



Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services

Committed to Excellence - Focused on Student Success

25 Brooklyn Avenue, P.O. Box 1308 | Forsyth, GA 31029 | Phone 478.994.2031 | Fax 478.994.3364 | www.monroe.k12.ga.us

MONROE COUNTY SCHOOLS 2026-2027

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INTRODUCTION

The Monroe County School System believes that an educational environment for gifted learners will provide maximum opportunities for students to achieve at levels commensurate with their ability. A district gifted committee will help demonstrate and document the efficiency and effectiveness of the Monroe County Schools Gifted Program. Individual school programs will meet the requirements of Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38.

Monroe County Schools will provide differentiated instructional practices, curriculum, and services for qualified students who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual ability, possess exceptional leadership skills and/or excel in specific academic content areas/fields. Services should provide for extending learning opportunities, developing individual potential, enhancing the student's self-concept, and advancing toward becoming an independent learner beyond the classroom. The Monroe County Schools Gifted Program is designed to challenge each student through a multidimensional teaching approach involving special curricula, enrichment, and the acceleration of course content.

Definitions

- **Gifted Student-** a student who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative abilities, exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields that need special instruction and/or additional services to achieve at levels relative to his or her ability.
- **Differentiated Curriculum-** courses of study in which the content, teaching strategies, and expectations of student mastery have been adjusted to be appropriate for gifted learners.
- **Qualified Evaluators-** Diagnosticians, School Psychologists, and Certified Educators trained to administer and evaluate student products and gifted assessments to determine gifted program eligibility.
- **Gifted Teacher-** A certified Georgia educator with a Gifted Endorsement or Advanced Placement certification.

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REFERRAL PROCESS

The referral process will establish a pool of students to be evaluated to determine eligibility for gifted services. Referral procedures for gifted education are non-discriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disability, and economic background. There are two types of referrals: automatic referrals and referrals by nomination.

Automatic Referral- A student may be referred for gifted screening based on standardized test results.

In August/September, Gifted Eligibility Team members for the elementary and middle schools will compile a list of 4th-8th grade students who would qualify for screening based on their most recent Georgia Milestones scores.

Students in grades 4 and 5 will qualify for screening if they score a level 4 on the ELA and/or Mathematics Georgia Milestones assessment on the state's most recent assessment administration. Students in grades 6-8 will qualify for screening if they scored a level 4 on the ELA and/or Mathematics Georgia Milestones assessment on the state's most recent assessment administration, as well as on the previous year's administration (two years of data in the same content area).

The Gifted Eligibility Team will determine if students who have been administered the complete battery of testing in prior years may be considered for screening if they meet Georgia Milestones requirements. Screenings will take place during the November testing window. If warranted, additional testing will be conducted for a complete gifted evaluation.

Referral by Nomination- A student may be referred for gifted education services by any individual with knowledge of the student's abilities using the *Gifted Referral Form* (refer to the Monroe County Schools Website or contact a school). Referrals may come from the student, a teacher or other professional knowledgeable about the student, a parent, or a peer. All parent

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referrals should include the *Gifted Behavior Checklist for Parents* (refer to the Monroe County Schools Website or contact a school). Schools will submit completed referrals to the Gifted Education Department, ATTN: Ms. Gaye Chamlee, Monroe County Board Office, 25 Brooklyn Avenue, Forsyth, GA 31029.

The Monroe County Gifted Search/Eligibility Team screens nominated students to consider all information collected during the student search stage of the nomination process and determines whether it is appropriate to proceed with a formal referral and further assessment. Factors to be considered by the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team should include the strength of the evidence of the student's advanced learning needs, the date(s) tested and performance levels of any previous gifted program testing, and circumstances which would indicate the validity of assessment results. A letter will be sent to the parents to inform them of the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team's decision.

Students can be referred to the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team throughout the school year. However, gifted testing will only occur during designated testing windows. The 2026-2027 testing window dates are:

- November 9-13, 2026
- April 26-May 21, 2027

During these windows, elementary Project Soar schedules may be interrupted. New students who qualify for gifted services will begin services once parents sign the eligibility reports as follows:

- November Testing Window- November 30, 2026
- April/May Testing Window- August 2027

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Students who do not attend Monroe County Schools are not eligible to be referred to the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team for consideration of testing; therefore, these students are not eligible to be tested by school personnel.

External evaluation data shall not be substituted or used as the sole source of data that the school generates during the initial eligibility process. Assessment data gathered and analyzed by a source outside the school district shall be considered as part of the referral process for the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team to consider.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The Gifted Education Department will process the *Gifted Referral Form* and send the *Consent to Evaluate* form to parents/guardians.

Upon receipt of the completed and signed *Consent to Evaluate* form, the Gifted Education Department will schedule an evaluation in the areas of mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. The signed parental referral is good for one year from the date of signature.

Any external evaluations will be considered by the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team.

Trained evaluators follow assessment protocols when administering nationally normed assessments for the determination of gifted eligibility.

Gifted teachers trained in the administration of gifted assessments will administer initial testing protocols to students. These qualified evaluators will administer assessments approved by the GADOE and will follow the Georgia Department of Gifted Education Assessment Measures. If the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team determines the need for additional testing in a qualifying area, the district's school psychologist or diagnostician will administer additional assessment(s). In the event a parent requests to have their child evaluated by another gifted teacher outside of their

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individual school, the district's school psychologist or diagnostician will be used to administer the assessment(s).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Student eligibility will be determined based on one of the following options:

Option A- The student may qualify on the basis of mental ability and achievement assessment results only. However, the evaluator must complete the full evaluation so the child can receive a score in the categories of creativity and motivation.

- **Mental Ability:** Composite or full-scale mental ability score at or above the 96th percentile for grades 3-12 or the 99th percentile for grades K-2 on a standardized test; **and**
- **Achievement:** Total battery, total reading, or total mathematics standardized achievement test score at or above the 90th percentile.

Option B- The student may qualify by meeting criteria in any three of the four data categories, including a qualifying score on a nationally normed test.

- **Mental Ability:** Score at or above 96% on the composite or full-scale score on a norm-referenced test (ex. CogAT, NNAT, KBIT).
- **Achievement:** Total battery, total reading, or total mathematics on a norm-referenced achievement test score at or above the 90th percentile (ex. Iowa Assessments, WIAT-4).
- **Creativity:** At or above the 90th percentile rating on a standardized test of creativity rating scale or test (ex. Torrence). **If a rating scale is used to determine Creativity, a rating scale can not be used to assess Motivation.*
- **Motivation:** At or above the 90th percentile rating on a standardized motivational characteristics rating scale (grades K-8) or a GPA of 3.5 on a scale of 4.0 or a numeric grade point average of 90% (grades 6-12). Grades used to determine GPAs of students are determined by calculating the grades earned during the two years prior to evaluation in the subjects of mathematics, science, English/language arts, social studies, and full-year world

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language, if such language study is included in the student's records (ex. GES-IV, Renzuilli, GPA). **If a rating scale is used to assess Motivation, a rating scale can not be used to assess Creativity.*

Test scores used to determine eligibility shall have been administered within the past two (2) calendar years. If a referral is made to the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team and approved by the team, a student can be re-evaluated in a qualifying category after one year from which the initial assessment was administered.

Eligibility procedures for gifted education are non-discriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disability, and economic background.

Eligible for Services- If the student meets the criteria for eligibility, the Gifted Education Department will send the parent a copy of the student's *Gifted Eligibility Report* and a *Consent for Placement* form. The *Gifted Eligibility Report/Data Collection Form* will include student demographic information, referral type, assessment dates, and scores across all categories.

Upon receipt of the signed *Consent for Placement* form, the Gifted Education Department will send a copy of the form to the Gifted Education teacher. An email confirming consent for placement will be sent to the child's Principal, the Gifted Education teacher, the Registrar, and the Homeroom teacher of the school at which the student is enrolled.

A copy of each child's *Gifted Eligibility Report* will be placed in their permanent record so classroom teachers can access this information to help inform instructional decisions.

Gifted services for students are reviewed annually by the child's gifted teacher(s) and recommendations for continuation of services are discussed by teachers and administration. A parent meeting will need to be scheduled to discuss the discontinuation of any services.

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Ineligible for Services- The Gifted Search/Eligibility Team will review eligibility scores for all students who did not qualify and will determine if any additional assessments should be administered. Any additional testing will be conducted by a School Psychologist or Diagnostician.

If the student **did not meet** the criteria for eligibility, the Gifted Education Department will send the parent a copy of the student's *Gifted Eligibility Report/Data Collection* form and the *Ineligibility for Gifted Services* letter. The *Gifted Eligibility Report/Data Collection Form* will include student demographic information, referral type, assessment dates, and scores across all categories.

The Gifted Education Department will forward a copy of the student's *Ineligibility for Gifted Services* letter to the Principal, the Gifted Education teacher and the homeroom teacher of the school at which the student is enrolled.

Appeals- Appeals of the eligibility decision may be submitted in writing to the Gifted Coordinator (Mrs. Alicia Elder, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Monroe County Schools, 25 Brooklyn Avenue, Forsyth, GA 31029). A response will be mailed or emailed within 30 days of receipt of the Appeal.

RECIPROCITY

Any student who meets the Georgia eligibility criteria for gifted education services shall be considered eligible to receive gifted services in any public school system within the state. Before receiving services in Monroe County, documentation of eligibility must be received by the school in which the student is enrolled. This documentation must include the names and scores of tests administered. Students with gifted eligibility who transfer to Monroe County from within the state of Georgia will be granted reciprocity and can begin services once documentation of eligibility has been received. In addition, reciprocity will also be granted for students of active military personnel

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and gold star families transferring into Monroe County Schools with a current gifted eligibility from another state.

Students moving into Georgia from out of state with a gifted eligibility should be strongly considered for evaluation during the next available testing window in order to determine eligibility under Georgia requirements and Monroe County Schools Board of Education guidelines.

PROGRAM CONTINUATION

The school shall review the progress of each student receiving gifted education services each year. Any student who receives gifted education services shall continue to receive services, provided the student demonstrates satisfactory performance in gifted education classes. A probationary period in which a student fails to maintain satisfactory performance in gifted education classes will be implemented.

The student will continue to receive gifted education services while attempting to achieve satisfactory performance status for one grading period. A final review will be conducted prior to discontinuing gifted education services for students who fail to demonstrate satisfactory performance in gifted education classes during the probationary period. Students must maintain a minimum overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or a numeric grade point average of 80% in the gifted education class.

The performance of students in the gifted program will be evaluated each grading period. Each school's administration or designated professionals will be responsible for reviewing grades after report cards are issued. A student who has been officially placed in the gifted program will be eligible to remain in that program for as long as he/she meets the continuation criteria. At the end of each year, elementary gifted education teachers will complete a Summative Progress/Recommendation Report. A copy of the report will be sent to the parent and placed in the child's permanent record.

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Student Performance in Gifted Education Classes- If a student does not perform satisfactorily in gifted classes, he/she is placed on probation for one grading period, or a period determined by the school's gifted team. The gifted team (consisting of gifted teacher(s), classroom teacher(s), an administrator, school counselor, parent, and student) will meet to develop a plan for improvement including interventions to support this improvement. The plan of improvement and interventions will be based upon documented deficiencies by the gifted educator and the regular classroom teacher. If parents do not attend the meeting, they are to be notified in writing when a student is placed on probation.

At the end of the designated term of probation, the gifted team will reconvene to recommend continuation in the program or dismissal from the program. Parents are to be invited to the meeting. The decision will be based upon performance as measured by criteria written in the plan for improvement. If parents do not attend the meeting, they are to be notified in writing concerning the final decision of the gifted team. If the criterion for continued placement is not met during the subsequent grading period, the student will be removed from the program unless extenuating circumstances for continuation can be documented and the Gifted Education Department agrees to extend the probation period. A letter of termination of gifted education services will be mailed to the parents by the Gifted Education Department.

Examples of Interventions- Gifted Interventions should help create a learning environment that fosters the intellectual and personal growth of gifted students.

- **Tiered Assignments-** Teachers provide varying levels of complexity with the same lesson.
- **Flexible Grouping-** Teachers flexibly group students together for specific activities or support to foster collaboration, deeper understanding, remediation, and/or acceleration of content.
- **Enrichment Activities-** Teachers provide opportunities for students to explore topics in greater depth, engage with advanced materials, or work on projects that extend beyond the regular curriculum.

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- **Differentiated Instruction-** Teachers tailor instruction to meet the specific needs of the student, including providing challenging tasks, appropriate support, and opportunities for choice.
- **Mentorship-** Teachers/Administration connect gifted students with mentors who can provide academic guidance as well as emotional and social support.
- **Goal Setting-** Teachers assist students with setting their own learning goals and tracking academic performance data.
- **Technology Integration-** Teachers utilize technology software to remediate skills and/or provide access to advanced learning tools to supplement instruction.

Re-Admittance to the Gifted Program- After an eighteen-week ineligibility period, parents or a teacher may request in writing to the school principal that the student be considered for re-admittance to the Gifted Education Program.

Elementary Project Soar Parent Request for Removal/Re-entry- If a parent wishes for their child to stop attending Project Soar, a meeting should be scheduled with the parent and the school-level gifted team (gifted teacher(s), classroom teacher(s), school administrator, counselor) to discuss reasons for the parent's request for removal. A parent must submit a signed written statement requesting that their child be removed from the program. The statement should be given to the school principal on or before the meeting. A copy of the letter and final decision should be submitted to the MCS Gifted Department.

Parents who wish for their child to re-enter Project Soar, after choosing to be removed from the program, will need to submit a written statement to the principal requesting reasons for re-entry. A meeting should be scheduled with the parents and the school-level gifted team. Students who re-enter are only allowed to do so after six months and can re-enter during the Open Enrollment window (August/January). A copy of the letter and final decision should be submitted to the MCS Gifted Department.

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TESTING MATERIALS AND TRAINING FOR TEST EXAMINERS

All gifted testing materials will be approved for ordering by a school system psychologist.

All gifted teachers who will be responsible for administering gifted assessments will be trained by a school system psychologist before the first testing window.

RECORDS RETENTION

Core documentation must be kept on file permanently. These items include student eligibility reports, parental consent, and program descriptions. Test materials can be shredded as long as all test scores are well documented with scores and dates of testing. All testing materials are housed at the Board of Education. All gifted students are flagged in Infinite Campus. Eligibility reports with parent signatures are uploaded to Infinite Campus.

DATA COLLECTION

The MC Gifted Department will collect and maintain statistical data on the number of students referred for evaluation for gifted education services, the number of students determined eligible for services, and the number of students served during the school year. The data includes the grade level, gender, and ethnicity of students. FTE regulations are followed according to the [Georgia Department of Education's Gifted Resource Manual](#).

PUBLIC NOTICE/PUBLIC REVIEW

General information regarding the MC Gifted Program and its referral procedures may be found in each school's student handbook located on each school's website under www.monroe.k12.ga.us. The Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services and forms can be found via the district's website under the Teaching and Learning page at <https://www.monroe.k12.ga.us/page/teaching-and-learning>.

NOTIFICATION

The district will offer communication materials (e.g. Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services, parent letters, eligibility reports) in students' home languages (e.g., English, Spanish) to inform parents/guardians and stakeholders about gifted education services in accordance with SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 Section (2) Requirements (a) Notification.

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PROGRAM REVIEW

The Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and the MC Gifted Search/Eligibility Team annually evaluate the gifted education services to determine the effectiveness of the program. The committee will review and revise the Gifted Education Administrative Procedures Manual and will seek input from school and district administration on recommendations. Service delivery models, staffing, and gifted schedules are also reviewed considering student needs and grade level enrollment.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professional Learning opportunities for staff are offered each year to increase content-area knowledge, effective teaching strategies, and effective assessment strategies. Opportunities are made available for classroom teachers to earn their gifted endorsement through Middle Georgia RESA. Identified staff are encouraged to attend the Georgia Association for Gifted Children's annual conference as well as join the association to be provided with effective teaching strategies, important information, and resources to enhance the district's programs.

Professional learning goals are established annually with school administration and staff are encouraged to participate in book studies, attend regional trainings, as well as attend in-district professional learning classes to support gifted learners. In addition, the district's Gifted Search/Eligibility Team members attend school faculty meetings to review procedures for gifted student identification, as well as inform classroom teachers regarding the curriculum and services that are provided at each school.

CURRICULUM AND SERVICES PROVIDED

Gifted instruction must be aligned with the Georgia Standards of Excellence, Georgia Board of Education approved curriculum courses and curriculum guides, and Monroe County Board of Education approved curriculum and instructional guides. Gifted instructional programs should include more elaborate, complex, and in-depth study of ideas, problems, and themes that would be ordinarily available in the regular classroom. Evaluation of gifted students' mastery of standards is provided at the end of each nine-week grading period. Curriculum review and assessment revisions occur annually for each content area in grades K-12.

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Gifted Skill Areas- The following skill areas will be emphasized during gifted education services.

- Gifted students will develop cognitive skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and decision-making, innovative thinking, citizenship, and leadership development.
- Gifted students will develop advanced research and reference skills through investigations, evaluating and using information and comprehension, accessing reference materials, independent study, and analyzing data.
- Gifted students will develop communication skills and ideas through the use of new techniques, materials, and formats and how to accurately and effectively communicate those with others through visual, oral, and written communication.
- Gifted students will develop mental habits and metacognitive skills as well as develop an understanding of self and how their unique characteristics may influence interactions with others.

Service Delivery Models- Direct services to identified gifted students are provided in a variety of delivery models in Monroe County Schools in accordance with SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38, Section 4 (e) and the Georgia Department of Education Gifted Resource Manual. Annually, the MC School Superintendent signs the Gifted Assurances Form to confirm the validity of the gifted service delivery models used.

- **Resource Class (grades K-5)-** Students must be identified as a gifted learner by the Georgia State Board of Education criteria. Teachers serving students must have a gifted endorsement. Curriculum must have an academic content, while focusing on enrichment activities. All elementary students will be served one day a week (minimum of 5 segments) in a resource class.

The elementary Project Soar Gifted Program serves all students identified as gifted in grades K-5 at S. E. Hubbard Elementary School, T. G. Scott Elementary School, and K. B. Sutton Elementary School.

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The Project Soar Gifted Schedule for S. E. Hubbard Elementary is as follows:

Monday	Grade K/1
Tuesday	Grade 4
Wednesday	Grade 3
Thursday	Grade 5
Friday	Grade 2

The Project Soar Gifted Schedule for T. G. Scott Elementary is as follows:

Monday	Grade K/1
Tuesday	Grade 5
Wednesday	Grade 2
Thursday	Grade 4
Friday	Grade 3

The Project Soar Gifted Schedule for K. B. Sutton Elementary is as follows:

Monday	Grade 3
Tuesday	Grade 2
Wednesday	Grade 5
Thursday	Grade K/1
Friday	Grade 4

- **Cluster Grouping (grades K-5)-** Identified gifted students are placed as a group (generally 6-8 students) into an otherwise heterogeneous classroom for that grade level. In order to count gifted students at the gifted FTE weight when this delivery model is used, the regular classroom teacher must have the gifted endorsement. Teachers should document curriculum modifications for the gifted students through lesson planning documents. Gifted students in the cluster delivery model are limited to two service segments as specified in the Georgia Department of Education Gifted Resource Manual.

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- **Advanced Content (grades 6-8)-** Students are homogeneously grouped based on academic achievement in a specific content area. Students must either be identified as a gifted learner by the Georgia State Board of Education criteria or have demonstrated exceptional ability and motivation in a content area based upon specific entrance criteria established by the school. Students have the opportunity to be served daily (5 FTE segments per week in each of the core content areas) in English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and/or Social Studies. Teachers serving students must have a gifted endorsement. See section below on specific information about the middle school's advanced content program- ALPHA (Accelerated Learning Program for High Achievers).
- **Advanced Placement Courses (grades 9-12)-** Gifted and non-gifted high school students may be enrolled in an Advanced Placement course based upon guidance from a high school counselor, student's prior academic performance, and parent/guardian permission. AP courses are designed to extend and enhance the curriculum requiring rigorous academic, exploration, and applied critical thinking skills. Teachers must have received (a) training by the College Board in the specific AP course and have completed the 10 clock hours of staff development in characteristics of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted students or (b) have the gifted endorsement. Advanced Placement courses are offered in Language, Literature, United States History, World History, Economics, Government, Biology, Calculus, Statistics, and Art. These classes are taught as college-level courses.
- **Honors Courses (grades 9-12)-** Gifted and non-gifted high school students may be enrolled in an Honors course based upon guidance from a high school counselor, student's prior academic performance, and parent/guardian permission. Honors courses are designed to extend and enhance the curriculum requiring rigorous academic, exploration, and applied critical thinking skills. Teachers must have received (a) the appropriate content area certification and (b) the gifted endorsement in order to count the gifted students in the class at the gifted FTE weight. Honors courses offered include Honors Literature and Composition I, Honors Literature and Composition II, Honors Biology, Honors Physics, Honors Chemistry, Honors Algebra, Honors Advanced Algebra, and Honors Geometry.

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Class Size- The SBOE establishes Gifted Education class sizes; Code: IEC 160-5-1-.08. The district follows the guidance stated in the GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services concerning the number of gifted students in classes. As authorized by O.C.G.A., 20-2-244 (H), the maximum individual gifted education class size is listed below:

• Gifted Education Program	Maximum Class Size
Elementary (K-5)	17
Middle (6-8)	21
High (9-12)	21

Class size may be adjusted based on the Strategic Waiver School System’s approved waivers.

Funding- Gifted funding is earned for all gifted-identified students who receive gifted education services as authorized by O.C.G.A., 20-2-161 QBE Funding Formula.

Project Soar Classwork Procedures- Gifted students are to be held responsible for mastery of all standard curriculum objectives. However, due to the unique nature of the Project Soar Gifted Program and the workload that these students are expected to complete, students are excused from daily and related homework assignments given in the regular classroom while they are participating in Project Soar classes. While all classroom assignments are important, requiring gifted students to make up all work is actually a penalty to the gifted learner.

The following are guidelines to be used when making decisions regarding work missed while attending Project Soar classes:

- Students attending Project Soar classes will be excused from the daily/homework assigned during the class period(s) missed. Students will be excused from these assignments without penalty to their grades, loss of other scheduled activities, or loss of any classroom privileges.
- Mastery of standard curriculum objectives may be determined by oral review, teacher observations, quizzes, modified assignments, and/or a few selected problems. It is the responsibility of the regular classroom teacher to determine mastery of objectives.

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- If mastery of standard grade-appropriate objectives becomes a problem for any Project Soar student, the classroom teacher and the Project Soar teachers should work together to find a solution to the problem.
- Tests, science labs, and other major or long-range assignments should not be made up before or after school. It is the responsibility of the student and classroom teacher to make alternate arrangements to ensure that the assignment is completed in a reasonable time period agreed upon by the teacher and the students. (For example, a test administered while the gifted student is attending Project Soar might be made up the following class day in lieu of that day's assignment.)
- Time spent in Project Soar is governed by GaDOE Regulations. Therefore, students are not to miss any of the scheduled time for gifted services. Assignments due on the day the student is to attend Project Soar are to be turned in at the next scheduled class time.
- It is certainly important that gifted students succeed in their academic classes. By not requiring daily assignments in addition to Gifted Program assignments for these students, the classroom teacher can take some of the pressure off and encourage their success. The thinking skills that gifted students are learning and practicing in Project Soar can only enhance their performance in regular education classes.

Accelerated Learning Program for High Achievers (ALPHA)- ALPHA courses are on-grade-level, academically advanced courses designed to provide in-depth learning opportunities to motivated students as a means to understand challenging content. An ALPHA student should possess the following characteristics to find success in an ALPHA class:

- Read on or above grade level
- Strong study skills and self-motivation
- Proficient oral and written communication skills
- Self-discipline to plan, organize, and carry out tasks to completion
- Interest and self-directedness in a particular subject

Gifted students who have tested into the gifted program will be automatically placed in ALPHA classes, unless a parent requests otherwise. Students who have not qualified as gifted learners may still request to enroll in an ALPHA class by meeting the requirements below.

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Students must meet the following qualifications in order to be considered for an ALPHA class in 6th grade:

- 90 or above final grade average in the requested class, along with meeting success criteria scoring on grade level on the following indicators: FY26 Georgia Milestones Assessment level 3 (Proficient) or level 4 (Distinguished) for Math and Science, Lexile score for ELA and Social Studies, STAR Math score, and STAR Reading score. **Due to the new Georgia Milestones assessment in ELA, ELA scores will not be available until fall 2026.*
- Students who transfer to Monroe County Middle School must meet the criteria stated above using a district-approved assessment. Students may be placed in an ALPHA class if space is available.

Students must meet the following qualifications in order to be considered for an ALPHA class in 7th/8th grade:

- **Students Currently Enrolled in an ALPHA Class**
85 or above final grade average in the ALPHA class they are currently enrolled in, and scoring on grade level on the following indicators: FY26 Georgia Milestones Assessment level 3 (Proficient) or level 4 (Distinguished) for Math, FY26 Final Exam Score of 85 or higher for Science and Social Studies, Lexile score for ELA, STAR Math score, and STAR Reading score. **Due to the new Georgia Milestones assessment in ELA, ELA scores will not be available until fall 2026.*
- **Students Not Currently Enrolled in an ALPHA Class**
90 or above final grade average in the requested class, along with meeting success criteria. Scoring on grade level on the following indicators: FY26 Georgia Milestones Assessment level 3 (Proficient) or level 4 (Distinguished) for Math, FY26 Final Exam Score of 85 or higher for Science and Social Studies, Lexile score for ELA, STAR Math score, and STAR

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Reading score. **Due to the new Georgia Milestones assessment in ELA, ELA scores will not be available until fall 2026.*

- Students who transfer to Monroe County Middle School must meet the criteria stated above using a district-approved assessment. Students may be placed in an ALPHA class if space is available.

High School Credit Opportunity for Gifted/ALPHA Math Students- Students enrolled in ALPHA Math courses have the opportunity to receive high school credit in 8th grade through the Enhanced Algebra Concepts and Connections course. The Enhanced Algebra Concepts and Connections curriculum combines 8th-grade standards and Algebra I standards into one year-long course. At the end of the school year, students enrolled in the 8th-grade Enhanced Algebra Concepts and Connections course will take the 8th-grade EOG and the EOC assessments.

ALPHA Probationary Status Information- Students are required to maintain 85% or higher in ALPHA courses each nine-week grading period. Students who enter the year on probationary status and meet the required 85% or higher on their Term 1 Report Card will be removed from probationary status and continue in their ALPHA class. Any student who does not meet the required 85% or higher on their term report card at the end of their probationary period will be removed from the ALPHA class and placed in an academic class for the following grading period.

Students who do not enter on probationary status are required to maintain 85% or higher in ALPHA courses each nine-week grading period (a gifted student's probationary period is 18 weeks). If a student does not meet the required 85%, a letter will be sent home attached to the student's report card notifying parents of probationary status. At the beginning of the next nine-week grading period, a conference will be held with the student's teacher(s), parents, and student to discuss their progress and develop an improvement plan. At the end of the probationary period, if a student has not met the required 85% or higher report card average, the student will be removed from the ALPHA class and placed in an academic class for the following grading period.

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Kindergarten Talent Identification Program (PILOT)- The goal of any talent identification program is to help identify students with the potential to perform at exceptional levels, if nurtured appropriately. Beginning in September, all kindergarten students will participate in the P.I.L.O.T. (Promoting Innovative Learning, Originality, and Talent) program at their school. A gifted teacher who specializes in higher-level learning will visit each classroom on a weekly basis and will teach a 30-45 minute mini-lesson to the entire class that focuses on higher-level mathematical and verbal reasoning, critical thinking, and creativity. During the PILOT lessons, the classroom teacher and the PILOT program teacher will be observing and collecting information and work samples from students to determine who might benefit from receiving additional higher-level activities.

Beginning in January, the PILOT program teacher will no longer push into each kindergarten class, but will provide small group lessons to identified students for 30-45 minutes each week. Higher-level thinking, reasoning, and creativity lessons will be provided to the identified students. The PILOT program teacher will continue to observe and collect information and work samples from students to help determine those students who should be referred to the Gifted Search/Eligibility Team for gifted testing.

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