
Fairfield Public Schools Workshop-Gifted/Talented Program

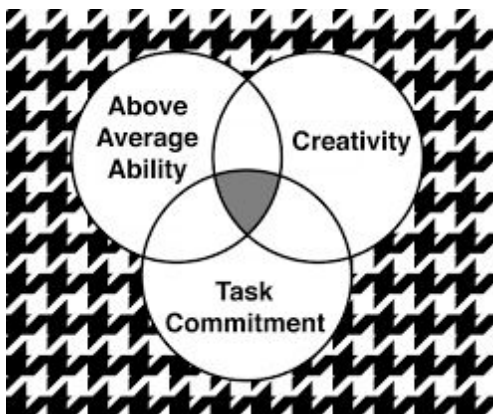
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Philosophy Statement

The Fairfield Public Schools are committed to providing an education of excellence that challenges students to reach their highest potential by meeting their individual interests, abilities, and needs under a common curriculum framework. A key component of this philosophy is that high-quality, differentiated learning experiences are at the heart of good classroom instruction across all grade levels and subject areas.

While differentiation is expected for every student, services for students identified as gifted and/or talented are not mandatory in the state of Connecticut. This means, under current regulations, public school districts in Connecticut are required to identify gifted and talented students; however, they are not mandated to provide a program of service.

The Fairfield Public Schools understand that some students who perform at higher levels than their peers may require instructional services beyond those found in the general educational program. To that end, a Workshop program has been developed to support students who demonstrate above average ability, creativity, and high levels of task commitment.



Three Ring Conception of Giftedness

Developed by Joseph Renzulli, the Three Ring Conception of Giftedness is a developmental approach that has revolutionized gifted and talented identification. The Three Rings include: Above Average Ability, Creativity, and Task Commitment.

https://gifted.uconn.edu/schoolwide-enrichment-model/three-ring_conception_of_giftedness/

Gifted & Talented Defined

Gifted and talented students are those who demonstrate an advanced ability or potential in one or more areas when compared to their peers, their experiences, or their environment. They excel in their ability to think and reason, therefore, making it necessary for them to receive support services in a program for the purpose of maximizing and fully developing their potential and talents.

These learners are a very diverse group of students. They sit in every classroom and come from all cultures, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Some are twice-exceptional (2E), meaning they are students who are both identified as gifted and with a disability defined by federal or state eligibility criteria, qualifying them for an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan.

Addressing Special Populations

Identifying and serving underserved gifted populations requires the use of multiple measures and sources, particularly when assessing culturally and linguistically diverse students, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities.

To support the identification of gifted abilities among students with limited English proficiency and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Fairfield Public Schools administer the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT3), a widely used nonverbal assessment for gifted and talented identification. The NNAT3 can provide a more equitable measure of ability for students whose cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, or disability-related factors may interfere with traditional assessments. Fairfield Public Schools believe that using the NNAT3 in conjunction with a comprehensive identification process can help educators more effectively recognize giftedness among students who have historically been underrepresented in gifted programs.

Identification

An integral component of the Fairfield Public Schools gifted identification process is the “formal review,” which incorporates multiple sources of data to provide a comprehensive picture of a student’s abilities and potential. This process considers performance on verbal, nonverbal, and quantitative ability assessments, as well as student work samples, performance tasks, and input from teachers, students, and parents. By examining multiple data points, educators can make more informed decisions and better identify students who demonstrate gifted abilities.

Please note, the cognitive ability scores used to consider gifted placement may vary each year based on factors such as overall applicant performance, available seats, and the State of Connecticut’s identification threshold. The Fairfield Public Schools do not revisit prior results or grant retroactive admission if a student did not meet the qualifying score in a previous year, even if the qualifying score is lower in a subsequent year. Students who meet the criteria for a formal review may be considered annually.

Programming

Our elementary and middle school Workshop program offers a dynamic, part-time learning experience designed specifically for gifted students.

The grades 3-8 program includes the following academic and social emotional components:

- A small group setting where social connections are developed and cultivated
- A rigorous curriculum focused on conceptual thinking, higher level processes, and problem solving

Programming (continued)

- Opportunities for students to be themselves and collaborate with like-minded peers
- Social-emotional exploration activities and discussions that help students develop healthy self-concepts and increase commitment to personal responsibility toward others
- Highly-qualified gifted teachers who facilitate engaging, problem and project-based inquiries and challenges that align with our district's standards for critical and creative thinking, as well as communication and collaboration

Workshop students convene weekly by grade level in middle schools, or on a letter-day rotation in elementary schools, during academic, unified arts, or FLEX periods. Sessions range from 2 to 3 hours per rotation/week and are scheduled to best enhance the students' overall learning experience. Consistent attendance is expected in order to maintain our program's integrity and continued success.

Online Resources for Parents

CT State Department of Education Gifted and Talented page
www.csdegifted.org

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)
www.nagc.org

Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG)
www.sengifted.org

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children
www.worldgifted.org

National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
www.gifted.uconn.edu/NRCGT/html