



Sayreville Public Schools

Gifted and Talented Program Handbook



Table of Contents

Program Overview 2

Timeline.....3

Nomination Process.....4

Eligibility.....6

District Policies (TAG).....8

Program Overview

The Sayreville Public Schools recognize the importance of identifying gifted and talented students within our district and providing these students with appropriate instructional adaptations and services.

Gifted Students and Twice Gifted Students are, by definition, students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability in one or more areas when compared to their chronological peers in the district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities. Sayreville assesses students cognitively, creatively and academically to determine eligibility for gifted programming.

Gifted programming varies at different grade levels in Sayreville and is differentiated to meet the level of needs for our TAG students. We offer tier 1 academic instruction in our early elementary grade bands to provide equitable access to students during the foundational educational years. Pull out instruction with our certified TAG staff is one example of our Tier 2 programming in grades 3-8. High school students are offered the opportunity to meet academic gifted needs through advanced placement and advance level courses in all core courses as well as electives that explore the identified NJDOE Standards for Gifted and Talented education found here: <https://www.nj.gov/education/standards/index.shtml>

Mrs. Michelle DiPaolo, Supervisor of Elementary Mathematics and Science oversees the TAG program in Sayreville and can be reached via email at Michelle.DiPaolo@Sayrevillek12.net

Timeline

September -

- Department meeting early in September.
- Establish a timeline for creativity testing & scoring (usually the first two weeks of school).
- Review of matrix and any necessary changes.
- Parent notification letters are sent (usually last week of September).
- Program start date is determined (usually first week of October).
- New cognitive scores are added to shared grade level Google sheets. *Sample title: Cognitive Scores for Students Moving Up From Grade 3 to Grade 4 (for Fall 2026)*

October -

- Program starts.
- Teachers may begin to submit EdData orders.

November -

- Teachers submit budgets for the following school year (example attached).

January -

- Department meeting.
- Timelines are established for parent nominations, self nominations, and teacher nominations.
- Dates for cognitive testing are set.
- Parent nomination form is created.
- TAG Supervisor shares “Save the Date” for Parent Information Session.

February -

- TAG Parent Information session takes place. Session information is shared by TAG Supervisor with parents across the district.
- Building principals/secretaries send out reminder emails regarding parent nominations and the Parent Information session.
- Parents nominations open (usually 3rd or 4th Friday of February).

March -

- Parent, Self, and Teacher nominations are due.
- “Permission to test” letters are sent to students who were teacher- or self-nominated.
- Cognitive testing administered in late March or early April.
- Teacher rating/evaluation forms are distributed and due by the end of March.

April - June -

- Teacher ratings, LinkIt! Form C, Cognitive, and NJSLA scores are entered into spreadsheets and shared with the next teacher. Creativity scores are added once the test is completed in September of the following year.
- List of grade 3 TAG students sent to SUES.

Nomination Process

Sayreville students can be nominated to be assessed for Gifted and Talented services in multiple ways. All nominated students will be assessed cognitively, creatively and academically.

Parent Nomination - Parents of students in grades 2-7 may nominate their child for TAG. Electronic nomination forms are made available in late February, and parents are given 2-3 weeks to complete the form.

Self Nomination - Students in grades 6-7 may self-nominate.

Teacher Nomination - Teachers are notified of which students have already been nominated. If they believe a student has been overlooked and should be considered, they may nominate children that they believe should be considered. Teacher nominations are due one week after parent nominations.

Parents of nominated students will receive a request to assess letter similar to this:

SAYREVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
TALENTED & GIFTED PROGRAM

Return form no later than March XXX. XXXX

Dear Parents of _____ Grade_____ Homeroom_____

Your child is currently being considered for the Talented and Gifted Program at his/her school. A formal cognitive skills test as well as a creativity test are integral parts of the TAG identification process. If you **would like** your child to be evaluated for possible entrance into this program, please check the first statement below, sign below and return this form to the corresponding TAG teacher as soon as possible. If you **do not want** your child to be evaluated for this program, please check the second statement below, sign on the line, and **return this form to the corresponding TAG teacher as soon as possible**.

Check one (1) of the following statements, and sign on the line provided.

(___) I **would like** my child to be considered for entrance into the Talented and Gifted Program and give my permission to have the cognitive skills and creativity tests administered to him/her.

(___) I **do not want** my child to be considered for the Talented and Gifted Program and fully realize that he/she will not be able to participate in any of the program's future activities.

Please return this form to the appropriate TAG teacher indicated below as soon as possible.
The test of cognitive skills will be administered the week of March XXth, 20XX.
The date for the creativity assessment is to be determined.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT _____

DATE _____

.....
RETURN THIS FORM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO:

Mrs. Laura Mihalenko Grades 2-3 Lower elementary schools
Mrs. Jennifer Mahieu Grades 4-5 Samsel Upper Elementary School
Mrs. Jennifer McGough Grades 6-8 Sayreville Middle School

Eligibility

Student eligibility is determined by multiple measures. These measures vary somewhat depending upon grade.

- ***Students entering grade 3:*** teacher rating, LinkIt! form C, cognitive test, creativity test
- ***Students entering grades 4-6:*** teacher rating, LinkIt! form C, cognitive test, creativity test, NJSLA
- ***Students entering grades 7-8:*** teacher rating, LinkIt! Form C, cognitive test, creativity test, NJSLA

All scores are entered into the corresponding grade-level matrix and combined for a total score out of 40 (for grade 3) or 50 (for grades 4-8). Students in the top 10% of the grade level (and also meeting the minimum cut score) are eligible to participate in the TAG program.

Students who do not meet eligibility requirements may reapply in subsequent years.

The parents of students deemed eligible for service are asked to sign a contract for TAG outlining expectations.

Gifted and Talented Renewal of Services:

Students who ARE eligible retain their placement through 5th grade (if in grades 3, 4, or 5) or through 8th grade (if in grades 6, 7, or 8). They are not reevaluated every year.

ALL students (regardless of placement in grades 3, 4, or 5) are reevaluated before entering middle school. With the exception of the cognitive score, all other measures will be reassessed.



TAG CONTRACT

Dear Parents,

The Sayreville Talented & Gifted Program was developed to provide the participants with a non-graded learning experience. The district is particularly mindful that special talents and abilities need to be nurtured and encouraged if they are to flourish.

In order to achieve this, students are required to adhere to the following expectations:

- Regular attendance to TAG classes and activities.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior at all times.
- Perform to the standards set in both their daily classes and the TAG Program.
- Assignments must be up-to-date and completed on time in all classes and TAG Program.

Failure to do so may result in a probationary period or removal from the program. This would be determined by administration, the TAG teacher, and the classroom teacher(s).

The bottom portion of this letter **must be detached and promptly returned** to your child's TAG teacher in order for your child to participate in the program for this school year.

Thank you very much!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Michelle DiPaolo

Mrs. Michelle DiPaolo

Supervisor of Elementary Education: Math and Science

Supervisor of Talented and Gifted

Elementary TAG Teacher: Mrs. Laura Mihalenko

Samsel Upper Elementary TAG Teacher: Mrs. Jennifer Mahieu

Middle School TAG Teacher: Mrs. Jennifer McGough

TAG CONTRACT

I have read and agreed to the terms of the requirements of the TAG Program.

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

District Policies: Gifted and Talented Education

Policy 2464 Gifted and Talented Students

<https://www.straussesmay.com/seportal/Public/DistrictPolicy.aspx?policyid=2464&id=630bb98a708d47a2a17485469269193d>

An individual who believes the district has not complied with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:35-34 et seq. may file a complaint with the Board of Education. This Policy for filing a complaint shall be linked to the homepage of the Board's Internet website (see above link). The Board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the district's action in the matter. The individual may then file a petition of appeal of the Board's written decision to the Commissioner of Education through the Office of Controversies and Disputes in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:6-9 and the procedures set forth in State Board of Education regulations.