
The Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act

What's new for the 2020-2021 school year



New Jersey Association for Gifted Children

-
- ★ Identification
 - ★ Ensuring equal access
 - ★ Continuum of services
 - ★ Cognitive and affective needs
 - ★ Professional development
 - ★ Transparency and reporting
-

Create a Defensible Identification Process

Boards of Education must develop a process for identifying their gifted and talented students, from **kindergarten through grade 12**.

Identification must be **ongoing**, include **multiple measures**, and compare students with age peers within the local district.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Align your assessments with your program goals and the services* you are providing. A reading assessment should not be used to identify advanced math students, for example.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Evaluate students according to local norms - compare students to their district peers.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Use multiple pieces of evidence and a variety of assessment formats. No one indicator should eliminate a student for consideration of needed services.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Intellectual capacity is measured by aptitude tests, while standardized tests aligned with specific subjects and grade level Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are achievement tests.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Choose assessments that are sensitive to the needs of under-represented groups, culturally and linguistically diverse, and twice-exceptional students. **Universal screening** is research-based and reduces bias.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Use multiple pathways to identify students' strengths in intellectual ability, creativity, or a specific academic area to ensure a match of students' needs to programming/services.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Choose measures that are sensitive to the needs of under-represented groups, culturally and linguistically diverse, and twice-exceptional students.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Anyone administering assessments or analyzing the data used for identification must have an understanding of the specific measure and its use for gifted student identification.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Placement decisions must be fair, unbiased, open,
and driven by defensible data.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

One score or indicator should not eliminate a student for gifted education services if the need is evident from other indicators.

Identification: Recommendations and Best Practices

Consider using a multi-phased identification process.

[More information on identification here](#)

NAGC Position Statements and White Papers

Guidance on Identification, Equity, and Access:

- A definition of giftedness that guides best practice
 - The role of assessments
 - Ensuring gifted students with disabilities receive appropriate services
 - Identifying and serving CLD gifted Students
 - Use of WISC-V for gifted identification
-

Ensure Equal Access

All students, including those who are English language learners and those (twice-exceptional) with Individualized Education or 504 plans, **must** be considered for gifted screening and services.

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Universal screening (not dependent on parent or teacher recommendations for access) is the most reliable way of finding traditionally under-represented groups of gifted students

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Prior to the formal identification process, provide opportunities for students who might otherwise be overlooked to demonstrate that they can respond to advanced curriculum. An example might be acquiring new content or skills rapidly without many practice repetitions.

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Qualitative and quantitative information, gathered from families, teachers, and students, should be part of the process. A missing or negative subjective assessment should not be used to eliminate a student as eligible for gifted and talented services.

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Seek to be inclusive, not exclusive!

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Use checklists that incorporate **multiple criteria** and ensure they are completed by teachers who are trained to recognize how giftedness manifests in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) learners, twice exceptional learners (2e), students in poverty, and other underrepresented students.

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Collect information from families, teachers, and students; conduct student interviews; evaluate student work samples.

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Consider alternate indicators of student ability, work, and performance. Examples may include success in competitions, interests, and areas of passion.

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Be aware of behaviors of quirky and/or questioning students may not be seen as gifted by those who have not had training in gifted and social emotional education.

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Note that the introverted or “underground” gifted may not demonstrate expected gifted behaviors in traditional school settings. Realize that giftedness may not be directly related to high grades.

Equal Access - Recommendations and Best Practices

Be aware of students' social and emotional needs.
CLD students may leave gifted programs without
psychological support and appropriate services.

[Click here for more on CLD learners.](#)

Develop a Continuum of Services

One size does not fit all! Boards must develop a **range of services** that are **matched to the needs** of identified students.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Document modifications for gifted learners in content, process, product, and learning environment.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Part-time placement in both regular and special classes, matched to a student's instructional level, not chronological age.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Full-time placement with students of similar abilities.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Provide educational activities such as academic competitions and guest instructors and speakers, which may lead to independent projects for gifted students.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Seek support from guidance department, social worker, and school psychologist for placement, social and emotional needs, acceleration, and early or co-enrollment college options.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Curriculum Compacting allows teachers to make adjustments to curriculum for students who have already mastered the material to be learned, replacing with new content, enrichment options, independent studies, or other activities.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Demonstration of mastery of grade level skills or benchmarks may occur before and during instruction to avoid unnecessary practice or repetition. The goal is to provide work at a challenge level. Alternate work should be instructed and monitored for growth.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Access to lessons with instructors at advanced levels, communications/mentoring with a specialist or expert in a topic or core subject.

Services - Recommendations and Best Practices

Whole-grade acceleration or subject advancement.

[More information on programming](#)

NAGC's Programming Standards

NAGC's gifted programming standards can help districts **evaluate** their current programs and ensure **high quality** education for their gifted students.

NAGC's Programming Standards

Learning and Development

Assessment

Curriculum & Instruction

Learning Environments

Programming

Professional Learning

[Download the standards from this page.](#)

Programming

NAGC Position Statements and White Papers

- Acceleration
 - Differentiating curriculum and instruction for gifted
 - NCTM and providing opportunities for students with exceptional mathematical promise
 - Grouping
-

Intersectionality of Cognitive and Affective Needs

NAGC Position Statements and White Papers

- Nurturing Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children (Affective Needs)
 - Supporting Gifted Students with Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities
 - Twice Exceptionality
-

Intersectionality of Cognitive and Affective Needs

- Perfectionism
 - Under-achievement
 - Behavioral attributes interfering with friendships
 - Asynchronous development
-

Professional Development

Boards must **actively assist and support** professional development for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders in the area of gifted and talented instruction. This includes **providing time and resources** for staff to develop, review, and enhance instruction for gifted and talented students.

Professional Development

Recommendations and Best Practices

- 3 NJ districts featured for [Best Practices](#)
 - Specific info for [teachers](#) and [administrators](#)
 - [Hoagies Gifted](#) (Gifted 101, as well as parent and educator resources)
 - [Resources from AASA, the Superintendents Association](#)
-

Professional Development

Recommendations and Best Practices

- [E-learning on Demand](#) from NAGC
 - [NAGC Resources](#)
 - [Rutgers Gifted Ed. Program, free on-demand webinars](#)
 - [Ian Byrd](#)
 - [Gifted Guru](#)
-

Transparency

Districts must create and maintain websites on which they share their gifted and talented policies and procedures. Information is to include:

- Criteria used in consideration for eligibility, including the multiple measures.
 - Alignment of students' needs to services.
 - Applicable timelines in the identification process.
-

Report to the Department of Education

Each school district must file a report with the Department of Education's Gifted Coordinator. During the 2020-21 school year, the report must be filed on October 1, 2020.

Report to the Department of Education

The report must include, but not be limited to:

1. The gifted and talented continuum of services, policies, and procedures implemented in the school district.
-

Report to the Department of Education

2. The total number of students receiving gifted and talented services in each grade level kindergarten through grade 12 disaggregated by race, gender, special education designation, and English language learner designation.

Report to the Department of Education

3. The professional development opportunities provided for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders about gifted and talented students, their needs, and educational development.

Report to the Department of Education

4. The number of staff employed by the school district whose job responsibilities include identification of and providing services to gifted and talented students.
