



Southwest Licking
— LOCAL SCHOOLS —

**2026-2027
GIFTED
HANDBOOK**

Southwest Licking Local School District

Administrative Offices

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Southwest Licking Local School District Mission Statement

The mission of the Southwest Licking School District is to ensure that all students are prepared to be lifelong learners who possess a sense of self-worth, critical thinking ability, and necessary life skills enabling them to solve problems, adapt to change, value beauty, diversity, and cooperation, and be productive citizens. The mission will be accomplished by a skilled and dedicated staff providing personalized instruction with family and community support and participation by students in safe, modern facilities where quality education and technological materials are the standard.

Southwest Licking Local Schools Philosophy for Gifted Education

Southwest Licking supports the philosophy that giftedness denotes the possession and use of untrained natural abilities (Gagne). Outstanding abilities are present in students from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. We believe that gifted students' natural abilities translate to educational needs that require differentiated instructional programming as an integrated part of their regular school day. In addition, the district supports research-based continuing staff development opportunities so that district teaching and administrative personnel may, through their teaching and educational leadership, ensure gifted and talented students learn and achieve at levels commensurate with their exceptional abilities.

State of Ohio Definition of Gifted

"Gifted" means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of section 3324.03 of the Ohio Revised Code.

District Identification Plan

The district accepts referrals, screeners, and identifies, or screens and reassesses students who perform or show potential for performing at high levels of accomplishment in the areas of superior cognitive ability, specific academic ability, creative thinking ability, and/or visual and/or performing arts. Referrals can be made by a review of a student's data history, a teacher, a parent or guardian, the student, or any individual. The district must follow policy and procedures established in Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-15. These rules specify that assessment instruments must come from the list approved by the Ohio Department of Education.

Whole Grade Screening:

- Students in grades 2-4 will be assessed using the STAR Reading Assessment two to three times a year.
- Students in grade 1-4 will be assessed using the STAR Math Assessment two to three times a year.
- Students in grades 5 - 8 will be using the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) to be screened in Reading and Math two to three times per year.
- Notification of new gifted identification will occur in September, January, and June.
- Students in grade 11 will take the ACT.
- Students in grades 2 and 5 take the NNAT3 in November to screen for Superior Cognitive Ability. Students in 4th grade will also be screened for Creative Thinking using the Torrance Test for Creative Thinking.
- Students in 5th and 7th grade will take the NWEA Science MAP one to two times during the academic year.
- Scores are sent home within thirty days of testing.

Alternative Testing: Any student in grades K-12 may be referred for testing in superior cognitive, specific academic, or creative thinking abilities for up to two opportunities per year for testing (including whole-grade screenings). Students referred with permission on file by October 1st will be tested between November 1st and January 1st. Students referred with permission on file by February 1st will be tested between March 1st and May 1st. Students referred with permission on file by June 1st will be tested between June 1st and August 1st. Students referred with permission on file after June 1st will be tested in the fall. Scores are sent home within thirty days of receiving scores.

Out-of-District Testing: Any student in grades K – 12 may submit to the Coordinator of Gifted Services testing done by a licensed psychologist or psychologist if the assessment is on the State of Ohio's approved vendor list, and the assessment was given in the last twenty-four months. Common testing includes the ACT, SAT, or PSAT. Results of the assessment review will be sent home within thirty days of receiving the documents.

Visual and Performing Arts Assessment: The assessment process for Visual and Performing Arts is a multi-step process. Individual referrals of students in grades K- 12 are accepted between August 1st and October 1st and again from December 1st through March 1st. Parent permission is obtained shortly after the window closes with teachers completing the checklists in October/February and eligible students finishing the process with their audition or display of talent in January/March. We offer whole grade level screening in grade 2 for Performing Arts to look for talented and gifted students.

State Testing: The State of Ohio forbids the use of State Testing (OST Testing) for gifted identification or placement in gifted services. The State Tests measure a student's achievement in grade-level standards and do not assess if a student has mastered above grade-level standards.

Testing Results for Gifted Identification: To be identified as gifted in superior cognitive ability, a student

must score two standard deviations above the norm on any approved assessment. To be identified as gifted in specific academics, a student must score 95% or higher on any approved achievement assessment.

Transfer Students: Gifted identification in another Ohio public school district will be recognized by Southwest Licking Local Schools. Families should provide documentation of identification from the previous district when enrolling the child. Students identified as gifted by a district outside of Ohio may be identified in Ohio if the tests used are less than twenty-four months old and are on the Ohio Department of Education's approved list of instruments. If the testing does not meet those criteria, the student may be referred for testing within ninety days of enrollment at the family's request.

Identification and Placement Appeal Process: In the event of a parent concern, parents should contact the Coordinator of Gifted Education. However, if that does not answer the parent's concern, appeals of identification and placement must be submitted in writing within 30 days of parent notification of results. Appeals should be mailed to the Assistant Superintendent at 927 South A Street Pataskala, Ohio 43062. The Assistant Superintendent will issue a written final decision within 30 days of the appeal.

Subsequent Test Scores

The district will share all test results with families. In the state of Ohio, once a child is identified as gifted the child remains identified as gifted regardless of subsequent scores. However, gifted services placements look at who is currently most in need of services, so students who have recent gifted identifying scores will be most likely to receive the highest need for gifted services. It is important that families monitor their child's progress and discuss any concerns with the child's teacher. One question useful to ask your child's teachers is how your child's test scores compare to students in gifted services and students in general education classrooms. Students should continue to perform in the same or higher percentile on tests from year to year. Teachers will work with the families to help ensure our gifted students continue to make a year's growth and maintain their percentile on standardized tests. It is sometimes difficult for students identified as gifted to continue to make a year's growth and maintain the same percentiles. This is particularly true of students with average cognitive ability who are identified as gifted at an early age; these students will likely need substantial support at home to maintain a gifted level of achievement. Teachers are an excellent resource for ideas on how families can support students at home.

Characteristics of the Gifted

Superior Cognitive Ability

High-ability students are identified by an ability score two standardized deviations above the norm on a state-approved assessment for gifted ability.

- Advanced vocabulary for age
- Independent reading, frequent preference for adult-level books
- Rapid learning and easy recall
- Quick perception of cause-effect relationships
- High level of curiosity
- Enjoyment of being with older children
- Pursuit of interests and of collecting things
- Long attention span for age
- Preference for new and challenging experiences
- Retention of information
- High level of planning, problem-solving, and abstract thinking compared to peers
- Ability to generalize quickly from principles and to look for similarities and differences
- Possession of an unusually large storehouse of information about a variety of topics
- Tendency to become easily bored with routine tasks
- Concern for ethical issues, questions of right and wrong, and “adult” topics such as religion and politics
- May or may not enjoy school or be considered a good student.

Specific Academic Ability

Knowledgeable in a specific area. Identified with an achievement score of 95th percentile or above on an approved gifted identification test in reading, math, science, or social studies.

- The long attention span for activities related to a specific academic area
- Advanced understanding of concepts, methods, and terminology of the subject
- Ability to apply concepts from the subject to activities in other subjects
- Willingness to devote a large amount of time and effort to achieve extensive knowledge in the subject
- Competitiveness and motivation in a subject
- Rapid learning in a subject
- May or may not enjoy school or be considered a good student

Creativity

Highly imaginative. Identified by an ability score above 115 with an academic identification AND an approved score on a creative abilities checklist.

- Inquisitiveness
- Tendency to do things their own way
- Preference for working alone
- Experimentation with whatever is at hand
- Active imagination
- Ability to think up many ways to accomplish a goal or solve a problem
- Tendency to respond with unexpected, clever, or smart-aleck answers
- Production of original ideas
- Uninhibited expression of what may be non-conforming opinions
- Adventurousness and willingness to take risks
- Possession of a keen sense of humor
- Sensitivity to beauty
- Nonconformity and lack of interest in detail
- Lack of concern with social acceptability

Visual/Performing Arts – Music

Unusually advanced talent for a student's chronological age. Identified by a checklist AND superior performance or exhibition.

- Makes up original tunes
- Enjoys and seeks out musical activities and opportunities to hear and create music
- Respond sensitively to music and move body in accord with tempo and mood changes
- Easily remember and reproduce melodies and rhythm patterns
- Pick out and discuss background sounds, chords, and individual instruments played
- Play a musical instrument or express a strong desire to do so
- Have good pitch

Visual/Performing Arts – Art

Unusually advanced talent for a student's chronological age. Identified by a checklist AND superior performance or exhibition.

- Fill in extra time by drawing, painting, etc.
- Demonstrate extraordinary imagination
- Draws a variety of things – not just people, houses, and flowers
- Remember things in detail
- Take art activities seriously
- Have a long attention span for art activities
- Plan the composition of an artwork
- Experiment with different media and techniques
- Arrive at unique solutions to artistic problems
- Produce highly original work with distinctive style, balance, and unity
- Demonstrate accelerated development of technical skills in art
- Show adeptness at representing movement
- Ask for explanations and instruction
- Respond to unusual subjects in art
- Are keen observers
- Set high standards of quality and rework their creations to achieve these standards
- Show interest in other children's products by spending time discussing and studying them

*Adapted from Kitano, Margie K., and Kirby, Darrell F., *Gifted Education: A Comprehensive View*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1986.

Please see the district website for additional resources on the characteristics of children who are gifted.

Comparison of Characteristics of a High-Achieving, Gifted, and/or Creative Child

The chart provides some generalized characteristics of each child. For example, gifted children can be high achieving, but not all gifted children are high achieving, and children can have characteristics from all categories.

High Achieving	Gifted	Creative
Remembers the Answer	Poses unforeseen questions	Sees exceptions
Is interested	Is curious	Wonders
Is attentive	Is selectively mentally engaged	Daydreams; may seem off-task
Generates advanced ideas	Generates complex abstract ideas	Ideas overflow, many never developed
Works hard to achieve	Knows without working hard	Plays with ideas and concepts
Answers the questions in detail	Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives	Injects new possibilities
Performs at the top of the group	Is beyond the group	Is in own group
Responds with interest and opinions	Exhibits feelings and opinions from multiple perspectives	Shares bizarre, sometimes conflicting opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows	Questions: What if. . .
Needs 6 to 8 repetitions to master	Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master	Questions the need to master
Comprehends at a high level	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas
Enjoys the company of age peers	Prefers the company of intellectual peers	Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone
Understands complex, abstract humor	Creates complex, abstract humor	Relishes wild, off-the-wall humor
Grasps the meaning	Infers and connects concepts	Makes mental leaps
Completes assignments on time	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments	Initiates more projects than will ever be completed
Is receptive	Is intense	Is independent and unconventional
Is accurate and complete	Is original and continually developing	Is original and continually developing
Enjoys school often	Enjoys self-directed learning	Enjoys creating
Memorizes well	Guesses and infers well	Is an inventor and idea generator
Is pleased with own learning	Is self-critical	Is never finished with the possibilities

Is able	Is intellectual	Is idiosyncratic
Gets A's	May not be motivated by grades	Is not motivated by grades

Referral for Gifted Identification Testing

Please see District Identification Plan for deadlines for referral for each testing window.

Student Name:

Grade:

Teacher's Name:

Date of Referral:

Person making referral and relationship to student:

Area of suspected giftedness:

A brief explanation of why giftedness is suspected:

Evidence of academic need not being served in current placement:

List any medical or other conditions or circumstances that may be impacting a student's academic performance and/or ability to perform well on standardized testing.

Any other information you feel would be helpful to determine identification:

Please email Ashley LeJeune (alejeune@swls.us) your responses to the above questions and prompts to start the referral process.

Additional Considerations

Twice-Exceptional Children

Twice-exceptional children often find school frustrating and may suffer from low self-esteem. They may have difficulty with social skills and not feel as though they fit in with their peers.

Three types of twice-exceptional students have been categorized:

1. Students who are identified as gifted but also have subtle learning disabilities. For example, a student may use a large vocabulary but have very poor spelling. This category of students tends to perform on grade level.
2. Students whose abilities and disabilities mask each other and are thus unidentified. Their superior intelligence, for example, may hide trouble working with numbers. These students often perform at or slightly below their grade level.
3. Students identified as both gifted and having learning disabilities. These students stand out in a classroom because they are obviously bright but frustrated with school activities and thus can tend to act out or shut down.

Identifying twice-exceptional children is often a challenge. If a parent or guardian suspects their child is twice-exceptional, please notify the Coordinator of Gifted Services and the child's building administrator.

Underachievement in Students Identified as Gifted

Underachievement is the unanticipated difference between accomplishment and ability.

Underachievement is a very complex situation with many possible interwoven causes. Among the areas to explore are:

- social issues such as peer pressure;
- psychological issues such as emotional sensitivities or perfectionism;
- undiagnosed learning disabilities;
- lack of interest in curriculum or curriculum is not challenging and engaging;
- low teacher expectations, especially with twice-exceptional, minority, and students from low-income backgrounds.

Asynchronous Development

According to the National Association for Gifted Children, asynchrony is the term used to describe the mismatch between the cognitive, emotional, and physical development of gifted individuals. Gifted children often have significant variations within themselves and develop unevenly across skill levels. For example, a gifted child may be excellent in math, but poor in reading--or vice versa. Often, intellectual skills are quite advanced, but fine motor or social skills are lagging.

Overexcitabilities

Overexcitabilities are inborn intensities indicating a heightened ability to respond to stimuli. Found to a greater degree in creative and gifted individuals, overexcitabilities are expressed in increased sensitivity, awareness, and intensity, and represent a real difference in the fabric of life and quality of experience. Dabrowski identified five areas of intensity: psychomotor, sensual, intellectual, imaginal, and emotional. A person may possess one or more of these. "One who manifests several forms of over-excitability sees reality in a different, stronger, and more multi-sided manner" (Dabrowski, 1972, p. 7).

Perfectionism

It's not uncommon for children who are identified as gifted to also be perfectionists. Approximately 20% of children, who are gifted, suffer from perfectionism to the degree it causes problems. Setting personal standards and pursuing excellence is important and healthy in many life situations. However, perfectionism can become unhealthy when it causes stress, pain, illness, procrastination, and underachievement. While not inclusive, some causes of perfectionism include a desire to please others, early successes and fear of failures at a young age, lack of exposure to advanced instruction in early school years, and difficulty setting realistic goals.

More Information

Families wanting more information on these and other topics can find them on the district website and may sign up for gifted services newsletters. Please share any concerns or questions regarding your child with his or her teachers or contact the Coordinator of Gifted Services.

Gifted Services

Programming Objectives

The National Association for Gifted Students has published gifted programming standards and student outcomes. Southwest Licking Local Schools has created programming that supports these standards and outcomes. Teachers of the gifted strive to accomplish these objectives and create a learning environment for students to obtain NAGC outcomes. Examples of evidence-based practices for each of these student outcomes and objectives can be found on the district website.

Homework

Students in gifted services at the elementary and middle school levels can expect to complete approximately the same amount of homework as their age peers. Usually, homework will be focused on providing additional practice on skills a student is struggling to master compared to others in the gifted service, on enrichment activities, studying, or reading. Because of the uniqueness of gifted students, they are particularly prone to spending more time on assignments than the teacher expects. Please discuss any homework concerns with your child's teachers.

Written Education Plan (WEP)

Instruction of students placed in a gifted service shall be based on the individual's needs and be guided by a written education plan. Per state law, students who are counted as served by the school district must have a written education plan (WEP). The district shall provide families with periodic reports regarding the effectiveness of the placement provided in accordance with the gifted child's educational plan, this will be incorporated into the quarterly report card and/or other communication methods. Families are asked to verify confirmation of the Written Education Plan by signing and acknowledging receipt of the WEP on a Google form that is linked to the student WEP.

Programming Evaluations

It is important that our gifted programs adapt to the needs of our students and the communities. Therefore, annually students and their families will be asked to participate in a survey about gifted services. The survey is anonymous. The results of the surveys are used to improve our programming.

Current Gifted Services

Please note: each year we reevaluate our gifted services based on program surveys, current district resources, and needs, availability of staff to provide gifted services, and other factors. Therefore, gifted services offerings are subject to change. Please see Placement Criteria (page 18) for information about who is served in each service.

Elementary and Middle School

Tier One Services

Gifted Classrooms (3rd, 4th, and 5th grades):

Based on cognitive and achievement-gifted testing data from previous years, students will be placed in an advanced classroom setting. The instruction of this class is designed to meet the needs of the superior cognitive student who may or may not have other areas of gifted identification. If the class must be filled beyond the number of superior cognitive students in the grade level, students who have substantially high above-average cognitive scores and reading and/or math identifications may be placed in the classroom. However, these students may not be placed in this service in subsequent years. These classes can be self-contained classrooms of gifted learners taught by a gifted intervention specialist and are substantially different from the instruction provided to students in a gifted cluster in a general classroom. These classes can also be in the form of gifted cluster classrooms served by a GIS in the student's area of academic identification where instruction is differentiated and enriched.

Gifted/Honors Courses: WMS (6th, 7th, and 8th grades):

Upon entering WMS, students are placed in Honors courses based on their cognitive ability and academic identifications. We offer some self-contained courses in Math and ELA; as well as cluster courses in order to meet the needs of our gifted community. The instruction focuses on a deep exploration of topics, interdisciplinary focused instruction, student-led learning, career exploration, and the social-emotional needs of the gifted learner. Students (6th grade) who are placed in Honors courses do not requalify each year, but students who newly qualify for the program based on the placement criteria used for each class are placed after a discussion with a parent to discuss whether the placement is appropriate. Students entering 7th and 8th grade may self select certain Honors courses with required criteria with the exception of our accelerated Science pathway, Pre-Algebra, Algebra and Honors Geometry. These courses have testing requirements and acceleration plans in place.

Tier Two Services

General Education Classrooms with Gifted Clusters (2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades):

When student data supports the need for gifted services and trained staff members are available, students identified as specifically academically gifted and have at least one test data in the last three

years of 95% or higher for the area being served may be placed in gifted clusters. The deliberate placing of students identified as gifted allows the teachers to provide targeted instruction for the needs of the gifted learner in the general classrooms. Please note, not all students identified as gifted in a specific academic area may be served and this service is not always offered. These clusters may or may not be offered by a GIS.

High School

The high school offers a variety of courses including Honors, Advanced Placement, and College Credit Plus classes that are part of our gifted offerings. Students with guidance from families and teachers self-select coursework. Students who are identified as gifted are usually best served in gifted service classrooms. When considering course selections, families and students should consider a student's future career goals, areas of gifted identification, student interest, student involvement in other activities, and other unique considerations. Typically, a student identified as specifically academically gifted usually should take courses in their area(s) of identification to ensure the instruction is appropriate for the student's abilities. Students who are identified as having superior cognitive ability should typically take multiple gifted service courses to help ensure the instruction is appropriate for the student's abilities. Students identified as having superior cognitive ability are particularly prone to underachieving when not in gifted services.

High school guidance counselors will meet individually with each student who is identified as gifted and discuss the services offered to them. Guidance counselors will send a course request form home for parents to review and sign. The district advises the students to take gifted service courses based on his or her gifted identification(s). This form serves as notice of the district offering services or not offering services to the student. If a student chooses not to take a gifted service class in his or her specific academic area of gifted identification, the form will serve as the family's refusal of gifted services. If a student is identified as having superior cognitive ability and chooses not to take available gifted service classes, the form will serve as the refusal of services as well. The form will be placed in the student's permanent file.

High School Scheduling Sheet: Students Identified Gifted

Students identified as gifted must have access to advanced coursework to prepare them for their future goals and to continue to show academic progress. At the high school, there are many advanced courses, and students choose their courses with your approval. Based on a student's schedule, aptitudes, and future plans, he or she may not choose to take all advanced courses offered to him or her, but it is important that students identified as gifted take advanced courses.

Please be aware that colleges give serious consideration to how much students challenge themselves by taking advanced coursework in high school. In fact, the school reports to colleges all advanced coursework available to students, and the colleges use this information to consider how often a student chooses advanced coursework.

Each spring students meet with their school counselor to review their course choices. Please consider the choices your child has made and contact the school counselor if you have concerns.

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____
ID #: _____

Students Areas of Identification:

____ Superior Cognitive ____ Math ____ Reading ____ Science
____ Social Studies

Students, who are superior cognitively identified, are served in any gifted service course, and students identified as specific academic gifted are served in advanced work in the area of identification. Your student's course selections are below:

<u>Course:</u>	<u>Gifted Service:</u>	
English Course: _____	_____ Yes	_____ No
Math Course: _____	_____ Yes	_____ No
Science Course: _____	_____ Yes	_____ No
Social Studies Course: _____	_____ Yes	_____ No

Additional Advanced Coursework (not in the area of identification):

Student Rationale for plan of study:

Counselor Concerns regarding plan and signature:

Student's Future Plans/Goals:

Intended Extra-Curricular Activities or Employment for the upcoming school year:

Student Signature and date

Parent/Guardian Signature and date

Gifted Coordinator Signature and date

Note: Teachers of courses that provide gifted service will provide the family of the student with a Written Education Plan during the first quarter of the school year and report quarterly on student progress towards goals. This form serves as documentation, per the Ohio Revised Code, of whether your child will or will not receive gifted services for the upcoming school year and your denial of services if applicable.

Elementary and Middle School Placement Criteria

Each year, student data only on state-approved gifted assessments is reviewed to determine placements. Air test results and grades are not used. Students are placed in groupings prioritized for tiered services. Inclusion in a group is based on the history of gifted assessment scores and gifted identifications of all students in the grade level, as shown in the chart below. Students in group one are placed first in the highest tier of service for the grade level, then group two next, then group three, and so on. When possible, a space is left in tier one and tier two gifted service classrooms for newly identified students.



Gifted Placement Determination Levels Southwest Licking Schools Pyramid Color Coding System

Round	2nd Grade Cog (127+)	5th Grade Cog (127+)	Reading ID (within 3 years)	Math ID (within 3 years)	2nd Grade 116+ Cog	5th Grade 116+ Cog	High Achieving (in non-ID area)
1	X	X	X	X			
1		X	X	X			
2	X		X	X			
2	X		X				
3	X	X					
4			X	X	X		
4			X		X		
5			X	X			
6			X				X

An X in two boxes means that a student must have a score in one of the two boxes.

Note: Some students have additional testing. A qualifying score will replace the grade level criteria listed above. For example, if a student takes a qualifying superior cognitive assessment in 3rd grade and is identified as superior cognitive, that score would count as one of the two qualifying scores. In the event that there are more students in a grouping than placements, students will be placed based on their highest cognitive score.

For round 5, a student must have been identified as superior cognitive on his or her most recent cognitive test.

Self-contained classrooms are filled first starting in order of the rounds on the chart. If qualified staffing permits and there is a need for more service, gifted clusters in the regular classrooms will be offered for the subsequent rounds until spaces are full. While Southwest Licking Schools serves many gifted students, some gifted students may not be served.

When more students are in a grouping than there are placement openings, students are sorted by the cognitive score with the student with the highest cognitive score placed until the service spots are taken.

Unserved Students Identified Gifted

Teachers are notified of all students who are gifted in their general education classrooms. Building administrators and teachers work closely together to ensure appropriate differentiation occurs for all students including students identified as gifted. Families of students should work closely with teachers to support their children in continuing to further their academic abilities. The child's teacher can provide suggestions for enrichment at home to increase skills. The Coordinator of Gifted Services and teachers of gifted services are available as resources to general education teachers differentiating for students identified as gifted. Students may want to take advantage of the enrichment opportunities offered throughout the district and community.

Family Involvement

Teachers welcome ideas, questions, or concerns to establish effective communication among parents, educators, and students. We recognize the involvement of the parent(s) or guardian(s) is essential in the education of the child; our teachers encourage families to become involved in their child's education.

Family members can participate in the education of gifted children in a variety of ways including

1. Keeping abreast of what is happening in the classroom
2. Communicating any concerns directly with the child's teachers
3. Becoming aware of and supporting student interests in areas outside the curriculum
4. Encouraging student participation in enrichment activities in and out of school
5. Assisting students with library research, executive functioning skills, and study skills
6. Visiting the class and events to see what is happening
7. Working with students as mentors, sharers of specialized knowledge, presenters on career exploration, and facilitators of enrichment activities
8. Volunteering in the classroom and chaperoning events
9. Becoming acquainted with resources relating to gifted education
10. Attending the Ohio Association of Gifted Children Conference and other events about gifted

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held at various times throughout the year. Conferences are a good time to discuss your child's needs and progress and to collaborate with the teacher to support your child at home. Conferences are a good time to discuss your child's scores on tests approved for gifted identification and gifted services placement. Progress on the student's Written Education Plan (WEP) goals will be discussed at conferences.

Communication

Teachers of our gifted programming will provide regular updates through newsletters and other forms of communication. Families must communicate with their child's teacher(s) any concerns regarding their child and his or her instruction and school experience. If families have concerns not addressed by the child's teacher(s), please communicate concerns to the building principal and Coordinator of Gifted Services.

Additional Services

Transfer Students

Students new to the district who have been identified as gifted per the identification process for transfer students (see Identification Transfer Students page 5) will be placed in gifted services if space allows, and if the student meets the criteria for placement for the year. If there is no room in the tier of service the student qualifies for, he or she will be placed in a different tiered service if room allows. If no space is available in gifted services, the student will be placed in a general education classroom. In those cases, the gifted coordinator and teachers, who are providing gifted service, will collaborate with the classroom teacher to assist with providing differentiation of classroom instruction to help meet the gifted student's needs. The following school year the child will be considered for gifted services using the placement process outlined on pages 5 – 6.

MTSS Multi-Tiered System of Supports

The MTSS process is a method used to monitor and assist students not achieving at their level of ability. Gifted students performing right on grade level may be performing below their potential ability. Teachers and families need to monitor student performance to initiate intervention assistance when an achievement/ability gap occurs.

While gifted students have great potential for academic success, instances occur when children struggle to perform at their expected level of achievement. Even a student performing above grade level may not be meeting his or her full potential due to curricular, behavioral, or affective issues. Open communication between families and teachers is essential. Teachers will implement interventions in the classroom and the school. If these interventions are not successful, teachers and parents should follow Southwest Licking Local School District's MTSS process before considering withdrawal from services.

Refusal of Services

If a family wants to remove their child from gifted services, whenever possible a meeting will be convened including the parent or guardian, the classroom teacher, the gifted coordinator, and the building principal to determine whether the student will remain in the service with interventions put in place or a timeline for removal. A student who withdraws from the gifted placement will not be accepted back into the service during that same school year.

Parents or guardians must complete a refusal of service form every year that service is refused. This form is available from the building principal or Coordinator of Gifted Services. The form will be signed by the building administrator and Coordinator of Gifted Services and placed in the student's permanent file. A meeting will not be required after the initial withdrawal.

Refusal of Gifted Services Form

Name _____

Grade _____

Placement _____

Reason for Refusal or Withdrawal

Prior to Withdrawal or Refusal:

- ☐ Parents and placement teacher met to discuss concerns.
- ☐ The issue was referred to IAT as appropriate.
- ☐ The parent and gifted coordinator discussed the district policies regarding the refusal of placement and the possible academic and social-emotional consequences of refusing gifted services.
- ☐ For withdrawals from service, a meeting was held with the building principal, parent or guardian, coordinator of gifted services, service teacher, and student (if appropriate). Date of Meeting:

Parent Statement of Understanding: "I understand that refusal of gifted services cannot be reversed this school year. Without proper placement, it will be more challenging for the student to make a year's growth and maintain his or her national percentages. Each year, the district determines service eligibility, and a refusal of service form will need to be completed yearly."

Parent Signature

Date

Coordinator of Gifted Services Signature

Date

Administrator Signature

Date

Acceleration Policy

Southwest Licking Schools has adopted the state Model acceleration policy. A copy of this policy can be found at the Ohio Department of Education and on the district website.

Kindergarten: Students must turn five years old prior to the first day of school to be enrolled in kindergarten and six years old prior to the first day of school to be enrolled in first grade. Students who do not meet this requirement may apply for early entrance under the district's acceleration policy.

Policy Highlights

Who can be accelerated?

- Anyone who demonstrates an advanced academic need regardless of gifted identification.
- Also, a four-year-old may enter Kindergarten.
- Also, a five-year-old may skip Kindergarten and enter 1st grade.

Who may make a referral for acceleration?

- Parents
- Teachers and Administrators
- Students
- Physicians and Psychologists
- Special note – if a referral is for Early Kindergarten and the child will be 5 after January 1 of the Kindergarten year or if the referral is for early 1st grade and the child will be 6 after January 1 of the 1st-grade year, the referral must come from an educator or medical professional.

Who decides if acceleration occurs?

- A committee including the gifted teacher(s), gifted coordinator, building administrator, sending and receiving teachers, and parents or guardians make the final decision together.
- The decision is based on information gathered on the Iowa Acceleration Scale.

What is the process?

- For early entrance kindergarten, the parent or guardian completes the early entrance kindergarten packet found on the district website.
- For all other referrals, contact your child's building principal or the district gifted coordinator.
- The student's family provides permission for testing.
- The gifted coordinator administers a screener for superior cognitive ability. If the score is below 115, the process ends. If the score is above 115, the process continues.
- A school psychologist administers a cognitive abilities test.
- If the student meets the minimum cognitive score for consideration, the gifted coordinator

and/or a district school psychologist will administer normed achievement tests for the grade to be skipped in any subjects appropriate. (Single subject test for single subject acceleration; all subjects for grade acceleration.)

- The district gifted coordinator will complete the Iowa Acceleration Scales (IAS).
- IAS scores are tallied, and a recommendation is made.
- The committee meets to determine the best placement.
- If acceleration will occur, a written acceleration plan (WAP) is developed to guide the transition. Parents will be included in a meeting to create the WAP. The meeting will include the gifted coordinator, building principal, parent, and teacher who will be providing service.

What is the Iowa Acceleration Scale?

- A rating scale for acceleration reviews.
- Considers academic, cognitive, motivational, physical growth, and social maturity elements.

Other notes:

- One person cannot decide to accelerate or not accelerate.
- Decisions may not be made based on available transportation.
- Subject accelerated students will take the State test at the level of instruction unless no State test exists at the higher grade level.
- Appeals may be made to the Superintendent within 30 days of the placement decision.