

<p>The PROBLEMS that make NJ's identification of and services to gifted students inadequate in our schools</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>THE SOLUTION - S3258-A4710 The Strengthening Gifted Education Act (updated for amendments September 2019)</p>
<p>Administrative Code is school law. The part for gifted was written in 2000 and updated in 2005, but has not since been reviewed or revised. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) have had policy on paper since 2005 LEA policy is not always consistent with practice. Parents are often denied access to information about the identification process, timelines, and multiple services provided in the district.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>6. A school district shall make detailed information available on its website regarding the policies and procedures used to identify students as gifted and talented and the continuum of services offered to gifted and talented students. The information shall include the criteria used for consideration for eligibility for gifted and talented services, including the multiple measures used in the identification process to match a student's needs with services , and any applicable timelines in the identification process.</p>
<p>The NJ Department of Education (NJDOE) formerly had an office of gifted education to support LEAs. The person currently appointed as the contact at NJDOE for gifted education has as his primary job responsibility a core subject area. Gifted and talented students represent 140,000+ students in NJ or ten percent of any LEA but often do not get identified or served in NJ's schools.</p> <p>The NJDOE has never asked for data from LEAs such as the number of students identified as gifted or the number of specialized staff employed for gifted education. This lead to many districts abolishing programs, services, & reducing specialized staff to support gifted and talented students in all grades K-12, and hinders NJ's access to federal grants.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>4 a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a coordinator for gifted and talented services. The coordinator shall have teaching experience and specialized knowledge in gifted and talented education. The coordinator shall be responsible for providing support by identifying and sharing research and resources to school districts as they develop, implement, and review their local gifted and talented services</p> <p>4 b. Each school district shall file with the coordinator a report by October 1, 2020 and thereafter on a schedule that coincides with the school district's New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum review including 4.b.(2) the total number of students receiving gifted and talented services in each grade level (4) the number of staff employed by the school district whose job responsibilities include identification of and providing services to gifted and talented students.</p>
<p>Confusion by LEAs about use of "multiple measures" for identification intended as pathways to candidacy, not to require that every child achieve every indicator to be eligible for gifted services, including a single subject acceleration or instruction at advanced levels. Checklist recommendations by educators untrained in G & T and use of grades may favor some students but may miss English learners, students in poverty, introverts, students with IEPs and 504 plans, and some racial and ethnic groups.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>3.b.(2) make provisions for an ongoing kindergarten through grade 12 identification process for gifted and talented students that includes multiple measures in order to identify student strengths in intellectual ability, creativity, or a specific academic area. To assure equal access to a continuum of gifted and talented education services, the identification process shall include consideration of all students, including those who are English language learners and those with Individualized Education Plans or 504 plans</p>

<p>Although identifying students as gifted and providing a range of services to meet their needs is in NJ school law, for K-12, 50% of the NJ districts report to the Office of Civil Rights of the US DOE, that they do not provide gifted ed'n services. Many of the districts report services only to gifted students in limited grade levels.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>3 a. A board of education shall ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations and educational services are provided to gifted and talented students in kindergarten through grade 12</p>
<p>No guidance by the NJ Department of Education in gifted education has been provided to LEAs since 2005. Although NJ receives ESSA federal funding for Title II for professional development with a requirement about gifted education, no support for providing appropriate options has been offered.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>3 a. (7) actively assist and support professional development for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders in the area of gifted and talented instruction.</p>
<p>In national research by Fordham University and The Jack Kent Cooke foundation, NJ was found to have an A- (second only to MA) in excellence, but a D- (the worst state) for the greatest discrepancy of students in poverty performing at advanced levels in mathematics.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>4 b. (2) the total number of students receiving gifted and talented services in each grade level. The data shall also be disaggregated by race, gender, special education designation, and English language learner designation.</p>
<p>There has been a lack of sharing of available research and policies from other states and national organizations for gifted education in New Jersey.</p>	<p>→</p>	<p>3.b. (4) take into consideration the Gifted Programming Standards, Position Statements, and White Papers of the National Association for Gifted Children in identifying and serving gifted and talented students</p>
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Additional information and references will be provided by The New Jersey Association for Gifted Children, www.njagc.org advocacy@njagc.org
The amendments to this bill (6/27/19) are supported through the collaboration of NJAGC, NJEA, NJPSA, NJSBA, NJASA, GSCS, and the NJDOE.