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Advanced Studies/ TAG Department

Important Parent Information About Gifted Testing In Grades 6-12

Your child has been referred to the Talented and Gifted (TAG) Advocacy Council at your child's school for further evaluation. Enclosed you will find a form to read and consider. Please complete and sign the form and return the TAG teacher indicated within five school days of this information being sent home. We cannot evaluate your child until we receive your signed consent.

The information below explains the types of tests that may be given to students as a part of the TAG testing process. Please save this information, as it will help you understand scores when they are mailed home.

Testing will take place during the school day in the weeks following our receipt of your signed consent. Some students may need up to three days of testing, some may need only one day of testing, while others may not be pulled from classes at all. The appropriate tests to give each child are determined on a case-by-case basis in order to give each individual child as many opportunities as possible to demonstrate their strengths. In order to protect test security, students will be asked not to share with others the questions on the test.

These are not tests that a student can prepare for by studying. The best preparation you can provide is a good night of sleep, a good breakfast, and encouragement each and every school day. Please explain to your child that the tests do not determine anything other than whether he or she needs different kinds of learning experiences in school.

As soon as all tests have been scored and eligibility determined by the school, you will be notified of the results. This process normally takes 4-6 school weeks after testing is over. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

We invite you to read the information below to learn more about the TAG testing process.

TAG Testing Middle/High School Parent Q&A

What is the Talented and Gifted (TAG) program?

The Talented and Gifted (TAG) program in the Fulton County School System provides enriching experiences for the intellectually advanced and exceptionally creative student. Gifted services are available in all Fulton County schools for students in kindergarten through grade 12.

How are students determined to be eligible for the TAG program?

For any child who is referred for gifted testing, Fulton County Schools is required to gather information in the following areas: Mental Ability, Creativity, Achievement, and Motivation. The instruments selected for each area meet the guidelines of Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38.

What testing instruments may be used to determine if my child is eligible for TAG?

The local school's TAG Advocacy Council uses a child's grade level, former testing experiences, and current classroom performance to determine exactly which testing instruments will be used. The use of certain instruments requires parental consent before the instruments are administered. Each specific test is only administered once every two years.

What is the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)?

The CogAT is a group-administered mental ability test, typically referred to as an IQ test. The test has three batteries: Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal. The Verbal Battery appraises the child's verbal inductive and deductive reasoning skills as well as flexibility, fluency, and adaptability in working with verbal materials and solving verbal problems. The Quantitative Battery appraises high-level problem solving with quantitative symbols and concepts. The Nonverbal Battery appraises general inductive reasoning skills in using and adapting cognitive strategies. This battery contains the most novel problems and uses only geometric shapes and figures. The battery requires no reading and no outside fund of knowledge.

The CogAT is typically administered to the K-5 student over three days. Each testing session takes approximately one hour. The resulting score for each battery is reported to parents as a national percentile ranking in the Mental Ability section on the Eligibility Report. The national percentile ranking allows you to compare your child's results to others of the same age across the nation. The typical child will score around the 50th percentile while a 96th percentile is a qualifying score in the mental ability category for gifted services. The CogAT is only administered once every two years.

What is the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)?

The NNAT is a group-administered mental ability test that only measures nonverbal abilities. It is similar to, but more in-depth, than the Nonverbal battery of the CogAT. It consists of four sub-tests that require students to complete patterns, sequences, and analogies as well as combine two or more geometric designs. The battery requires no reading and no outside fund of knowledge.

The NNAT is administered in an hour-long session. The resulting score is reported as a national percentile ranking to parents in the Mental Ability section on the Eligibility Report. The 96th percentile is the qualifying score for gifted services. The NNAT is only administered once every two years.

What is the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT)?

The TTCT requires responses that are mainly drawing or pictorial in nature. However, it does not measure artistic talent nor is artistic talent required to do well on the instrument. The TTCT requires students to use their imagination, solve problems, think of new ideas, and elaborate on their ideas.

The TTCT is administered in a one-hour long session. The resulting score is reported as a national percentile ranking to parents in the Creativity section on the Eligibility Report. The 90th percentile is the qualifying score for gifted services. The TTCT is only administered once every two years.

What are the IOWA Assessments, NWEA MAP Assessments, and the Stanford Achievement Test (STAT-10)?

These three assessments are nationally-normed tests of achievement. For purposes of gifted eligibility, the total reading and total mathematics batteries are use. These assessments measure concepts and skills typically taught at the grade level of the child. Determination of which of the three tests will be administered to each child is determined based on a number of factors.

The resulting scores are reported as a national percentile ranking to parents in the Achievement section on the Eligibility Report. The 90th percentile is the qualifying score for gifted services. Each specific type of achievement test can only be administered once every two years for the purposes of determining eligibility for the gifted program

How are class grades used for TAG eligibility?

In the area of Motivation, for students in grades 8-12, a qualifying score is a cumulative average of 85 or greater on a scale of 1-100 over the last two years in core content courses.

How are the Middle and High School Products used for TAG eligibility?

The Middle/High School Product is made up of a student's summative (test) average and overall average from an above-level course (middle school) or an honors, advanced placement, dual enrollment, or International Baccalaureate Diploma Program course from the previous semester. The Middle/High School Product is scored by three trained evaluators using a rubric.

The resulting score is reported as a percentage to parents in either the Creativity or the Motivation section on the Eligibility Report. The scored product from a course used in one section cannot be used in another section. The qualifying score for gifted services is the 90th percentile. The Middle/High School Product can be assessed each semester.

Is any other data gathered for possible TAG eligibility?

For all grade levels, an individual first place or win in a district level academic competition can be used in either the Creativity or Motivation section. This would include competitions such as the Fulton County spelling bee, technology fair, science fair, etc. The win must be based on individual work, not as part of a team. A competition win used in one section cannot be used in the other section.

For high school students, a score of 90th percentile or greater on the SAT or PSAT can be used in the area of Achievement.

What is the Gifted Rating Scales-Motivation (GRS-M)? (Grades 6-7 only)

The GRS-M is a rating scale, completed independently by two teachers, based upon a child's motivational behaviors in an academic setting. The teachers completing the scale are selected by the local school TAG Advocacy Council and must have known the child for at least one month. Motivation refers to a child's desire to achieve a goal or complete self-selected tasks. Motivation is not a type of giftedness but rather viewed as the energy that drives a child to achieve.

The resulting score is reported as a national percentile ranking to parents in the Motivation section on the Eligibility Report. The 90th percentile is the qualifying score for gifted services. While a qualifying score is valid for two years, the GRS-M may be re-administered after one calendar year by different teachers only if the child is referred again for TAG testing and scored below a 90th percentile.

Why might my child take some instruments and not all of them?

The TAG Advocacy Council will use only one instrument for each category in each testing cycle: Mental Ability, Creativity, Achievement, and Motivation. Based upon previous testing experiences and/or classroom performance, some children may already have information in their permanent record that can be used in one or more categories. Children will not be tested unnecessarily. The TAG Advocacy Council has more than one option of instruments for some categories. The team will use all pertinent data about the student to select the best instrument at this time. The team will not exhaust all of its options in each category during this referral process. If a child is found ineligible now, he or she needs additional time to mature before being referred again for TAG testing.

How can I help my child prepare for these instruments?

Preparation for any of these instruments cannot be done within a short period of time. Knowledge or skills needed are developed as a result of all school and life experiences. It is best for you to ensure that your child is well rested and has a nutritious breakfast for each day of school.

For more information, please contact the TAG Contact at your local school.