

Frequently Asked Questions: Gifted Education

- 1. What are the primary differences between the various gifted education models (cluster, advanced content, pull-out) used in the district?** *The Georgia Department of Education defines these delivery models as: Cluster Grouping- Students are served by a gifted endorsed teacher. Instruction is differentiated by content, process, product and/or assessments. Advanced Content - Students are served by a gifted endorsed teacher. Emphasis is placed on process skills, problem-solving activities, research projects and/or creative/problem solving thinking skills. Resource Model - Students are “pulled out” by a gifted endorsed teacher. Lessons are interdisciplinary, enrichment and extension activities that go beyond the typical student at that grade level.*
[https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/1dacad8d-a918-4dcc-afae-4ab1172eda82/1/2024-2025%20Gifted%20Resource%20Manual .pdf](https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/1dacad8d-a918-4dcc-afae-4ab1172eda82/1/2024-2025%20Gifted%20Resource%20Manual.pdf)
- 2. How will the district address equity in identifying and serving gifted students across all schools?** *DeKalb County School District embraces the notion that any student who can qualify as eligible for gifted services, should be afforded the opportunity to do so. Thus, we provide our students with multiple pathways to be considered for gifted eligibility – including multiple assessment windows during the school year; and utilizing multiple different instruments (as approved by the Georgia Department of Education). These multiple instruments include: Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test (NNAT) Torrance Test for Creative Thinking (TTCT), Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), and Renzulli.*
- 3. What are the criteria for a student to be considered gifted in this district?** *DeKalb County School District adheres to Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38 for students’ eligibility for gifted services. Click: www.DeKalbSchoolsGA.org/Gifted/ then click “Eligibility” to review specifics on eligibility criteria.*
- 4. How often do students need to be re-evaluated to stay in the gifted education?** *Once a student is eligible for gifted services, no further evaluation is required.*
- 5. What types of services are available for students identified as gifted?** *Gifted services are determined by the delivery model implemented at the local school level. Click www.DeKalbSchoolsGA.org/Gifted/ then click “Programs” to review specifics on service models.*
- 6. How does the gifted program transition from elementary to middle and high school in this district?** *Gifted services are determined by the delivery model implemented at the local school level. The District’s Gifted Education team remains available to school administrations to assist with selecting the local school’s gifted service delivery model, based on local factors (i.e. number of students identified for gifted, teachers with gifted endorsement, school schedule, etc.)*
- 7. Can parents request their child to be tested for the gifted program, or is testing determined by teachers?** *The DeKalb County School District implements an automatic referral process for all students in grades K-11 by using the Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) assessment as its universal screener. Students are identified for*



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further evaluation for gifted education based on results of other evaluation instruments administered multiple times during the school year, to include Measures of Academic Performance (MAP), ITBS, CogAT, NNAT, TTCT, and GES. All students in grades K-10 are administered the MAP three times per school year.

8. What is the timeline for receiving test results once a student has been evaluated for the gifted program? *Local schools and parents can expect to receive results from assessments used in the district's gifted identification process on or before the district's next grading cycle, subsequent to the most recent gifted assessments administered.*

9. How does the district ensure consistency in gifted services across schools? *The local school's building administration has the autonomy to determine which delivery models best meet the needs of its gifted population, and align with their staffing capacity. These will vary from school to school. The District's Gifted Education team remains available to school administrations to assist with selecting the local school's gifted service delivery model, based on local factors (i.e. number of students identified for gifted, teachers with gifted endorsement, school schedule, etc.). The Gifted Education team regularly visits classrooms in schools throughout the District, and regularly provides teachers and school leaders with guidance, training, and feedback on instructional conditions within gifted-identified classes.*

10. What resources are available to support gifted students who are also dealing with emotional or social challenges?

Parents/guardians, and any student within DeKalb County School District, whether gifted-identified or not, should contact their school's counselor, school psychologist, social worker, or school administrator to access resources and information to support positive mental health and wellness.

11. If the student has taken other mental ability assessments administered outside the school system, can those scores be considered? *Test data from an outside/private source may not be used to determine eligibility; it may be used as a rationale for further evaluation.*

12. What accommodations are made for gifted students with learning disabilities or other special needs? *Any accommodation stated in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan must be adhered to in ensuring the student has access to the curriculum and/or academic standards being taught.*

13. What role do MAP scores play in identifying gifted students, and how are they used in the process? *The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment satisfies the achievement domain in the Georgia Department of Education criteria for gifted identification and is used as the district's universal screener for all students in grades K-11. Students who achieve the State's criteria of 90th percentile or higher in reading or math, or score in the 75th-89th percentile in reading or math, will be further evaluated with other gifted-eligibility instruments. All students in grades K-10 take MAP three times per school year.*

- 14. How can parents access information on their child’s gifted test scores and evaluations?** *Parent/Guardian notification is communicated by the local school. Parents can expect to receive results from assessments used in the district’s gifted identification process on or before the district’s grading cycle. Documentation will include a letter of eligibility, Continuation Agreement, Student/Individual Score Report, and a gifted eligibility report of gifted status.*
- 15. Are teachers in the gifted program required to have special certification or training, and how is that enforced?** *Teachers who are assigned to courses with gifted-identified students receiving services must be gifted-endorsed. DeKalb County School District offers a free gifted endorsement program that certifies teachers through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, or Georgia Professional Standards Commission. DeKalb’s program consists of four courses for 200 hours. The Gifted Education team collaborates with the District’s Department of Instructional and Information Technology (DIIT) to monitor schools’ scheduling of gifted courses within Infinite Campus.*
- 16. How does the district measure the success of the gifted program for individual students?** *Teachers use student-level achievement data to plan for and to drive instruction within the classroom. Teachers formatively assess the performance of all students’ performance on a continual basis. Multiple District departments, including Gifted Education, provide professional learning sessions for teachers throughout the school year; on accessing, analyzing, and responding to students’ achievement to drive academic improvements for each student.*
- 17. What options are available for students who need to accelerate beyond their current grade level due to advanced abilities?** *Through the gifted endorsement program, teachers learn to facilitate experiences for students which allow them to elevate their critical and higher order thinking skills via learning tasks that stretch and deepen their cognition. Teachers learn through the gifted endorsement program to provide students with classroom experiences in which instructional strategies are employed to meet the academic needs of their learners. Grade or subject acceleration is a separate process conducted at the local school. The district’s acceleration guidelines help to address support for students who may benefit from additional educational opportunities that stretch beyond the academically challenging environment.*
- 18. How are parents informed about their child’s gifted status and the services they will receive?** *Once the gifted identification process is completed and data sets used in this process reside in Student Information System (SIS), parent/guardian notification is communicated by the local school. Parents can expect to receive results from assessments used in the district’s gifted identification process on or before the district’s grading cycle. Documentation will include a letter of eligibility, Continuation Agreement, Student/Individual Score Report, Local School brochure, and a gifted eligibility report of gifted status.*

19. **Are there opportunities for gifted students to connect with peers outside of their regular classroom?** *Yes, there are many opportunities for gifted students to connect with their peers outside of the classroom. Some experiences include summer extended learning for gifted elementary and middle school gifted learners, Serendipity. The district also offers [Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl](#), [Technology Fair](#), and [Regional Science and Engineering Fair](#). The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) coordinates the [Governor's Honors Program](#), a program for high school sophomores and juniors that DeKalb students can apply to participate in.*
20. **What is the process for transferring gifted status from another state or district?** *The State of Georgia does not grant reciprocity for gifted education from outside the State. The only exception is for the children of current active military families. Students that have been identified as gifted from within the state of Georgia are granted reciprocity once the receiving school has obtained a copy of the student's gifted eligibility report, verifying their gifted identification, according to Georgia Department of Education guidelines and criteria. <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Gifted-FAQ.aspx#:~:text=There%20is%20no%20mandated%20reciprocity,samples%2C%20and%20recommendations%20from%20teachers.>*
21. **How does the district ensure that gifted students are being sufficiently challenged in the classroom?** *We offer professional learning to teachers in the summer and throughout the school year. We address creating an academically challenging environment through topics such as questioning/discussions and feedback/growth mindset. School leaders also regularly observe classrooms within their schools, gifted and otherwise, and provide teachers with feedback, professional development opportunities, and evaluations related to the efficacy and quality of classroom instruction.*
22. **Does DCSD waive the SBOE rule for Gifted education? If so, how does that affect how Gifted students are served?** *No. DeKalb County School District does not have a waiver from Georgia State Board of Education for rules governing gifted education.*
23. **What are the criteria for maintaining a student's gifted status year over year?** *A signed Continuation Agreement for gifted services states that the student must maintain satisfactory progress in the gifted class(es) if service is through the Resource model, maintain a cumulative "B" average (not less than 80%) in the appropriate gifted class(es), and performance criteria for continuation in the gifted classes will be reviewed if the student's overall achievement is deemed unsatisfactory.*
24. **How does the district address under-representation of minority or low-income students in the gifted program?** *DeKalb County School District is committed to providing all students who may qualify for gifted eligibility with ample opportunities to be considered for gifted education. We have given renewed focus recently towards addressing the current disproportionality in gifted education by increasing the number of timeframes during the school year in which students can be assessed for gifted identification, by*

increasing the number of instruments, we utilize to assess students for gifted identification (including some offered in multiple languages), by offering parent education sessions on gifted education multiple times per school year, by increasing the opportunities during the school year for teachers to experience professional development on identifying characteristics of gifted children, and by allocating slots in our local teacher gifted endorsement program for teachers who teach in schools within our underrepresented Areas within DeKalb County.

- 25. What is the role of creativity and motivation in identifying students for gifted programs?** *Creativity and Motivation serve as two of the four domains (Mental Ability, Achievement, Creativity, and Motivation) as outlined in the Georgia Department of Education's criteria for being identified as gifted.*
- 26. How can parents access resources or support services for gifted students outside of school hours or during the summer? What gifted resources are available outside of school? Can they be accessed from a tablet or PC from home?** *There are many resources available to your child in Clever/Launchpad. Online resources are accessible 24/7 and can be accessed from a tablet or home computer.*
- 27. What steps does the district take to ensure gifted students receive differentiated instruction appropriate to their needs?** *School leaders routinely conduct learning walks, informal and formal observations of staff to determine the level of student engagement and grade appropriate assigned tasks. Written feedback is given to the teacher to make the necessary lesson plan modification. The Gifted Education Department offers support to local school administration and teachers by offering summer and school year professional learning that covers topics such as differentiation, instructional strategies, and creating an academically challenging environment.*
- 28. What factors are considered when determining the appropriate delivery model at the school-level?** *The number of students identified as gifted, teachers with gifted endorsement, and school schedule are examples of factors that may be considered for determining the appropriate delivery model. These are decisions made at the local school level by the school's administrative team.*
- 29. Is there a difference between Gifted-certified and Gifted-endorsed?** *No. Both mean that the teacher completed a program approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, or Georgia Professional Standards Commission.*
- 30. How can we ensure that individual teachers are actually addressing giftedness? How are the teachers held accountable for meeting our gifted students' specific needs?** *In the gifted endorsement program, teachers participate in Nature and Needs of Gifted Learners, Curriculum and Strategies for Gifted Learners, Methods and Materials for Gifted Learners, and Measurement and Assessment of Gifted Learners. All four courses have field experiences which emphasize the application of course material. Teachers are to use data to drive instruction and document differentiation in their lesson plans.*

31. **Are there any books/other resources that parents can use to support and understand their children's gifted needs?** *There are many resources available for parents. We recommending using the [Georgia Department of Education's gifted page](#) and the [National Association for Gifted Children](#).*
32. **Can students be assessed for gifted identification in consecutive years?** *Yes, they can. The DeKalb County School District implements an annual gifted identification process.*
33. **What is the timeline for this testing in a typical school year?** *For example, does a student who is tested with MAP in the fall potentially start a gift program in the spring? The DeKalb County School District's gifted identification assessment window will take place September 3, 2024-October 4, 2024. Students identified as gifted may be scheduled and receiving services as early as the second semester. An additional gifted identification assessment window will take place February 3, 2025 - March 7, 2025. Students identified as gifted may be scheduled and receiving services as early as spring.*
34. **How are staff assigned based on the total number of gifted students in a school? Do schools receive extra Teacher allotments to serve their Gifted students?** *Staff assignments are local school decisions, based on individual student enrollment, staffing, and school needs. Per Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38, gifted identified students served with an approved gifted service model by a gifted endorsed teacher, earn 1.7340 Full Time Equivalent (FTE), per student. Georgia Department of Education FTE weights for 2024-2025 school year can be found at this link: <https://georgiainsights.gadoe.org/Data-Collections/Documents/FTE%20Resources/FY2025/FY2025%20FTE%20Categories%20and%20Weights.pdf>*
- To earn gifted FTE, does an AP teacher have to have the 200-hour Gifted course or the shorter course on Needs of the Gifted? According to the Georgia Gifted Services Manual, in order to count the gifted students' in grades 9-12 in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, at the gifted FTE weight, the teacher must have the following qualifications: the teacher has a current Georgia Professional Standards Commission-issued gifted endorsement/certification, OR has completed the appropriate AP Summer Institute training endorsed by the College Board for that specific AP course AND has completed a 10-hour clock gifted professional development course in nature and needs of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted learners. [https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/1dacad8d-a918-4dcc-afae-4ab1172eda82/1/2024-2025%20Gifted%20Resource%20Manual .pdf](https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/1dacad8d-a918-4dcc-afae-4ab1172eda82/1/2024-2025%20Gifted%20Resource%20Manual.pdf) (Pages 16-17)*
36. **How many segments of Gifted education are required for a HS student at a block schedule HS (4 Carnegie units earned each semester)?** *Per Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38: Students identified as gifted and whose participation has received parental consent shall receive at least five segments per week (or the yearly equivalent) of gifted education services, using one of the approved models described in the GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.*

- 37. How can the District achieve smaller class sizes to help gifted students to help meet their needs?** *The Gifted Department does not manage schools' class sizes. During professional learning sessions, teachers often experience stations, where they can see how station teaching reduces group sizes to better meet the needs of all learners. As a school earns additional teaching allotments, this may serve to reduce some class sizes, depending on other local school level factors. DeKalb County School District has secured a class size waiver from the Georgia Department of Education as part of the District's strategic waiver contract with the State. Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.08 CLASS SIZE can be found at this link: <https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/State-Board-of-Education/SBOE%20Rules/160-5-1-.08.pdf>*
- 38. Is there a process to challenge gifted assessment results received?** *No. Assessments used in the district's gifted identification process are approved by the Georgia Department of Education and are administered in a standardized procedure as outlined in the Assessment and Georgia Department of Education Test Administration Manual.*