NEWS FROM THE ACADEMICALLY GIFTED DEPARTMENT
The Middle School Edition

Quarter 1

Join Guilford Gifted!

ADVOCATE TODAY FOR A GIFTED TOMORROW

Website: https://www.guilfordgifted.org/

Guilford Gifted is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supporting our community's brightest young minds with strong advocacy for the advancement of gifted education. We provide the tools to engage and empower all those involved with gifted children, thereby building tomorrow's leaders today. **It's FREE to join!**

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The revised GCS 2025–2028 AIG Plan was approved by the Board of Education in June. This plan explains how GCS identifies and serves gifted students in line with North Carolina's Gifted Law (Article 9B – Chapter 115C). The full plan is available on the GCS Academically Gifted Department website.

At the middle school level, to be identified as academically gifted, a student must score a Level 5 on the NC EOG for Math or Reading **OR** have a nationally normed summative achievement percentile score at or above the 90th%ile in either of these two areas. Once identified, students in grades 6 – 8 are served through **enrollment in advanced coursework** based on the district's placement guidelines and their identified area.

To ensure proper differentiation occurs in the classroom, teachers of academically gifted students should hold their AIG licensure, National Boards Certification, or, at a minimum, have completed the district's professional development on the characteristics of academically gifted students and proper classroom support for academically gifted and advanced learners. Annually, the school will provide a copy of the ***Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)***, which details how the curriculum provided in advanced coursework differs from grade-level content and supports the learning needs of academically gifted students. Each year, the school holds a beginning-of-year meeting for parent/guardians to review the ***DEP*** and seek clarification regarding their child's identification. In addition to the DEP, for newly identified students or for students who have added an identification area, the ***Student Eligibility Record (SER)*** is provided. The ***SER*** details the data used for AG eligibility and must be signed and returned by the parent/guardian.

News From Our School:
Welcome back to the 2025-2026 school year! We are so excited for a brand new year full of possibilities. Our theme this year is "Persevere and Do the Work!" We are looking forward to guiding our students into showing us their best work and best selves.
Stay tuned for additional details about our upcoming AG Beginning of Year Meeting, set for October 14, 2025. Details for the time and Teams Link will be found on our school website.

District Highlight:
The district's Choice Application Window will open in Fall 2025. Scan the QR Code below to learn about the choice options available at the middle grades and high school levels. Additionally. you can visit the Choice Schools & Programs webpage at: https://www.gcsnc.com/choose-and-enroll/choice-programs

Starting the School Year Strong

Empowering Your Gifted Child: From Advocacy to Independence

As a new school year begins, many families of gifted learners are thinking about how to best support their child's success—academically, socially, and emotionally. One of the most powerful ways you can help is by understanding how your role as a parent changes over time.

In the early years, your advocacy helps ensure your child's strengths are recognized and that they are given opportunities to grow. As your child matures, it's just as important to guide them toward learning how to advocate for themselves. This shift not only prepares them for middle and high school but also builds skills they'll use throughout life.

Here are a few ways to begin the year with your gifted child in mind:

- **Advocate, then coach**. In the beginning, you may be the one speaking up for your child—asking questions, arranging meetings, and helping teachers understand their needs. As the year goes on, look for ways to invite your child into the conversation. Encourage them to share what they enjoy most in class and talk about moments when they'd like more challenge or additional support. These small steps build their confidence and help them practice speaking up for themselves.

- **Celebrate challenge while supporting balance.** Gifted learners often love new challenges, and it's exciting to see them stretch their abilities. At the same time, they need space for fun, rest, and creativity. Help your child celebrate the joy of learning while also making time for hobbies, friendships, and relaxation. This balance allows them to grow as learners while staying happy and well-rounded.

- **Partner with teachers and connect with others**. Teachers want to see your child thrive, and building a strong partnership helps set the tone for a positive year. Share helpful insights about your child's interests, learning style, and strengths early on, and keep communication open. It can also be reassuring to connect with other families of gifted learners—sharing encouragement, ideas, and support with people who understand your journey.

"Our role as parents shifts from speaking for our children to teaching them how to speak for themselves."

Guilford County Schools AIG services are designed to provide both support and appropriate challenge in the classroom. By beginning the year with a focus on advocacy—and gradually guiding your child toward self-advocacy—you are helping them grow into confident learners who can thrive both in school and beyond.

Source: Adapted from Casey Isaacson's article, "The Changing Role of Parents in Gifted Education Programs," published in Parenting for High Potential, June 2024 (Davidson Institute).

💡 Quick Tips for Parents
💡 Start the year with insight. Share your child's strengths, interests, and learning preferences with teachers early to set a positive foundation.
⭐ Encourage reflection. Ask your child to share one success or highlight from their week—whether academic, creative, or personal.
🌱 Promote balance. Make space for both intellectual challenge and downtime. Time spent on hobbies, exercise, or quiet activities helps sustain motivation.
🤝 Build community. Connect with other families of gifted learners for encouragement, resources, and shared understanding.