

CHAPTER 16

Chapter 16 of the PA Code specifies how Pennsylvania will meet its obligations to suspected and identified gifted students who require gifted education to reach their potential. Gifted students are to be provided with quality gifted education services and programs. Requirements for Gifted Education Plans can be found in the Pennsylvania Code (22 Pa Code §16.32).

In accordance with 22 Pa. Code § 4.13(e) (relating to strategic plans) and 22 Pa. Code § 16.4, each school district shall develop and implement a gifted education plan every 6 years.

- a. The plan shall include the process for identifying children who are gifted and in need of specially designed instruction, as well as the gifted special education programs offered.
- b. The school districts shall make its gifted education plan available for public inspection and comment for a minimum of 28 days prior to approval of the plan by the school district's board of directors.
- c. Each school district shall provide, as the Department may require, reports of students, personnel and program elements, including the costs of the elements, which are relevant to the delivery of gifted education. (22 Pa. Code § 16.4)

1. Describe your district's public notice procedures conducted annually to inform the public of the gifted education services AND programs offered (newspaper, student handbooks, school website, etc.).

Information about gifted services and programs as well as contact information is printed in the local newspaper as part of the required Annual Public Notice. Information is also posted on District and individual building web pages and is included in the District handbook, provided to all current students and families. The student handbook is also provided to families new to the District as part of registration. The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process, where high achievers are discussed, is also a talking point for principals to discuss in newsletters and at parent meetings.

2. Describe your district's process for locating students who are thought to be gifted and may need specially designed instruction.

Screening begins in kindergarten with locally developed and norm-referenced assessments administered to all students, such as Study Island, Exact Path Diagnostics, Acadience, and the PSSA. Students who score consistently above average in both areas of assessments are referred for further screening. Further screening involves rating scales, teacher input, and cognitive ability testing. Results obtained on individual student assessments such as Study Island assist in identifying students who may be in need of enrichment and/or acceleration. Additionally, in 2nd grade, the InView Ability Test, a nationally normed assessment, is administered to all students to seek out further students who could potentially be in need of gifted services. Students scoring in the highest performance ranges are brought forward for further discussion and to consider the need for a complete, gifted evaluation. If the data suggests that a student is in need of enrichment or acceleration, permission to evaluate is issued to the parent to conduct a formal assessment. In addition to looking at assessment results, classroom teachers may bring a student who demonstrates high ability forward to the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team for discussion as part of the ongoing data analysis to identify potentially gifted students. Parent conferences are an opportunity to discuss high-achieving students and options to meet their needs.

3. Describe your district's procedures for determining ELIGIBILITY (through MULTIPLE CRITERIA) and NEED (based on ACADEMIC STRENGTH) for potentially mentally gifted students (EVALUATION).

If a student meets the criteria established in the screening process and is thought to potentially require specially designed instruction under Chapter 16, the student receives a Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) that is completed by the school team and psychologist. During the GMDE, staff will gather information relevant to a student's suspected giftedness, including academic functioning, learning strengths, and educational needs from current levels of educational performance, assessment results, classroom observations, and information from parents. The District will also look for an indication of demonstrated achievement, performance, or expertise in one or more academic

areas. The team determines gifted eligibility with data collected through the Gifted Written Report (GWR) within 60 calendar days from the date of parental consent for evaluation. Information is collected from various sources, including parent and teacher input, standardized assessments, curriculum-based assessments, rating scales/checklists, and classroom performance. Measures of processing and memory are not considered, given that deficits in these areas may not make a person ineligible for gifted services. A nonverbal measure will be considered for use for ELL or ethnically diverse students. If the Full-Scale IQ score is 130 or above, the student automatically meets the Pennsylvania Criteria for gifted eligibility. The Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMDT) will convene to make recommendations as to whether the student is intellectually gifted and in need/not in need of specially designed instruction. If a student's IQ is less than 130, the District will examine the Multiple Criteria required by Chapter 16 as a second method for identifying gifted. The Multiple Criteria consider other factors aside from IQ. The academic performance demonstrated achievement or other observed skills must strongly indicate the gifted ability for that student to be identified as gifted and admitted to a gifted program. Because disabilities and bias factors may mask gifted abilities, the District will examine discrepancies between ability assessment results, academic achievement or demonstrated skills, and discrepancies among ability subtests. The information considered as part of the multiple criteria includes cognitive ability, demonstrated achievement, academic performance, rate of acquisition and retention, early skill development, and intervening factors that could mask giftedness.

4. Describe the gifted programs* that are offered to provide opportunities for acceleration, enrichment, or both. *The word "programs" refers to the CONTINUUM OF SERVICES, not one particular option.

Students receive gifted support in the West Shore School District through a broad spectrum of offerings. Placement decisions are based on the needs identified in the GWR and IEP. From elementary through high school, offerings include strategies that accelerate, enrich, or are a combination of both, including differentiated instruction, curriculum compaction, and subject acceleration. Students may be pulled out of regular education for replacement instruction that accelerates and enriches their educational experiences. The enrichment and acceleration specialist may also enter the regular education classroom to provide alternative activities via co-teaching or consultation with classroom teachers. Additionally, students in the gifted program can participate in enrichment activities outside the classroom, including but not limited to exploratory projects and activities, field trips, and academic competitions.

Chief School Administrator

Date