

---

## Identification and Assessment of Giftedness Frequently Asked Questions

Gifted and Talented Education in Atlanta Public School System provides differentiated instruction for the intellectually advanced and creatively gifted student. Gifted services are available in all Atlanta Public Schools for students in grades K-12.

For any child who is referred for gifted testing, Atlanta Public Schools is required to gather information in the following areas: Mental Ability, Creativity, Achievement, and Motivation. The instruments selected for each area meet the guidelines of Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38.

### **What testing instruments may be used to determine if my child is eligible for the Gifted Program?**

During the testing process, the Gifted Eligibility Team may request your consent to administer one or more of the following instruments: Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT), Gifted Rating Scales (GRS) elementary grades and/or Children's Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (CAIMI) middle grades. The CogAT and TTCT are administered once every two years.

### **What is the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)?**

The CogAT is a group-administered **mental ability test**, typically referred to as an IQ test. The test has three batteries: Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal. The Verbal Battery appraises the child's verbal inductive and deductive reasoning skills as well as flexibility, fluency, and adaptability in working with verbal materials and solving verbal problems. The Quantitative Battery appraises high-level problem solving with quantitative symbols and concepts. The Nonverbal Battery appraises general inductive reasoning skills in using and adapting cognitive strategies.

The CogAT is typically administered to the students over three days. Each testing session is approximately one hour. The resulting score for each battery is reported to parents as a national percentile rank in the mental ability section on the gifted eligibility report. The national percentile rank allows you to compare your child's results to others of the same age across the nation. The 96<sup>th</sup> percentile is the minimum qualifying score.

### **What is the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT)?**

The Figural TTCT is a group-administered **creativity test** requiring pictorial responses. It requires students to use their imagination, solve problems, think of new ideas, and elaborate on their ideas.

The TTCT is administered in one 45-minute session. The resulting score is reported as a national percentile rank to parents in the creativity section on the gifted eligibility report. The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile is the minimum qualifying score.

### **What is the Nationally Normed Achievement Test?**

Achievement tests assess how well a student has learned objectives in academic areas. For gifted identification, total reading, total math, or complete battery (when administered) is reported in the achievement section on the gifted eligibility report.

Scantron's Performance Series Computer Adaptive Achievement Series (CAAS) is a group-administered **achievement test** given to students in grades 2-5. Both the reading and math sections are administered in approximately one hour sessions each. The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile is the minimum qualifying score.

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills is a group-administered **achievement test** given to students in grades K-1. Each area is administered in approximately a one hour session. The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile is the minimum qualifying score.

### **What is the Gifted Rating Scales?**

Gifted Rating Scales are norm-referenced rating scales based on current theories of giftedness; and meets state guidelines regarding the definition of gifted and talented students for students in grades K-7. The GRS is a **rating scale**, completed by a teacher, based upon a child's motivational behaviors in an academic setting. The local school Gifted Eligibility Team will select two teachers to complete the scale who have known the child for at least one month. The Gifted Eligibility Team will utilize the highest score for the eligibility determination purposes. The resulting score is reported as a national percentile rank to parents in the motivation section on the gifted eligibility report.

The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile is the minimum qualifying score. While a qualifying score is valid for two years, the GRS may be re-administered once a school year by different teachers only if the child is referred again for gifted testing.

*\*\*Motivation refers to a child's desire to achieve a goal or complete self-selected tasks. Motivation is not a type of giftedness but rather viewed as the energy that drives a child to achieve.*

### **What is the Children's Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (CAIMI)?**

The CAIMI measures the academic intrinsic motivation as defined as enjoyment of school learning characterized by an orientation toward mastery, curiosity, persistence, and the learning of challenging, difficult, and novel tasks. The CAIMI contains five scales, four in each of the academic areas and one general orientation scale. Students in grade 8 will complete the **inventory** in a group setting in approximately 30 minutes. Scores are reported for motivation in reading, math, science, social studies, and general attitudes toward school and learning. The resulting scores are reported as national percentiles to parents in the motivation section on the gifted eligibility report. Students can complete the inventory once each calendar year and two of the five scores must be at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile to support gifted identification.

### **How can I help my child prepare for these instruments?**

Knowledge or skills needed are developed as a result of all school and life experiences. These are not tests you can, or should, prepare for as they are meant to measure innate ability. Do *not* overemphasize the importance of these tests or act in a way so as to add to any test anxiety. Make sure that your child gets a good night's sleep prior to testing and has a nutritious breakfast each morning before testing.

### **Why is my child only being recommended for some instruments and not all of them?**

The Gifted Eligibility Team will use only one instrument for each category: Mental Ability, Creativity, Achievement, and Motivation. Based upon previous testing experiences and/or classroom performance, some children may already have test data in their permanent record can be used in one or more categories. Children will not be tested unnecessarily. The Gifted Eligibility Team has more than one option of instruments for most categories. The team will use all relevant data about the student to select the best instrument at this time. The team will not exhaust all of its options in each category during any referral window.

**For additional information, contact the Office of Gifted and Talented Education (404) 802-7585.**