

Gifted Education (Quest) Procedures Manual
Coffee County Schools
Douglas, GA



Contents

Gifted Education (Quest) Procedures Manual.....	1
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES.....	3
a) Notification and Information to Stakeholders	3
b) Referrals	3
c) Consent for Initial Consideration	5
d) Eligibility Criteria	5
e) Continuation Criteria (Elementary and Middle School)	6
f) Reciprocity and Transfer Placement.....	7
g) Curriculum and Services to be Provided.....	9
h) Data Collections	10
i) Public Review	11

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES GIFTED EDUCATION SERVICES

Purpose

The Coffee County Board of Education recognizes the need to provide Gifted Education services to students who have the potential for exceptional achievement. These procedures provide the framework for provisions of these services as outlined in State Board Rule 160-4-2.38.

Definition

A Gifted Student is identified as one who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual, creative and/or artistic ability(ies), possesses exceptional leadership skills, or excels in specific academic fields and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities.

Goals

Gifted Students will:

- Develop advanced research skills and methods
- Develop and practice creative thinking and creative problem-solving skills
- Develop and practice critical thinking and logical problem-solving skills
- Develop advanced communication skills
- Develop an understanding of self and how their unique characteristics may influence interactions with others

a) Notification and Information to Stakeholders

Parents and other stakeholders (students, teachers, administration, community, school-wide, district-wide) will be notified about gifted program services and procedures through a variety of methods: Student handbooks, brochures, PTO meetings, open house orientation, parent conferences, school council meetings at each of the schools, system website and with an assortment of letters and forms for specific purposes. Gifted information is discussed at system wide Parent Advisory Council meetings held in the fall and spring of each year.

b) Referrals

The consideration for gifted education services may be reported or automatic.

Reported Referrals

A student may be referred for consideration for gifted educational services by the classroom teacher, counselor, administrator, special area teacher, parents or guardian, a peer, the student or any other responsible person who has knowledge of the student's abilities.

Consideration of Not Assessing

If a student has been assessed consecutively for two years and did not successfully meet the eligibility criteria for the Gifted Program, the Gifted Eligibility Committee may determine that moving forward with an evaluation is not in the best interest of the student's well-being. Students will be considered for another evaluation in the fourth year of the evaluation rotation. For example, if a student is assessed in Kindergarten and again in First grade, the student may not be evaluated in the Second grade. The student could be eligible for consideration again in the Third grade.

Teacher Request for Screening

Teachers requesting students (who do not meet the Automatic Referral criteria) to be considered for gifted testing will complete the following three checklists and meet the established cut-scores to advance on for additional testing.

- TABS (Traits, Attitudes and Behaviors) Checklist: Cut-score- 5 Areas Indicated
- Creativity Observation Checklist: Cut-score- 38
- Motivation Checklist: Cut-score-32

Parent Request for Screening

Parents may request preliminary screening. If parents wish to make this request they should complete the "Gifted Education Support Team Parent Request for Screening".

The gifted eligibility committee will look at all available evidence concerning the student's mental capacity and achievement. If available scores indicate the student has percentile scores at the 90th percentile in one area and one area in the 75th percentile or higher on the Curriculum Based Measures (CBMs) in reading and/or math, then the committee may decide that further screening is necessary.

The student's teacher will be asked to complete the following three checklists and meet the established cut-scores to advance on for additional testing.

- TABS (Traits, Attitudes and Behaviors) Checklist: Cut-score- 5 Areas Indicated
- Creativity Observation Checklist: Cut-score- 38
- Motivation Checklist: Cut-score-32

If the student meets the cut scores on the three checklists, the child will be referred for a more specific evaluation.

If the evidence is insufficient; however, to warrant the complete testing process, the committee may determine that the process be stopped. In this

case, parents will be notified by the “Gifted education support Team Notification for Parents”.

Automatic Referrals

Students who score at specified levels on the Curriculum Based Measures (universal screeners) may be referred for further assessment to determine eligibility for gifted program services. Criteria include assessments such as: STAR, Beacon, Georgia Milestones, writing prompts, GPA, etc.

Once the preliminary selection pool is determined through automatic or referral, additional screeners (Creativity Observation Checklist, Motivation Checklist and Traits, Attitudes and Behaviors {TABS}) will be collected for those students. Utilizing a variety of assessments will help ensure that students have an opportunity to be considered for services, regardless of gender, ethnicity, background, or disability.

All available data will be studied for each student in the preliminary selection pool by the school’s Gifted Eligibility Team. The Gifted Eligibility Team must consist of at least one gifted certified teacher, the gifted referral coordinator (grade level counselor) at the school, grade-level teachers, and an administrator. The team will make the decision to move forward with formal testing or stop the process. Based on the evidence presented, the eligibility committee may determine at this time that further testing will not be beneficial and the student will not be considered for service.

c) Consent for Initial Consideration

Parents are notified by letter if a student is being considered for gifted education services. Parents must complete a “Consent for Screening” and a “Biographical Data Sheet”. Students may not be given a test of scholastic or mental ability, creativity, motivation, or achievement without written permission of a parent or guardian. Ability, achievement, creativity or motivation scores to determine eligibility of initial placement must be current within two years. Mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation tests must provide percentile rankings by age and must have been normed within the last ten years. The majority of formal testing is conducted in the Spring, however, individual student data is monitored on a consistent basis. The Eligibility Committee reserves the right to make exceptions.

d) Eligibility Criteria

A student must meet eligibility criteria for Gifted Education from State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2.38. Under this rule there are two ways eligibility can be established;

Option 1, the Psychometric Approach: the mental ability test score must be a composite or full scale score of 99th percentile for students in grades K-2 and at the 96th percentile or higher for students in grades 3-12. In addition, one of the achievement standards described in SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38: 90th percentile total reading, 90th percentile total math, 90th percentile total achievement test battery, or superior product/performance assessment. No student may qualify on the basis of a mental ability test score alone, even if that score is at the 99th percentile.

Option 2, the Multiple-Criteria Approach: The student must be assessed in all four categories. The student may qualify by meeting the standards in any three of the four

data categories; mental ability (intelligence), achievement, creativity, or motivation. (At least one must be a nationally-normed standardized test). Under this option, a student must meet eligibility requirements in **three of the four** following areas:

- Mental Ability: 96th percentile on a standardized test of mental ability
- Achievement: 90th percentile in total reading, total math, or total battery section of a standardized achievement battery
- Creativity: 90th percentile / 90th percent on a creativity assessment
- Motivation: 90th percentile / 90th percent on a motivation assessment/ 95 overall GPA for a 2 year period for grades 6-8.

NOTE: A rating scale may be used to evaluate creativity or motivation, but not both.

*Test scores used to establish eligibility shall have been administered within the past two calendar years.

The Site Coordinator or other authorized party will administer the appropriate mental abilities, achievement, creativity and motivation tests. Test scores on such instruments will be valid for two years. When a student's score is within one standard error of measurement on a mental abilities test, a second test may be administered.

The District uses the list of approved assessments provided by the Georgia Department of Education.

The Site Coordinator or other authorized party will record all information on the appropriate forms and present them to the Gifted Eligibility Committee.

*GPA is determined by calculating the average of grades earned during the two years prior to evaluation in the subjects of mathematics, science, English language arts, social studies and foreign language, if such language study is included in the student's records. Grades 6 - 8 require a 95 or higher GPA for two consecutive year periods in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

Secondary Assessments

Secondary Assessments may be administered in any of the four areas under the following conditions:

- Students have qualified for services in at least two of the four areas.
- Scores fall within the Standard Error of Measurement in the area(s) where secondary assessment(s) are being considered.

Note: Evaluations used to determine gifted eligibility have been reviewed for bias with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within the specified time recommended by the Georgia Department of Education.

e) Continuation Criteria (Elementary and Middle School)

The student must maintain satisfactory performance in the gifted program in addition to maintaining satisfactory performance in the regular class. Satisfactory is defined as students meeting 80% of areas assessed on the student's progress report. For students failing to meet continuation criteria:

- A conference will be held between all teachers of the gifted student, an administrator and the parent, if possible, to determine the reason(s) for the student's unsatisfactory performance. This team will set up goals and/or criteria with interventions in an effort to bring the student back to satisfactory performance. A reasonable timeline for reaching satisfactory performance will be established, not to exceed one nine week grading period (elementary and middle school). If satisfactory performance is not attained by the end of the probationary period, the student may be removed from the program.
- **Withdrawal from the program:** Students who fail to maintain satisfactory performance in the gifted program classes will be withdrawn at the end of the specified probationary period. Parents will be notified in writing when a student is placed on probation and a final review conference will be held prior to a student's withdrawal from the program.

Parents may choose to withdraw the student from the gifted program at the end of a semester at the middle school and high school level or at a grading period on the elementary school level (extenuating circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by an Eligibility Committee). Parents wishing to withdraw a student from the Gifted Program may submit a request in writing and sign a "Withdrawal from the program form".

Continuation Criteria (High School)

The continuation criteria for high school students is based on performance in individual subject areas without regard to grades in other areas.

- The student must maintain satisfactory performance for each 1/2 unit of credit in a particular Gifted/Honors subject area.
- Students who fail to meet this criteria will automatically be placed on academic probation for the next 1/2 unit of Gifted credit in that area.

If during the **probationary period**, the student fails to maintain satisfactory performance, the student will be placed into a regular academic course.

Parents will receive a "Continuation of Services" letter, at least annually, from the Gifted Education Teachers. No student will be withdrawn from the gifted education program without prior written notification to the parent or guardian

Re-Admittance to the Program

Parents wishing to re-enroll a student in the Gifted Program may submit a Re-Entry for Gifted Program form for consideration by the school's gifted eligibility committee. Initial test scores cannot be more than two years old. To re-enter the program, there must be sufficient supporting evidence that the student will be successful in the program (classroom performance, attendance, etc.).

f) Reciprocity and Transfer Placement

Upon receiving current documentation of eligibility, any student who meets the state eligibility criteria for gifted education services is considered eligible to receive services. The system grants reciprocal eligibility to students who have been

identified as gifted in Georgia. However, a student transferring in from another school system within the state shall meet the criteria for continuation of services established by the Coffee County Board of Education. There is no mandated reciprocity between states.

Active Military: Any student who (1) has been identified as gifted in the school from which the student transferred and (2) the dependent of activity duty military personnel may be placed in the Gifted Program.

Outside Data - The system may consider data regarding a student's eligibility that was gathered and analyzed by a source outside the school system. However, this outside data shall not be substituted for data the school generates during the testing/evaluating process. The gifted eligibility committee shall convene to determine the sufficiency of the scores.

Parent Notification of Eligibility Status and Placement

If a student is determined eligible to receive gifted education services, parents will be notified of eligibility and placement by letter in their home language. Parents must sign and return the letter to the school's gifted site coordinator. Parents will have an opportunity for a conference to discuss student eligibility and placement. Information will also be provided to parents concerning the type of service to be offered, teaching methods, time allotted for services, objectives designed for students, and the manner of evaluation.

If a student is determined ineligible to receive gifted education services, parents will be notified by a letter.

Parents of Eligible and Ineligible students will receive a copy of the Coffee County Gifted Eligibility Report.

Documentation

The gifted site coordinator at each school will document the following: the date of the meeting/decision; the committee members present; the names of the students who were considered; the source of the nomination (automatic, teacher, parent, etc.) and the committee's/individual's decisions and rationale for those decisions regarding whether each student who was considered should be referred for formal evaluation. The site coordinator notifies the appropriate parties (e.g., teacher or parent who nominated the student) of the decisions.

Ineligible student files will be kept in an inactive file at the home school for a period of five years.

Eligible student files will be kept in an active file at the home school. When the student changes schools within the county, student records from the home school will be transferred to the appropriate school by the gifted education teacher.

When a student withdraws from the Coffee County School System, the Eligibility Report will be forwarded with the request of student's permanent records.

Expectations of Gifted Teachers:

- Obtain and maintain gifted endorsement
- Plan and teach gifted classes following county guidelines noted below
- Follow Coffee County School System Administrative Procedures in the system manual
- Assist with administration of testing and complete eligibility reports in a timely fashion
- Participate in Eligibility Meetings and follow guidance of the system gifted coordinator.
- Participate in professional learning activities appropriate for gifted students
- Communicate to parents in a timely manner
- Work directly under the supervision of the building administrator
- Understand that gifted teachers are system assigned and may be transferred to another school to meet state and system needs

g) Curriculum and Services to be Provided

Elementary School Students

At the elementary level students are served in the Quest Program at their home school campus one day each week. A certified teacher comes to the school on a designated day. During the remaining days of the week the curriculum is modified as necessary to challenge students in regular classrooms. While participating in the program, students will receive a minimum of six segments of instruction per week with certified gifted education teachers. Units of study have been designed to provide differentiated instruction using research based practices to enhance the Georgia Standards of Excellence. The academic standards-based classes have high expectations, a faster pace and more complex curriculum. They offer topics and experiences outside the regular curriculum. A variety of teaching methods are used utilizing a compilation of all the system's resources and materials at the elementary level. Authentic audiences are encouraged, assessment is varied, and self-evaluation is developed.

Makeup Work for Elementary Gifted Students

Gifted students are to be held responsible for mastery of the Georgia Standards of Excellence. However, gifted students are to be excused from daily homework assignments/classwork given while attending gifted education classes. Major assignments that students miss due to attendance in a gifted education class will be made up at a time convenient for the teacher and the student within five (5) school days.

Middle School Students

Gifted students in middle school are served through advanced content classes in English/Language Arts and Math, according to identified strengths. Advanced content courses are based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence state curriculum that includes differentiated instructional strategies to present

more complex subject matter at an accelerated pace. Students in middle school advanced content classes are expected to go beyond baseline standards and develop the critical thinking, reasoning, and writing skills in core content areas that will ensure academic success during their high school and college academic careers.

High School Students (Grades 9-12)

High school gifted services are provided through honors and advanced placement. Honors courses present more complex subject matter at an accelerated pace based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence. Advanced Placement (AP) courses are the equivalent of a typical college-level introductory course for which students have the opportunity to earn college credit through the AP testing program. Efforts will be made to match students' learning needs and gifted program services.

Curriculum: Curriculum is reviewed annually and revised to meet the needs of students.

Progress: Reported to parents each 9-week grading period. Progress reports are placed in the student's gifted file, permanent folder and in the Student Information System.

Differentiated Instruction

Units of study have been designed to provide differentiated instruction using research based practices to enhance the Georgia Standards of Excellence. In a differentiated classroom, teachers differentiate content, process, product, and assessments according to a student's readiness, interest, and learning profile.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

All identified gifted students can be served in the general education MTSS framework. By using instructional interventions, the MTSS framework allows gifted and high-achieving students access to a differentiated curriculum, flexible pacing, cluster grouping, and other universal interventions. A continuum of supports at Tiers 1, 2 and 3 is utilized.

Professional Learning: Professional Learning is provided throughout the year to improve the quality of instruction and services provided to all students.

h) Data Collections

The District shall annually collect and maintain data that includes:

- The number of students referred for evaluation for eligibility for gifted education services,
- The number of students determined eligible for services, and
- The number of students actually served during the school year.”

Data is archived and retained by subgroups (grade level, gender, and ethnic groups) in the Student Information System. Data is sent by individual schools to the District's Student Information System Director, who inputs it into the system.

FTE Funding:

FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) reporting refers to a state funding process that is dependent

on a student's enrollment and the educational services provided by the local school district. The Georgia General Assembly determines the base amount of money paid for each FTE student. Gifted Education weight is recorded for each section served on the FTE count day for students who are served in an authorized gifted education model. Section VII of the Georgia Resource Manual for Gifted Education contains information on state FTE funding rates and levels.

i) Public Review

Additional information pertaining to gifted education guidelines and procedures may be found by visiting the

Coffee County School System Website

www.coffee.k12.ga.us

Georgia Department of Education website

<https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Gifted-Education.aspx>