



GIFTED EDUCATION HANDBOOK

Artesia Public Schools



Updated Fall 2025

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Mission & Vision Statements

The mission of Artesia Public Schools is to develop each individual student's self-reliance instilling a belief that everybody can make a difference and a worthy contribution to society.

For Gifted Education, it is our mission in Artesia Public Schools to identify gifted and talented students and meet their unique needs to contribute to life-long success and learning.

Our Vision is that we will collaborate with all stakeholders to provide a program that will:

- engage GT students,
 - encourage exploration in areas of interests, and
 - focus on challenging, real-world scenarios
- within a safe, caring, and inclusive environment.

Definitions (New Mexico Administrative Code 6.31.3)

“Gifted Student” means a person between the ages of 5 and 21 whose abilities, talents, or potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs.

“Aptitude” means a capacity to acquire competence, skill, or behaviors that can be monitored, evaluated, or observed.

“Artistic Ability” means having exceptional capability or potential in visual art, theater, music, or dance. Artistic ability is demonstrated by achieving at an advanced level on a performance assessment or scoring in the ninety-fifth percentile or above on standardized arts assessments.

“Creative or Divergent Thinking” means having exceptional capability or potential to solve a problem or reach a decision using strategies that deviate from commonly used or previously taught strategies, which is demonstrated by achieving an advanced level on performance assessments or scoring in the ninety-fifth percentile or above on standardized tests of creative or divergent thinking.

“General Intellectual Ability” means having exceptional capability or potential recognized through cognitive processes, such as memory, reasoning, rate of learning, spatial reasoning, ability to find and solve problems, ability to manipulate abstract ideas, and ability to make connections, which is demonstrated by scoring in the ninety-fifth percentile or above on standardized cognitive abilities tests.

“Leadership Ability” means exceptional capability or potential to influence, inspire, and empower groups demonstrated by achieving an advanced level on leadership ability performance assessment or scoring in the ninety-fifth percentile or above on standardized leadership tests.

“Problem-Solving or Critical Thinking” means having outstanding capabilities to analyze a problem and engage in solutions-oriented performance, which is demonstrated by achieving an advanced level on problem-solving or critical thinking performance assessments or scoring in the ninety-fifth percentile or above on standardized problem-solving assessments.

“Specific Aptitude” means having exceptional capability in a subject area, such as having a strong knowledge base or the ability to ask insightful, pertinent questions within the discipline, and achievement at an advanced level on performance assessments or state standardized achievement tests. Specific aptitude subject areas include all subject areas for which educational standards for students have been adopted in Chapter 29 of Title 6 NMAC.

“Twice-Exceptional (2E)” means a student who is identified as a gifted student and is:

- Identified as a student with a disability pursuant to 6.31.2 NMAC; or
- A qualified individual pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Gifted Advisory Committee

Per New Mexico Administrative Code 6.31.3.8, each LEA (Local Education Agency) must have a gifted advisory committee that is comprised of parents, community members, students, and school staff members and that meets at least three times per year.

In Artesia Public Schools, we meet the second Thursday of October, January, and April at the Bulldog Training Center. Notices are posted on the school website and are sent home with students prior to each advisory committee meeting. All who are interested are encouraged to attend.

Areas of Giftedness

New Mexico recognizes six areas of giftedness: General Intellectual Ability, Specific Aptitude or Achievement, Problem-Solving or Critical Thinking, Creative or Divergent Thinking, Artistic Ability, and Leadership Ability. A student must qualify in at least one of these areas to receive gifted services.

Identification Process

The identification process for Artesia Public Schools uses the New Mexico Talent and Potential Assessment System (NM-TAPAS). The NM-TAPAS is a primarily quantitative approach that utilizes local norms and universal screening with qualitative safeguards. It takes into consideration opportunity factors to ensure that gifted students from all areas are identified.

There are two paths for identification: the referral process and universal screening.

Nomination Process:

A teacher/staff member or parent/guardian can nominate a student for Gifted evaluation. In order to nominate a student, the referring person/s must complete the nomination form that is located on our school website at <https://www.bulldogs.org/page/gifted-education>. The nomination window is open yearly from May 1 to September 30.

Upon closure of the nomination window, the Gifted Education teacher will begin to collect a body of evidence on the student, which may include testing data, observational data, etc. The Gifted Education Team will make a determination on whether or not a student is further assessed based on the body of evidence.

If a determination is made to not evaluate the student, a meeting will be held with the student's parents/guardians. If a determination is made to evaluate the student, parents/guardians will be notified, and evaluation via NM-TAPAS will occur.

Universal Screening:

All second-grade students are screened for gifted in the spring semester using their middle of year testing data and the Naglieri General Abilities Test - Nonverbal. Classroom teachers may complete an additional nomination scale for their students as an additional piece of data. Students who are within the top 15% of their school move into a full evaluation for gifted. Parents of those students are notified, and evaluation via NM-TAPAS occurs.

NM-TAPAS:

Students who are being evaluated for gifted education will take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). As needed, students may be given the Torrence Test of Creative Abilities-Figural.

Once all data has been collected, the Gifted Education Team will meet to discuss all data and evidence in order to make a determination. A student must score within the 95th percentile or higher in at least one demonstrated area in order to qualify for gifted education services.

Gifted Identification Process

Artesia Public Schools



Reciprocity

Students transferring from out of state will be considered on an individual basis by the Gifted Education Team and a determination made regarding whether sufficient information exists to establish eligibility based on state criteria or whether further testing is needed.

Students who have been in a gifted program in another district in New Mexico will automatically begin receiving gifted education services in Artesia Public Schools as soon as documentation of placement in the former school district is confirmed and parent consent is received.

Services and Placement

Students receive services for gifted education dependent on their educational setting. Pull-out services are provided pursuant to New Mexico Administrative Code 6.29.1.9.E.10.

Elementary – Pull-out Services and Case Management

Intermediate – Pull-out Services and Case Management

Junior High & High School – Case Management

All students all receive case management from their case manager, allowing for individual needs to be met as needed and in a one-on-one setting. Case management includes, but is not limited to, monitoring grades, conferencing with students, conferencing with parents, conferencing with teachers, tracking IEP goal data, etc.

At the Intermediate and Junior High levels, students also have the opportunity to participate in Honors courses. See Artesia Public School's Gifted LEA Plan, available on the Gifted webpage at <https://www.bulldogs.org/page/gifted-education>, for more information on what courses are offered at the secondary level.

Characteristics of Gifted Children

Giftedness is a collection of certain traits and characteristics that have been displayed. There is much diversity among the gifted. Each person has a different combination or characteristics and traits and will display them in different ways. They may be asynchronous (uneven) in development, showing extraordinary talents in some

areas but be average or even below average in others. The characteristics displayed by gifted students may be assets or liabilities in the school setting. Listed below are some of the characteristics associated with gifted individuals.

General Intellectual Ability

- Has an extensive and detailed memory, particularly in an area of interest
- Has vocabulary advanced for age – precocious language
- Has communication skills advanced for age and is able to express ideas and feelings
- Asks intelligent questions
- Is able to identify the important characteristics of new concepts, problems
- Learns information quickly
- Uses logic in arriving at common sense answers
- Has a broad base of knowledge – a large quantity of information
- Understands abstract ideas and complex concepts
- Uses analogical thinking, problem solving, or reasoning
- Observes relationships and sees connections
- Finds and solves difficult and unusual problems
- Understands principles, forms generalizations, and uses them in new situations
- Wants to learn and is curious
- Works conscientiously and has a high degree of concentration in areas of interest
- Understand and uses various symbol systems
- Is reflective about learning

Specific Aptitude/Achievement – General within field of interest

- Has an intense, sustained interest
- Has hobbies/collections related to field
- Attracted towards cognitive complexity, enjoys solving complex problems
- Prefers classes/careers in the academic field
- Is highly self-motivated, persistent
- Has a broad base of knowledge
- Reads widely in an academic field
- Learns information quickly
- Has an inquisitive nature, asks good questions
- Examines and recalls details
- Recognizes critical elements and details in learning concepts
- Analyzes problems and considers alternatives
- Understands abstract ideas and concepts
- Uses vocabulary beyond grade level
- Verbalizes complex concepts and processes
- Visualizes images and translates into other forms

- Sees connections and relationships in a field and generalizes to other situations, applications

Specific Aptitude/Achievement – Math/Science

- Is interested in numerical analysis
- Has a good memory for storing main features of problems and solutions
- Appreciates parsimony, simplicity, or economy in solutions
- Reasons effectively and efficiently
- Solves problems intuitively using insight
- Can reverse steps in the mental process
- Organizes data and experiments to discover patterns or relationships
- Improvises with science equipment and math methods
- Is flexible in solving problems

Specific Aptitude/Achievement – Social Studies/Language Arts

- Enjoys language/verbal communication, communication skills
- Engages in intellectual play, enjoys puns, good sense of humor
- Organizes ideas and sequences in preparation for speaking and writing
- Suspends judgement, entertains alternative points of view
- Is original and creative – has unique ideas in writing or speaking
- Is sensitive to social, ethical, and moral issues
- Is interested in theories of causation
- Likes independent study and research in areas of interest

Creative/Divergent Thinking

- Has in-depth foundational knowledge
- Prefers complexity and open-endedness
- Contributes new concepts, methods, products, or performances
- Has extreme fluency of thoughts and a large number of ideas
- Is observant and pays attention to details
- Uses unique solutions to problems, improvises
- Challenges existing ideas and products
- Connects disparate ideas
- Is constantly asking questions
- Criticizes constructively
- Is a risk taker, confident
- Is attracted to the novel, complex, mysterious
- Is a nonconformist, uninhibited in expression, adventurous, able to resist group pressure
- Accepts disorder
- Tolerates ambiguity; delays closure
- Is persistent and task committed in area/s of interest
- Has a sense of humor

- Is intellectually playful
- Is aware of their own creativity
- Is emotionally sensitive; sensitive to beauty
- Is intuitive
- Enjoys alone time
- Is reflective about personal creative process

Artistic

- Chooses artistic activity for projects or during free time
- Studies or practices artistic talent without being told
- Strives to improve artistic skills
- Demonstrates talent for an extended period of time
- Concentrates for long periods of time on artistic projects
- Seems to pick up skills in the arts with little or no instruction
- Possess high sensory sensitivity
- Observes and shows interest in others who are proficient in the artistic skill
- Uses the artistic area to communicate
- Experiments in the artistic medium/s
- Sets high standards in the artistic area/s
- Demonstrates confidence in the artistic area/s

Leadership

- Is well-organized
- Can do backward planning
- Is visionary, has a holistic view
- Is a problem finder
- Is able to see problems from multiple perspectives
- Is adaptable to new situations
- Can manipulate systems
- Is highly responsible; dependable
- Maintains on-task focus
- Is self-confident
- Is a persuasive communicator
- Has a cooperative attitude; works well in groups
- Participates in most social activities, enjoys being around other people
- Influences the behavior of others; recognized as a leader by peers
- Is respected, liked, or both by others
- Is aware of verbal and nonverbal cues; sophisticated interpersonal skills
- Is emotionally stable
- Is willing to take risks

A High Achiever	A Gifted Learner	A Creative Thinker
Remembers the answers.	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.	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed.
Works hard to achieve.	Knows without working hard.	Plays with ideas and concepts.
Answer 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 for mastery.
Comprehends at a high level.	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas.	Overflows with ideas--many of which will never be developed
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: Aha!
Completes assignments on time.	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments.	Initiates more projects that 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.
Absorbs information.	Manipulates information.	Improvises.
Is a technician with expertise in a field.	Is an expert who abstracts beyond the field.	Is an inventor and idea generator.
Memorizes well.	Guesses and infers well.	Creates and brainstorms well.
Is highly alert and observant.	Anticipates and relates observations..	Is intuitive.
Is pleased with own learning.	Is self-critical.	Is never finished with possibilities.
Gets A's.	May not be motivated by grades.	May not be motivated by grades.
Is able.	Is intellectual	Is idiosyncratic.

Non-Obvious Gifted Children

There are four main populations of students who can be overlooked when districts use standard identification methods other than alternative methods, such as the New Mexico Talent and Potential Assessment System. As with other characteristics of gifted students, the following traits show in different combinations and different ways. These groups are:

Economically and/or Educationally Disadvantaged Students

Ethnic Minorities and/or Different Cultures

Students with Disabilities

Underachieving Students

Traits of Economically and/or Educationally Disadvantaged

- High mathematical abilities
- Alertness, Curiosity
- Independence of action
- Initiative, anxious to do new things
- Fluency in nonverbal communication
- Imagination in Thinking
- Flexibility in approach to problems
- Learning quickly through experience
- Retaining and using ideas and information well
- Showing a desire to learn in daily work
- Originality and creativity in thinking
- Responding well to visual media
- Varied interests
- Ability to generalize learning to other areas and show relationships among apparently unrelated ideas
- Resourcefulness, ability to solve problems by ingenious methods
- Entrepreneurial ability; readily makes money on various projects or activities
- Imaginative story telling, language rich in imagery
- Mature sense of humor
- Responsiveness to the concrete
- Greater dependence on the teacher for direction
- Reasoning in a more step-by-step process
- Appear to have more patience in dealing with tasks not easily resolved

Traits of Ethnic Minorities and/or Different Cultures

- Ability to meaningfully manipulate some symbol held valuable in the subculture
- Ability to think logically, given appropriate data
- Ability to use stored knowledge to solve problems
- Ability to reason by analogy
- Ability to extend or extrapolate knowledge to new situations or unique applications

Traits of Students with Disabilities (Twice-Exceptional)

- Cognitive/Affective Strengths
 - Wide range of interests that are not related to school topics of learning
 - Specific talent or consuming interest area for which they have an exceptional memory and knowledge
 - Are interested in the “big picture” rather than small details
 - Are extremely curious and questioning
 - Possess high levels of problem-solving and reasoning skills
 - Penetrating insights
 - Capable of setting up situations to their own advantage often as a coping method
 - Extremely creative in their approach to tasks as a technique commensurate for their disability
 - Have an unusual imagination
 - Humorous often in “bizarre” ways
 - Advanced ideas and opinions which they are uninhibited in expressing
 - Superior vocabulary
 - Very high energy levels
- Cognitive/Affective Problems
 - Discrepant verbal and performance abilities
 - Deficient or extremely uneven academic skills
 - Extremely frustrated by school
 - Auditory and/or visual processing problems
 - Problems with long-term and/or short-term memory
 - Motorical difficulties
 - Lack organizational skills and study skills
 - Unable to think in a linear fashion
 - Are easily frustrated
 - Difficulty expressing ideas, “getting to the point,” and/or expressing feelings
 - Blame others for their problems while believing that their success are only due to “luck”
 - Distractible
 - Unable to control impulses
 - Poor social skills
 - Highly sensitive to crisis
 - Low self-esteem

Traits of Underachieving Students

- Low self-concept; negative evaluations of self
- Feelings of inferiority
- Socially more immature than achievers
- Lack self-discipline; procrastinate
- Unwilling to face realities and consequences
- Feelings of rejection
- Feelings of helplessness
- Do not see the relationship between their efforts and subsequent achievement outcomes; negate personal responsibility for failures
- Irresponsible, rebellious
- Have few hobbies or strong interests
- Hostile towards adult authority figures; distrust adults generally
- Resistant to influence from teacher or parent
- Lower aspirations for future
- Lack study skills and academic curiosity
- Often leave schoolwork incomplete
- Perform at higher levels on tasks using random thinking than detailed, computational tasks

Needs of Gifted Children

The needs of gifted children vary. Regardless of the area/s of qualification, gifted students need:

- Continuous progress at an advanced level and rate of instruction in their area/s of giftedness
- Opportunity to explore and apply advanced creative thinking and problem-solving strategies in their area/s of giftedness
- Training in effective leadership techniques
- Training in responsible use of influence
- Regular interaction with other gifted students to provide a support system which values high level achievement and unique interests and perspectives
- Experience in dealing with “failure”

There may be other needs that are addressed on an individual basis for gifted students.

Multi-Layered System of Supports (MLSS) & Gifted

Advanced learning needs can be met in the general education classroom for the majority of students as it offers a quality learning environment by providing instructional interventions. Through these interventions within the MLSS process, gifted and high-achieving students have access to a differentiated curriculum, flexible pacing, cluster grouping, and other universal interventions.

If evidence and data shows that instructional modifications are not meeting a student's needs, parents/guardians and/or staff members should follow Artesia Public School's Gifted nomination process.

Gifted Education Organizations

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/>

New Mexico Association for the Gifted (NMAG)

<https://nmgifted.org/>

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

<https://www.nagc.org/>

Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG)

<https://www.sengifted.org/>

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC)

<https://world-gifted.org/>

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