



# Gifted & Talented Parent's Handbook

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“Is my child gifted?”

### What Does “Gifted” Mean?

The term "giftedness" is used by schools, organizations, and cultures in different ways, with some using the term strictly to indicate people with well-above average intelligence as measured by IQ scores. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) offers the following definition:

"Gifted individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as an exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10 percent or rarer) in one or more domains. Domains include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system (e.g., mathematics, music, language) and/or set of sensorimotor skills (e.g., painting, dance, sports)."

In Pennsylvania gifted is defined as:

- Outstanding intellectual and creative ability, the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the regular education program. (22 Pa. Code §16.1)
- An IQ of 130 or higher or *when multiple criteria strongly indicate gifted ability*

Intellectual ability is not equated with an IQ score alone.

Not every child achieving above his grade level is a genius, some are just exceptionally hard workers. Often parents and educators believe a child who can read early is gifted. The truth is, her brain may have developed a bit quicker than her peers, but young kids are known for developmental leaps and stalls. Later on she may learn at the same pace as other kids, or she may continue to outpace them.

Gifted and talented students are found in every classroom, in every grade, in every school. They come from all ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds and cultures.

### **Evaluating students for gifted services follows an established process.**

During the early months of school students participate in a variety of assessments to determine learning needs. For students in 2nd grade, an additional non-verbal assessment is administered in the spring. The Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT3) addresses critical thinking, problem solving and analytical skills without relying on reading ability. Scoring advanced on the NNAT3 is **not** a requirement for gifted consideration. It is an additional method to help identify students who may be advanced in areas not assessed through more traditional reading and math tests.

Parents may also initiate the gifted referral process. Here is how it works:

1. A referral request is made **in writing** to the school counselor. A request form is [available here](#), Gifted Education.
2. Information on the student is gathered in a variety of areas; Grades, test scores, assessments and screening data, work samples, gifted behaviors checklist are reviewed to determine if there is evidence to support a full psychological evaluation.
3. **First Decision Point** (10 days from referral request)
  - If further evaluation **IS** recommended, you will receive a Permission to Evaluate and a [Parent Information Form to complete](#)
  - A psychological evaluation will be scheduled
  - If further evaluation is **NOT** recommended, you will receive a summary of the findings and an explanation of how the decision was made. You will also receive a NORA (Notice of Recommended Assignment). If you disagree with the recommendation, you may indicate it on the NORA.
4. After the psychological evaluation, the school Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team meets to review the findings and determine whether your child is in need of gifted services.

A student may be gifted but not in need of a special program of services. This can occur if a school offers advanced levels of instruction to every student.

5. The parent is invited to participate in a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) meeting to design the educational services that will be provided for your child.

6. The parent is issued a Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA) which you are asked to sign as acceptance of the GIEP.

At any time, if you disagree with the findings or recommendations of the school you may request mediation through the Office of Dispute Resolution at PDE. [The Notice of Parental Rights](#) explains the options you have available.

Here is the roadmap --

A Request is submitted in writing to the Gifted Liaison at your child's school



- An initial review of existing data, work artifacts and any other evidence
- The evaluation team will determine, based on the data, if a psychological evaluation (IQ Test) is warranted.
- To determine eligibility students should meet a minimum of 3 data points from the [Gifted Data Guidelines](#)



**What data do we look at?** Screeners, Reading Data, Test scores, behaviors, acquisition and retention rates, higher level thinking skills, creativity, leadership, foreign language aptitude or technology expertise, non-verbal ability

What criteria do we use? Criteria related to your child's ranking within the top 10% of his/her peers. If a majority of the criteria are met, evaluation by a psychologist is recommended.

If evaluation is not recommended, you will receive a report on how the decision was made

Within 10 days, if an evaluation is recommended, you will be provided with a Permission to Evaluate. You must consent to allow your student to be evaluated by a psychologist.

Within 60 days:

-- Your student is evaluated by a school psychologist



-- GWR The Gifted Written Report is issued. You will be invited to the meeting that reviews the evaluation of your child. At that meeting a determination will be made to answer the following question:

Does your child need specially designed instruction (SDI)? The PDE states that these SDI services may be **enrichment**, **acceleration**, or a **combination of both**. The school team will work with you to identify the instructional resources and strategies that fit the needs of your child based on the data.

Remember: Learning happens everywhere. A pull-out program may not be one of the recommended services. Your child's teacher will be able to share with you a plan for how the SDI will be met in the general education classroom.

A Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) will be created that includes annual learning goals, based on your child's strengths and the strategies or activities (SDI) that your child will be receiving to reach those goals. A Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA) will be part of this document. You will be required to sign the NORA before services may begin.

-- You have 5 days to respond to the NORA.

Resources for Parents:

[Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education](http://www.giftedpage.org/) <http://www.giftedpage.org/>

[National Association for Gifted Children](http://www.nagc.org) <http://www.nagc.org>

[Pennsylvania Department of Education: Gifted Education](http://www.education.pa.gov/gifted) <http://www.education.pa.gov/gifted>

[48 Essential Links for the Parents of Gifted and Talented Students](http://oedb.org/ilibrarian/50-essential-links-for-the-parents-of-gifted-children/)  
<http://oedb.org/ilibrarian/50-essential-links-for-the-parents-of-gifted-children/>

[TeachThought: 18 Resources for the Parents of Gifted Students](http://www.teachthought.com/pedagogy/18-resources-for-the-parents-of-gifted-students/)  
<http://www.teachthought.com/pedagogy/18-resources-for-the-parents-of-gifted-students/>

[Renzulli Center for Gifted Education: Websites for Parents](http://gifted.uconn.edu/websites_parents/)  
[http://gifted.uconn.edu/websites\\_parents/](http://gifted.uconn.edu/websites_parents/)

[Center for Talented Youth - Johns Hopkins](http://cty.jhu.edu/) <http://cty.jhu.edu/>

[National Society for Gifted and Talented](https://www.nsgt.org/) <https://www.nsgt.org/>

[Hoagies' Gifted Education Page](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/parents.htm) <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/parents.htm>