

Challenge!

District Handbook



Intellectually Gifted Program

Of the Attala County School District

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23.9 Gifted Education {MS Code 37-23-171 through 181} (SB Policy 3700) (Refer to the *Regulations for Gifted Education Programs in Mississippi, 2006*, and the *Gifted Education Program Standards, 2004*.)

Attala County School District

Gifted Education Handbook

The Mississippi Gifted Education Act of 1989 mandates that each public school district within the state provide gifted education programs for intellectually gifted students in grades 2-6. This district's mission is to comply with this act and identify those students who demonstrate high achievement and/or potential for unusually high achievement. Because of their unusual capabilities, they require uniquely qualitatively differentiated educational programs not usually available in the regular classroom. This program is required to enable the gifted students to realize their potential contributions to self and society. The curriculum for this program is based on Mississippi's GEP standards and is in accordance to the six outcomes: thinking skills, creativity, information literacy, communication skills, affective skills, and success skills.

Philosophy/Mission Statement

It is the belief of the Attala County School District that the gifted program must have a qualitative/quantitative-differentiated program that goes far and beyond the regular instructional program. This district believes that all gifted students have the potential to be intellectually challenged. Through a diverse curriculum and active participation each student's potential will be enhanced. The district's gifted philosophy works cooperatively with the district's mission statement.

The mission of the Attala County School District is to provide an educational climate where all students have an opportunity to achieve success and become productive and responsible citizens within a setting that is as safe and secure as possible.

Mississippi Program Standards and Guiding Principles

- I. Curriculum and Instruction- Gifted education services shall include curricular and instructional opportunities directed to the unique needs of the gifted students.
 - A. The local gifted education program shall provide a qualitatively different educational experience in addition to and different from the regular program of instruction.
 - B. Differentiated curriculum shall be provided for identified gifted students.
 - C. The local district shall provide opportunities for high ability learners that include grade acceleration, subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, mentorships, and/or concurrent enrollment.
 - D. The program of instruction provided to gifted students shall be based on the mastery of the MDE gifted program outcomes.
 - E. Career exploration and life skills shall be an integral part of the differentiated program of instruction for all gifted students.
 - F. Visual and performing arts shall be included in the differentiated program of instruction for gifted students.

- II. Program Administration and Management- Appropriate gifted education programming must include the establishment of a systemic means of developing, implementing, and managing.
 - A. Appropriately qualified personnel shall direct services for the education of gifted students.
 - B. Gifted programming shall be an integral part of the district's overall educational offerings and gifted students will receive a minimum of 300 minutes per week of services in an approved gifted education program.
 - C. Gifted education programming shall include positive working relationships with advocacy groups, parents, and administrative and district instructional personnel.
 - D. Requisite resources and materials shall be provided to adequately support the efforts of gifted education programming.

- III. Program Design-The development of appropriate gifted education programming requires comprehensive services based on sound philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support.
 - A. Rather than any single gifted program, a continuum of programming services shall exist for gifted learners.
 - B. Gifted education is adequately supplied by blended funding.

- C. Flexible grouping of students in a resource room shall be developed in order to facilitate differentiated instruction and curriculum.
 - D. Policies for adapting and adding to the nature and operations of the general education program are necessary for gifted education.
- IV. Program Evaluation- The systematic study of the value and impact of services provided.
- A. An annual evaluation shall be conducted competently and ethically and shall solicit information from all stakeholders.
 - B. The evaluation shall be made available through a written report.
 - C. An annual self-evaluation shall be conducted for the purpose of improving the program.
- V. Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling- Gifted education programming must establish a plan to recognize and nurture the unique social-emotional development of the gifted learner.
- A. Gifted students shall be provided differentiated guidance efforts to meet their unique socio-emotional development.
 - B. Gifted students shall be provided with career guidance services especially designed for their unique needs.
 - C. Gifted at-risk students shall be provided with guidance and counseling to help them reach their potential.
 - D. Gifted students shall be provided with affective curriculum in addition to differentiated guidance and counseling services.
 - E. Underachieving gifted students shall be identified and served rather than omitted from differentiated services.
- VI. Professional Development- Gifted students are entitled to be served by professionals who have specialized preparations in gifted education, expertise in appropriate differentiated content and instructional methods, involvement in ongoing professional development, and who possess exemplary personal and professional traits.
- A. A comprehensive staff development program and materials shall be provided for all school staff involved in the education of gifted students.
 - B. Only properly endorsed personnel shall be involved in the gifted education program.
 - C. Gifted program teachers and district staff are provided opportunities to attend non-district professional development regarding gifted education.

- D. Training for developing differentiated program appropriate to the needs of gifted student is available for teachers of the gifted student.
- VII. Student Identification- Potential gifted students must be assessed to determine appropriate education services. In order to help districts accomplish this effectively, the following guiding principles h
- A. District guidelines shall outline a coordinated, comprehensive, and coherent process for student referral and assessment in order to determine eligibility for gifted services. *The program is available to **all** students regardless of race, gender, religion, including students identified as homeless, migrant, ELL or with disabilities*
 - B. All student identification procedures and instruments shall be based on best practices and research.
 - C. Written procedures for student identification shall include provisions for informed consent, notification of results, student reassessment, and student exiting.
 - D. Student assessment instruments used to determine eligibility for gifted education services shall be selected based on the strengths of the individual student comprehensive student profile takes into account multiple factors.
 - E. Equitable consideration for gifted education services is given to all students through the screening process.
 - F. Referrals for gifted screening are acceptable from multiple sources.
 - G. Information about characteristics of giftedness and gifted programming is provided to parents.
 - H. Reliable and valid instruments are used for identifying gifted students.
 - I. The district has a policy in place for parent appeals.
 - J. Staff development is provided to all personnel involved in the identification and assessment of potentially gifted students.

Gifted Outcomes by Competency

- I. Thinking Skills
 1. Define and classify problems
 2. Make connections and draw distinctions
 3. Analyze information objectively and critically
 4. Reflectively developing a relationship between facts and values
 5. Differentiate beliefs and what is true from his/her understanding of what is logically and realistically possible.

- II. Creativity
 1. Divergent thinking
 2. Analogical thinking
 3. Visualization
 4. Attribute listing
 5. Morphological analysis
 6. Synectics
 7. Intuitive thinking
 8. Spontaneous thinking
 9. Creative problem solving
 10. Creative process in an appropriate manner to develop a workable solution(s)

- III. Information Literacy
 1. Identify and define the problem
 2. Design a research plan appropriate to the problem
 3. Conduct the investigation
 4. Decide on the most appropriate media for dissemination of the findings/solution(s)
 5. Present the results before an authentic audience

- IV. Communication Skills
 1. Need to retrieve and/or disseminate information
 2. Utilize the most appropriate media based upon available resources
 3. Effective communication of information

V. Affective Skills

1. Develop self- acceptance and awareness
2. Demonstrate responsibility for:
 - Personal growth
 - Awareness of personal and cultural diversity in others
 - Recognizing forms of bias and stereotypes
 - Respect unique beliefs and experiences in themselves and others
 - Embrace giftedness

VI. Success Skills

1. Utilize effective organizational, decision making, goal-setting, project management, and time management skills
2. Control impulses and adapt to unforeseen circumstances

Admin, parent/guardian, teacher and student needs assessments are conducted to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The data is compiled into a summary and distributed to stakeholders.

Attala County School District Gifted Education District Policy

1. The gifted program will have a qualitatively different educational experience in addition to and different from regular education.
2. Gifted students will meet a minimal 240-300 minutes per week.
3. Needs assessments and evaluations are given to all stakeholders once a year. Changes to the program are made accordingly by the district coordinator and teachers of the gifted.
4. The written report summary of all needs assessment inventories and evaluations given are located and available at the Federal Programs Office and at each of the elementary schools in the district.
5. All individual data are held confidential (FERPA).
6. School counselors and teachers of the gifted will counsel referred gifted students who are underachieving, from diverse populations, twice exceptional and/or at risk.
7. School counselors will provide activities that support the Gifted Educational Program (GEP).
8. Professional development opportunities will be provided to counselors, teachers of the gifted and other staff associated to the identification, referral, testing or providing services for gifted students.
9. Professional development materials pertaining to gifted is located in the school's library, office, gifted classroom and/or the counselor's room for check out.
10. A mass screener is given to all first and third grade students.
11. Anyone can refer a student. All referred students will be subject to meeting district requirements before being tested for the program.
12. Students may be referred and/or tested once in a school calendar year.
13. Students who have satisfied criteria on the Emerging Potential for Gifted Checklist (attached) will be administered a second test if deemed necessary by the psychometrist. Teachers of the gifted will meet with the parents of those students before placement and on a yearly basis.
14. Referrals are made in the spring with testing conducted thereafter.
15. All testing must be done through the district. Outside sources are not allowed.
16. A licensed examiner will review all student referral data, determine appropriate assessment(s), conduct testing and produce an accurate assessment report.
17. Upon completion of testing, a list of students receiving gifted educational services will be given to the counselor of the school to flag them correctly in the school's database.

18. On a student by student basis, the district may provide opportunities for high ability learners such as curriculum compacting at the elementary level and dual enrollment at the high school level. All accommodations must adhere to local and state law.
19. Student records will be kept on file at the Federal Programs Office until graduation. An ad is placed in the paper for the release of documents to the parents. After a designated time, all remaining records are destroyed.
20. Students may temporarily exit the program one time for up to, but not more than, 9 weeks after proper justification has been presented to the student's teacher of the gifted. Additional requests to exit the program will be considered and determined by the LSC committee. A second request for exiting the program will be permanent and an exit form will be sent to the Federal Programs Office.
21. Out-of-state transfers: Student must be retested in the state of Mississippi. All confidential information should be sent directly to the Federal Programs Office attention to the program director.
22. In-state transfers: Students coming from other districts in Mississippi will be accepted as long as appropriate information indicating eligibility requirements have been met.
23. Parent appeals:
 - Step 1:** Local teacher of the gifted notified by parent of appeal in written form, signed and dated. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, go to Step 2.
 - Step 2:** Local teacher of the gifted gives appeal to district gifted coordinator for review. Date received and signature will be written on the appeal by the coordinator. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, go to Step 3.
 - Step 3:** Coordinator gives appeal to superintendent for review. Date received and signature will be written on the appeal by the superintendent. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, go to Step 4.
 - Step 4:** Superintendent puts appeal on the agenda for the next board meeting for discussion and decision.
 - Step 5:** Following the board's decision, the coordinator will contact parent(s) with the results.

Attala County School District Gifted Referral Process

1. A mass screener is administered to all students in 1st and 3rd grade. Those scoring 90% and/or above are placed on the referral list.
2. Referral lists are sent out to the teachers with a traits of gifted sheet. Students who are referred by a parent, teacher, another adult or themselves are also added to the referral list.
3. Once the referral lists are compiled, teachers of the gifted send out **Phase One** parent notification letters containing an explanation of the referral process and the student's current status in the process.
4. The Referral Form, Gifted Pupil Personal Data Sheet (GPPDS), checklists and other measures are completed on each student referred.
5. The teachers of the gifted review documents for accuracy and score the checklists and/or other measures.
6. Students who meet the District Requirements for Testing are eligible to be assessed for giftedness through a formal IQ examination by a licensed psychometrist.
7. The local school committee (LSC) then meets to review each student's data and decide if the District Requirements for Testing have been met.
8. Once a list of students eligible for testing is compiled, the teachers of the gifted send out **Phase Two** parent/guardian notification letters and permission to test forms.
9. By signing section C of the Referral Form, parent /guardian give the district permission to test their child for intellectual giftedness.
10. Testing is scheduled and administered at the student's designated school during school hours by a licensed psychometrist.
11. Once testing is complete, the psychometrist will return all student referral information and assessment reports to the Federal Programs Office.
12. The LSC then meets to review all tested students' data and decide each student's eligibility for entering the program.
13. Once the list of eligible students for placement is compiled, teachers of the gifted send out **Phase Three** parent/guardian notification letters and permission to place forms.
14. By signing section C of the GPPDS, parent/guardian give the district permission to place their child in the gifted program.
15. Placement generally begins the following school year in August.

Attala County School District

Contact Information

Federal Programs Office

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Greenlee Elementary

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