

Frequently Asked Questions

Office of Gifted Education



What are the advanced learning opportunities at my child's school?

Each D51 elementary school provides pull-out services from one or more GT teachers. Regular classroom teachers also differentiate for their advanced learners within each classroom in a variety of ways and with the support of the GT teachers. Individual student needs and interests are used to provide appropriate programming.

D51 middle schools provide GT enrichment courses and advanced math opportunities. High schools provide a wide variety of programming, including concurrent enrollment and Advanced Placement courses. All D51 secondary schools have a GT teacher or liaison who supports gifted students with their Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) goals and academic planning.

What are the laws that pertain to gifted identification in Colorado? The Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA) Rules can be found on the Colorado Secretary of State's webpage. [ECEA rules](#) provide definitions and guidelines for all gifted education programming elements.

At what age may a child be identified for gifted education? Students between the ages of five and twenty-one can be identified. D51 begins universal screening for exceptional potential at the beginning of 2nd grade. However, a student who demonstrates gifted abilities prior or after this time may also be identified and/or served.

Who can refer a student for possible gifted identification? When does this occur? Students can be referred by anyone who sees exceptional abilities or characteristics. This can occur at any time during the school year by contacting the GT Teacher or using the [Referral Form](#) on the D51 website. A referral does not necessarily lead to the administration of specific assessments. However, each referral is considered using current data and observations to determine next steps.

How are gifted students identified? Identification in District 51 follows the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) guidelines for gifted education. A body of evidence must be used to demonstrate that a student meets state criteria and has a need for gifted education. The body of evidence may include tests and tools such as: tests of cognitive ability (e.g. CogAT, NGAT), standardized achievement tests (CMAS, NWEA, iReady, etc.), behavior rating scales (e.g. SIGS), performance observation data, and anecdotal data (from teachers, students, parents, etc.).

Does a child have to have a certain score on these tests to qualify as gifted? ECEA Rules define the criteria used for identification. This includes demonstration in the body of evidence of an advanced level on performance assessments and/or ninety-fifth percentile and above on standardized, norm-referenced assessments. Not meeting criteria on a single assessment tool shall not prevent further data collection or consideration for gifted identification, if other indicators suggest exceptional potential as observed in a body of evidence.

Is the parent part of the identification process? Colorado Rules state parents should have the opportunity to provide input in the identification process. There is an expectation that parents will provide insight into the needs and interests of their child, and their input can add value to the identification process. If a parent is requested to complete a norm-referenced observation scale, a district may choose to use this as part of the body of evidence for identification.

What will happen after a child is identified? After identification, the parents, school staff and the student will work together to develop an individualized Advanced Learning Plan (ALP). The ALP will include achievement and affective annual goals for the student and describe the type of programming services that will be provided to meet the unique educational needs of the newly identified student.

What happens if an identified child moves to another district? Another state? In Colorado, identification may transfer with the child if he/she is moving to another district in the state. In Colorado law, this is called “portability” of identification. If the receiving district does not find a body of evidence to support the identification, the receiving district may conduct further assessment to confirm identification. If a student moves to another state, the new state may or may not honor the identification based on their state laws and regulations governing gifted identification. Unlike special education, gifted education is not mandated by federal law.

Where can I learn more?

- D51 Gifted Education Department [web page](#)
- CDE Office of Gifted Education: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt>
- Contact your school’s gifted education teacher or liaison (see list on [D51 GT web page](#))