Fannin County School System Gifted Education Program

Procedures Manual



2022-2023

FANNIN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM Gifted Education Plan



Table of Contents

Program's Purpose Definition of the Gifted SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students FCSS Referral Procedures Eligibility Guidelines Guidelines for Re-testing Gifted Curriculum Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Gifted Learners Delivery Models

Reciprocal Eligibility Guidelines for Transfer Students

External Evaluation Guidance

In-state Transfer Guidance

Out-of-state Transfer Guidance

Evaluation for Identification Process and Gifted Services

Appendix A: GaDOE Referral and Eligibility Process Chart

Appendix B: GaDOE Gifted Education Eligibility Chart

Appendix C: GaDOE Differentiation Table

FANNIN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM Gifted Education Plan

Program's Purpose

The Fannin County Board of Education recognizes the need to provide gifted education services to students who have the potential for exceptional academic achievement in Grades K-12. This plan provides the framework for provisions of these services.

Definition of the Gifted

Gifted students are those students who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual ability, creative strengths, leadership capacity; exhibit an exceptionally high degree of motivation; excel in specific academic fields, and who need specialized instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her ability. The abilities manifest in a collection of traits, aptitudes, and behaviors that when taken together, are indicative of gifted potential.

SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 Education Program for Gifted Students

(1) Definitions

(2) Requirements

(A) Notification. The LEA shall notify parents and guardians of identified gifted students being considered to receive gifted education services in writing of information related to the gifted education program including, but not limited to the following:

- (1) Referral procedures and eligibility requirements adopted and applied by the LEA.
- (2) Notification of initial consideration for gifted education services.
- (3) Evaluation guidelines and documentation of training procedures utilized and maintained by the LEA.
- (4) The type(s) of gifted services to be provided, academic standards to be met, the teaching methods employed, and the manner in which students will be evaluated annually.

- (5) Performance standards gifted students are to meet to maintain their eligibility and receive continued services in the program.
- A description of the probationary period applied to students in jeopardy of losing their eligibility for services. The description shall include the length of the probationary period and the criteria.
- (7) Termination of services when students on probation have failed to meet criteria for a continuation of services.

(B) **Referrals**. A student may be referred for consideration for gifted education services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities.

- (1) **Reported Referral.** A student may be referred for consideration for gifted education services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities.
- (2) **Automatic Referral**. Students who score at specified levels on a norm-referenced test as defined in the GaDOE *Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services,* for further assessment to determine eligibility for gifted program services.
 - a) The LBOE shall establish the criterion score needed on norm-referenced tests for automatic consideration for further eligibility assessment.
 - b) The LBOE shall ensure that tests or procedures used in the referral process and to determine eligibility for gifted education services meet standards of validity and reliability for the purpose of identifying gifted students and shall be non-discriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background.

(C) **Consent**. The LEA shall obtain written consent for testing from parents or guardians of students who are being considered for referral for gifted education services. The LEA shall obtain written consent from parents or guardians before providing gifted education services to students determined to be eligible.

(D) Eligibility. The LBOE shall adopt eligibility criteria that are consistent with this rule and as defined in the *GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*. To be eligible for gifted education services. a student must either

To be eligible for gifted education services, a student must either (a) score at the 99th percentile (for grades K-2) or the 96th percentile for grades 3-12) on the composite or full scale score of a norm-referenced test of mental ability and meet one of the achievement criteria, or (b) quality through a multiple criteria assessment process by meeting the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation.

- (2) To be eligible for gifted education services for Option B, a student must meet the qualifying score on at least one nationally normed referenced test and must have qualified in two other categories by either assessments, observational data collected on his/her performance or production of a superior product(s)...Information shall be collected in each of the four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation.
- (3) Test cores used to establish eligibility shall have been administered within the past two calendar years.
- (4) Any data used in one area to establish a student's eligibility shall not be used in any other data category.
- (5) Data shall be used for eligibility in the four areas

(E) **Continued Participation**. The LBOE shall have a continuation policy for students identified as eligible for gifted services to continue to receive such services. The LEA shall review the progress of each student receiving gifted education services each year. Any student who receives gifted education services shall continue to receive services, provided the student demonstrates satisfactory performance in gifted education classes, as described in the LBOE continuation policy and stated in the continuation policy.

(F) **Reciprocity**. Any student who meets the initial eligibility criteria in this rule for gifted education services in one LEA shall be considered eligible to receive gifted education services in any LEA in the state.

(G) Curriculum and Services to be Provided.

- (1) The LBOE shall develop curricula for gifted students that incorporate SBOE approved curriculum. LBOE curricula for gifted students shall focus on developing cognitive learning, research and reference, and metacognitive skills at each grade grouping, using principles of differentiation, in one or more of the following content areas: mathematics, science, English/language arts, social studies, world languages, fine arts, and/or career, technical and agricultural education. LEAs shall make available to the public and the GaDOE a description of the differentiated curricula used for instruction of gifted students. The LEA shall review and revise, if revisions are needed, its curricula for gifted students at least annually.
- (2) 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*.

(H) Data Collection.

- (1) The LBOE shall collect and maintain statistical data on the number of students referred for evaluation of eligibility for gifted education services, the number of students determined eligible for services, and the number of students actually served during the school year. These data shall be archived and maintained by subgroups, which shall include at least the grade-level, gender, and ethnic group of the students.
- (2) The LEA shall evaluate its gifted program at least every three years using criteria established by GaDOE.

(I) **Public Review**. The LBOE shall make available for review by the public and the GaDOE a copy of its administrative procedures for the operation of its gifted education program and the LEA's gifted education curricula.

Authority: O.C.G.A. § 20-2-151; 20-2-152; 20-2-161

FCSS Referral Procedures

Students in grades K-8 are referred for consideration for the gifted program by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, or other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities and aptitudes. An automatic referral process utilizing a nationally norm-referenced assessment may be utilized to assist teachers with identification. Identification and eventual placement decisions are made on a case-by-case basis utilizing the Student Search/Eligibility Team.

At the high school level, an automatic referral process is utilized based on a review of data related to a specified level on a norm-referenced test as defined by the Georgia Department of Education. In addition, students may be referred for consideration following the methods described above.

Following students' initial referral, the Student Search/Eligibility Team will consider the data collected on individual student referrals; this team of professionals will decide if it is appropriate to continue with formal evaluation. The team will consider such factors as the strength of the evidence of the student's advanced learning needs and/or the receny and performance levels of any previous gifted program referral, in addition to supplied data. At this point, the formal evaluation process will begin, and parents/guardians will be notified. Appropriate permission will be obtained through a Consent to Test prior to the assessment phase. Data gathered and analyzed by a source outside the school system will be considered regarding a student's referral, but this data will not be substituted for data the school generates during the testing/ evaluation process.

Once the student has been assessed, the Student Search/Eligibility Team will meet to review the assessment results and to make a recommendation for placement (refer to chart in Appendix A). During this meeting, results of the assessment will be discussed, and a determination will be made as to whether or not the student meets the criteria for placement in the gifted program. A meeting is then scheduled with the parents or guardians. If the determination is made that the student is eligible for gifted services, the parents must sign a Consent for Placement to initiate gifted services.

Eligibility Guidelines

Pursuant to Georgia Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38, certain criteria conditions must be met in order to qualify for gifted placement; see above section on mandated eligibility requirements. These criteria are unwaivable.

In order to qualify for placement in the gifted program, students must either meet the eligibility conditions in Option A, where a student must have a qualifying score in the mental ability and achievement categories, or in Option B, where a student must meet three of the four components established by the State Board of Education. These include: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation (refer to chart in Appendix B).

Mental Ability. Mental ability tests shall be the most current editions, or editions approved by GaDOE, of published tests that measure intelligence or cognitive ability, which have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disability, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.

For Option A, students in grades K-2 shall score at the 99th percentile on a composite or full-scale score, and students in grades 3-12 shall score at or above the 96th percentile on a composite or full scale score on a norms-referenced test of mental ability. For Option B, students in grades K-12 shall score at or above the 96th percentile on a composite or full-scale score or appropriate score, as defined in the approved list of assessments, on a norm-referenced test of mental ability.

For the Mental Ability indicator, the FCSS utilizes the following assessment:

• CogAT, Form 7 or 8, in grades K-12.

Achievement. Norm-referenced achievement tests shall be the most current editions of tests, or editions approved by GaDOE, that measure reading skills, including comprehension, and shall yield a total reading score and/or a total

mathematics score based upon a combination of scores in mathematics concepts and applications. These tests have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.

Students shall score at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery, total math or total reading section(s) of a norm-referenced achievement test.

For the Achievement indicator, the FCSS utilizes a number of nationally norm-referenced tests as potentially appropriate:

- Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
- NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
- Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)
- Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT)
- American College Test (ACT)

Creativity. Norm-referenced tests of creative thinking shall be the most current editions of tests, or editions approved by GaDOE, that provide scores of fluency, originality, and elaboration. These tests shall have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.

Students shall score at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery score of a norm-referenced test of creative thinking.

For the Creativity indicator, the FCSS utilizes the following option:

- Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT)
- Gifted Evaluation Scale (GES) IV, Creativity (potentially as a second measure for grades 6-12)

Motivation. Students shall receive a score at or above the 90th percentile ona standardized motivational characteristics rating scale, or for grades 6-`12 have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale where a 4.0 = A and 3.0 = B, or a numeric grade point average (NGA) of 90 percent on a 100 point scale where 100 = A and 89 = B. Grades used to determine the GPA or NGA must be a two-year average of regular school program core subject grades in mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, science, and full year world languages.

Ratings scales used to qualify student motivation shall differentiate levels such that judgments may equate to the 90th percentile. If a rating scale is used toevaluate motivation, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate creativity.

For the Motivation indicator, the FCSS utilizes the following options as appropriate:

- Grades K-5: Gifted Evaluation Scale, Motivation (GES-IV)
- Grades 6-12: A two-year average of core subject grades in ELA, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages

Regardless of the method used for placement, students must be assessed in all four categories.

Guidelines for Re-testing

Scores/product performances are valid for two years. The Student Search/ Eligibility Team may address any concern of re-testing. In the event a student does not qualify pursuant to the required criteria under Option B, but does meet the criteria in two of the four areas, with at least one of the remaining scores being no more than one standard deviation from the passing score, he or she will be eligible to re-test on only the remaining assessments during a subsequent testing window during the two year period.

Gifted Curriculum

The Gifted Education Program in Fannin County is designed to provide an enriching and challenging enhancement to the regular curriculum program and the required Georgia Standards of Excellence by emphasizing the following skill areas:

- Inquiry-based Learning
- Innovative Thinking
- Problem-Solving and Decision-Making
- Critical Thinking
- Metacognition
- Citizenship and Leadership
- Collaboration
- Research and Reference Skills
- Independent Investigative Skills
- Data Analysis Skills
- Communication Skills
- Creative Exploration and Expression

Differentiated instruction is a teaching theory based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms (Tomlinson, 2011). The model of differentiated instruction requires teachers to be flexible in their approach to teaching and to adjust the curriculum and presentation of information to learners rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum (Hall, 2011). A differentiated curriculum for gifted learners may include the following expectations:

<u>Content</u>: Complex and challenging subject matter that:

- Requires intellectual struggle
- Includes primary documents when possible
- Integrates research skills and methods
- Incorporates relevant and real-life experiences
- Integrates interdisciplinary connections

Process: Instructional strategies are designed to:

- Emphasize higher-order thinking, problem-solving, and communications skills
- Foster self-initiated and self-directed learning
- Promotes creative application of ideas
- Model and encourage academic discussion

<u>Product</u>: Gifted student products should demonstrate a developmentally appropriate capacity for:

- Self-directed learning
- Meaningful collaboration
- Effective problem-solving of challenging and complex issues
- Effective communication
- Social and emotional understanding of self relative to community, culture, and/or physical environment

Environmental: Physical and work conditions to:

- Change the actual place where students work
- Allow flexible time
- Provide opportunities for independent study and in-depth research
- Provide opportunities for mentorship

Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Gifted Learners

All identified gifted education students can be served in the general education multi-tiered MTSS framework; differentiation can and should occur in Tier I instruction.

Advanced learning needs for the majority of students can be addressed in a general education classroom which offers a quality learning environment by providing instructional interventions prior to, or in lieu of, identifying students for specialized

educational services. By documenting instructional interventions, the MTSS framework allows gifted and high-achieving students access to differentiated curriculum, flexible pacing, cluster grouping, and other universal interventions. The MTSS process for referral, evaluation, eligibility, and instruction of gifted education students is set by the State Board of Education and defined in the *GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*.

The needs of gifted and high-ability students vary widely; therefore, an array of instructional modification options may be available for all grade levels and content areas. Specific learner objections can be developed on a case-by-case basis.

Tier I, II, and III instructional options may include, but are not limited to, the following (as appropriate):

- Acceleration
- Assessments
- Cross-Age Grouping/Multi-Age Grouping
- Curriculum Compacting
- Enrichment Clusters
- Graduated Rubrics
- Independent/Directed Study
- Internships/Mentorships
- Interest Centers
- Socratic Seminars
- Subject Grouping or Advancement
- Tiered Assignments/Products

The Georgia Department of Education provides a Tiered Differentiation Table (see Appendix C) that may be utilized to craft instructional plans in order to best meet the needs of students.

Delivery Models

A differentiated curriculum is defined as courses of study in which the content, teaching strategies, and expectations of student mastery have been adjusted to be appropriate for gifted students. In all delivery models, the instruction must be based on the Georgia curriculum standards. In the event that regular school operation is interrupted, all models can be utilized virtually.

Because of the nature of the program and the varying needs of gifted students in Fannin County, a variety of delivery models is provided. A cluster model or innovative model is provided for students in Grades K-5 by a gifted endorsed teacher. All students receiving thisservice must have been identified as gifted by SBOE criteria. These students will receive a minimum of five segments of specialized instruction per week from a certified gifted endorsed teacher. The curriculum must have an academic content foundation based on the Georgia

curriculum standards, but it may focus on interdisciplinary enrichment activities. The content and pacing should be differentiated to the degree that the activities are clearly not appropriate for moretypical students at that grade level.

Students identified as gifted in Grades 6-8 are provided gifted instruction using the advanced content model. The district has elected to include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. These students will receive five hours a week of instruction in each relevant content area of placement. These classes will be taught by a gifted endorsed teacher or served via a collaborative model where a regular classroom teacher plans for appropriately differentiated instructions with a gifted endorsed teacher.

For students identified as gifted in Grades 9-12, advanced content or advanced placement (AP) classes are available. The district has elected to also include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. These advanced placement courses are taught by teachers who have gifted certification or gifted endorsement in their content areas or a regular classroom teacher working collaboratively with a gifted endorsed teacher for appropriately differentiated instructions. Classes meet for a minimum of five segments per week, and Carnegie credits are awarded at the completion of all course work.

The full list of approved delivery models of gifted service by the Georgia Department of Education includes: Direct Services (Resource Classes K-12, Advanced Content Classes K-12, Advanced Content - AP Classes, Cluster Grouping K-12), Indirect Services (Collaborative Teaching K-12, Internship/Mentorship 9-12, Self-directed Study 9-12, Community Service Learning 9-12), and Innovative Models.

While the above descriptions detail the current models in practice in Fannin County, alternate service models may be utilized at the discretion of the LBOE should the need arise due to extenuating circumstances.

Local Continuation

Following placement, parents will be given a copy of the Local Continuation procedures outlined below. This document explains that in order to continue to receive gifted services the student is required to maintain satisfactory performance through academic growth and progress towards mastery of the standards in each class in which gifted services are provided. If a problem is identified, a teacher will work with the student to improve performance.

If the problem(s) persists, the Review Team (which may be comprised of, but not limited to, the following individuals: the primary gifted educator, an administrator, the parent/guardian, and/or the student) will develop a written Plan of Improvement, including specific goals and evaluation criteria, as well as a probationary period (one grading period), that should be implemented in the gifted

course where the necessary continuation performance has not been met. During this time, the student should continue to receive gifted education services in the content area/class/course in question, but his/her eligibility for receiving gifted services will be in jeopardy, and the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) must be notified. During the probationary period, the student will receive interventions (which may include but are not limited to academic, behavioral, social/emotional interventions) as part of the MTSS framework that may assist the student in improving his/her performance in the gifted course. Documentation of the intervention supports, improvement plan, and progress monitoring data should be maintained.

At the conclusion of the probationary period, the Review Team will meet again to discuss the student's progress. If the student has been able to meet the prescribed goals, placement in the gifted education program continues. If the goals have not been met, gifted education services will be discontinued in the gifted course(s) where the necessary scores for continuation were not met. Parent(s)/guardian(s) should be notified in writing, including any specific criteria or conditions that would be necessary to resume gifted education services.

If a student is placed on the inactive gifted roster for failure to comply with the local continuation requirements, the continuing eligibility criteria will remain in effect as long as the test results are within the required two year period. Should a student qualify for gifted services in an area for which gifted services are not offered, the student may be placed on the inactive gifted roster, after consultation with the child's parents and the gifted teacher, until services are offered in the student's identified area. For example, parents of a student who meets placement criteria in math may choose to place their child on the inactive roster until gifted services are offered in math.

If a student is placed on the inactive gifted roster while on probation due to the continuing eligibility criteria, this student will revert to probationary status for one nine week period should he/she return to the active gifted roster.

In the event that a parent/guardian voluntarily withdraws a student from the gifted program, even though he/she meets the locally established continuation criteria, this would be considered a "break in service." Upon re-entry to the system, the student will be reinstated for a provisional time of one grading period. If the student's performance during that time meets the expectations for Local Continuation guidance, then he or she will resume regular placement. If the student does not meet the performance expectations, then he or she will proceed through the MTSS intervention process as detailed above.

Reciprocal Eligibility Guidelines for Transfer Students

Any student who meets the initial eligibility criteria in any public school system in Georgia shall be considered eligible to receive gifted education services in Fannin County Schools. These students who transfer into the system shall meet the criteria for continuation of gifted services as established by the Fannin County BOE. There is no reciprocal eligibility between states unless the student is a dependent of military personnel as provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2140.

External Evaluation Guidance

Assessment data pieces that were gathered and analyzed by a source outside the student's school or LEA shall be considered as part of the referral process. External evaluation data shall not be substituted for or used as the sole source of data the school generates during the initial eligibility process. External evaluations shall have been reviewed for bias with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background.

In-state Transfer Guidance

If gifted education records are not available at registration, school personnel should contact the transferring district to obtain the student's gifted education records before placing the student into the gifted education program. The FCSS will honor the continuation policy of the transferring district.

Out-of-state Transfer Guidance

Due to the fact that gifted education programs are not federally funded or mandated, no reciprocity exists between the state of Georgia and any other state, except in the event that a student is a dependent of military personnel as provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2140. When the district receives notification of prior gifted placement in another state, the student will be given the option of evaluation in a timely fashion to meet Georgia's initial eligibility requirements.

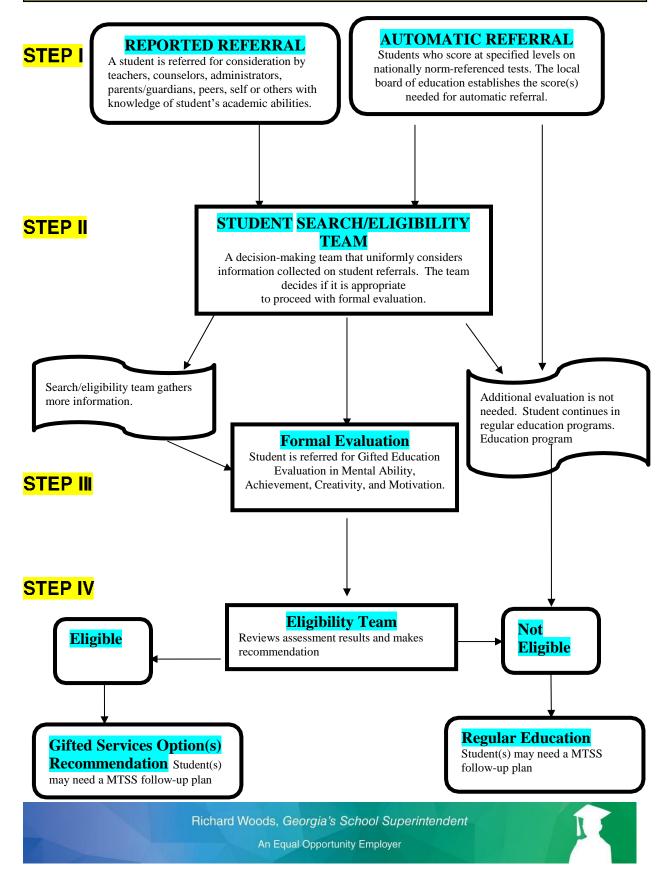
Evaluation for Identification Process and Gifted Services

A team of educators consisting of gifted teachers, members of the Student Search/ Eligibility Team, and administrators will meet annually to evaluate the effectiveness of the identification process and gifted education services.

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Appendix A: Referral and Eligibility Process Chart

SECTION IV REFERRAL and ELIGIBILITY PROCESS CHART



Appendix B: Gifted Education Eligibility Chart



Rule 160-4-2-.38 Education Programs for Gifted Students Evaluation and Eligibility Chart SECTION III GIFTED EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY CHART

- In option A and B, information shall be gathered in each of the four categories.
- At least one of the criteria must be met by a score on a GaDOE approved nationally normed-referenced test.
- Any data used to establish eligibility in one category shall not be used to establish eligibility in another category.
- If a rating scale is used to evaluate creativity, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate motivation. If a rating scale is used to evaluate motivation, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate creativity.
- Any piece of information used to establish eligibility shall be current within two years.
- Local school systems must establish policies regarding the use of data gathered and analyzed by private entities.

Category	Option A	Option B
	Student must have a qualifying score in the mental ability AND achievement categories.	Student must qualify in <u>three of the fou</u> r categories.
Mental Ability	 > Grades K-2 99th% percentile composite score on a nationally age normed mental ability test > Grades 3-12 ≥96th percentile composite score on a nationally age normed mental ability test 	➢ Grades K- 12 ≥ 96 th percentile composite OR appropriate component score on a nationally age normed mental ability tests
Achievement	Grades K-12 ≥ 90 th percentile Total Reading, Total Math, or Complete Battery on a nationally normed achievement test	 Grades K-12 ≥ 90th percentile Total Reading, Total Math, or Complete Battery on a nationally normed achievement test Grades K – 12 Superior product/performance with a score ≥ 90 on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators
Creativity	 Evaluation data required 	 > Grades K-12 ≥ 90th percentile on composite score on a nationally normed creativity test > Grades K-12 Rating scales used to qualify student creativity must equate to the 90th percentile > Grades K-12 Superior product/performance with a score ≥ 90 on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators
Motivation	Evaluation data required	 Grades 6-12 Two-year average of a 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale in regular core subject of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, science, and full year world languages. (See pg. 32-33 for additional information) Grades K-12 Rating scales used to qualify student motivation must equate to the 90th percentile Grades K – 12 Superior product/performance/structured observation with a score ≥ 90 on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators
Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent An Equal Opportunity Employer		

Appendix C: MTSS Differentiation Table

Table 2: Differentiation Table

Tier 1	Tier 2	
Flexible-Learning Groups by Readiness, Interest, Learning Profiles	Gifted Education Cluster Classes	
Choice of Books	Gifted Education Collaboration Classes	
Homework Options	Tiered Activities and Products	
Use of Reading Buddies	Use of Literature Clubs	
Various Journal Prompts	Multiple Testing Options	
Student/Teacher Goal Setting	Multiple Texts	
Varied Pacing with Anchor Options	Alternative Assessments	
Work Alone or Together	Subject Advancement within class	
Flexible Seating	Curriculum Compacting	
Varied Scaffolding	Tiered Centers	
Varied Computer Programs	Spelling by Readiness	
Design-A-DAY	Varying Organizers	
Varied Supplemental Materials	Community Mentorships	
Computer Mentors	Stations	
Think-Pair-Share by Readiness, Interest, Learning Profiles	Group Investigations	
Open-ended Activities	Students are Assessed in Multiple Ways	
Explorations by Interest	Student choice in selecting learning activities.	
Options for Competition	Simulations	
Tier 3		
Advanced Content English/language arts, mathematics, science, and/or social studies courses	Above grade level accelerated English/language arts, mathematics, science, and/or social studies courses	
Resource Classes	Advanced Placement Classes	
Independent/Directed Study	International Baccalaureate Classes	
Socratic Seminars	Internship/Mentorships	
	Whole Grade Acceleration	

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