

Procedures Manual for Gifted Program Services 2026-2027

Schley County Schools
161 Perry Drive
Ellaville, Georgia 31806

Gifted Program Services

Schley County Schools

Schley County Schools is dedicated to the concept that every student has the right to an education that provides opportunities for the maximum development of his/her potential. We recognize that some students in our schools have capabilities that are beyond those of their peers. The school system encourages, fosters, and supports educational efforts that meet provisions for the special needs of gifted learners.

Gifted Education Rule

The Schley County School System determines that students are eligible for gifted education services in compliance with the definition found in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (20-2-152), Georgia State Board of Education (SBOE) Rule 160-4-2-.38 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS and the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services: A gifted student is defined as one who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability(ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities. A multiple criteria assessment process is used to evaluate student eligibility for gifted services based on evaluations of academic achievement, mental ability, creativity, and motivation.

The guidelines in this manual reflect the current rules and regulations set up by the state and the Schley County Board of Education to maintain and effectively meet the needs of gifted learners. Any guidelines previous to this rule are void.

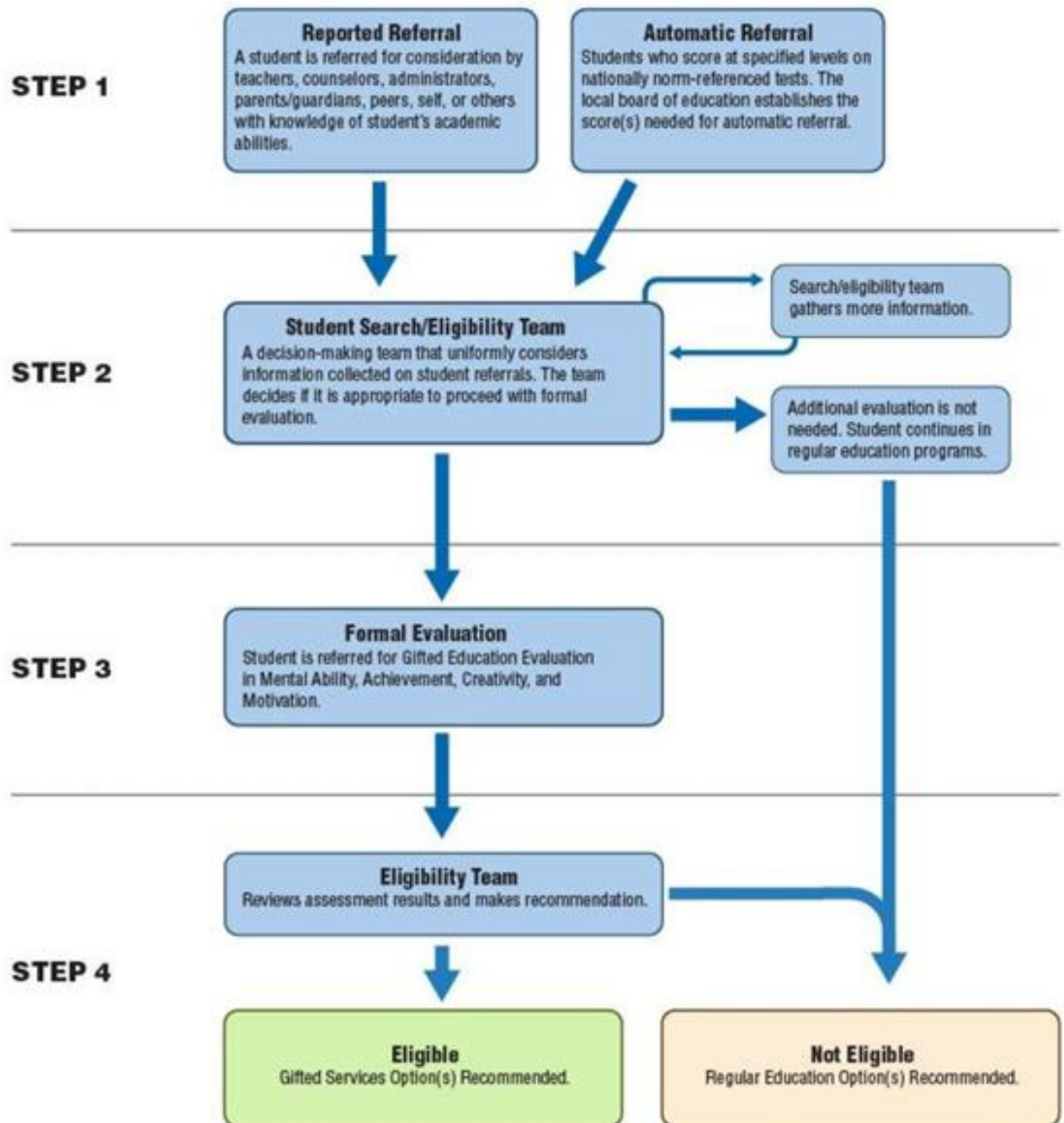
Nomination / Referral Process

A student may be referred for consideration by teachers, administrators, parents, counselors, peers, self, and other individuals with the knowledge of the student's abilities. All referrals are reviewed by the local Gifted Eligibility Team (GET) to consider if existing information warrants a formal evaluation for eligibility.

A student may be referred or nominated at any time. When a student is considered for the gifted program, notification is given to the child's parents in their home language. The gifted coordinator handles the gathering of all appropriate information to present to the gifted eligibility team committee for student consideration. *Parental consent must be obtained before any testing can occur.*

The Schley County Board of Education shall ensure that any tests or procedures used in the referral process and to determine eligibility for gifted education services meet standards of validity and reliability and shall be nondiscriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, gender, disabilities, or economic background. Additionally, standardized tests and other assessment tools must meet the requirements described in SBOE Rule 1604-2-.38 for that form of assessment.

Referral and Eligibility Process Chart



Transfer Students – In-State Reciprocity

Any student who meets the Georgia eligibility criteria for the gifted education program is considered eligible to receive gifted services in Schley County upon verification of records. The student's previous eligibility records must be attached to the SCSS Eligibility Report. Transfer students who qualify for services in Schley County Schools, but whose performance does not meet Schley's continuation criteria, may begin gifted services on probation.

*Note: Students **may not** be scheduled into the gifted classes until eligibility has been verified and parent permission has been obtained.*

Transfer Students - Out-of-State Students

A student served by the gifted program in schools out-of-state is also immediately referred for consideration. Georgia State requirements, however, must be met in order for the student to receive services within the state of Georgia, except in the case of students who are dependents of military personnel as provided in O.C.G.A. §§20-2-2140 et.seq.

Parents are encouraged to share information about the student who will receive gifted services when they enroll their child.

Automatic Referral

Students scoring at the 95th percentile or higher in reading, math, or on the composite score of a norm-referenced standardized assessments (MAP and PSAT) are automatically referred for consideration of evaluation to determine eligibility for gifted services.

Before additional testing is conducted, parental notification and permission will be obtained. Additional testing is that which is conducted to further determine the eligibility for gifted services for the individual.

Eligibility and Criteria

A student is initially eligible to participate in gifted education services as stated in Georgia rule 160-4-2.38 by meeting the state mandated criteria explained below.

Option A: Students in Kindergarten through grade 12 may qualify on the basis of mental ability and achievement assessment results only. The mental ability test score must be a composite or full-scale score at or above the 99th percentile for grades Kindergarten through 2 and at or above the 96th percentile for grades 3 through 12. Scores on achievement assessment must be greater than the 90th percentile for grades K-12. If students meet Option A criteria, data may also be collected in the areas of creativity and motivation. Each student evaluated must have data in all four areas.

Option B: Students in Grades K through 12 may qualify by meeting the criteria in 3 of the 4 areas assessed including mental ability, achievement, motivation, and creativity. Mental ability percentiles may be 96th percentile for grades K through 2 in this option.

Mental Ability

A student in grades K-2 must make at or above the 99th percentile (by age) on the composite score or appropriate component score for Option A, 96th for Option B; grades 3-12 must make at or above the 96th percentile on the composite score or appropriate component score. The system Gifted Coordinator may exercise his/her discretion to select other test(s) based on need.

Achievement

A student must score greater than or equal to the 90th percentile (by age or grade) on a state adopted standardized test of academic achievement in one of the following areas: Total Reading, Total Math, or Total Battery. The system Gifted Coordinator may exercise his/her discretion to select other test(s) based on need. These tests have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.

Creativity

A student must score greater than or equal to the 90th percentile (by age or grade) on the total battery of a standardized creativity test. Schley currently uses the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking—Visual and Figural, and determines which to use for each student, depending on recommendations from the referring teacher and/or parent. We have three staff members who have earned certificates from UGA to score the Torrance.

Motivation

A student may be eligible by scoring in the 90th percentile or higher on a standardized motivational characteristics rating scale. Schley County Schools currently uses the Hawthorne Gifted Motivation Scale. The system Gifted Coordinator may exercise his/her discretion to select other test(s) or measures, based on need.

Testing Instruments used to Evaluate Students in Schley County

Mental Ability	In-View Total score; total non-verbal or total verbal KBIT-2— Composite/Verbal/Nonverbal SIT-4 Total score; total non-verbal or total verbal	The In-View is a test published by DRC. It has non-verbal and verbal components. KBIT-2 is Revised Edition SIT 4 is latest version	Full scale or appropriate component score at or above the 96 th -99 th percentile (depending on age and other areas of eligibility—See Options A and B)
Achievement	NWEA MAP PSAT Grades 9-11	MAP Reading and Math tests are administered 3 times a year to all students in K-12	Score the 90th percentile or above on Total Reading, or Total Math, or Total Battery
Creativity	Torrance Test of Creativity	Three teachers in the system are certified to score the Torrance	Score the 90th percentile (by age or grade) or above on the Total Battery
Motivation	Hawthorne Rating Scales	Gifted Rating Scale (GRS) Completed by a teacher currently serving or recently having served student	Score the 90th percentile or above

NOTE:

- * A qualifying score on a nationally normed test is required to meet the criteria in at least one area. *
- Any data used to establish eligibility in one area shall not be used to establish eligibility in another area.
- * Any test score used to establish eligibility shall be current within two years.

External Test Data

Private test data may be used to determine eligibility. External evaluation data shall not be substituted for or used as the sole source of data the school generates during the initial

eligibility process. External evaluations shall have been reviewed for bias with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background.

Assessment Data Gathered by an Outside Source

Assessment data gathered and analyzed by a source outside of the student's school or school system must be considered as part of the nomination and evaluation process.

(Occasionally, RESA psychologists are asked to assist with testing.) However, these outside data shall not be substituted for data the school generates during the testing/evaluation process and may never be the sole source of assessment data. Systems shall never rely on outside data exclusively for determination of eligibility for gifted program services.

Instead, outside test data may be used as part of a comprehensive profile of test and non-test evidence of advanced instructional needs. If Schley County Schools elect to use outside test data to help establish students' eligibility, it shall collect and maintain statistical data that will allow the Georgia Department of Education to evaluate the impact of this practice on the identification of gifted students from all ethnic and socioeconomic groups.

Non-Discrimination Clause

Identification of gifted students shall be nondiscriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities or economic background. Questions related to the application and compliance of this policy may contact the school system's Student Services Director, Jodie Leeder, at 161 Perry Drive, Ellaville, GA 31806, or by calling (229) 937-2405, ext. 229.

Eligibility Status

Parents will be notified of eligibility/ineligibility status in their home language. Parents will be given an opportunity for conferencing. Parental permission must be requested and obtained for the student to participate in gifted education.

Gifted Eligibility Team

The Schley County School System Eligibility Team promotes the education of gifted students. The Gifted Eligibility Team consists of school administrators, the Gifted Coordinator, the Student Services Coordinator, school counselors, and classroom teachers.

Gifted Educational Services

Local systems are required to provide at least five segments a week (or the yearly equivalent) of gifted education services for all eligible students whose participation in the gifted program has been approved by the parent. The differentiated instruction, utilizing Georgia Standards of Excellence, must be provided in one or more of the delivery models described below. The system shall review and revise, if revisions are needed, its curricula for gifted students at least annually. Detailed descriptions of the characteristics of the various delivery strategies, the recommended uses of each, and the research findings on effect sizes may be found in the body of the *Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

Schley County Schools presently uses the Advance Content and Cluster Grouping models. Other models are considered as needs for them arise.

Delivery Models:

Advanced Content Class (K-12) - Students are homogeneously grouped on the basis of achievement and interests ((Career, Technical and Agricultural Education, English language arts, fine arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages). The district may elect to include students who are not identified as gifted but who have demonstrated exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. In that case, the local district must establish criteria and guidelines that identify students who will be successful with the advanced curriculum to be offered in these classes. Identified gifted students in the advanced content course may be counted at the gifted weight only if (a) the maximum size specified for gifted resource classes in State Board Rule 160-5-1.08 CLASS SIZE is observed; (b) a description of the course curriculum (showing very clearly how the advanced course content, pacing, process skills emphasis, and expectation of student outcomes differ from the course more typical students at that grade level would take in that content area) is developed and maintained by the local board of education; and (c) the teacher has the following qualifications:

1. Advanced Placement (AP) Courses - The teacher must have the appropriate content area certification. In addition, the teacher must (a) have been trained by the College Board in that specific AP course and have had at least 10 clock hours of staff development in characteristics of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted students; or (b) have the gifted endorsement.
2. Honors Courses - The teacher of a locally developed honors course curriculum must have the appropriate content area certification and the gifted endorsement in order to count the gifted students in the class at the gifted FTE weight.

Cluster Grouping (K-12) - Identified gifted students are placed as a group into an otherwise heterogeneous classroom, rather than being dispersed among all of the rooms/courses at that grade level. To count any gifted student at the gifted weight when this delivery model is used, the regular classroom teacher must have the gifted endorsement. At least one, but no more than two segments per day are provided in this setting and may be counted at the gifted weight if the teacher documents the curriculum modifications he/she has made for the gifted students by way of (a) separate lesson plans and (b) individual student contracts which show the:

1. Reason(s) why that particular student needs an advanced curriculum in that particular content area (e.g., pretest grades);
2. Learning objectives for the gifted student;
3. Alternative activities in which the gifted student will be engaged;
4. Dates and amount of time (in segments) the student will be engaged in the higher-level activities; and

5. Means by which the gifted student's learning will be assessed (e.g., the expected outcomes or products).

Resource Class (K-12) - All students must have been identified as gifted by Georgia State Board of Education criteria. The class is limited to the maximum size specified in State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.08 CLASS SIZE. The teacher must have the gifted endorsement. The curriculum must have an academic content foundation, but it should focus on interdisciplinary enrichment activities. The content and pacing should be differentiated to the degree that the activities are clearly not appropriate for more typical students at that grade level. Gifted students may receive no more than ten segments per week of resource class service. Schley County does not currently offer this model.

- **Mentorship/Internship** (Grades 9-12) -- A gifted student works with a mentor to explore a profession of interest. The gifted education specialist maintains close contact with both the participating student(s) and the selected mentor(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals. One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted weight for students participating in a gifted mentorship/internship if an individual student contract documents the work to be done, the learning objectives for the gifted student, the dates and amount of time the student will be participating in the internship/mentorship, the means by which the gifted student's learning will be assessed (e.g., the expected outcomes or products), and the responsibilities of the gifted education teacher and the mentor.

To ensure adequate time for the gifted education specialist to monitor and assist gifted students participating in mentorships/internships, he/she must be given one full period each day or its weekly equivalent during which he/she has only gifted education programming responsibilities (as determined by the local system) for every fifteen (15) gifted students for whom he/she is supervising a mentorship/internship experience.

- **Self-directed Study** (9-12)—A gifted student works under the direction of a gifted-endorsed teacher to explore a challenge/subject of interest. The gifted teacher assigned to supervise the self-directed program maintains close contact with the participating student(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals which are based on the approved Georgia standards-based curriculum. **One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted FTE weight for students participating in the gifted self-directed program.** Each gifted student in the self-directed study must have a contract which documents the work to be done, the learning goals for the gifted student, the dates and amount of time the student will be working on the self-directed study, the means by which the gifted students learning will be evaluated, and the responsibilities of the gifted program self-directed study teacher and any other supporting teachers/staff working with the study.
- **Community Service Learning** (9-12)—A gifted student works under the direction of a gifted endorsed teacher to complete a project with community service learning. The gifted teacher assigned to supervise the community service-learning program maintains

close contact with the participating student(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals which are based on the approved Georgia standards-based curriculum. **One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted FTE weight for students participating in the gifted community service – learning program.** Each gifted student in the community service learning program must have a contract which documents the work to be done, the learning goals for the gifted student, the dates and amount of time the student will be working on the community service learning, the means by which the gifted students learning will be evaluated, and the responsibilities of the gifted program community service learner teacher and any other supporting teachers/staff working with the community service learning project.

To ensure adequate time for the gifted program community service learning teacher to monitor and assist gifted students participating in community service learning, he/she must be given one full period each day or its weekly equivalent during which he/she has only gifted education community service learning responsibilities (as determined by the local system) for every 15 gifted students for whom he/she is supervising in the community service learning.

- **Approved Innovative Models**

The Georgia Department of Education encourages the development of innovative programs for gifted students that are clearly in accordance with the needs of the community and the philosophy of the district. If a school district desires to implement a gifted program delivery model other than one of the models described above, the district must submit a description of that plan to the Department of Education's Gifted Education Specialist. The plan must clearly describe the rationale for the special model, the goals and objectives for the program, the advanced nature of the curriculum which will be provided to gifted learners, how the model's effectiveness will be evaluated, how FTE funding will be generated and documented, and the anticipated fiscal impact of the model (i.e., how many FTE will be generated).

The Innovative Model Review Team will approve local school district plans for special models that are in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations, that are consistent with best practice guidelines for the education of gifted students, and that provide strong programming and fiscal accountability. If the district's proposal for a special model is not within the guidelines established by State Board of Education rules and Department of Education regulations, the Gifted Education Specialist will advise the district contact that the local Board of Education would have to be granted a waiver from the State Board of Education before that model could be used to provide gifted education. Schley County does not currently use an innovative model.

Continuation Policy for Gifted Services

Students must achieve satisfactory performance in gifted education classes for continuation in the gifted education program. Parents will be notified in their home language at the conclusion of the school year as to whether or not their child will continue to receive gifted education services.

Academic Performance Criteria

Grades K-2 -- Satisfactory performance shall be defined as maintain a B average (Achieving mastery of 80% or higher on the standards assessed) in each gifted reading and/or math classes. Student progress will be evaluated at the end of the nine-week grading period for grades K-2.

Grades 3-8 -- Satisfactory performance in gifted education classes shall be defined as an 80 in each major subject area (English/Language Arts, reading, mathematics) Student progress will be evaluated at the end of each nine-week grading period.

Grades 9-12 -- Satisfactory performance in gifted education classes shall be defined as an 80 in each major subject area. Student progress will be evaluated at the end of each semester.

- “Gifted education classes” cluster and advanced content courses in which the gifted student is enrolled and taught by a gifted-endorsed teacher.

Probation

Grades of gifted education participants are evaluated at the end of each nine weeks. Any student in grades 3-12 who does not maintain a B average or above in all core subjects or any student who fails any core subject within a nine-week period will be placed on probation for the next nine weeks. A failing grade in any core subject automatically places any student on probation. Teachers of the student will be notified of the probationary status and asked to closely monitor students and offer support and refer to MTSS, if necessary.

Withdrawal

A student who is placed on probation will remain on probation for the remainder of the grading period. If during that grading period, the student does not make an 80 average in gifted core subjects or fails any gifted core subject for a grading period, he/she is removed from the gifted courses in which they have struggled for the next nine weeks. Students remain in gifted courses in which they experience success.

At any time, a parent may request that the student no longer receive gifted services.

Re-entry

A student may re-enter the gifted program at the beginning of the next nine weeks by maintaining an 80 average or above in all core subjects during the termination period. If a student in grades 3-12 is withdrawn from the gifted program during the 4th nine weeks grading period, the student must maintain an 80 average or above with no failing grades in all core subjects for the first nine weeks of the following year.

See contract, probation, withdrawal, and re-entry forms in the Resources section at the end of this manual for a more comprehensive explanation of continuation, probation, and withdrawal policies and procedures.

Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Gifted Learner Guidance

All identified gifted education students can be served in the general education MTSS framework. The following information relates to the tiers within the gifted education program.

Advanced learning needs for the majority of students can be addressed in a general education classroom which offers a quality learning environment by providing instructional interventions prior to, or in lieu of, identifying students for specialized educational services. By documenting instructional interventions, the MTSS framework allows gifted and high-achieving students access to a differentiated curriculum, flexible pacing, cluster grouping, and other universal interventions. The MTSS process for referral, evaluation, eligibility, and instruction of gifted education students is set by the State Board of Education and defined in the Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.

When should students be considered for gifted education services?

If there is evidence that instructional modifications have not met a student's needs, local school districts should follow the student nomination and decision-making process outlined in the Georgia Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services. Factors to be considered in the nomination process should include evidence of the student's advanced learning needs and the regency and performance levels of any previous gifted program referrals or placements.

The term differentiation is used quite often in education. What is differentiation and when should differentiation be used in the classroom?

Differentiated instruction is a teaching theory based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms (Tomlinson, 2011). The model of differentiated instruction requires teachers to be flexible in their approach to teaching and adjust the curriculum and presentation of information to learners rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum (Hall, 2011).

Differentiation of curriculum for gifted learners is the process of adapting and modifying curriculum structures to address these characteristics and needs more optimally. Thus, curriculum goals, outcomes, and activities may be tailored for gifted learners to accommodate their needs. Typically, this process involves the use of the strategies of acceleration. Acceleration is a broad term used to describe ways in which gifted student learning may occur at a faster more appropriate rate throughout the years of schooling. It refers to content acceleration through compacting and

reorganizing curriculum by unit or year, grade skipping, telescoping two years into one, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual enrollment in high school and college or university, as well as more personalized approaches such as tutorials and mentorships that also would be sensitive to the advanced starting level of these learners (NAGC, 2011).

Curriculum Overview

SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS requires local boards of education to develop curricula for their gifted students. There are certain characteristics that generally differentiate gifted learners from more typical learners: learn at faster rates, their capacity to find, solve, and act on problems, their ability to manipulate abstract ideas and make connections, and so on. Although it is recognized that not all gifted students exhibit identical behaviors and characteristics and, thus, have different needs, it is the unique behaviors and characteristics of gifted learners that must serve as the basis for establishing gifted program curriculum goals and then making decisions regarding specific curriculum units and activities (Source: *Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Service*).

Curricular Components

The system provides differentiated curriculum for gifted students that incorporates the State Board of Education approved student competencies and Georgia Standards of Excellence. By focusing on developing cognitive, learning, research, references, communication and meta-cognitive skills at each grade grouping (K-12), the instructional program for the gifted employs differentiated curriculum principles in one (1) or more of the content areas of mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, foreign language, fine arts and vocational/technical education.

Instructional Philosophy

“Excellence implies more than competence. It implies a striving for the highest standards in every phase of life” (Gardner, p. 961). In reaffirming the goal of excellence in education for all students, the Schley County Board of Education has recognized that residing within this county are many intellectually gifted students who possess a learning capacity in advance of their chronological age peers.

Education for intellectually gifted students is based upon the assumptions that education provides all students the opportunity to develop their potential to the maximum; and, to be effective, education must be provided in accordance with students’ developmental levels.

By virtue of their potential for advanced intellectual development, intellectually gifted students share certain learning characteristics that cause their educational needs to differ significantly from those of others their age. Development of their exceptional abilities requires a differentiated educational experience including both quantitative and qualitative

curricular modifications. Therefore, educational programs for intellectually gifted students must provide a broad range of opportunities that include both extended and accelerated learning experiences that are commensurate with the needs of individual students.

Exceptional ability requires these students to receive public school programs designed to meet their special needs. These program needs are:

1. to progress at their own rate, regardless of chronological age or grade placement;
2. to provide diverse learning experiences, including instructional methods, materials, activities and higher levels of conceptual complexity;
3. to be valued, challenged and stimulated in an environment that allows children of like ability to learn with and from one another; and
4. to have access to counseling, so they may better understand themselves and make appropriate school and career decisions.

As exceptional learners, intellectually gifted students are to be educated in a less restrictive educational environment that affords optimal opportunity for intellectual development. The regular classroom setting with chronological age peers is the starting point from which these students may progress into more intellectually challenging and, therefore, less restrictive settings.

To provide each intellectually gifted student an individualized education in this environment, gifted programs provided by Schley County Schools offer a range of educational placement alternatives within the school and the community. Such programs develop advanced academic and process skills to prepare these students for their anticipated adult roles.

Only through the collaborative efforts of the total educational community will an appropriate education be achieved for these exceptional learners.

Principles of a Differentiated Curriculum for the Gifted/Talented

- Present content that is related to broad-based issues, themes, or problems.
- Integrate multiple disciplines into the area of study.
- Present comprehensive, related, and mutually reinforcing experiences within an area of study.
- Allow for the in-depth learning of a self-selected topic within the area of study.
- Develop independent or self-directed study skills.
- Develop productive, complex, abstract, and/or higher level thinking skills.
- Focus on open-ended tasks.
- Develop research skills and methods.
- Integrate basic skills and higher level thinking skills into the curriculum.

- Encourage the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce new ideas.
- Encourage the development of products that use new techniques, materials, and forms.
- Encourage the development of self-understanding, i.e., recognizing and using one's abilities, becoming self-directed, appreciating likenesses and differences between oneself and others.
- Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion referenced and/or standardized instruments.

Source: National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and Talented, *Developed by the Curriculum Council (James J. Gallagher, Sandra N. Kaplan, A. Harry Passow, Joseph S. Renzulli, Irving S. Sato, Dorothy Sisk, Janice Wickless)*

Skills Areas within the Curriculum

Curricular considerations include extending competencies in cognitive skills, learning skills, research and reference skills, communications skills and metacognitive ("habits of mind") skills.

There are five skill areas basic to Schley County Schools Program for the Gifted. These five areas are explained below.

Area I: Cognitive Skills

Gifted education services include teaching students to develop cognitive skills such as innovative thinking, citizenship and leadership development. Components of innovative thinking include developing and practicing the use of fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration. These four (4) components may be defined as:

- a. Fluency – the amount of knowledge in a variety of contents (i.e., if a person is considered fluent in a foreign language, he or she knows a great many words and is able to use them effectively);
- b. Flexibility – the ability to change perspective;
- c. Originality – productions unique to the referent group; and
- d. Elaboration – additions to content already known, including more complexity and more sophistication than might be expected for that age or grade student.

Problem solving and decision-making are taught to gifted students not only through word problems in logic and skills in research, but through investigating "real world" problems, i.e., community concerns with construction and development, ecological concerns with clean environments, historical concerns in preserving heritage and other similar types of problems. The gifted education services provide an application of skills learned in the classroom toward rational decision-making, i.e., getting information and

facts prior to actually making a decision and understanding consequences of a decision. Critical thinking includes having students develop and practice not only inductive and deductive reasoning skills but analytical thinking skills as well. Citizenship and leadership development include understanding leadership, how leadership potential is developed and how to improve group discussion skills.

Area II: Learning Skills

Schley County Schools Program for the Gifted teaches students how-to-learn skills so that students will be better able to function independently in a productive manner. Such skills include those of listening; observing and perceiving; information skills such as outlining, interviewing and surveying; and skills in analyzing and organizing data.

Area III: Research and Reference Skills

These skills are of particular importance to teach gifted students as they prepare for independent investigations. Conducting such investigations requires using resources in all formats. Students need to be taught planning skills, interpretive skills and skills that involve processes of finding, evaluating and using information. Mastery of these skills should help the system's gifted students become functional in the following types of research.

1. Historical – objective reconstruction of the past,
2. Developmental – concerns changes, patterns, trends, sequence and continuity involving people,
3. Descriptive – consistent and systematic description involving qualifications,
4. Case and Field – intense study of an individual, group or institution,
5. Correlational – comparison between one set of quantitative data and another to investigate relationships,
6. Action Research – looking for improvement in skills, methods, problem solving, etc.,
7. Quasi-Experimental – attempts to construct a true experiment in a setting that does not allow exact control of all variables,
8. True Experimental – looks at cause-and effect with experimental and random groups, and
9. Causal-comparative – looks at or observes, “what is” and then examines data to find possible causes.

(Adapted from *Up Periscope?: Research Activities for the Academically Talented Student* (grades K-4) by Dallas Independent School District, Dallas, Texas. Copyright 1977 by publisher.)

Area IV: Communication Skills

Gifted students may have some of the most innovative ideas or viable solutions to complex problems, but if they are unable to clearly, succinctly and accurately communicate those ideas to others, then their ideas and solutions are for naught. Students will be taught means to interpret and prepare visual communications such as

slides, films, video tapes, and overheads; oral communication skills in public-speaking, debate and lecture; and written communication skills including word processing and other multi-media presentation skills.

Area V: Metacognitive Skills

Robert Marzano (1994), in Assessing Student Outcomes defines “habits of mind” as “Habits used by critical, creative and self-regulated thinkers. Ultimately, developing mental habits that will enable individuals to learn on their own whatever they want or need to know at any point in their lives is probably the most important goal of education.” These habits of mind are metacognitive skills and include such things as being clear and seeking clarity, evaluating the effectiveness of one’s own actions.

In addition to sharing and emphasizing these curriculum and instructional philosophies, principles of differentiated curriculum and the various skill areas to address, the administration encourages and supports year-round professional development. Teachers and administrators attend RESA workshops regularly and have attended (and continue to be offered opportunities to attend) the Torrance Center Summer Institute at UGA.

Full time Equivalent (FTE) and Other Data Collection

FTE reporting refers to the state funding mechanism based on student enrollment and the educational services that Schley County Schools provides for the students. The base amount of money received for each FTE student is determined by the Georgia General Assembly (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-161) Gifted Education is one of the nineteen categories of instruction funded through the state’s Full-Time Equivalent Funding Formulas. A Full-Time Equivalent Student (FTE) is defined as six segments of instruction. Students who are served in an approved gifted education model are reported with the Gifted Education weight for each segment served on the FTE count day.

Gifted certification requirements of teachers to earn FTE funding at the gifted weight include:

- Official gifted endorsement the GaPSC, or
- Actively participating in a gifted endorsement program
- Completed appropriate content-area GaPSC-approved certification with the appropriate coursework in, for example Advance Placement courses (through College Board), combined with the 10-hour gifted professional course offered by the Ga. DOE.

The school system may claim students for gifted weight who receive gifted services on the day of the count only. Gifted students who are not provided with gifted program instruction on the day of the count must be reported according to the weight that indicates the actual services they receive on the FTE count day. These count days are the first Tuesday in October the first Thursday in March. For federal cross-functional monitoring, Schley County maintains documentation for AP training and gifted endorsement requirements.

Students who are referred during a school year but who are not eligible for gifted series need to be coded for the Student Records Collection that is transmitted in June.

Class sizes for gifted are established by the State Board of Education. The current funding ratio for gifted education is twelve. The maximum individual gifted education class sizes are:

Elementary (k-5)	17
Middle School (6-8)	18
High School (9-12)	21

Note: Class size may be adjusted based on waivers included as part of approved Charter system or Strategic Waiver System contracts; however, the use of these class size waivers to generate additional funding is prohibited.

The Gifted Coordinator enters all codes for gifted students and students who are referred for gifted designation, but not eligible, in Infinite Campus. The GC also reviews the schedules of all gifted students in the county to ensure they are enrolled in the allowable number of .2 (gifted) courses and that those courses are taught by teachers with the GaPSC gifted endorsement. The GC works with school counselors and registrars to ensure gifted students are appropriately scheduled and served.

Prior to FTE count days, our data collection specialist shares reports and errors for FTE accuracy across all programs, including gifted. Gifted students who are not being served, who have recently transferred in and not been identified in IC, or who have contradictory or missing information in IC are identified, and that information is updated correctly. After corrections are made, additional error reports are shared until all errors are corrected.

RESOURCES

Forms for Referrals, Identification, Evaluation,
and Correspondence in the Schley County Schools
Gifted Education Program

Research-based Articles about Gifted Learners for
Parents and Educators

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Gifted Program Referral/Information Form

Referral Date:	Referred by:	Reason for Referral:

Full Name of Student: _____

Grade: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Race: _____ Gender: _____

Parent or Guardian's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____, Georgia Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Has the child ever been evaluated for gifted before? _____

If so, what grade(s) /year(s)? _____

Other Information:

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Teacher Inventory

Student: _____ HR Teacher: _____

As a teacher, you can provide a great deal of information about your student that will help us to know him/her better. Please take a few minutes to complete this inventory. We will use this information in the selection process for our gifted programs. There are four main areas of behavior in which we are interested: Mental Ability, Achievement, Creativity and Motivation. Please note that most gifted children will not demonstrate abilities in all of the areas listed below.

The behaviors listed below are shown by your student compared to other children of the same age:

1. Seldom or never 2. Occasionally 3. Often 4. Almost all the time

Please check the appropriate box using the code above and provide examples. **If number 4 is checked, you must provide documentation.**

_____ Solves problems in many different ways. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Displays a keen sense of humor (intellectually playful). Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Can see beyond a situation to its positive and/or negative conclusion (is able to see discrepancies). Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Displays leadership qualities. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Is aware of details. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Indicates intense interest in a topic. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Sees relationships between different concepts and ideas. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Learns more rapidly. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Has unusually advanced vocabulary for age or grade level. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Displays originality. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ Has intense curiosity. Give an example of how your student shows this trait:

_____ When you compare your student with others the same age, do you think he/she is:
_____ about average _____ somewhat above average _____ considerably above average

Referring Teacher's Signature

Date

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Initial Letter

Date _____

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child is being considered for placement in Schley County's Gifted Program. This letter will explain the evaluation process and the eligibility criteria. Information concerning your child is gathered in these four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation. To qualify for the gifted education program, a child must meet three of the four following criteria as established by Georgia State Board of Education Rule #160-4-2.38:

- 96th percentile on a mental ability test
- 90th percentile in reading, math, or total battery on an achievement test
- 90th percentile on a creativity test
- 90th percentile on a motivation test

The evaluation process includes the following steps:

- A permission for evaluation form is completed and signed by the parent or guardian (form is attached).
- Test scores and other pertinent information are submitted to the individual school's Gifted Eligibility Team (GET).
- The GET reviews the data and determines the eligibility of the student in accordance with the state guidelines. The evaluation process is not complete until the eligibility team meets and determines student eligibility.
- Parents are informed of the results of the team's decision. If a student has met the eligibility criteria, a placement conference may be scheduled.
- Students must meet eligibility continuation criteria in order to remain in the program.

If you decide to have your child evaluated, please complete the attached form and return it to me as soon as possible. Should you have questions or wish to discuss the gifted program in detail, please feel free to call me.

Gifted Education Coordinator

School Phone Number

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Permission to Test

Date _____

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child, _____, has been referred for testing for eligibility in the Schley County Program for Gifted and Talented students. The person listed below referred him or her for the following reason(s):

Check	Reason for Referral
☐	System-Wide Testing (Automatic Referral)
☐	Teacher Referral
☐	Administrator Referral
☐	Counselor Referral
☐	Parent Referral
☐	Self-Referral
☐	Peer Referral
☐	Referred by Other (please indicate):

Parental written permission is required to begin the evaluation process. Please sign below and return this form to your child's school to the teacher listed below as soon as possible. You will be notified in writing concerning your child's eligibility or ineligibility for the program as soon as time permits. This process may take several weeks, so please be patient. If you have any questions, please contact the gifted teacher at your child's school.

Sincerely,

Gifted Education Coordinator

Phone Number

_____ I give permission for the Schley County School System to administer tests necessary to determine eligibility for the Gifted Education Program.

_____ I do not give permission for testing.

Parent or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____
Child's Full Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Parent Notification of Evaluation Results

Date: _____

To the Parent or Guardian of: _____

The gifted evaluation for your child has been completed, and the results have been assessed according to the State of Georgia eligibility criteria for gifted education programs.

Under Georgia's guidelines, a child must qualify on at least three of the four criteria shown below or meet more stringent requirements in the mental ability and achievement areas.

The results of your child's evaluation for the gifted program reflect that your child is not eligible for this program. The four criteria evaluated and their results are:

	Eligible	Not Eligible
Mental Ability	_____	_____
Achievement	_____	_____
Creativity	_____	_____
Motivation	_____	_____

A number of bright and capable students have been tested for possible placement in the program for the gifted, and some did not achieve the state-required scores for placement. Consideration for the program is an honor and indicates that your child is certainly above average in achievement and/or ability. Please encourage your child to continue the performance that resulted in a referral to this program.

If you have any questions or concerns about these results, feel free to contact me at school.

Sincerely,

Gifted Education Coordinator

Phone Number

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Permission to Place/Eligibility Letter

Date: _____

To the Parent or Guardian of: _____

The results of your child's evaluation for the gifted program reflect that your child is eligible for the gifted program.

	Eligible	Not Eligible
Mental Ability	_____	_____
Achievement	_____	_____
Creativity	_____	_____
Motivation	_____	_____

Under Georgia's guidelines, a child must qualify on at least three of the four criteria shown above or meet more stringent requirements in mental ability and achievement areas. In order to place your student in the program beginning on _____, your permission is required.

If you have any questions or concerns about these results, feel free to contact me at school.

Sincerely,

Gifted Education Coordinator

Phone

____ I give permission to place my child, _____, in the Schley County Gifted Program.

____ I do not give permission to place my child, _____, in the Schley County Gifted Program at this time.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Contract

Date: _____

To the Parent or Guardian of: _____

Your child will be served in the gifted program at _____
School. Participation in this program requires that a student maintain satisfactory performance in the Gifted Program courses as noted by regular attendance, active participation, appropriate conduct and attitude for learning, completion of assignments, and acceptable academic achievement (an average score of 80 or above).

Elementary School - Achievement guidelines include meeting and/or exceeding the standards in all gifted subject areas for the nine-week period. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration. Final decisions for continuation rest with the teacher of the gifted and the program director. Students failing to meet the continuation criteria in elementary grades will either be:

- automatically placed on probation: The probationary period will be for one nine week period. A conference will be held between all teachers of the gifted student before placing a student on academic probation. The gifted teacher is responsible for placing students on probation. If a student is placed on probation at the end of the year, the probation will be served the first nine weeks of the following school year. Parents are notified in writing when a student is placed on probation.
- withdrawn from the program: A student will be withdrawn at the end of the probationary period if the student still fails to meet the continuation criteria. The student must apply for re-entry into the program in the fall of the year following at least one year of termination. Parents are notified in writing prior to a student's withdrawal from the program.

Middle and High School - Achievement guidelines include maintaining at least at 80 average in gifted education classes of language arts, reading, and math for the nine week period.. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration. Final decisions for continuation rest with the teacher of the gifted and the program director. Students failing to meet the continuation criteria in middle grades will either be:

- automatically placed on probation: The probationary period will be for one nine week period. A conference will be held between all teachers of the gifted student before placing a student on academic probation. The gifted teacher is responsible for placing students on probation. If a student is placed on probation

at the end of the year, the probation will be served the first nine weeks of the following school year. Parents are notified in writing when a student is placed on probation.

- withdrawn from the program: A student will be withdrawn at the end of the probationary period if the student still fails to meet the continuation criteria. Parents are notified in writing prior to a student's withdrawal from the program.

Read and discuss this contract with your child thoroughly. Please sign below and return to school as soon as possible. Services will not be offered without a signed contract each school year.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Teacher Signature: _____

Date: _____

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Notice of Probation/Withdrawal from Program

Date: _____

To the Parent or Guardian of: _____

_____ Probation Term: _____ to _____ (1 Nine Weeks Prior To Re-Evaluation)

_____ Termination Term: _____ to _____ (1 Year Prior To Re-Apply)

_____ Withdrawal: Your child will be probated/terminated/withdrawn from the gifted program for the following reason(s):

1. _____ Failure to maintain continuing criteria as stated in the contract you signed at the beginning of this school year.

Comments:

2. _____ Parent Request

3. _____ Other: _____

Comments:

A conference to discuss your child's probation/termination/withdrawal from the SCS Gifted Education Program is required. Please contact me to set up an appointment.

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Annual Review

Date: _____

Student: _____

HR Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

1. Performance in regular classroom: Yearly GPA _____

2. Satisfactory performance in gifted classroom: Yes ____ No ____

3. Status in gifted program for the _____ - _____ school year:

_____ Continued Placement

_____ Probation

_____ Termination

_____ Withdrawal

COMMENTS:

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Gifted Education Teacher

Date

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services Service Delivery Notice

Date: _____ HR Teacher: _____ School Year: _____

Student: _____ Grade: _____

Description of Services for School Year _____ - _____

I. Delivery Model(s): ___Resource ___Independent Study
 ___Cluster Model ___Collaborative
 ___Advanced Content

II. Contact hours per week are (circle one): 5 10 15 20 Other: _____

III. Curriculum Focus - All levels of the Gifted Education Program include instruction in skills area basic to Gifted Education. These are: (1) Developing Cognitive Skills; (2) Learning Skills; (3) Research and Reference Skills; and (4) Communication Skills. The gifted curriculum incorporates these skills areas into units and/or courses.

Your child's curriculum will have as a focus the following content area(s):

 ___Reading ___Social Studies ___Math

 ___Language Arts ___Science ___Other:

Individual provisions, comments, etc. _____

Gifted Program Teacher _____ Date _____

Schley County Schools Gifted Program Services

Checklist for Maintaining Gifted Records

Records Which Should Be Kept In Gifted Child's PR Folder:

- _____ 1. Original Referral/Eligibility Report
- _____ 2. Annual Review
- _____ 3. Notice of Probation/Termination/Withdrawal

Records Which Should Be Kept by The Gifted Teacher:

- _____ 1. Copy of Referral/Eligibility Report
- _____ 2. Permission to Test
- _____ 3. Parent Inventory or Teacher Rating Scale (optional)
- _____ 4. Parent/Student/Teacher Contract
- _____ 5. Notice of Probation/Termination
- _____ 6. Annual Review
- _____ 7. Transition Report

Reports to Be Sent to County Office - System Gifted Coordinator:

- _____ 1. Teacher Testing Report
- _____ 2. Original Referral, Eligibility, Consent, Evaluation Forms

Characteristics of Gifted Learners

Advanced curricular needs of highly able learners are based on one or more of the following characteristics of the population:

1. Excellent memory; large storehouse of information on school or non-school topics
2. Attention to details
3. Easily bored with routine tasks
4. Intensely curious
5. Enthusiastic learner
6. Strong need to know
7. Are highly expressive; effective use of words, numbers or other symbols
8. Demonstrate unusual ability to communicate (verbally, physically, artistically, symbolically)
9. May use language that is advanced, colorful, and elaborative
10. Use particularly apt examples, illustrations, or elaborations
11. More easily see connections within and across disciplines
12. Perceive more unusual and remote associations
13. Manipulate information
14. Use critical thinking skills and logical approaches to figuring out solutions
15. See and create patterns of meaning
16. Are often intellectually playful
17. Intuitive and/or insightful
18. Demonstrate unusual emotional depth
19. Convey and pick up on humor
20. Are highly imaginative; can generate many unique and different ideas
21. Create new designs; invent
22. Tend to think deeply about what they have learned; sense deeper meanings
23. Grasp complex and abstract concepts
24. Can draw inferences and make generalizations that age peers do not yet recognize
25. Adept at abstract thinking skills
26. Use metaphors and analogies
27. Use effective, often inventive, strategies for recognizing and solving problems
28. Intense (sometimes unusual) interests
29. Are self-starters
30. Intrinsically motivated by a challenge
31. Can be highly focused and extremely goal-directed (particularly with self-selected tasks)
32. Highly energetic and persevering
33. Have longer attention spans
34. Can deal with multifaceted activities or several problems at once
35. Can tolerate ambiguity and/or structure open-ended task
36. Thrive on independent learning opportunities

Resources for Parents of Gifted Learners

- [Parenting for High Potential: Toys & Games for Gifted](#)
- [Meeting the Needs of Gifted Learners at a Distance-A Focus on Grades 4-8](#)
- [NEW - Supporting Your Gifted Child During COVID-19 Tip Sheet](#)
- [Is My Child Gifted?](#)
- [48 Essential Links for the Parents of Gifted Children](#)
- ["When Bright Kids Become Disillusioned" by James T. Webb](#)
- ["An Interview with Jean Sunde Peterson: About Social Emotional Needs of the Gifted"](#)
- ["The Whole Gifted Child" by George Betts](#)
- ["Social & Emotional Development of Gifted Students" by Thomas Hebert and Kenneth Smith](#)

Resources for Educators of Gifted Learners

- [GaDOE Website](#)
- [National Association for Gifted Children](#)
- [Georgia Association for Gifted Children](#)
- [The National Research Center on the gifted and Talented](#)
- [SENG--Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted](#)

