

INSTRUCTION: Special Programs

Gifted and Talented Education Program

- I. THE OFFICE OF GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION (GTE) SHALL ESTABLISH PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM IN ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOLS. THESE PROCEDURES WILL ENCOMPASS THE CONTENT OF THE *HANDBOOK OF PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAM*. PROCEDURES SHALL INCLUDE INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING:
 - A. STUDENT IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT
 - 1) PRIMARY TALENT DEVELOPMENT, K-2
 - 2) REFERRAL AND REVIEW PROCESS
 - 3) APPEALS PROCESS
 - 4) PARENT COMMUNICATIONS
 - B. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION
 - 1) TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS
 - 2) INSTRUCTIONAL AND DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES
 - 3) GRADE OR COURSE ACCELERATION
 - 4) DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS
 - C. PROGRAM REVIEW AND REPORTING
- II. UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE AREA ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS, PRINCIPALS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING THE ADMINISTRATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAM AND SHALL ESTABLISH A GTE REFERRAL AND REVIEW TEAM IN EACH SCHOOL. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEAM INCLUDE: COLLECTING AND ANALYZING STUDENT DATA, AND; COMMUNICATING STUDENT PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO PARENTS.

[1. DEFINITIONS

- A. The term gifted and talented refers to those students who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or specific academic fields, who need specific services or activities in order to fully develop those capabilities. 1 A gifted and talented elementary or secondary student is identified by professionally qualified individuals as having outstanding talent and performing or showing the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other students of a similar age, experience, or environment.²

- B. Differentiation refers to multiple instructional approaches used to address gifted and talented students’ unique abilities and interests by varying the instructional content, processes, and products. Differentiated instruction for gifted and talented students accelerates and enriches grade-level instructional content using overarching concepts and themes and advanced instructional materials. Instructional processes are varied to incorporate flexible pacing and opportunities to engage in advanced research and problem solving characteristic of professionals in the field. Differentiated products and performance assessments apply learning meaningfully to complex, authentic tasks.

- C. Acceleration of instruction means that students are provided with more complex and challenging material which they are expected to master at a faster pace. As used in this rule, acceleration occurs in various forms and may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1) Curriculum compacting. The student is pre-assessed to determine skill mastery. The mastered material is then replaced with enriched or accelerated content;

 - 2) Subject acceleration. For one or more specific subjects, a student is advanced to another grade level without being promoted to a higher grade level;

 - 3) Grade level acceleration. A student is promoted to the next grade level;

 - 4) Concurrent enrollment. A student is enrolled in college courses while in high school;

- 5) Advanced placement courses. Students are enrolled in college level courses as preparation to take advanced placement exams for college credit.

D. Enrichment of instruction means that students are provided with curriculum and instructional techniques that challenge their advanced academic needs. The instructional program is differentiated to meet the unique learning styles, learning rates, interests, abilities and needs of the gifted and talented students. As used in this rule, enrichment includes but is not limited to differentiation in:

- 1) Content (what is taught, e.g. more in-depth examination of topics, greater emphasis on creative and critical thinking skills, etc.);
- 2) Sequence and pacing;
- 3) Instructional strategies (how content is taught, e.g., greater emphasis on students as active participants, etc.);
- 4) Products (opportunities for the students to demonstrate and apply learning through creation of original products); and
- 5) Learning environment (the context in which learning occurs, e.g. on-line course offerings, student groupings, independent study, collaboration with outside resources such as colleges and businesses, etc.).

2. Student Identification and Placement

Student identification and placement for Gifted and Talented Education is ongoing. As used in this rule, student identification and placement consists of early talent development K-2, a school-based process for ongoing student referral and review, program recommendations, and a process for appeals.

A. Early Talent Development, K – 2

- 1) All elementary schools shall be required to implement the primary talent development (PTD) program K-2 in order to recognize, nurture, and challenge the potential of all children.³

¹ *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. §7801 (22).*

² *Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §8-201.*

- 2) Schools shall document evidence of each child's PTD learning behaviors in a cumulative K-2 portfolio used to make referrals to the Gifted and Talented Education program at the end of grade 2.

B. The Student Referral and Review Process

- 1) The Office of Gifted and Talented Education shall annually provide to schools the timelines and procedures for student referral and review. Elementary and secondary schools shall inform parents about the nature, content, and expectations of the school's Gifted and Talented Education program, including providing parents with, among other items, a copy of the "Mission and Goals" and "Characteristics of Gifted Learners" sections of the Handbook of Procedures for Implementing the Gifted and Talented Education Program.
- 2) Elementary and secondary schools shall encourage ongoing student referrals from a variety of sources, including but not limited to teachers, parents, test data, and self-nominations.
- 3) Elementary and secondary schools shall be responsible for establishing diverse, interdisciplinary Gifted and Talented Education referral and review teams that implement a comprehensive student profile assessment process and operate according to the timelines and procedures outlined in the elementary, middle, or high school Handbook of Procedures for Implementing the Gifted and Talented Education Program.
- 4) Elementary and secondary school Gifted and Talented Education referral and review teams shall, on an annual basis, review their referral and review procedures. The team's review should address equity of access by analyzing disaggregated school and Gifted and Talented Education program student enrollment data.

3 Baltimore County Public Schools *Primary Talent Development; Primary Talent Development Supplemental Lessons* (1996, 2000).

C. Program Recommendations

- 1) Elementary and secondary school Gifted and Talented Education referral and review teams shall inform parents when recommending that a student enter or exit the Gifted and Talented Education program. The referral and review teams shall also at this time provide parents with the list of resources (e.g. reading materials and websites) regarding Gifted and Talented students and Gifted and Talented education as provided by the Office of Gifted and Talented Education. This communication shall take place according to the timelines and procedures outlined in the elementary, middle, or high school Handbook of Procedures for Implementing the Gifted and Talented Education Program.
- 2) The Gifted and Talented Education curriculum incorporates various forms of acceleration. In accordance with Board of Education Policy and Rule 5200, Students: Promotion and Retention, the Executive Director of Special Programs PreK-12 shall approve all recommendations for subject and grade acceleration.
- 3) A student in the Gifted and Talented Education program who also has special needs documented on an individualized education plan (IEP) or 504 plan shall receive the appropriate program modifications, accommodations, and/or services required by that plan.
- 4) When the referral and review team recommends that a student either exit or not enter the Gifted and Talented Education program, the team shall immediately provide the parents with the description of the Appeals procedures including timing.

D. Appeals

- 1) Parents/guardians of students may appeal the student placement recommendation of the school's Gifted and Talented Education referral and review team.
- 2) The first step in the appeal process is a parent/guardian conference with a school administrator and representative from the referral and review team to review the data on the student profile used to make the program recommendation.

- 3) After this conference, if the parent/guardian and the school do not come to an agreement regarding appropriate placement, the parent may appeal the school's decision to the coordinator of the office of Gifted and Talented Education and Magnet programs. The school will provide the parent with a "Request for Gifted and Talented Education Appeal" from the elementary, middle, or high school Handbook of Procedures for Implementing the Gifted and Talented Education Program.
- 4) End-of-year appeals for the following school year must be received in the office of Gifted and Talented Education and Magnet programs by May 30 or the nearest business day thereafter in order to be considered.
- 5) The Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Education and Magnet programs will review the appeal, collect additional data as deemed necessary, and make a recommendation to the school for student placement. Such decision can be further appealed to the Superintendent's designee.

3. Program Implementation

- A. The school principal, under the direction of the Executive Director of Schools, shall administer the Gifted and Talented Education program in the local school according to the procedures for student identification, program articulation and administration, curriculum and instruction, and parent communication specified in the elementary, middle, or high school Handbook of Procedures for Implementing the Gifted and Talented Education Program.
- B. Elementary and secondary schools shall implement the differentiated Gifted and Talented Education curricula developed by the curriculum offices in the Division of Curriculum and Instruction.
- C. As specified in the elementary, middle, or high school Handbook of Procedures for Implementing the Gifted and Talented Education Program, elementary and secondary schools, with the assistance of the office of Gifted and Talented Education, shall provide teaching staff with information regarding the characteristics of giftedness, differentiation

strategies, and gifted and talented education referral and review procedures and timelines.

- D. The office of Gifted and Talented Education shall make available to all teaching staff and administrators professional development in Gifted and Talented Education including training in such items as characteristics and identification of Gifted and Talented students, social and emotional differences, need for and concept of differentiated educational services, administrative alternatives and program options to support acceleration and enrichment, and differentiated teaching strategies.
- E. A student in the Gifted and Talented Education program who also has special needs documented on an individualized education plan (IEP) or 504 plan shall receive the appropriate services pursuant to law.

4. Program Review and Reporting

- A. Each school principal shall conduct an annual review regarding the school's implementation of the procedures outlined in this Rule and in the Handbook of Procedures for Implementing the Gifted and Talented Education Program, and shall provide a report to the Area Assistant Superintendent outlining the results of that review together with identifying any changes being implemented for improvement.
- B. The executive leadership shall submit to the Superintendent two annual reports for the Gifted and Talented Education program as follows: a copy of the annual Report on Results as submitted to the Maryland State Department of Education, and, by October 1 of each year, a status report that includes disaggregated student enrollment, retention and achievement data, curriculum, program implementation, teacher certification and training, allocation of resources for curriculum and professional development, as well as program needs. The Superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Education strategies to address needs and areas for improvement.

- C. The school system shall contract periodic external program reviews to ensure continuous improvement in the Gifted and Talented education program's goals.]

Rule
Adopted: 09/09/03
REVISED: _____

Superintendent of Schools