances and products shall be assessed by a panel of qualified evaluators and must have been produced within the two calendar years prior to evaluation.

iii. **Creativity.** Students shall score at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery score of a norm-referenced test of creative thinking, receive a score at or above the 90th percentile on a standardized creativity characteristics rating scale, or receive from a panel of qualified evaluators a score at or above 90 on a 100-point scale on a structured observation/evaluation of creative products and/or performances.

a. Norm-referenced tests of creative thinking shall be the most current editions of tests, or editions approved by GaDOE, that provide scores of fluency, originality, and elaboration. These tests shall have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10- year period prior to administration.

b. Rating scales used to qualify creativity shall differentiate levels such that judgments may equate to the 90th percentile. If a rating scale is used to evaluate creativity, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate motivation.

c. As evidence of creativity, students, or individuals on behalf of students, may submit products or evidence of outstanding performances completed during the two calendar years prior to evaluation. The products or performances submitted shall be reviewed by a panel of qualified evaluators.

iv. **Motivation.** Students shall receive a score at or above the 90th percentile on a standardized motivational characteristics rating scale, receive from a panel of qualified evaluators a score at or above 90 on a 100 point scale on a structured observation or evaluation of student-generated products and/or performances, or for grades 6-12 have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 89 on a 4.0 scale where a 4.0 = A and 3.0 = B, or a numeric grade point average (NGA) of 90 percent on a 100 point scale where 100 = A and 89 = B. Grades used to determine the GPA or NGA must be a two-year average of regular school program core subject grades in mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, science, and full year world languages.

a. Rating scales used to qualify student motivation shall differentiate levels such that judgments may equate to the 90th percentile. If a

rating scale is used to evaluate motivation, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate creativity.

b. As evidence of motivation, students, or individuals on behalf of students, may submit products or evidence of outstanding performances made during the two calendar years prior to evaluation. The products, performances, or structured observations submitted shall be reviewed by a panel of qualified evaluators.

c. GPAs of students are determined by calculating the grades earned during the two years prior to evaluation in the subjects of mathematics, science, English/language arts, social studies, and full year world language, if such language study is included in the student's records.

6. Assessment data that were gathered and analyzed by a source outside the student's school or LEA shall be considered as part of the referral and evaluation process. External evaluation data shall not be substituted for or used as the sole source of data the school generates during the initial eligibility process. External evaluations shall have been reviewed for bias with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background.

**(e) Continued Participation.** The LBOE shall have a continuation policy for students identified as eligible for gifted services to continue to receive such services. The LEA shall review the progress of each student receiving gifted education services each year. Any student who receives gifted education services shall continue to receive services, provided the student demonstrates satisfactory performance in gifted education classes, as described in the LBOE continuation policy and stated in the continuation policy.

1. The LBOE continuation policy shall include a probationary period in which a student who fails to maintain satisfactory performance in gifted education classes shall continue to receive gifted education services while attempting to achieve satisfactory performance status. The length of this probationary period shall be determined by the LBOE.

2. The LBOE continuation policy shall provide for a final review prior to discontinuing gifted education services for students who fail to demonstrate satisfactory performance in gifted education classes during the probationary period and criteria for resuming gifted education services for such students.

(f) **Reciprocity.** Any student who meets the initial eligibility criteria in this rule for gifted education services in one LEA shall be considered eligible to receive gifted education services in any LEA within the state. For further details, please see page 45 of the *GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

(g) **Curriculum and Services to Be Provided.**

1. The LBOE shall develop curricula for gifted students that incorporate SBOE approved curriculum. LBOE curricula for gifted students shall focus on developing cognitive learning, research and reference, and metacognitive skills at each grade grouping, using principles of differentiation, in one or more of the following content areas: mathematics, science, English/language arts, social studies, world languages, fine arts, and career, technical and agricultural education. LEAs shall make available to the public and the GaDOE a description of the differentiated curricula used for instruction of gifted students. The LEA shall review and revise, if revisions are needed, its curricula for gifted students at least annually.

2. Students identified as gifted and whose participation has received parental consent shall receive at least five segments per week (or the yearly equivalent) of gifted education services, using one of the approved models described in the *GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

(h) **Data Collection.**

1. The LBOE shall collect and maintain statistical data on the number of students referred for evaluation of eligibility for gifted education services, the number of students determined eligible for services, and the number of students actually served during the school year. These data shall be archived and maintained by subgroups, which shall include at least the grade level, gender, and ethnic group of the students.

2. The LEA shall evaluate its gifted program at least every three years using criteria established by GaDOE.

(i) **Public Review.** The LBOE shall make available for review by the public and by GaDOE a copy of its administrative procedures for the operation of its gifted education program and the LEA's gifted education curricula.

# Gifted Education Eligibility Chart



Educating Georgia's Future

Rule 160-4-2-.38 Education Programs for Gifted Students Evaluation and Eligibility Chart		
SECTION III GIFTED EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY CHART		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In option A and B, information shall be gathered in each of the four categories.</li> <li>At least one of the criteria must be met by a score on a GaDOE approved nationally normed-referenced test.</li> <li>Any data used to establish eligibility in one category shall not be used to establish eligibility in another category.</li> <li>If a rating scale is used to evaluate creativity, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate motivation. If a rating scale is used to evaluate motivation, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate creativity.</li> <li>Any piece of information used to establish eligibility shall be current within two years.</li> <li>Local school systems must establish policies regarding the use of data gathered and analyzed by private entities.</li> </ul>		
Category	Option A	Option B
	<b>Student must have a qualifying score in the mental ability AND achievement categories.</b>	<b>Student must qualify in <u>three of the four</u> categories.</b>
<b>Mental Ability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grades K-2 <math>\geq 99^{\text{th}}</math> percentile composite score on a nationally age normed mental ability test</li> <li>Grades 3-12 <math>\geq 96^{\text{th}}</math> percentile composite score on a nationally age normed mental ability test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grades K-12 <math>\geq 96^{\text{th}}</math> percentile composite OR appropriate component score on a nationally age normed mental ability tests</li> </ul>
<b>Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grades K-12 <math>\geq 90^{\text{th}}</math> percentile Total Reading, Total Math, or Complete Battery on a nationally normed achievement test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grades K-12 <math>\geq 90^{\text{th}}</math> percentile Total Reading, Total Math, or Complete Battery on a nationally normed achievement test</li> <li>Grades K-12 Superior product/performance with a score <math>\geq 90</math> on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators</li> </ul>
<b>Creativity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation data required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grades K-12 <math>\geq 90^{\text{th}}</math> percentile on composite score on a nationally normed creativity test</li> <li>Grades K-12 Rating scales used to qualify student creativity must equate to the <math>90^{\text{th}}</math> percentile</li> <li>Grades K-12 Superior product/performance with a score <math>\geq 90</math> on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators</li> </ul>
<b>Motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation data required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grades 6-12 Two-year average of a 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale in regular core subject of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, science, and full year world languages. (See pg. 32-33 for additional information)</li> <li>Grades K-12 Rating scales used to qualify student motivation must equate to the <math>90^{\text{th}}</math> percentile</li> <li>Grades K-12 Superior product/performance/structured observation with a score <math>\geq 90</math> on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators</li> </ul>

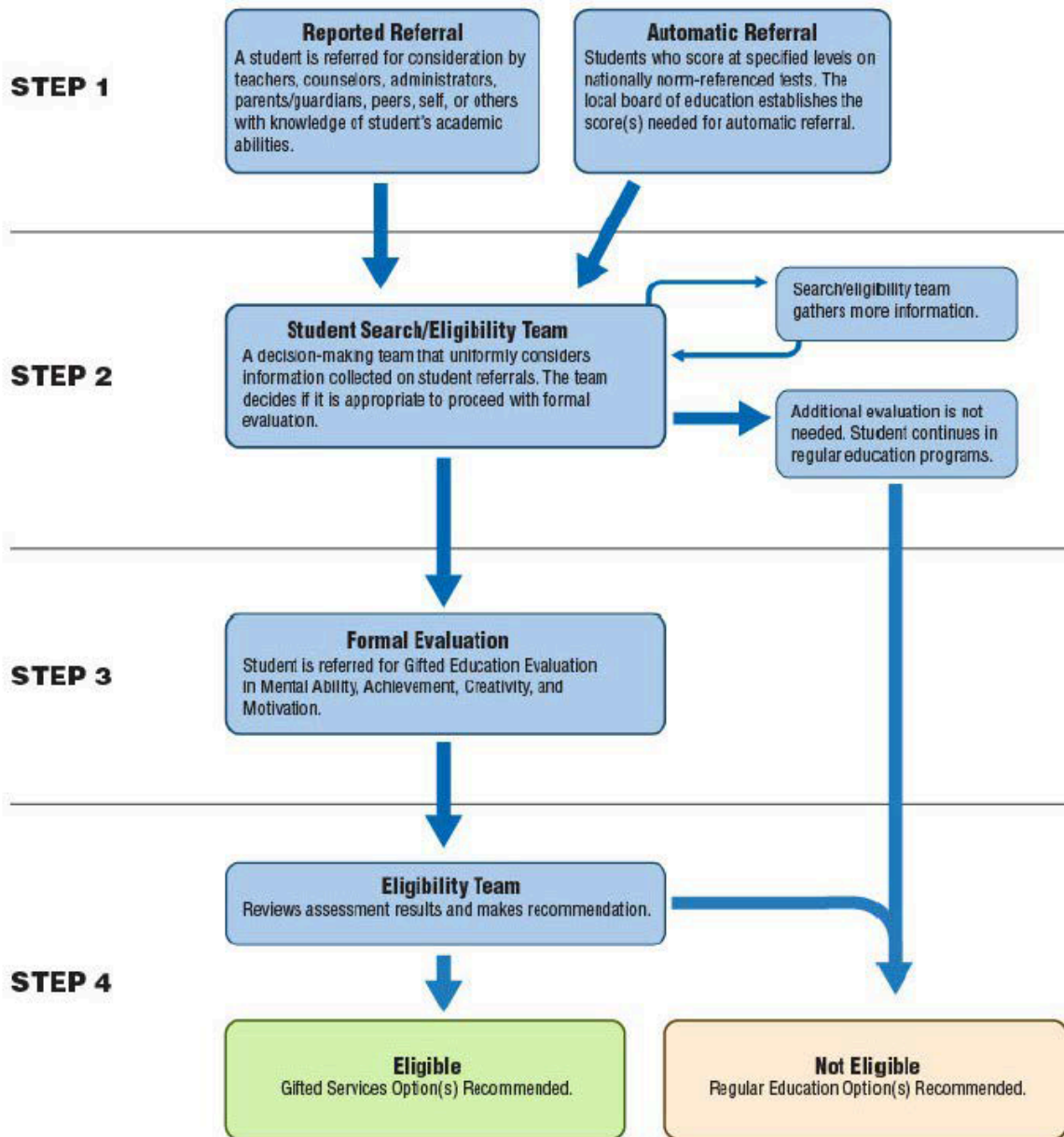
Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent

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## Referral and Eligibility Process

# Referral and Eligibility Process Chart



For more information on Creating a Thorough Gifted Education Eligibility Process, please see page 15 of the *GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

## Gifted Education Service Delivery Models

Students identified as gifted whose participation has received parental consent must receive at least five segments per week (or the yearly equivalent) of gifted education services using one of the following GaDOE-approved models. The LEA will make a description of the differentiated curricula and delivery models used for instruction of gifted students available to the public and the GaDOE upon request. In forming classes, schools need to adhere to federal laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background.

A differentiated curriculum is defined as courses of study in which the content, teaching strategies, and expectations of student mastery have been adjusted to be appropriate for gifted students. In the delivery models described below, the instruction must be based on the Georgia curriculum standards. These regulations also describe the requirements that must be met in order to count the instructional segments provided by any of these models at the gifted weight in full time equivalency (FTE) reporting. In the event that regular school operation is interrupted, all models can be utilized virtually. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) requires that gifted education teachers have a gifted education endorsement attached to their Georgia Teaching Certificate or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program. Best practice would be for the teacher to apply for an N3T or I3T certificate while the teacher is working on the gifted endorsement program. Unless noted otherwise, the total class size is specified by the SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.08.

### Direct Services

#### Resource Class (K-12)

1. All students must have been identified as gifted by SBOE criteria.
2. The curriculum must have an academic content foundation based on the Georgia curriculum standards, but it should focus on interdisciplinary enrichment activities and not any one content area.
3. The content and pacing should be differentiated to the degree that the activities are clearly not appropriate for more typical students at that grade level.
4. Gifted students may receive no more than ten gifted FTE segments per week of resource class service.

5. To earn FTE gifted funding, the teacher must
  - have completed content-area GaPSC-approved certification **and**
  - have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program.

### **Advanced Content (K-12)**

1. Students are homogeneously grouped based on achievement and interests in any content area: ELA, math, science, social studies, world languages, fine arts, computer science, and .0 Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education-CTAE courses.
2. The district may elect to include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area.
3. The local district must establish criteria and guidelines that identify gifted and regular education students who will be successful in advanced content classes.
4. The LBOE must maintain a description of the course curriculum which very clearly shows how the advanced course content, teaching strategies, pacing, process skills, and assessments differ from courses more typical for students at that grade level.
5. Identified gifted students in the advanced content course may be counted at the gifted FTE weight. Students who are not identified as gifted must be counted at the regular education FTE weight.
6. Gifted students may receive no more than two gifted FTE segments per day of advanced content services in the same content area.
7. Gifted Honors (6-12), Cambridge Middle School, IB Middle Years Programme (IBMYP), and Pre-AP Courses to earn FTE gifted funding must have:
  - The teacher must have the appropriate content-area GaPSC-approved certificate in the specific honors course.
  - The teacher has a current GaPSC-issued gifted endorsement **or** is actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program.
  - The Cambridge, IB, or Pre-AP teacher must complete the appropriate professional development courses required by Cambridge, College Board, or IB.

8. Gifted FTE segment(s) may not be earned in the advanced content service model if a gifted student is already receiving a cluster or collaborative gifted FTE segment in the same content area. For example, a student could not earn a gifted FTE segment in advanced content mathematics and earn a gifted FTE segment in the cluster or collaboration model in mathematics.

9. To earn FTE gifted funding, the teacher must

- Have completed content-area GaPSC-approved certification **and**
- Have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program.

### **Advanced Content Classes: Grades 9-12 Advanced Placement (AP) course, International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, and Cambridge courses**

Students are homogeneously grouped based on achievement and interests in any content area: ELA, math, science, social studies, world languages, fine arts, computer science, and .O Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education-CTAE. The district may elect to include students who are not identified as gifted but who have demonstrated exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area.

1. The LBOE must maintain a description of the course curriculum, which is based on the College Board, the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework, or the Cambridge framework. These frameworks very clearly show how the AP, IB, and Cambridge advanced course content, teaching strategies, pacing skills, and assessments differ from the courses more typical for students at that grade level.

2. The total class size specified by the SBOE is 21 at the high school level.

3. In order to count the gifted students in grades 9-12 in AP, IB, and/or Cambridge courses at the gifted FTE weight, the teacher must have the following qualifications:

i. Advanced Placement (AP) Courses:

a. Content teacher with appropriate content-area GaPSC-approved certification **AND** one of the following:

- The teacher has a current GaPSC-issued gifted endorsement/certification **or** is actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program **OR**

- The teacher has completed the appropriate Advanced Placement Summer Institute (APSI) training endorsed by the College Board for that specific AP course and has completed a 10-hour clock gifted professional development course in nature and needs of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted learners

ii. International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Courses or Cambridge high school courses:

- a. Content teacher with appropriate content-area GaPSC-approved certification AND one of the following:
  - The teacher has a current GaPSC-issued gifted endorsement certification **or** is actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program **OR**
  - The teacher has completed the appropriate training endorsed by IB for that specific IB course or by Cambridge for that specific Cambridge course and has completed a 10-hour gifted professional development course in nature and needs of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted learners.

### Cluster Grouping (K-12)

Identified gifted students are placed as a group (recommended 6-8 students) into an otherwise heterogeneous classroom rather than being dispersed among all the rooms/courses at that grade level.

1. To earn FTE gifted funding, the teacher must

- have completed content-area GaPSC-approved certification **and**
- have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement **or** be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program.

2. A maximum of two gifted FTE segments per day may be counted at the gifted weight. The teacher must document the curriculum differentiation for the gifted student(s) by completing individual or group contracts which include the following requirements:

- A description of the course curriculum which is based on Georgia standards that very clearly shows how the advanced course content, teaching strategies,

pacing, process skills, and assessments differ from courses more typical for student(s) at that grade level

- Dates and amount of time (in segments) the student(s) will be engaged in the higher-level activities and how the students will be evaluated (formative and summative)

3. The superintendent must sign assurances that this model has been used appropriately and that the proper documentation has been collected and evaluated for its effectiveness.

### **Innovative Models**

GaDOE encourages the development of innovative programs for gifted students which are clearly in accordance with the needs of the gifted learners and the philosophy of the district. To earn gifted FTE funding for this model, the gifted education teacher for the innovative model must have an appropriate GaPSC-approved certification and a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively participating/enrolled in a gifted endorsement program.

School districts implementing a gifted program delivery model other than one of the models described above need to keep on file a plan that clearly describes the rationale for the special model, the goals and objectives for the program, the advanced nature of the curriculum which will be provided to gifted learners, how the model's effectiveness will be evaluated, how gifted FTE funding will be generated and documented, and the anticipated fiscal impact of the model (i.e., how many FTEs will be generated).

1. To ensure appropriate development of the innovative programs for gifted students, school districts may contact the Gifted Education and Advanced Academics unit for guidance.

2. For the FY26 school year and following years, the Innovative model plans must be submitted by April 15th of the previous school year, in essence in the spring (April 15th) before the new school year starts.

3. The Gifted Education and Advanced Academics team may approve the submissions for one or two years of implementation. The request for the two-year implementation must be included in the initial submission.

4. On September 1st of each school year, the superintendent must sign assurances that this model is being used appropriately, and that the proper documentation is being collected and evaluated for its effectiveness.

## Indirect Services

### Collaborative Teaching (K-12)

Starting the 2024-2025 school year, a maximum of 10 identified gifted students are placed as a group in an otherwise heterogeneous classroom. Direct instruction is provided by the students' regular classroom teacher who collaborates with a designated gifted education teacher. Substantial, regularly scheduled collaborative planning must exist between the regular classroom teacher and the gifted education teacher. The following requirements must be met to earn the gifted FTE weight:

1. The regular education teacher may only be in this collaborative gifted service delivery model for a maximum of two years.

- During the two-year cycle, the regular education teacher should complete their gifted endorsements or for the high school regular education teachers, they should have APSI (Advanced Placement Summer Institute), IB, and/or Cambridge coursework plus 10- hour course requirements.
- If the endorsement or other requirements are not completed, then there will be no gifted service delivery model attached to his/her classes.

2. The collaborating gifted education teacher must have a clear renewable GaPSC-approved gifted education endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program.

- In grades 6-12, if the gifted endorsed teacher is working with regular education teachers, the gifted endorsed teacher should have certification in the same content area or similar content areas as the regular education teacher.
- Elementary gifted endorsed teachers should be certified in elementary education or appropriate certification.

3. The gifted endorsed teacher must observe in the regular education teacher's class where the gifted students are served through the collaborative model at least five times per semester for at least 20 minutes per observation. These observations will be documented and submitted to the gifted coordinator or designee.

4. The gifted education teacher, the regular classroom teacher, and the gifted student(s) (when appropriate) collaborate and document the development of differentiated instructional strategies, Georgia standards-based curriculum, and evaluation practices.

5. In certified personnel information, the regular education teacher is the teacher of record, and the gifted education program teacher is recorded in the consultative subject code. Content areas might include English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, .O CTAE (Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education), fine arts, and computer science.

6. The superintendent must sign assurances that this model has been used appropriately and that the proper documentation has been collected and evaluated for its effectiveness.

7. The collaborating regular classroom teacher and gifted education teacher must be provided adequate planning time which must be documented and approved by the LEA. The gifted education teacher must be given one full period each week or its monthly equivalent during which he/she has only gifted education collaborative planning responsibilities (as determined by the local system).

8. The total number of gifted students whose instruction may be modified through this collaborative approach may not exceed ten gifted students per class.

9. Instructional segments that have been modified for gifted learners may be counted at the gifted FTE weight if the gifted education teacher and regular education teacher document the curriculum modifications made by the gifted education teachers in the following ways:

- District developed documentation that shows the reason(s) why any student whose instruction is counted at the gifted FTE weight needs an advanced curriculum in that specific content area (e.g., national norm-referenced tests and/or benchmark tests),
- A time and discussion log of the collaborative planning sessions between the teachers, and
- Documentation in lesson plans and individual/small group learning contracts noting the differentiated learning experiences for the gifted student(s) and alternative instructional strategies utilized.

10. The gifted education collaborating teacher could have a maximum of nine gifted collaborative classes with a maximum of nine regular education teachers. Further, the maximum FTE segments per class should not exceed ten. A minimum of a full period for planning per class is required per week or the equivalent.

**Preparations for local level delivery models should be made for the planned discontinuation of the Collaborative Model in FY27 (June 30, 2026).**

### **Internship/Mentorship (9-12)**

Gifted students collaborate with a mentor to explore a profession of interest. The district may include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. The local district must establish criteria and guidelines that identify gifted and regular education students who will be successful in internship/mentorship classes.

- The gifted program internship teacher (gifted endorsed) assigned to supervise the internship/mentorship program maintains close contact with both the participating student(s) and the selected mentor(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals which are based on the approved Georgia standards-based curriculum. One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted FTE weight for gifted students participating in the internship/mentorship program.
- To earn gifted FTE funding for this model, the gifted education program internship teacher must have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program and be assigned to supervise the internship/mentorship program.
- Each internship/mentorship student must have a contract which documents the work to be completed, the learning goals for the student, the dates and amount of time the student will be participating in the internship/mentorship, how the student's learning will be assessed, and the responsibilities of the gifted program internship teacher and the mentor.
- This internship/mentorship is not intended or designed for the student to receive monetary compensation, but as an internship/mentorship designed for exploration into a profession of interest.

- To ensure adequate time for the gifted program internship teacher to monitor and assist students participating in internships/ mentorships, the teacher must be given one full period each day or its weekly equivalent during which the teacher has only gifted education internship/mentorship responsibilities (as determined by the local system) for every fifteen students for whom he/she is supervising the internship/mentorship experience.

### **Directed Study (9-12)**

Gifted students work under the direction of a gifted endorsed teacher to explore a challenge/subject of interest. Students participate in self-initiated, teacher-directed, and approved courses of study in an area of interest as described in a written contract which is based on curriculum standards, research, and planned presentations. Independent study encourages student autonomy in planning, research, and problem-solving.

The district may include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. The local district must establish criteria and guidelines that identify gifted and regular education students who will be successful in Directed Study classes.

The gifted education teacher assigned to supervise the Directed Study program maintains close contact with the participating student(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals which are based on the approved Georgia standards-based curriculum.

- One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted FTE weight for gifted students participating in the Directed Study program.
- To earn gifted FTE funding for this model, the gifted education program directed study teacher must have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program and be assigned to supervise the Directed Study.
- Each student in the directed study must have a contract which documents the work to be completed, the learning goals for the student, the dates and amount of time the student will be working on the directed study, how the student's learning will be assessed, and the responsibilities of the gifted education program directed study teacher and any other supporting teachers/staff working with the directed study.

- To ensure adequate time for the gifted program Directed Study teacher to monitor and assist students participating in the directed study, the teacher must be given one full period each day or its weekly equivalent during which the teacher has only gifted education directed responsibilities (as determined by the local system) for every 15 students for whom the teacher is supervising in the directed study.

### **Community Service Learning (9-12)**

Gifted students work under the direction of an endorsed gifted teacher to complete a project(s) with community service learning. The district may include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. The local district must establish criteria and guidelines that identify gifted and regular education students who will be successful in the Community Service Learning classes.

The gifted education teacher assigned to supervise the Community Service Learning program maintains close contact with the participating student(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals which are based on the approved Georgia standards-based curriculum.

- One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted FTE weight for gifted students participating in the gifted Community Service Learning program.
- To earn gifted FTE funding for this model, the gifted education program Community Service Learning teacher must have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively participating/enrolled in a gifted endorsement program and be assigned to supervise the community service learning.
- Each student in the Community Service Learning program must have a contract which documents the work to be completed, the learning goals for the student, the dates and amount of time the student will be working on the community service learning project, how the student's learning will be assessed, and the responsibilities of the gifted education program community service learning teacher and any other supporting teachers/staff working with the community service learning project.
- To ensure adequate time for the gifted education program Community Service Learning teacher to monitor and assist students participating in community service learning, the teacher must be given one full period each day or its weekly equivalent during which the teacher has only gifted education Community Service Learning

responsibilities (as determined by the local system) for every 15 students for whom he/she is supervising in the community service learning.

## Gifted Education Curriculum

Curricula for gifted education learners must incorporate the SBOE-approved standards. Local BOE curricula for gifted students focuses on developing cognitive learning, research and reference, and metacognitive skills at each grade grouping, using principles of differentiation.

Differentiated instruction is a teaching theory based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms (Tomlinson, 2011). The model of differentiated instruction requires teachers to be flexible in their approach to teaching and adjust the curriculum and presentation of information to learners rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum (Hall, 2011).

A differentiated curriculum for gifted learners includes the following expectations:

### Content

Complex and challenging subject matter that:

- Requires intellectual struggle
- Utilizes primary documents
- Integrates research skills and methods
- Incorporates relevant and real-life experiences
- Integrates interdisciplinary connections

### Process

Instructional strategies are designed to:

- Emphasize higher-order thinking, problem-solving and communications skills
- Foster self-initiated and self-directed learning
- Promote creative application of ideas
- Model and encourage academic discussion

### Product

Gifted student products should demonstrate a developmentally appropriate capacity for:

- Self-directed learning
- Meaningful collaboration
- Effective problem solving of challenging and complex issues
- Effective communication

## **Environmental**

Physical setting and work conditions to:

- Change the actual place where students work
- Allow flexible time
- Provide opportunities for independent study and in-depth research
- Provide opportunities for mentorship

## **Assessment**

Gifted learners need various methods and opportunities to document mastery of curriculum such as:

- Pre/post tests
- Self-assessment through rubrics
- Creation of goal-based checklists
- Conferencing, commentary, and qualitative feedback (Cobb, 2012)

## FTE and other Data Collection

FTE reporting refers to the state funding mechanism based on the student enrollment and the educational services that local school systems provide for the students. The base amount of money received for each FTE student is determined by the Georgia General Assembly. Refer to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161 for information concerning the Quality Based Education (QBE) formula. Gifted Education is one of nineteen categories of instruction funded through the state's Full-Time Equivalent Funding Formulas. A Full-Time Equivalent Student (FTE) is defined as six (6) segments of instruction. To view state FTE funding rates and levels go [here](#) and select a specific report.

Students who are served in an approved gifted education model are reported with the Gifted Education weight (PROGRAM CODE = "I") for each segment served on the FTE count day.

Gifted certification requirements to earn FTE funding at the gifted weight:

- Official gifted endorsement from the GaPSC
- Actively participating in a gifted endorsement program
- Completed appropriate content-area GaPSC-approved certification with the appropriate coursework. For example, Advanced Placement Summer Institute (APSI) training endorsed by the College Board for that specific AP course, or appropriate training endorsed by IB for that specific IB course, or appropriate training endorsed by Cambridge for that specific Cambridge course and has completed a 10-hour gifted professional course in nature and needs of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted learners (page 16-17 in the *2025-2026 Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*).

The school system may claim students for gifted weight who receive services on the day of the count only. Gifted students who are not provided with gifted program instruction on the day of the count must be reported according to the weight that indicates the actual services they receive on the FTE count day. For state-funded FTE earnings, the count dates are the first Tuesday in October and the first Thursday in March. The FTE count days provide a “picture” or “point in time snapshot” of the scheduled instructional services provided to students on that specific date.

Students who are referred during a school year, but who are not eligible for gifted services, need to be coded for the Student Records Collection that is transmitted in June. The students should have a gifted referral code (example: automatic, etc.) and the gifted eligibility code: “4. referred this school year, but not eligible.”

For federal cross functional monitoring, LEAs should have all documentation for the APSI, IB, and/or Cambridge high school training, plus the 10-hour gifted course in nature and needs of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted learners.

Per the Georgia Archives, the gifted and talented program selection and placement requirements for documentation are core documentation about the admission criteria and program requirements. Retention in permanent (LG-06-009 [https://www.georgiaarchives.org/records/local\\_government/schedules/51/P20](https://www.georgiaarchives.org/records/local_government/schedules/51/P20)).

**Please ensure that all CPI, student class, student records, and FTE data are accurate and supported by gifted documentation.**

#### CLASS SIZE

Source: Code: IEC 160-5-1-.08 – CLASS SIZE  
O.C.G.A. & 20-2-244 (H)

Gifted Education class sizes are established by the State Board of Education. The current funding ratio for gifted education is twelve. The maximum individual gifted education class sizes are listed below:

<u>GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM</u>	<u>MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE</u>
Elementary (K-5)	17
Middle School (6-8)	21
High School (9-12)	21

Note: Class size may be adjusted based on waivers included as a part of approved Charter System or Strategic Waiver System contracts. Be mindful that the expressed legislative intent of the additional gifted funding weight is to provide additional resources and lower student to teacher ratios directly for gifted students.

## Georgia Multi-Tiered System of Supports (GaMTSS) and Gifted Learner Guidance

Georgia Multi-Tiered System of Supports (GaMTSS) is a data-driven, multi-level prevention system designed to meet the needs of the whole child by implementing a continuum of tiered supports for academics, behavior and well-being. It emphasizes effective teaming and data-based decision making to foster a positive school climate that contributes to increased student success and overall district and school improvement.

GaMTSS is the integration of existing systems of tiered support within the state, including Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). This integrated approach recognizes that academics, behavior, and wellbeing are not separate, but rather interconnected and mutually influencing.

GaTSS is designed in context and delivered to meet the needs of all students, including gifted and high-ability learners. The authors of *Effective Universal Instruction* "argue that students who are at or above the 90th percentile in achievement have as much need for intensive differentiation as students who are at or below the 10th percentile" (p. 189).

Teams use data from universal screenings and other data sources to identify who is at risk and the degree to which support is needed for each student to progress and reach his/her potential. Instructional support in GaMTSS extends beyond providing interventions for at-risk students not meeting grade-level expectations to providing gifted and high ability learners the same structural and tiered support for enrichment and acceleration. Additionally, students needing enrichment, who have yet to be determined eligible for gifted services or who have not met eligibility requirements, can be challenged and participate in enriched learning opportunities immediately after universal screening.

Supports of increasing intensity are organized and operationalized within three tiers. The tiers represent support to students who display a need, not a step in a sequential process.

Teams use data from universal screenings and other data sources to identify who is at risk and the degree to which support is needed for each student to progress and reach his/her potential. Instructional support in GaTSS extends beyond providing interventions for at-risk students not meeting grade-level expectations to providing gifted and high ability learners the same structural and tiered support for enrichment and acceleration. Additionally, students needing enrichment, who have yet to be determined eligible for gifted services or who have not met eligibility requirements, can be challenged and participate in enriched learning opportunities immediately after universal screening.

Supports of increasing intensity are organized and operationalized within three tiers. The tiers represent support to students who display a need, not a step in a sequential process.

All students should have access to and benefit from Tier 1. The design of Tier 1 includes high-quality, schoolwide academic, behavior and wellbeing instruction, differentiated

instruction, and evidence-based supports. While there is not a one-size fits-all approach to address the needs of all gifted and high-ability learners, the advanced learning needs for most students can be addressed in the general education setting by considering:

- how students are grouped for instruction (i.e., cooperative learning groups, flexible instructional grouping, grouping strategies that allow for a like-ability learning cohort),
- how students are taught (e.g., accelerated pace, less practice and review, whole to-part concept teaching, problem-solving learning), and
- how the curriculum is differentiated (e.g., the content, process, product, environment, and assessment, tiered instruction and assignments for depth, complexity and higher-order thinking).

Tier 2 refers to targeted, supplemental intervention and support in addition to high quality core instruction.

For gifted and high-ability learners, Tier 2 instruction is systematic, explicit, and aligned with ongoing Tier 1 instruction—that is, it matches what is going on in the general classroom but takes learning to a more complex level. Tier 2 instructional interventions are typically delivered in small groups of students with similar strengths, interests, or needs. Instruction is based on the needs of individual students as determined by assessments and observation.

An increasingly intense level of instruction and support occurs at Tier 3 to address individual student needs. Gifted and high-ability learners, who require this level of enrichment and instructional support, are generally highly or exceptionally gifted students. This small percentage of students requires radical acceleration. Students whose academic and intellectual needs are not met at Tier 1 or Tier 2 require a curriculum that differs significantly in pace, level, complexity, and abstraction from age- level peers. Tier 3 instruction may take place in addition to Tier 1 instruction, or it may replace it entirely.

Gifted and high-ability learners, like all learners, require varying services and supports based on their shifting needs. They may need varying support at more than one tier of intervention to progress and reach their potential. As their needs shift, the intensity of support may increase or decrease. Movement within the tiers of support is fluid and supported by data from universal screeners, diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring, and how a student responds to one level of intervention. Needs can also differ among gifted and high-ability students based on their readiness for differentiated curriculum as well as support needed for behavioral growth and wellbeing.

Some gifted students are considered to be twice-exceptional, meaning they are gifted and talented while also having a disability such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), dyslexia, etc. They may need acceleration in one subject area; while also needing academic support in another subject area where they are not meeting grade-level expectations.

## **Instructional Options for Gifted and High-Ability Students**

The needs of gifted and high-ability students vary widely; therefore, an array of instructional supports should be available for all grade levels and content areas. Specific learning objectives are developed on a case-by-case basis. A continuum of supports at Tiers 1, 2 and 3 may include but are not limited to the following:

### **Acceleration (subject and whole grade)**

An individual student moves to a higher grade for instruction in one or more subject areas, or a student skips a grade level to move to a higher grade than one more typical for the student's age group.

### **Cross-Age Grouping/Multi-Age Grouping**

Students of different ages/grades are grouped together for instruction for all or part of the day.

### **Curriculum Compacting**

Curriculum a student has already mastered is eliminated. The student is then allowed to pursue alternative curriculum options.

### **Gifted Resource Classes/Enrichment Clusters**

Students are grouped according to achievement levels for instructional purposes. The instructional focus is on an interdisciplinary curriculum.

### **Graduated Rubrics**

The standard and level of student proficiency and accomplishments designed for students and teachers to measure learning outcomes are increased. Graduated rubrics offer clear expectations for quality and increasing levels of excellence to encourage optimum performance among high-ability learners.

### **Independent/Directed Study**

A student participates in a self-initiated, teacher-directed, and approved course of study in an area of interest as described in a written contract which is based on curriculum standards, research, and planned presentations. Independent study encourages student autonomy in planning, research, and problem-solving.

## **Internship/Mentorships**

A student collaborates with a mentor to explore a potential career choice. The internship/mentorship teacher maintains close contact with both the participating student and the selected mentor to ensure acceptable progress towards the student's individual career goals.

## **Interest Centers**

Centers placed within the classroom that link curriculum topics to areas of student talent and interest in depth and breadth.

## **Subject Grouping Within Class/Gifted Cluster Classes**

Students are grouped/clustered according to achievement, within a regular education classroom, for instruction in one or more subjects.

## **Subject Grouping across Teams/Classes**

Students are grouped according to achievement and go to a different classroom or team, within the same grade level, for instruction in one or more subjects.

## **Subject Advancement across Grades**

Students are grouped according to achievement, in a higher-grade level, for instruction in one or more subjects.

## **Tiered Assignments**

Assignments are designed to meet the varying ability levels of students.

## **Tiered Products**

Products are designed to meet the varying ability levels of the students

## **Modification Options for Gifted and High-Ability Students**

In a differentiated classroom, teachers differentiate **content, process, product, and assessments** according to a student's **readiness, interest, and learning profile**.

- **Content** -the State Board of Education-adopted standards that the student is expected to master and related support materials.
- **Process** - instructional strategies designed to ensure that students acquire a deep understanding of the curriculum standards.
- **Products** - vehicles through which students demonstrate and extend what they have learned.
- **Assessment**- formative and summative - on and/or off-grade-level monitoring to document a student's mastery of curriculum standards and learning levels.

- **Readiness** - a student's entry point relative to a particular understanding or skill.
- **Learning Profile** - how an individual student learns.

## Tiered Supports Options for the Gifted/High-Ability Learner

Students may need Tier 1 types of support for one content area and Tier 3 types of support for another.

Tier 1	Tier 2
Flexible-Learning Groups	Gifted Education Cluster Classes
Choice of Books	Gifted Education Collaboration Classes
Homework Options	Tiered Activities and Products
Use of Reading Buddies	Use of Literature Clubs
Various Journal Prompts	Multiple Testing Options
Student/Teacher Goal Setting	Multiple Texts
Varied Pacing with Anchor Options	Alternative Assessments
Options for Competition	Subject Advancement within Class
Flexible Seating	Curriculum Compacting
Varied Scaffolding	Advanced Centers/Stations
Varied Computer Programs	Spelling by Readiness
Design-a-Day	Varying Organizers
Varied Supplemental Materials	Community Mentorships
Stations/Centers	Simulations
Think-Pair-Share	Group Investigations
Open-ended Activities	Multiple Assessment Methods
Explorations by Interest	Student Choice in Learning Activities
Tier 3	
Advanced Content English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and/or Social Studies courses (Honors)	Above Grade Level Accelerated English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and/or Social Studies courses
Resource Classes	Advanced Placement Classes
Independent/Directed Study	International Baccalaureate Classes
Socratic Seminars	Cambridge Classes
Internship/Mentorships	Whole Grade Acceleration

## **Gifted Education Organizations**

**Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)**

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/>

**Georgia Association for Gifted Children (GAGC)**

<https://www.gagc.org/>

**National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)**

<https://www.nagc.org/>

**World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC)**

<https://world-gifted.org/>