

# LaRue County Schools Gifted and Talented Services Parent Handbook

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The primary goal of gifted and talented services is to provide opportunities to meet the diverse needs of gifted and talented students. Such a program should:

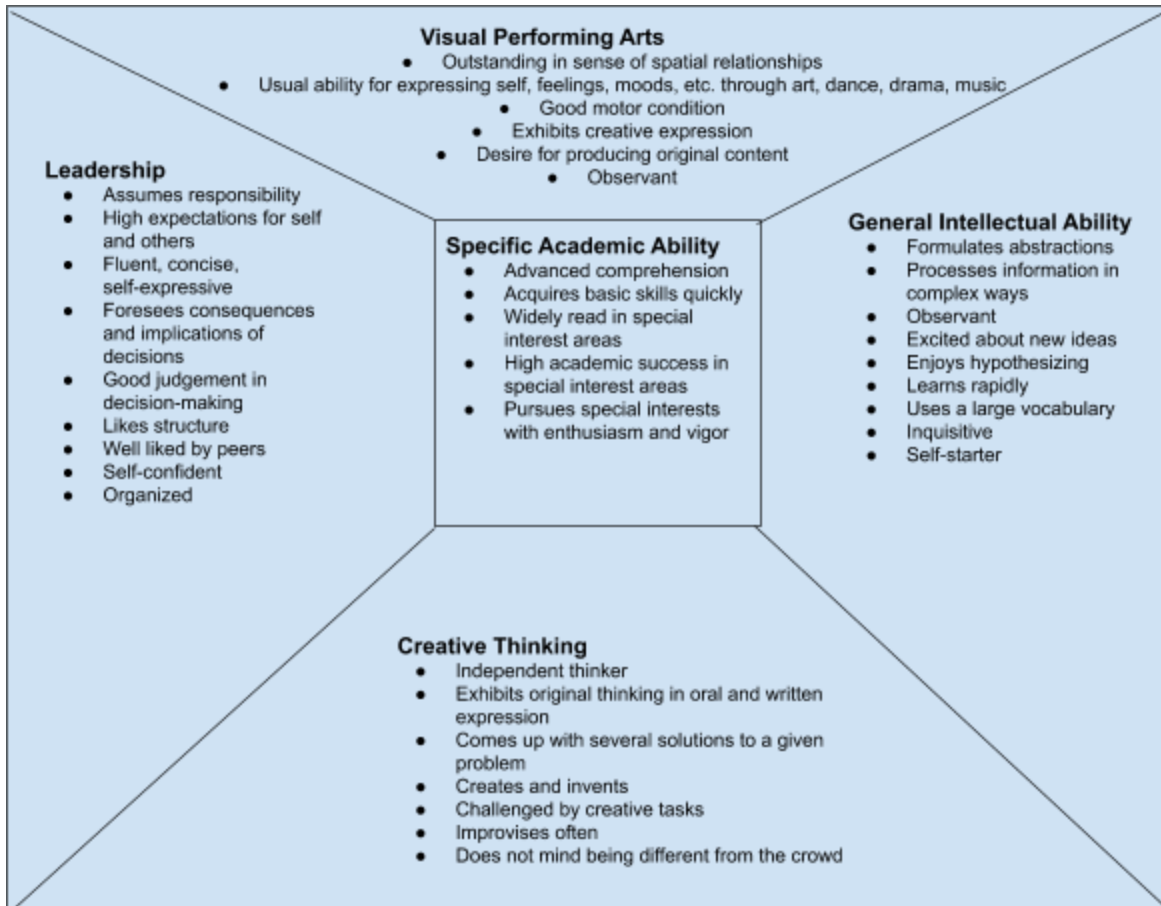
- Expand and extend the student's learning beyond the standard curriculum
- Provide flexible curricular and extracurricular grouping and differentiated curriculum experiences commensurate with the student's interests, needs, and abilities
- Help the student to attain, to a high degree, the goals established by statute and the Board of Education

## GIFTEDNESS

The national definition for giftedness as stated in the Jacob K. Javits Education Act of 1988 is that gifted and talented students are students who can be defined as exceptional—that is, they can be identified as possessing demonstrated or potential ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in five general areas:

1. General Intellectual—requires exceptional reasoning ability
2. Specific Academic - based on high achievement in specific content areas
3. Creativity
4. Leadership
5. Visual/Performing Arts - includes art, drama, music and dance

# CHARACTERISTICS OF VARIOUS AREAS OF GIFTEDNESS



## GOVERNING LEGISLATION

KRS 157.200 Definitions...Gifted and talented student means a pupil identified as possessing demonstrated or potential ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in general intellectual aptitude, specific academic aptitude, creative or divergent thinking, psychosocial or leadership skills, or in the visual or performing arts.

KRS 157.220 Functions of the Department of Education in special education programs

KRS 157.224 Statewide plan for exceptional education programs

KRS 157.230 Special education programs of school districts

704 KRS 3:285 Programs for the gifted and talented

Revised Administrative Regulation on Gifted Education: 704 KAR:3.285

The revised regulation:

- ✓ Requires school districts to have identification procedures for all five categories of gifted behavior including: general intellectual, specific academic aptitude, creativity, leadership, and visual and performing arts
- ✓ Requires school districts to provide a range of services to address the needs of students identified in the five areas. (Districts may choose how services are delivered.)
- ✓ Eliminates the priority of service. Services must be offered in all areas.
- ✓ Requires the establishment of a “talent pool” in the primary program based on informal measures which broadens the view of giftedness and provides opportunities for a wider range of gifted and talented behaviors to emerge among a greater number of the student population.
- ✓ Permits the use of formal, normed measures only as a diagnostic tool to determine the instructional needs of individual children in the primary talent pool.
- ✓ Requires the incorporation of authentic assessment practices in the identification and evaluation process
- ✓ Prohibits the use of formal, normed measures in the primary talent pool except to diagnose need for appropriate services
- ✓ Prohibits full-time, everyday self-contained classrooms for students in the primary program
- ✓ Allows for “special schools” and full-time “self-contained classroom” options in grades 4-12.

# *Bright Child or Gifted Learner?*

## **Bright Child**

**Knows the answers**

**Is interested**

**Is attentive**

**Has good ideas**

**Works Hard**

**Answers the question**

**Top group**

**Listens with interest**

**Learns with ease**

**6-8 repetitions for mastery**

**Understands ideas**

**Enjoys peers**

**Grasps the meaning**

**Completes assignments**

**Is receptive**

**Copies accurately**

**Enjoys school**

**Absorbs information**

**Technician**

**Good memorizer**

**Enjoys straightforward,  
sequential presentations**

**Is alert**

**Is pleased with own learning**

## **Gifted Learner**

**Asks the questions**

**Is highly curious**

**Is mentally and physically involved**

**Has wild, silly ideas**

**Plays around, yet tests well**

**Discusses in detail, elaborates**

**Beyond the group**

**Shows strong feelings and  
opinions**

**Already knows**

**1-2 repetitions for mastery**

**Constructs abstractions**

**Prefers adults**

**Draws inferences**

**Initiates projects**

**Is intense**

**Creates a new design**

**Enjoys learning**

**Manipulates information**

**Inventor**

**Good guesser**

**Thrives on complexity**

**Is keenly observant**

**Is highly self-critical**

**---By Janise Szabos**

# Exiting Primary Formal Identification Procedure

- Upon exiting primary, all third-grade students will be screened with the NNAT 3 for *general intellectual* placement. Students who score in the 9<sup>th</sup> stanine and have a 96% score or above, and show exceptional reasoning ability will be formally identified pending two other pieces of evidence including a recommendation from their teacher.
- To be identified for a *specific academic* area, students must have a 9<sup>th</sup> stanine and 96% score on content area subtests, and two forms of supporting evidence including a recommendation from their teacher. The iReady test will be used three times per year in grades 4-8 for math and reading. The Scholastic Educational Development series will be used in 4th and 6th grades for science and social studies.
- *Creatively* gifted and talented students are screened by teachers and specialists, and must also provide two pieces of supporting evidence. Third graders take the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking.
- *Leadership* gifted students must be identified by their leadership abilities in various situations, and be referred by a teacher or parent. Parents and/or teachers may recommend a student for placement in this category. Three pieces of evidence must be submitted, including a student questionnaire. A committee consisting of a principal, a counselor, the GT Coordinator and the GT resource teacher will review the evidence anonymously to determine placement.
- The *Visual/Performing Arts* students are recommended based on their exceptional ability in the area identified. After the referral has been made by a parent and/or teacher, a letter of recommendation is obtained from a specialist (music, art teacher, etc.) in the identified area. A portfolio of 3 entries must be submitted. A committee of specialists in the identified area reviews the portfolio and determine placement.

\*\*Special considerations and local norms may be used to promote equity and access.

\*\*Referral forms are available on the LaRue County Schools website.

# Gifted & Talented Timeline

## **iReady testing of Math and Reading**

Grades 1-8 testing takes place three times per year: fall, winter, and spring  
Kindergarten iReady takes place once per semester

## **August**

4th-grade testing in the areas of Science & Social Studies  
Make-up testing for new fourth-grade students

## **September**

Leadership and Visual/Performing Arts referral entries must be submitted  
Testing for any new students referred

## **October**

4th-grade students notified of gifted placement  
Gifted Students Service Plans posted on Parent Portal under documents; Grades  
4-12  
Leadership and Visual/Performing Arts committee meetings

## **November**

6th-grade testing in the areas of Science & Social Studies

## **December**

6th-grade testing in the areas of Science & Social Studies

## **January/end of the first semester**

Progress Reports posted on Parent Portal under documents; Grades 4-12

## **February**

GT month  
Leadership and Visual/Performing Arts referral entries must be submitted

## **March**

Leadership and Visual/Performing Arts committee meetings

## **April**

## **May**

3rd-grade testing in the areas of Creativity and General Intelligence  
Progress Reports posted on Parent Portal under documents; Grades 4-12



## Exiting Primary Service Options\*

**Acceleration Options** - Various forms of advancing through material or grade levels prior to the prescribed time based on early mastery, such as pre-testing in content and being excused to go on to high-level activities, curriculum compacting or linear acceleration, simultaneous or dual enrollment in courses at different grade levels including postsecondary, early exit from high school, and grade-skipping. Also includes the following service options: Early Exit from Primary, Subject Area Higher Grade Level, and Dual Credit.

**Advanced Placement and Honors**- Courses emphasizing college-level content based on College Board curricula and tests (advanced placement), or the provision of more challenging material through higher levels of content, process and product (honors courses).

**Extracurricular enrichment opportunities**- differentiated, academically-based activities that supplement classroom instruction and are often after school and competitive in nature, such as academic teams.

**Differentiated Individual Study**- A method through which educators shall establish a specific well thought out match between learner and characteristics in terms of abilities, interests, and needs, and curriculum opportunities in terms of enrichment and acceleration options that maximize learning experiences.

**Cluster Groups**- A group usually consisting of four or more identified students placed in a heterogeneous classroom or other instructional setting with a teacher trained in the appropriate instruction of special needs students, specifically gifted and talented, for the purpose of receiving a differentiated educational experience matched to the student's needs, interests, and ability.

**Distance Learning**- Learning opportunities offered through the use of computer technology and satellite transmission or optical fiber transmission. This may include video courses or other online courses.

**Enrichment Services (school day)**- Enrichment services during the school day (not extracurricular) that include exposure beyond the regular curriculum to new ideas, new skills and new concepts; extension of the regular curriculum going more broadly and deeply into what has been introduced; concept development exploring more fully the meaning and implications introduced in the regular curriculum.

**Independent study**- a self-directed course or study of a selected topic under the supervision of a teacher or the auspices of a university.

**Mentorship**- specialized studies, such as an internship, with an adult mentor in the community and under the direction of an educator knowledgeable in gifted education.

**Resource Services**- A service delivery option that:

- a.) Entails a part-time grouping of students with gifted characteristics based on the interests, needs, and abilities of the students;
- b.) Is designed for accelerated content, special interest groups, process skills development or various combinations of all; and
- c.) Is provided in a pull-out setting and appropriate instructional setting/placement.

\*This list is recommended by the state but all options are not always available.

# THE GIFTED STUDENT SERVICE PLAN (GSSP)

## **What is the Gifted Student Service Plan?**

A Gifted and Talented Student Services Plan (GSSP) is a yearly educational plan which matches a formally identified gifted student's interests, needs and abilities to differentiated service options and serves as the communication vehicle between the parents and school personnel. The teacher providing the service option uses information in the GSSP related to the identified gifted students interests, needs and abilities to differentiate the curriculum and design extensions which will provide continuous progress for the student. The GSSP *should not* contain confidential information such as achievement test scores.

## **Why is a gifted student now required to have a GSSP?**

KRS 157.200 *Exceptional Children and Youth* includes within the definition of "exceptional child" a category of "exceptional students" identified as gifted and talented. A student might be identified as gifted in one or more of the following 5 categories: general intellectual, specific academic, creative thinking, leadership, and the visual/performing arts. 707 KAR 1:320 *Individual education program*, requires that Individual Education Programs be developed for all students included in KRS 157.200. For gifted students, the Individual Education Program is called a Gifted Students Services Plan (GSSP).

## **Who is required to have a GSSP?**

It is now mandatory for *all* students who have been formally identified as gifted in grades 4-12 in one or more categories to have a GSSP beginning in the fall of the 2001-2002 school year. School districts are responsible for assuring that each formally identified gifted student has a GSSP. A local district may decide if Primary Talent Pool students will also have a GSSP.

## **Is there an official GSSP form?**

There is not an official GSSP form and districts may design their own. 704 KAR 3:285 does require that information related to the interests, needs and abilities of an identified gifted student *must* be obtained from the student's parent or guardian for inclusion in determining appropriate service options for each student.

## **May each school have its own committee and address only their students when writing the GSSP?**

The regulation states a school district *or* a school shall have a selection/placement committee made up of a gifted education coordinator or a gifted education teacher and representatives from classroom teachers, administrators, counselors, special education teachers and other appropriate personnel who follow district policies and procedures to formally identify and determine the level and type of service options for gifted students.

Formal identification begins in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade so the majority of students needing formal identification will be those students going into 4<sup>th</sup> grade. However, formal identification can occur in any grade level 4-12. Once a student has been formally identified in one or more areas of giftedness, only yearly gifted services need to be assigned. Personnel responsible for the design and delivery of appropriate service options develop the GSSP and include parental input. Those persons writing the GSSP should have a knowledge of the interest, needs and abilities of the student and also which service option(s) would best provide the opportunity for continuous progress for that student.

**What type of documentation do we need to keep if a student chooses not to participate in the service option?**

The committee should have documentation that an appropriate service option has been offered. A signature by the student and/or parent on the GSSP stating the student chooses not to participate in the service option provides a procedural safeguard for the school district.

**What happens after the GSSP is completed?**

After formally identifying a student as gifted in one or more areas, the selection committee should use a parent inventory and other formal and informal documentation to assign a service option(s) and then fill out the student’s GSSP. It is very important to remember the purpose of the GSSP is to provide documentation of matching differentiated services to the identified gifted student’s interest, needs, and abilities. *A gifted child’s strengths are his/her needs.*

After assigning the appropriate service option, notification is given to each teacher who will be providing the service(s), the parent or guardian, and a copy should be placed in the student’s record. The teacher assigned to provide the service option is responsible for differentiating the curriculum and providing extensions for each student in the class who has a GSSP.

**Who is responsible for checking to see if the GSSP is being carried out?** The educator assigned to provide the service option is responsible for recording extensions which they are providing *for each identified exceptional student* in their classroom. The person responsible for evaluation of the teacher providing the service should check to see what extensions are being provided to all exceptional students in the classroom.

**Where can the GSSP be accessed?**

Beginning in the 2021-22 school year, the GSSP can be accessed in the Infinite Campus parent portal under documents. Parents can also access the G/T Progress Reports for the fall and spring semesters in the Parent Portal. Teachers and principals can access the GSSP in Infinite Campus.

**Who can recommend a student for Gifted and Talented services?**

Teachers, parents, guardians, or other acquaintances of the student, can make a recommendation for gifted and talented services. Referral forms can be found on the LaRue County Schools website.

# PARENT GUIDE TO GIFTED EDUCATION

## VOCABULARY

**Ability grouping:** Grouping students by need, interest, or ability for particular learning activities or for instructional purposes. Groups should be formed and reformed in the classroom to meet various instructional needs. (This is not tracking in which students are placed in a fixed group that is maintained for all learning activities and remains in place over time.)

**Acceleration:** Allowing students to move through material at a pace faster than age-mates and at a rate equal to their abilities (i.e. higher-level activities, compacting, dual-enrollment to obtain high school and college credit, grade skipping, and early exit from school.)

**ACT and SAT:** American College Testing and Scholastic Aptitude Test are both standardized tests traditionally taken by high school students and used by colleges in determining admissions and placement. Now also given to middle school gifted students for selection and placement in talent searches, summer institutes, and other academic programs. Taking tests higher than their grade level provides gifted students with the opportunity to show their abilities since they usually top out on a test given on their grade level.

**A.P. (Advanced Placement):** The College Board program of college level courses offered in high school in which students, after receiving a certain score on the national AP exams in May, can be offered college credit at many institutions nationwide.

**Authentic Assessment:** Process of evaluating student learning using student products or performances (such as writing, art projects, dance recital, etc.) rather than traditional standardized tests.

**Cluster Grouping:** The year-long assignment of a small group, usually four or more, of students with similar interests, needs, or abilities to the same classroom for the purpose of receiving differentiated instruction.

**Collaborative Teaching:** Gifted education teacher and a regular classroom teacher working together to differentiate instruction for a cluster of identified gifted students.

**Compacting:** Reducing the amount of curriculum material by proving content mastery. By reducing repetition of content, students are challenged to their full potential. Students can be pretested on content to show what they already have mastered. The focus of study would then be the content that hasn't yet been mastered.

**Differentiation:** Making changes in the curriculum, either in content (what they learn), process (how they learn), or product (how they show what they've learned) to meet the needs of the individual student.

**Distance Learning:** Learning opportunities offered through the use of computer technology (such as web based instruction) or satellite transmission.

**Enrichment:** Learning activities not found in the core curriculum that are more in-depth or from an additional discipline used to supplement the gifted student's educational experience.

**Extensions:** Modifications in instruction and materials to ensure gifted students have the

opportunity to learn at an appropriate level and pace for them to reach higher goals.

**Gifted and Talented:** Those students that give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as general intellect, creativity, visual and performing arts, leadership or specific academic aptitude, and who require services or activities beyond those ordinarily provided by the school in order to fulfill their full potential.

**Gifted and Talented Student Services Plan (GSSP):** An educational plan designed specifically for an individual student's needs.

**Heterogeneous/Homogeneous Grouping:** Students placed together based on their age or grade level are grouped heterogeneously. But homogeneous grouping places students with others like themselves based on academic ability, special needs, or interests.

**High Potential Learners:** Students in the top twenty-five percent of the primary student population that demonstrate the need for differentiated instruction to further develop their abilities.

**Honors Courses:** Rigorous, in-depth classes designed for students who want and can handle a challenge. Teachers recommend students for these classes and they're offered during all four years of high school in a wide variety of subjects, including but not limited to the subjects required for graduation.

**Independent Study:** A self-directed course of study under the supervision of a teacher or under the guidance of a college or university.

**Learning Styles:** The preferred style of learning (i.e., verbal/linguistic, kinesthetic/movement, spatial/visual, musical, mathematical/logical, natural, existential/living in the real world.)

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**1. If my child is in the Talent Pool, will he/she automatically receive Gifted/talented services in 4<sup>th</sup> grade?** No. At the end of third grade, students take a formal standardized test. Scores made on that test determine if a student needs G/T modifications or if that student needs to be tested further. Ideally the Talent Pool comprises 25% of the student population. At the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, however, only 5% of students will be identified as needing General Intellectual or Specific Academic services. Therefore, it is not unusual for a student to participate in a Talent Pool but not be identified for G/T services in the intermediate grades.

**Why?** The idea behind the Talent Pool is to “cast a wider net” and try to find and nurture student talents at a young age. We want to try to include students, not to exclude them. The need for a student to be in a Talent Pool is based mainly upon teacher observation and examples of student work. No formal test is given.

**2. How do you decide which service options my child will have?** We strive to match the service options with your child’s needs, interests, and abilities. (Note: We provide a student interest survey for you and your child to fill out in 4th, 7th and 10th grades.) We then meet as a committee to decide which services are right for your child.

**6. Who is responsible for delivering the changes my child might need?** Primarily the classroom teacher is responsible for seeing that the individual needs of every student are met. The district G/T teacher and district G/T coordinator are available to help with strategies and resources.

## WEBSITES AND RESOURCES OF INTEREST TO FAMILIES OF GIFTED/TALENTED CHILDREN

- Hoagies [www.hoagiesgifted.org](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org)
- GT World [www.gtworld.org](http://www.gtworld.org)
- The Gifted Child Development Center  
[www.gifteddevelopment.com](http://www.gifteddevelopment.com)
- National Association for Gifted Children  
[www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)
- Council for Exceptional Children [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)
- Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky  
University [www.wku.edu/gifted/](http://www.wku.edu/gifted/)
- Kentucky Association for Gifted Education  
[www.wku.edu/kage](http://www.wku.edu/kage)
- Legislation: Kentucky [www.lrc.state.ky.us](http://www.lrc.state.ky.us)

# PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS AND GRIEVANCES

- A . Parents and/or students (grades P-12) may petition for identification. Students and teachers may petition or appeal on behalf of a student, provided written parental approval is secured. Parents and/or students may also submit an appeal regarding appropriate and adequate services for gifted students.
- B. The appealing party shall submit in writing to the Gifted and Talented Coordinator specifically why he/she believes that screening results are not accurate, or why the services provided are not adequate/appropriate to meet the needs of the student, or why an exception should be made, and/or reconsideration given.
- C. The Gifted and Talented Coordinator shall compile a student profile and present that along with the petition or appeal to the school's Gifted and Talented Selection Committee. The profile shall include a recommendation with substantiating evidence from the child's present and previous teachers.
- D. The school's Gifted and Talented Selection Committee shall hear appeals according to policies adopted by the SBDM aligned with district policies.
- E. If the student is not selected for the program by the school's Gifted and Talented Selection Committee or services are not appropriate, a written appeal may be made to the district Gifted and Talented Coordinator or assistant superintendent within ten working days of notification.
- F. If the student is still not selected for the program or services are not appropriate, a written appeal may be made within ten working days after the District Selection Committee's rejection to the Board of Education which will have the final decision in the case.

GT Resources and contacts:

Amanda Farmer, Larue County Gifted/Talented Coordinator  
270-358-4111 email: [amanda.farmer@larue.kyschools.us](mailto:amanda.farmer@larue.kyschools.us)

Natalie Detre, Larue County Gifted/Talented Resource Teacher  
270-358-4111 email: [natalie.detre@larue.kyschools.us](mailto:natalie.detre@larue.kyschools.us)



