Merchantville Board of Education 130 South Centre Street Merchantville, NJ 08109	File Code : 6171.2 Adopted : 06/27/1978 Revised : 12/15/2020 Reviewed : 07/15/2024

Gifted & Talented

Definitions

"Gifted and talented student" means a student who possesses or demonstrates a high level of ability in one or more content areas when compared to their chronological peers in the school district and who requires modifications of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

"Instructional adaptation" means an adjustment or modification to instruction enabling a student who is gifted and talented to participate in, benefit from, and demonstrate knowledge and application of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in one or more content areas at the instructional level of the student, not just the student's grade level.

The board of education shall ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations and educational services are provided to gifted and talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 to enable them to participate in, benefit from, and demonstrate knowledge and application of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at the instructional level of the student.

Gifted and Talented Program

The board of education directs that the chief school administrator and appropriately trained and qualified staff members designated by the chief school administrator shall:

A. Ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations are designed for students who are gifted and talented;

B. Make provisions for an ongoing kindergarten through grade 12 identification process for gifted and talented students that includes multiple measures in order to identify student strengths in intellectual ability, creativity, or a specific academic area. The district shall ensure equal access to a continuum of gifted and talented education services. The identification process shall include consideration of all students, including those who are English language learners and those with individualized education plans (IEPs) or 504 plans;

C. Develop and document appropriate curricular and instructional modifications used for gifted and talented students indicating content, process, products, and learning environment, and including, but not limited to, additional education activities such as academic competitions, guest speakers, and lessons with a specialist;

D. Take into consideration the Gifted Programming Standards, Position Statements, and White Papers of the National Association for Gifted Children in identifying and serving gifted and talented students;

E. Provide the time and resources to develop, review, and enhance instructional tools with modifications for helping gifted and talented students acquire and demonstrate mastery of the required knowledge and skills specified by the standards at the instructional level of the student; and

F. Actively assist and support professional development for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders in the area of gifted and talented instruction including their efforts to meet mandatory professional development requirements (see board policy 4131/4131.1 Staff Development, Inservice Education, Visitation, Conferences and N.J.A.C. 6A:9C-3).

Gifted and Talented Curriculum and Instruction

The board shall provide appropriate kindergarten-through-grade-12 (K-12) educational services for gifted and talented students.

The chief school administrator shall develop and the board shall approve criteria for identifying all gifted and talented students in kindergarten through grade 12. The identification process shall include multiple measures. Gifted and talented students shall be provided with appropriate instructional adaptations and services to encourage development of their special abilities in achieving the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

The chief school administrator or designee shall ensure that the curriculum and instruction are designed and delivered in such a way that all students are able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. The curriculum and instruction shall provide educational challenges to students identified as gifted and talented and shall be reviewed regularly.

Curriculum and instruction shall be designed with consideration for the individual learning styles of each student as well as the capacity of a gifted student to create concepts, respond to stimuli in a unique and creative manner, and develop higher levels of thinking. Appropriate accommodations, instructional adaptations, and/or modifications as determined by the IEP or 504 team shall be made for students with disabilities or 504 plans.

Because early discovery of a gift or talent is important, it is essential that the identification of these students be carried on as a continuing process, since special abilities and skills appear at different times in the development of many children.

The chief school administrator shall coordinate development of appropriate curricular and instructional modifications used for gifted and talented students indicating content, process, products, and learning environment. The board directs the chief school administrator to take into consideration the prekindergarten through grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards of the National Association for Gifted Children in developing school and district programs for gifted and talented students.

The chief school administrator shall devise indicators of achievement to evaluate the success of each program presented to the board for adoption.

The chief school administrator shall take the appropriate measures to ensure that minority and female students are not underrepresented in gifted and talented or accelerated/advanced courses.

Coordinator for Gifted and Talented Services

The state coordinator for gifted and talented services appointed by the commissioner of education, shall be responsible for reviewing the information about gifted and talented services provided by the district. The chief school administrator or designee shall file a report with the coordinator on a schedule that coincides with the district's New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) review. The report shall include, but not be limited to:

A. The gifted and talented continuum of services, policies, and procedures implemented in the school district;

B. The total number of students receiving gifted and talented services in each grade level

kindergarten through grade 12 disaggregated by race, gender, special education designation, and English language learner designation;

C. The professional development opportunities provided for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders about gifted and talented students, their needs, and educational development; and

D. The number of staff employed by the school district whose job responsibilities include identification of and providing services to gifted and talented students.

Complaint Process

Any individual who believes that the district has not complied with the provisions in the law or administrative code related to gifted and talented services may file a complaint with the board of education. The complaint shall be submitted in writing to the board office. The chief school administrator or designee shall take the necessary actions to correct or remediate the complaint and report such actions to the board. The board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the district's action in the matter.

If the complaint is not resolved to the individual's satisfaction or the individual is not satisfied by the written decision of the board, 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 law (N.J.S.A. 18A:6-9) and the procedures set forth in State Board of Education regulations.

This complaint policy shall be linked to the homepage of the board's website.

Information Available on Website

Detailed information shall be available on the district website regarding the policies and procedures used to identify students as gifted and talented and the continuum of services offered to gifted and talented students. The information shall include the criteria used for consideration for eligibility for the gifted and talented services, including the multiple measures used in the identification process to match a student's needs with services, and any applicable timelines in the identification process.

Key Words

Gifted, Talented

Mandated:

N.J.S.A. 18A:35-38 states "that the right to file a complaint shall be set forth in the board's policy on gifted and talented education. The policy shall be linked to the homepage of the board's Internet website."

Other Reasons:

P.L. 2019, c. 338 (N.J.S.A. 18A:35-34 through N.J.S.A. 18A:35-39), Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act defines the district's responsibilities for the provision of gifted and talented programs and services.

A. Gifted and talented programs and services include;

1. Ensuring that appropriate instructional adaptations are designed for students who are gifted and talented;

2. Making provisions for an ongoing kindergarten through grade 12 identification process for gifted and talented students that includes multiple measures in order to identify student strengths in intellectual ability, creativity, or a specific academic area. The district shall ensure equal access to a continuum of gifted and talented education services. The identification process shall include consideration of all students, including those who are English language learners and those with individualized education plans (IEPs) or 504 plans;
3. Developing and documenting appropriate curricular and instructional modifications used for gifted and talented students indicating content, process, products, and learning environment, and including, but not limited to, additional education activities such as academic competitions, guest speakers, and lessons with a specialist;
4. Taking into consideration the Gifted Programming Standards, Position Statements, and White Papers of the National Association for Gifted Children in identifying and serving gifted and talented students;
5. Providing the time and resources to develop, review, and enhance instructional tools with modifications for helping gifted and talented students acquire and demonstrate mastery of the required knowledge and skills specified by the standards at the instructional level of the student; and
6. Actively assisting and supporting professional development for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders.

B. P.L. 2019, c. 338 also sets forth:

1. That districts shall file a report with the state coordinator for gifted and talented services on a schedule that coincides with the district's New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) review;
2. A complaint process for individuals who believe that the district has not complied with the provisions in the law or administrative code (N.J.S.A. 18A:35-34 through N.J.S.A. 18A:35-39, and N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1) related to gifted and talented services; and
3. Requirements for posting information about gifted and talented programs and services on the district website.

N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1 states that each district board of education shall be responsible for identifying gifted and talented students in grades kindergarten through 12, provide appropriate services for students identified, and develop appropriate curricular and instructional modifications for gifted and talented student indicating content, process, products, and learning environments. Additionally, the district shall assist and support professional development for teachers. In developing programs for gifted and talented students the board shall take into consideration the prekindergarten through grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards of the National Association for Gifted Children.

Recommendation:

A policy directing development of a program for gifted and talented pupils. It should include or direct development of criteria for selection. This is a sensitive area.

Legal References:

N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.15 through -4.16	Legislative findings and declarations; chess instruction for second-grade pupils in gifted and talented and special education programs ...
N.J.S.A. 18A:35-34	Short Title: Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act
N.J.S.A. 18A:35-35	Definitions relative to gifted and talented students
N.J.S.A. 18A:35-36	Instructional adaptations, educational services for gifted and talented students
N.J.S.A. 18A:35-37	Coordinator for gifted and talented services
N.J.S.A. 18A:35-38	Complaint for noncompliance

N.J.S.A.	18A:35-39	Information available on the website
N.J.S.A.	18A:61C-10	Dual enrollment agreement increased availability of college-level instruction; scope
N.J.S.A.	18A:61C-11	Acceptance of course credit
N.J.S.A.	18A:61C-15	Eligibility to receive college credit
N.J.S.A.	18A:61C-16	Awarding college credit
N.J.A.C.	6A:8-1.3	Definitions
N.J.A.C.	6A:8-3.1	Curriculum and instruction
N.J.A.C.	6A:8-3.3	Enrollment in college courses
N.J.A.C.	6A:13-2.3	Standards-based instruction
N.J.A.C.	6A:30-1.4	Evaluation process for the annual review

P.L. 2019, c. 338, Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act

National Association for Gifted and Talented, www.nagc.org

Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards, http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/national-standards-gifted-and-talented-education/pre-k-grade-12

Possible Cross References:

*1600	Relations between other entities and the district
*6010	Goals and objectives
*6121	Nondiscrimination/affirmative action
*6171	Special instructional programs

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.