
South Carolina Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual

**Prepared by
the South Carolina Department of Education**

**May 2006
Second Edition**

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Preface

The *South Carolina Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual* (2006 Second Edition) is designed for educators involved in the administration and implementation of gifted and talented programs. This document is a joint effort of the South Carolina State Department of Education (SDE) and the South Carolina Consortium for Gifted Education (SCCGE). Included in the manual is a copy of the current state regulation governing the education of the gifted and talented (Regulation 43-220, Gifted and Talented), along with clarification of the regulation, information on research-based best practices in gifted education, and resources to which the reader can refer for additional detail.

Regulation 43-220 (amended June 2005) makes specific reference to the *Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual*. This manual outlines the mission of gifted education and sets forth the dimensions of effective compliance with regard to all aspects of the gifted and talented program—curriculum and instruction, student assessment and evaluation, program models, program evaluation, professional development, support services, identification, and reporting and monitoring. Each of these aspects provides the focus for a separate chapter. The final chapter describes the roles and responsibilities of state and local educators, including administrators of gifted and talented programs and teachers of the gifted and talented.

This manual is intended to be a dynamic document—one that is refined and extended as the needs of educators and changes in law, regulations, and research dictate. The SDE and SCCGE invite program administrators and teachers to assist in the updating of the contents. Educators can send comments and suggestions to either organization.

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Legislation Pertaining to State-Funded Gifted and Talented Program in South Carolina

§ 59-29-170. Programs for talented students. Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, Amended 1986

Not later than August 15, 1987, gifted and talented students at the elementary and secondary levels must be provided programs during the regular school year or during summer school to develop their unique talents in the manner the State Board of Education must specify and to the extent state funds are provided. The Select Committee shall study the implementation of this section and report its findings to the General Assembly by July 1, 1986. By August 15, 1984, the State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations establishing the criteria for student eligibility in Gifted and Talented Programs. The funds appropriated for Gifted and Talented Programs under the Education Improvement Act of 1984 must be allocated to the school districts of the State on the basis that the number of gifted and talented students served in each district bears to the total of all those students in the State. However, districts unable to identify more than forty students using the selection criteria established by regulations of the State Board of Education shall receive fifteen thousand dollars annually. Provided, further, school districts shall serve gifted and talented students according to the following order of priority: (1) grades 3-12 academically identified gifted and talented students not included in the state-funded Advanced Placement Program for eleventh and twelfth grade students; (2) after all students eligible under priority one are served, students in grades 3-12 identified in one of the following visual and performing arts areas: dance, drama, music, and visual arts must be served; and (3) after all students eligible under priorities one and two are served, students in grades 1 and 2 identified as academically or artistically gifted and talented must be served. All categories of students identified and served shall be funded at a weight of .30 for the base student cost as provided in Chapter 20 of this title. Where funds are insufficient to serve all students in a given category, the district may determine which students within the category shall be served. Provided, further, no district shall be prohibited from using local funds to serve additional students above those for whom state funds are provided.

HISTORY: 1984 Act No. 512, Part II, § 9, Division II, Subdivision A, SubPart 4, § 2, 1985 Act No. 201, Part II, § 9C, 1986 Act No. 540, Part II, § 18.

Title of Regulation:

Regulation No.: R43-220

GIFTED AND TALENTED

Effective Date: 06/25/04

Constitutional and Statutory Provisions:

S.C. Code Ann. § 59-5-60 (2004)

General powers of [State] Board.

Descriptor Code: IDD

State Board Regulation:

R 43-220. Gifted and Talented

Purpose: The State Board of Education recognizes the need to provide gifted education services to identified students in grades one through twelve. These regulations provide the framework for provision of these services. All regulations must be followed in order to qualify for state funding.

In order to comply with the South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984, school districts must provide programs for all gifted and talented students at the elementary and secondary levels. These programs shall develop the unique talents of students.

I. Definitions

A. Population

1. Gifted and talented students are those who are identified in grades one through twelve as demonstrating high performance ability or potential in academic and/or artistic areas and therefore require an educational program beyond that normally provided by the general school program in order to achieve their potential.
2. Gifted and talented abilities for these regulations include
 - (a) Academic and Intellectual Ability: Students who have the academic and/or intellectual potential to function at a high level in one or more academic areas.

- (b) Visual and Performing Arts: Students who have the artistic potential to function at a high performance level in one or more of the fine arts.

B. Terms

1. Demonstrating: making evident or establishing by reasoning; proving
2. Academic areas: any or all of the academic disciplines and performance skills that cross the disciplines to include research, technology, and reasoning
3. High level: functional or performance level set by the identification dimensions in these regulations
4. Confluent: blending and moving forward together
5. Multi-: more than one
6. Multiage classroom: regular classroom where gifted and talented students are served through grade placement above chronological grade placement
7. Screening: considering all students on consistent measures (Screening involves census testing to guarantee each student consideration in the identification process.)
8. Referral: considering one or more students based on recommendation or nomination (Each student referred must be assessed and reassessed as indicated in these regulations.)
9. Assessment: evaluation and re-evaluation of student aptitudes, attributes, and behaviors according to specified dimensions
10. Placement: evaluation of student profiles for service indications
11. Special school: full-time gifted and talented magnet school: full-time gifted and talented school-within-a-school
12. Special class: self-contained gifted and talented class organized around one or more disciplines
13. Resource room/pull-out: self-contained gifted and talented class that meets away from the regular classroom to provide the services established in these regulations

14. Regular classroom cluster/itinerant teacher: an intra-classroom model in which students in grades one through two receive services from the trained classroom teacher or an itinerant teacher
15. Academic discipline/disciplines: English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign language

II. Academics

A. Program

1. Districts will submit a local gifted and talented program plan every three years and delineate progress on this plan annually. The State Department of Education will review the plan annually and provide written feedback to the districts. The State Department of Education shall establish a format and template for the plan. The following academic program requirements will be addressed in a district plan:
 - (a) curriculum, instruction, and assessment that maximize the potential of the identified students;
 - (b) support services that facilitate student learning (e.g., technology, guidance, academic support, staff development, academic competition);
 - (c) program models that facilitate the delivery of curriculum and instruction;
 - (d) a teacher-pupil ratio that fosters positive results; and
 - (e) appropriate and sufficient time in instruction to assure that the goals and objectives of the program are met.
2. To provide curriculum, instruction, and assessment that maximize the potential of the identified students, educational programs for academically gifted and talented students must reflect the following characteristics:
 - (a) content, process, and product standards that exceed the state-adopted standards for all students;
 - (b) goals and indicators that require students to demonstrate depth and complexity of knowledge and skills;
 - (c) instructional strategies that accommodate the unique needs of gifted learners;

- (d) a confluent approach that incorporates acceleration and enrichment;
 - (e) opportunities for worldwide communication/research; and
 - (f) evaluation of student performance and program effectiveness.
3. Districts should reference the *South Carolina Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual* for program models and curriculum requirements.
4. The models and teacher-pupil ratios that are approved for program service at respective grade levels are

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Approved Program Model Choices</u>
1–2	Regular Classroom/Itinerant Teacher (1:10) Multiage Classroom (NA) Resource Room/Pull-out (1:15)
3–5	Special School (1:25) Special Class (1:25) Resource Room/Pull-out (1:20)
6–8	Special School (1:25) Special Class (1:25) Resource Room/Pull-out (1:20)
9–12	Special School (1:25) Special Class (1:25)

5. Extension Models, while encouraged to supplement service, may not be substituted for one of the Approved Program Model Choices. They include but are not limited to

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Extension Model</u>
1–2	After School/Summer Services Individual Educational Plan Grade/Subject Acceleration Independent Study Special Training/Services for Parents
3–5	Regular Classroom Cluster/Itinerant Model After School/Summer Services Independent Study

6–12 Mentorship/Internship
 Regular Classroom Cluster/Itinerant Model
 After School/Summer Services
 Independent Study
 Seminars
 Exploratory Courses

6. A school or district may elect to serve students in any of the above Approved Program Models through a consortium agreement with other school districts. Other models developed by the school district must receive written approval annually from the State Department of Education.
7. An appropriate teacher-pupil ratio fosters positive results. The teacher-pupil ratios are listed beside the models in the chart above. Teachers shall be provided two hundred and fifty minutes per week or the equivalent for planning.
8. The program must provide appropriate and sufficient time to assure that the goals and objectives of the program are met. The following time requirements must be met by resource room/pull-out and regular classroom/itinerant teacher program models at respective grade levels to assure funding:

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Minimum Minutes Per Year</u>
1–3	4500
4–8	7200

The special school model requires full-time (academic) service. The special class model time requirements are 8100 minutes per year.

B. Identification of Population to be Served

1. The purposes of identification are (1) to find students who display characteristics of the gifted and talented; (2) to assess the aptitudes, attributes, and behaviors of each student; and (3) to evaluate each student for the purposes of placement. Student aptitudes, attributes, and behaviors will be identified, assessed, and reviewed through a multistep, multimodal, and multidimensional identification system.

2. Gifted and talented students may be found within any racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group; within any nationality; within both genders; and within populations with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, or behavioral problems.
3. Identification is a multistep process, which consists of screening and referral, assessment of eligibility, and placement.
4. Districts should reference the *South Carolina Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual* for the identification process.
5. The following students are deemed eligible for services with the approval of the District Evaluation Placement Team:
 - (a) students who were served and qualified by state regulations prior to 1999,
 - (b) students who meet the criteria in two out of three dimensions that follow,
 - (c) students who meet the 96th national age percentile composite score or higher (placement grades three through twelve) or the 98th national age percentile composite score or higher (placement grades one through two) on an individual or group aptitude test, and
 - (d) students identified in one South Carolina school district are eligible for services in any South Carolina school district.
6. Screening/Referral Procedures
 - (a) Districts shall screen all students by reviewing census aptitude and achievement test scores. Referrals from administrators, parents, teachers, and students must be accepted. Initial screening does not in itself guarantee placement.
 - (b) Districts shall include the following procedures in the screening/referral process:
 - (1) provide all parents/guardians with effective, written notice of the gifted education program, screening/referral procedures, and eligibility requirements;
 - (2) implement processes for identifying the academically gifted from all student populations;

- (3) provide training/guidance regarding the characteristics of academic giftedness for teachers and other district staff involved in the identification process;
 - (4) use screening criteria and procedures that are directly related to the purpose of the gifted program (i.e., identifying all students with demonstrated potential for high academic performance as well as those who have demonstrated high achievement).
- (c) All students with the potential for eligibility after screening and all students with referrals must continue into the assessment for eligibility phase of the identification process. The State Department of Education will establish procedures for screening and referral criteria with options for districts. Districts must use one of these options or obtain State Department of Education approval of an alternative proposal.

7. Assessment for Eligibility

- (a) Districts must ensure that all assessment instruments/measures are reviewed for bias and accurately assess the abilities/skills/potential intended to be measured; these abilities/skills/potentials are consistent with the definition of population set forth in this regulation; and, to the extent that subjective assessment criteria are used, those individuals conducting the assessment are trained to ensure proper evaluation.
- (b) No private testing will be accepted for eligibility, but those results may be considered for referral purposes.
- (c) The following criteria organized by dimensions shall be used in the screening/referral/assessment processes of identification:

(1) Dimension A: Reasoning Abilities

These students demonstrate high aptitude (93rd national age percentile or above) in one or more of these areas: verbal/linguistic, quantitative/ mathematical, nonverbal, and/or a composite of the three.

- a) Individual aptitude test (full-scale or component score)
- b) Group aptitude test (composite, verbal, or nonverbal scores)

(2) Dimension B: High Achievement in Reading and/or Mathematical Areas

These students demonstrate high achievement (94th national percentile and above or advanced status) in reading and/or mathematical areas as measured by nationally normed or South Carolina statewide assessment instruments. (See *South Carolina Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual* for approved subtest areas.)

(3) Dimension C: Intellectual/Academic Performance

These students demonstrate a high degree of interest in and commitment to academic and/or intellectual pursuits or demonstrate intellectual characteristics such as curiosity/inquiry, reflection, persistence/tenacity in the face of challenge and creative productive thinking. Characteristics for this dimension are demonstrated through

a) Evidence of commitment in academic disciplines through grades for placement in grades seven through twelve; the standard is 3.75 points on a 4.0 scale (See the glossary of terms for a listing of the academic disciplines.);

or

b) Assessments of performance on Project STAR for placement in Grades three through six. . Instruments for these assessments will be maintained secure under S.C. Code Ann. §59-1-445 (1990), Section 59-1-445, Violations of mandatory test security; penalties; investigations. The performance standard for the primary level is sixteen on either the verbal or nonverbal assessments for placement into grade three and eighteen on either the verbal or nonverbal assessment for placement into grade four. The performance standard for the intermediate level is sixteen on the verbal or twenty-two on the nonverbal for placement into grade five and eighteen on the verbal or twenty-five on the nonverbal for placement into grade six. The qualifying standards for new forms of Project STAR will be equivalent to those of the base year.

- (4) Districts will follow steps established by the Department of Education to guarantee no single criterion eliminates students from gifted program participation.

8. Placement

- (a) The evaluation step in the identification process of gifted and talented students shall be the responsibility of an evaluation/placement team within the school or district. The team shall be composed of at least a teacher, an administrator, and a psychologist (if employed by the district) and may also include a guidance counselor and/or a community-related person whose training and expertise qualifies him or her to appraise the special competencies of students.
- (b) The evaluation/placement team shall have the responsibility to interpret and evaluate student data in such a way that will insure appropriate placement. The evaluation/placement team may require additional assessment before determining student placement. Placement may involve a trial period for at least one semester but not more than one year. Criteria for trial placement shall be established in guidelines established by the State Department of Education. Students whose progress within the gifted and talented program at the end of trial placement is not deemed adequate by the evaluation/placement team may be withdrawn from the program.
- (c) The evaluation/placement team will be responsible for developing appropriate written procedures for removing a student from the gifted program. The criteria for these procedures according to the program model shall be established by the State Department of Education by January 1, 2005. Removal from the program must be preceded by appropriate counseling with the student and conferences with the student's parents and teachers. Records of any assessment and evaluative measures and other student information must be maintained in a confidential manner.
- (d) Students identified and served according to prior eligibility criteria will continue to be eligible for placement and funding provided their program service meets the requirements herein. Any student entering the program once these regulation amendments are effective shall be considered for placement based on the eligibility criteria herein.

C. Staff

1. Teacher Qualifications

- (a) Teachers must hold valid teaching certificates appropriate to the grade level(s) or subject area(s) included in the program.
- (b) Each teacher of a state-funded gifted and talented course or class shall have completed a training program approved by the State Department of Education.
 - (1) Exception 1: Newly assigned teachers will have one year to meet gifted and talented training requirements.
 - (2) Exception 2: Teachers who have a master's degree or higher in gifted education may have this requirement waived upon approval of credentials by the State Department of Education.

2. Professional Development

Appropriate, ongoing staff development activities in gifted education shall be provided annually by the district.

D. Reporting

- 1. Districts will report to the State Department of Education information, which includes, but is not limited to, student eligibility, screening, and referrals. Districts will annually collect and maintain, district statistical data on (1) the number, by race, of students referred for evaluation for eligibility for gifted education services; (2) the number, by race, of students determined eligible for services; (3) the number, by race, of students actually served during the school year; and (4) the number, by school, by grade, by race, by model, of students actually served during the school year.
- 2. Districts shall review annually the performance of gifted students on PACT, AP exams, IB exams, SAT, ACT, and similar college entrance tests. Districts shall summarize the performance of gifted students on these assessments and report trend data to the State Department of Education annually. These data will be disaggregated demographically and reported annually to the General Assembly.
- 3. Official enrollment reports to be used for funding purposes shall be submitted at the end of the 135-day enrollment period. The enrollment reports shall be submitted on forms to be furnished by the State Department of Education.

E. Funding

1. Allocation of Funds

The State Department of Education will annually calculate each district's allocation based on the number of gifted and talented students projected to be served in each district as it relates to the total of all such students in the state. Unobligated funds, which become available during the fiscal year (July 1–June 30) will be redistributed to serve additional eligible students.

2. Distribution of Funds

School districts will be authorized to expend allocated funds on students meeting the eligibility criteria of prior regulations and students meeting the eligibility criteria and being served in approved programs. Distribution of funds will be made periodically with a final adjustment occurring at the end of the 135-day attendance reporting period for regular academic programs.

3. Base Allocation for School Districts with Small Enrollments

School districts identifying and serving, according to the State Board of Education Regulations, forty students or less shall receive a minimum funding of \$15,000 annually for academic programs.

F. Expenditures and Accounting Procedures

1. State funds provided for gifted and talented programs must impact directly on students served in accordance with provisions of the State Board of Education Regulations. Accounting procedures shall conform to those outlined in the Financial Accounting Handbook issued by the State Department of Education. The entire allocation must be used directly for gifted and talented related expenditures.

2. A supplemental schedule shall be required in the school district's annual audit under the single audit concept.

III. Artistic

A. Program

1. Districts shall develop a written plan to include the following artistic requirements:

(a) curriculum, instruction, and assessment that maximize the potential of the identified students;

- (b) support services that facilitate student learning (e.g., technology, guidance, artistic support, staff development, artistic competition);
 - (c) program models that facilitate the delivery of instruction;
 - (d) a teacher-pupil ratio that fosters positive results; and
 - (e) appropriate and sufficient time in instruction to assure that the goals and objectives of the program are met.
2. To provide curriculum, instruction, and assessment that maximize the potential of the identified students, educational programs for the artistic gifted and talented students must reflect the following characteristics:
- (a) content, process, and product standards that exceed the state-adopted arts standards for all students;
 - (b) goals and indicators that require students to demonstrate depth and complexity of knowledge and skills;
 - (c) instructional strategies that accommodate the unique needs of gifted learners;
 - (d) opportunities for worldwide communication/research; and
 - (e) evaluation of student performance and program effectiveness.
3. Program Models
- (a) Visual and performing arts programs may be offered during the regular school year or during the summer for grades one through twelve. Visual and performing arts programs shall focus on creative expression in one or more of the following areas: dance, drama, music, and/or visual arts. A diversified arts program encompassing the disciplines of dance, drama, music, and visual arts may be offered in grades one through six. (A diversified program is one in which students take a variety of disciplines, typically in a summer program.) The program models are in-school programs, after-school programs, summer programs, Saturday programs, and consortium programs. Combinations of the approved program models are also acceptable.
 - (b) A school district may elect to serve students in any of the models through consortium agreement with other school districts.

4. Length of Time in Models

Academic School Year

(In-school, after-school, and Saturday Programs)

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Minimum Minutes Per Year</u>
1-3	4500
4-8	7200

9–12

8100

Summer Programs (30 days in length)
Saturday Programs (minimum 30 Saturdays)

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Minimum Hours Per Day</u>
1–3	2 ½ hours
4–8	4 hours
9–12	5 hours

5. Teacher-Pupil Ratios: an appropriate teacher-pupil ratio fosters positive results. Districts should reference the *South Carolina Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual* for further information.

B. Identification of Population to be Served

1. The purposes of identification are (1) to find students who display talent beyond that of their peers in one or more artistic areas; (2) to assess the aptitudes, attributes, and behaviors of each student; and (3) to evaluate each student for the purposes of referral.
2. Gifted and talented students may be found within any racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group; within any nationality; within both genders; and within populations with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, or behavioral problems.

C. Identification/Selection is a four-step process, which consists of referral, recommendation, demonstration, and placement.

1. Referral Procedures

- (a) Students may be referred by a teacher, administrator, parent, self, or a peer using a State Department of Education–approved instrument appropriate to the visual and performing arts area, to include creativity and expressive qualities. The referral should be used to identify students who have an aptitude for the arts and may benefit from intense exploration and in-depth study in one or more of the arts. The initial referral does not itself guarantee placement.
- (b) Districts shall include the following procedures in the referral process:
 - (1) provide all parents/guardians with effective, written notice of the gifted education program, referral procedures, and eligibility requirements;
 - (2) implement processes for identifying artistically gifted from all student populations;

- (3) provide training/guidance regarding characteristics of the artistically gifted for teachers and other district staff involved in the identification process;
- (4) use referral criteria and procedures that are directly related to the purpose of the artistically gifted program; and
- (5) reference the *South Carolina Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual* for appropriate forms for the referral process.

(c) Assessment for Eligibility

Districts shall establish a review team comprised of at least three individuals to include an arts teacher, an administrator, and a community person with experience in the arts. The team shall ensure that all assessment instruments/measures are reviewed for bias and accurately assess the abilities/skills/potentials intended to be measured and, to the extent that subjective assessment criteria are used, that those individuals conducting the assessment are trained to ensure proper evaluation.

2. Recommendation Form

- (a) A recommendation form, which may be combined with the referral form, consisting of a checklist to assist with identifying the gifted artistic student will be completed by the dance teacher, the physical education teacher, the classroom teacher, the drama teacher (or the classroom teacher in the elementary school or middle school if the middle school does not have a drama teacher), the music teacher, or the visual arts teacher.
- (b) A teacher should base responses to the checklist on student behaviors that were observed throughout the school year.
- (c) Districts should refer to the *South Carolina Gifted and Talented Best Practices Manual* for recommendation forms and checklists.

3. Demonstration/Audition

- (a) The demonstration/audition should enable the evaluation-placement team to determine a student's artistic potential to function at a high level in one or more of the arts.
- (b) The demonstration/audition must also include either a student interview or questionnaire to assist the evaluation/placement team in determining suitability for placement.

- (c) Students will be rank ordered using results from the demonstration/audition and the student interview or questionnaire.
- (d) Parents of referred students may decide not to proceed with the demonstration/audition.

4. Placement

- (a) The placement of gifted and talented students should be the responsibility of the evaluation/placement team comprised of one member of the arts faculty or district arts staff, an administrator, and an additional member from the community who has expertise in the arts area for which the student has been referred.
- (b) The evaluation/placement team shall interpret and evaluate student data in such a way that will insure appropriate placement. The team may require additional assessment before determining student placement. Placement may involve a trial period for at least one semester but not more than one year. Students whose progress within the program are not deemed adequate by the team may be withdrawn from the program.
- (c) The team will be responsible for developing appropriate written procedures for removing a student from the gifted program. Removal from the program must be preceded by appropriate counseling with the student and conferences with the student's parents and teachers. Records of any assessment and evaluative measures and other student information must be maintained in a confidential manner.

D. Staff

1. Teacher Qualifications for a Visual and Performing Arts Program: Teachers must hold a valid teaching certificate appropriate to the grade level(s) or subject area(s) included in the program. Professionals in the visual and performing arts may teach in the gifted and talented program if serving in the program under the supervision of the appropriate district personnel.
2. Professional Development: Appropriate, ongoing staff development activities related to serving gifted and talented students shall be provided by the district annually.

E. Reporting

1. Districts will report to the State Department of Education information that includes, but is not limited to, student eligibility and referrals. Districts will annually collect and maintain district statistical data on (1) the number, by race, of students referred for evaluation; (2) the number, by race, of students determined eligible for services; and (3) the number, by race, by school, by grade, by arts area, of students actually served during the school year.
2. Official enrollment reports shall be submitted annually on appropriate State Department of Education forms.
3. Districts will submit a local gifted and talented program plan every three years and delineate progress on these plans annually. The State Department of Education will review the plans annually and provide written feedback to the districts. The State Department of Education will provide a format and template for the plans.

F. Funding

Distribution of Funds: School districts will be authorized to expend allocated funds on students meeting eligibility criteria and being served in approved programs. Programs initiated prior to June 30 will be funded from that fiscal year's allocation.

G. Expenditures and Accounting Procedures

1. State funds provided for gifted and talented programs must impact directly on students served in accordance with provisions of the State Board of Education Regulations. Accounting procedures shall conform to those outlined in the Financial Accounting Handbook issued by the State Department of Education. The entire allocation must be used directly for gifted and talented related expenditures.
2. A supplemental schedule shall be required in the school district's annual audit under the single audit concept.

Chapter 1 - Gifted Education

A gifted program is a permanent curricular response to the needs of gifted [and talented] students that articulates with the basic core curriculum.

—James H. Borland
Associate Professor of Education
Teachers College, Columbia University

Mission

The mission of gifted education is to maximize the potential of gifted and talented students by providing academic and artistic programs and services that match the unique characteristics and needs of these students.

Beliefs

Gifted and talented students have a right to an appropriate education, one grounded in the recognition of their individual differences and unique learning needs.

Gifted and talented students must be taught using a curriculum that is responsive to their individual strengths and their learning styles.

Curriculum for gifted and talented learners must be founded on South Carolina academic standards and must allow for both acceleration and enrichment.

The instructional environment for gifted and talented learners must encourage and nurture inquiry, flexibility, and critical and creative thinking.

Rationale

Gifted and talented students are those who are identified in grades 1–12 as demonstrating high performance ability or potential in academic and/or artistic areas and therefore require an educational program beyond that

normally provided by the general school program in order to achieve their potential. (*Regulation 43-220, Gifted and Talented*)

... no matter what the initial characteristics (or gifts) of the individuals, unless there is a long and intensive process of encouragement, nurturance, education, and training, the individuals will not attain extreme levels of capability (Bloom, 1985)¹

Gifted and talented students possess learning characteristics and needs that differ from those of their chronological peers: they typically learn faster, desire greater depth of content, and concentrate on tasks longer. They are more curious and prefer solving more complex problems than their chronological peers. These differences call for challenging educational opportunities in which gifted and talented students can learn with and from intellectual peers. Special programming and services are essential in order for gifted and talented students to maximize their potential. Accordingly, the South Carolina General Assembly has mandated that school districts provide modified programs to develop the unique talents of these students. (§59-29-170. Programs for talented students. Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, amended 1986).

Gifted and talented learners should be identified as soon as they enter school. Since advanced abilities may become evident at different times for different individuals, identification should be an ongoing process. Identification should be inclusive, with attention given to underrepresented populations of gifted and talented learners.

Great diversity exists within the population of gifted and talented learners with respect to areas of academic and artistic giftedness, degree of giftedness within those areas, qualities such as motivation and persistence, and level of performance in school subjects. Because of this diversity, school districts must employ consistent procedures and multiple measures for the identification of gifted and talented students. Placement in gifted and talented programming as a result of the identification process implies that a student has the potential to learn at an advanced level in one or more areas of the curriculum when the program services provided match the student's strength(s).

Given the diverse needs of gifted and talented students, programming must be flexible and responsive to the needs of particular learners at a given stage of development. Programming for the gifted and talented should include a variety of options, including early school entrance, acceleration, grade/subject skipping, in-depth work in selected areas of study, and opportunities for community-based learning such as mentorships. Teachers who work with these learners must be carefully selected and trained in gifted education.

¹Bloom, B. (1985). *Developing talent in young people*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Curriculum for gifted and talented learners must have rigor, depth, and complexity. Instructional services must be delivered in an environment that honors diversity in thinking, fosters inquiry, and engenders positive attitudes toward learning. Curriculum scope and sequence must be designed to ensure that all learning opportunities for gifted and talented students form a coherent program of studies not only in specific content areas but also in critical/creative thinking and research.

Assessment of student learning is essential for continued student growth. Assessment strategies for gifted and talented students must match the instructional approaches used in the curriculum and provide specific, constructive feedback about growth and areas for further development. Assessment strategies should allow students to demonstrate their ability to function as disciplinarians in the various academic and artistic areas would in daily life (authentic assessment).

In addition to differentiated programming, curriculum, and assessment, gifted and talented students require guidance and counseling services responsive to their unique needs. Defined services for meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted and talented learners through differentiated guidance and counseling must be developed at the school and district level. These services should address issues especially pertinent to gifted populations, such as coping with being different, perfectionism, underachievement, and dealing with uneven abilities. While teachers may support the social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students, professionals who are trained in guidance and counseling should be the principal provider of these services. In order for counselors to address these issues effectively, counselors should complete graduate work in the nature and needs of the gifted and talented and meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. Counselors must also assist with academic and career planning appropriate for the aspirations and goals of gifted and talented learners. Early access to scholarship information and opportunities is crucial for these students.

When an educational program does not provide the challenge that gifted and talented students need, they may experience motivational, behavioral, and other problems that put them at risk. Therefore, it is critical that administrators, teachers, and support personnel participate in regular, relevant professional development that supports their understanding the nature and needs of gifted and talented learners. Also, schools must form collaborative relationships with parents to ensure that educational services address the particular needs of gifted and talented learners. Our gifted and talented students are too important to let them be “left behind” or to “fall through the cracks” of the educational system.

Legislation Pertaining to State-Funded Gifted and Talented Program in South Carolina

§ 59-29-170. Programs for talented students. Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, Amended 1986

Not later than August 15, 1987, gifted and talented students at the elementary and secondary levels must be provided programs during the regular school year or during summer school to develop their unique talents in the manner the State Board of Education must specify and to the extent state funds are provided. The Select Committee shall study the implementation of this section and report its findings to the General Assembly by July 1, 1986. By August 15, 1984, the State Board of Education shall promulgate regulations establishing the criteria for student eligibility in Gifted and Talented Programs. The funds appropriated for Gifted and Talented Programs under the Education Improvement Act of 1984 must be allocated to the school districts of the State on the basis that the number of gifted and talented students served in each district bears to the total of all those students in the State. However, districts unable to identify more than forty students using the selection criteria established by regulations of the State Board of Education shall receive fifteen thousand dollars annually. Provided, further, school districts shall serve gifted and talented students according to the following order of priority: (1) grades 3–12 academically identified gifted and talented students not included in the state-funded Advanced Placement Program for eleventh and twelfth grade students; (2) after all students eligible under priority one are served, students in grades 3–12 identified in one of the following visual and performing arts areas: dance, drama, music, and visual arts must be served; and (3) after all students eligible under priorities one and two are served, students in grades 1 and 2 identified as academically or artistically gifted and talented must be served. All categories of students identified and served shall be funded at a weight of .30 for the base student cost as provided in Chapter 20 of this title. Where funds are insufficient to serve all students in a given category, the district may determine which students within the category shall be served. Provided, further, no district shall be prohibited from using local funds to serve additional students above those for whom state funds are provided.

HISTORY: 1984 Act No. 512, Part II, § 9, Division II, Subdivision A, SubPart 4, § 2, 1985 Act No. 201, Part II, § 9C, 1986 Act No. 540, Part II, § 18.

Chapter 2 - Academically Gifted and Talented Curriculum and Instruction

To implement appropriate curriculum for gifted [and talented] students, there must be concern for the translation of theoretical principles into good practice in a holistic manner so that education of the gifted [and talented] is complete, not fragmented.

—Joyce VanTassel-Baska, Ed. D.
Smith Professor of Education and Director of the Center for Gifted Education
The College of William & Mary

Introduction

Regulation 43-220 requires that South Carolina school districts provide programs for all gifted and talented students at the elementary and secondary levels. According to R43-220, these programs shall provide curriculum and instruction that maximize the potential of gifted and talented students (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(A)(1)(a)). More specifically, programs for the gifted and talented must reflect the following curricular and instructional characteristics:

- a. Content, process, and product standards that exceed the state-adopted standards for all students;
- b. Goals and indicators that require students to demonstrate depth and complexity of knowledge and skills;
- c. Instructional strategies that accommodate the unique needs of gifted and talented learners;
- d. A confluent approach that incorporates acceleration and enrichment;
- e. Opportunities for worldwide communication and research.

This chapter addresses curriculum requirements for gifted education programs, as well as recommended instructional provisions for gifted and talented students in the general education classroom.

Curriculum for Gifted Education Programs

The curriculum for gifted education programs must be, not only different from the basic core curriculum, but defensible—i.e., matching the needs and abilities of gifted and talented students. Gifted and talented learners require a multi-faceted curriculum that utilizes approaches based on content advancement, analysis of abstract themes or concepts, development of complex thinking processes, and transformation of learning into creative products. Instructional strategies for the gifted and talented should include inquiry-based learning, group and individual problem solving, and questioning that encourages critical and creative thinking.

The curriculum plan should be written to include goals and indicators for the performance of gifted and talented students. The following checklist of curriculum components is intended as a guide for the on-going curriculum development process.

Curriculum Components

Effective curriculum and instruction for gifted and talented students must incorporate the following components:

- ◆ goals that support mastery of core areas of learning,
- ◆ scope and sequence that provide meaningful organization and structure,
- ◆ learning experiences organized around complex concepts, themes, and issues,
- ◆ challenging, meaningful content that exceeds state grade-level standards,
- ◆ instruction in the processes of communicating, problem solving, and critical thinking that exceeds state grade-level standards,
- ◆ instruction in independent learning skills,
- ◆ opportunities for worldwide communication and research,
- ◆ products that reflect advanced achievement and in-depth research,
- ◆ combination of acceleration and enrichment,
- ◆ articulation with the basic core curriculum, and
- ◆ integrated, relevant assessment of student performance.

Additional curriculum resources for gifted education programs include Davis and Rimm (2004), Gallagher and Gallagher (1994), Maker and Nielson (1995), O'Tuel and Bullard (1993), and VanTassel-Baska (2003 & 2006).

A gifted and talented curriculum designed to serve culturally diverse populations should also include components such as mentorships, remediation for deficiencies in basic skills, adaptations for variant learning styles, extracurricular enrichment, counseling, and career education. Further information on serving culturally diverse populations is provided in the following references: Borland (1989, Chapter 10), Colangelo and Davis (2003), Davis and Rimm (2004), and Gallagher and Gallagher (1994, Chapters 2 & 12).

Standards-based Curriculum

South Carolina's emphasis on discipline-based standards is focusing the teacher of the gifted on the need to integrate discipline content and process skillfully when designing and developing curriculum. Powerful curricular experiences for high ability learners must proceed through the content standards, not around them.

Why is this content standards approach important?

- Basic content areas organize schools, and the majority of student time is allocated across academic content. By using content as our organizational framework, we increase communication and maximize learning.
- In our culture, knowledge is organized by disciplines. Professions are often based on content expertise, and many significant products of civilization are discipline-specific (e.g. novels, medicines, political treaties, fine art).
- Our current research base on conceptions of giftedness supports a content-specific organizational model. Theorists such as Gagné, Csikszentmihalyi, and Bloom suggest that giftedness is domain specific.
- The research on teaching and learning suggests that integration of content and process optimizes transfer.
- Students in South Carolina are identified and placed in gifted programs based on verbal and/or nonverbal abilities; thus, the need exists to offer students curricular experiences that are congruent with their abilities. (Joyce Van Tassel-Baska in conversations with teachers from South Carolina at the Center for Gifted Education, College of William and Mary, February 2001.)

The curriculum for South Carolina academically gifted programs and must incorporate strategies to ensure the appropriate differentiation of the South Carolina Academic Standards for the gifted learner. An effective curriculum for gifted learners is articulated across grades and addresses significant concepts across disciplines.

Teachers and coordinators involved in the design, adaptation, and development of curriculum for gifted learners must approach curriculum and instruction as a team and as colleagues. Individual teachers can no longer work in isolation to respond to the reform agenda.

Curriculum Goals

State Board of Education Regulation 43-220 requires districts to develop a plan for academically gifted and talented classes that maximizes the potential of identified students. Six specific characteristics of this educational program are outlined in the regulation. The following goals are examples of the kind of curriculum goals that must be developed by districts to guide their planning of curriculum, instruction, and assessment for academically gifted programs. Districts may adopt these goals or prepare local goals provided that the curriculum goals fully reflect the requirements of Regulation 43-220.

GOAL ONE

To support mastery of core areas of learning at a pace, complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted learners.

GOAL TWO

To develop understanding of concepts, themes, and issues which are fundamental to the disciplines as well as society and to develop an appreciation for interrelationships among the disciplines.

GOAL THREE

To develop inquiry skills at a level of complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted learners.

GOAL FOUR

To develop the skills of critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making at a level of complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted learners.

GOAL FIVE

To develop proficiency in communicating abstract and complex ideas, relationships, and issues.

Curriculum for Academically Gifted Students

School districts must provide a curriculum for academically gifted and talented students that is designed to support their unique characteristics and needs. This curriculum must address specific goals so that gifted and talented students have the opportunity to reach the corresponding culminating objectives for each goal. A culminating objective is what the learner will know and be able to do as the result of instructional experiences.

GOAL ONE

To support mastery of core areas of learning at a pace, complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted and talented learners.

School district and teachers will ensure that gifted and talented students are appropriately challenged. Effective curriculum will address the academic strengths and weaknesses of the identified students. To accomplish this task, teachers should pre-assess students' learning (See Chapter Three in the *Best Practices Manual*) and provide instruction so that students demonstrate continuous progress.

The key to developing and designing effective curriculum to address goal one is the ability to differentiate pace, complexity, abstractness, and depth. Both acceleration and enrichment strategies must be used.

GOAL ONE CULMINATING OBJECTIVE:

In the designated curriculum area or areas, gifted and talented students will meet or exceed South Carolina Curriculum Standards.

GOAL TWO

To develop understanding of concepts, themes, and issues which are fundamental to the disciplines as well as society and to develop an appreciation for interrelationships among the disciplines.

“Central to any vision of comprehensive curriculum for the gifted is the focus on the ideas that have guided the development of civilization as we know it. These large concepts, ideas, and themes are those that dominate all areas of knowledge exploration, yet may have specific connotations within a given discipline of thought. So the task of educators of the gifted is to seek out those ideas that can be best utilized with gifted learners at various stages of development both within and across traditional fields of inquiry.” Joyce VanTassel-Baska, *Comprehensive Curriculum for Gifted Learners* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1988.)

School districts and teachers will design curriculum, instruction, and assessment so that gifted and talented students will articulate the underlying structure of the discipline(s), explain the interconnectedness of knowledge across the disciplines, and apply this understanding to current societal problems and issues.

GOAL TWO CULMINATING OBJECTIVES

Gifted and talented students will

- A. Demonstrate comprehension of a discipline as a system of knowledge.
- B. Analyze the content of a discipline in terms of major concepts, themes, and issues of that discipline.
- C. Analyze a concept, theme, problem, or issue within and across disciplines by using the different perspectives of those disciplines.
- D. Analyze the ethical dimensions of ideas, issues, problems, and themes.
- E. Explain the dynamic nature of knowledge and the interaction between culture and knowledge.

GOAL THREE

To develop inquiry skills at a level of complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted learners.

School districts and teachers will ensure that gifted and talented students acquire the skills necessary for self-directed and life-long learning. Students will develop facility in using various technologies and sources of information to conduct inquiry appropriate to the discipline(s). The curriculum will provide students with opportunities to explore and to evaluate existing research as well as to identify and to research new areas of interest.

Students will gather, analyze, interpret, and communicate data (See Goal Five.). They will learn to plan and to organize their work, to monitor their progress, and to assess the quality of their products and presentations. In the process they will develop and exercise the traits of the reasoning mind. See Richard Paul, *Critical Thinking: What every person needs to survive in a rapidly changing world* (CA: The Foundation for Critical Thinking 1992).

GOAL THREE CULMINATING OBJECTIVES

Gifted and talented students will

A. Demonstrate inquiry skills.

1. Identify a topic, problem, or issue and formulate questions for research.
2. Select and apply research methodology appropriate for the topic, problem, or issue.
3. Access information worldwide from primary and secondary sources by using a variety of print, electronic, and other media.
4. Assess the validity, reliability, and relevance of the information collected.
5. Organize and analyze data.
6. Synthesize and interpret data.
7. Develop conclusions and implications in the light of the problem.
8. Select an appropriate medium to communicate the results of research.

B. Demonstrate management skills.

1. Plan, pace, implement, and evaluate research projects.
2. Demonstrate effective allocation of time and resources

C. Apply ethical standards in conducting and reporting research. (See Paul Leedy and Jeanne Ormrod, *Practical Research* Seventh Edition, Merrill: 2001 or Gary W. Heiman, *Research Methods in Psychology* Second Edition, Houghton Mifflin: 1999.)

D. Apply intellectual standards and aesthetic criteria to assess the quality of their research products and presentations.

GOAL FOUR

To develop the skills of critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and decision-making at a level of complexity, abstractness, and depth appropriate for gifted learners.

School districts and teachers will incorporate models of critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and decision making so that students develop a repertoire of strategies to apply in the context of significant content.

As they learn reasoning strategies, students will apply intellectual standards (clarity, specificity, relevance, logic, breadth, significance, fairness, precision, accuracy, consistency, depth, completeness, adequacy) to assess the quality of their thinking. (See Paul, 1992).

GOAL FOUR CULMINATING OBJECTIVES

Gifted and talented students will

A. Demonstrate effective use of critical and creative thinking skills.

1. Apply the cognitive processes of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
2. Apply basic argument forms (i.e., induction and deduction).
3. Reason logically (define the central issue, analyze assumptions, select appropriate data or evidence, determine central concepts, distinguish points of view, develop valid inferences, determine purpose, and analyze implications). (Paul, 1992)

4. Apply the divergent thinking processes of fluency, flexibility, elaboration, and originality.
- B. Demonstrate effective use of problem-solving and decision-making strategies.
- C. Evaluate the quality and appropriateness of arguments, lines of reasoning, and solutions in terms of both ethical and intellectual standards.
- D. Analyze the content, structure, value, aesthetic qualities, and historical context of products of creative thinking.

GOAL FIVE

To develop proficiency in communicating abstract and complex ideas, relationships, and issues.

School districts and teachers will provide learning experiences for gifted and talented students to develop the ability to communicate ideas, issues, and relationships in effectively manners using multiple forms and technologies. Districts and schools will provide opportunities for students to demonstrate transformation of learning through the creation of products and presentations appropriate for both content and audience.

GOAL FIVE CULMINATING OBJECTIVES:

Gifted and talented students will

- A. Synthesize knowledge and skills to communicate ideas, relationships, and issues effectively through products and presentations.
- B. Analyze and evaluate the quality, effectiveness, and substantive content of products and presentations.

Instructional Provisions in the General Education Classroom

In addition to the services provided through gifted and talented program models, districts should attend to instructional provisions for gifted and talented students in the general education classroom. Depending on the nature of the gifted and talented program being implemented, identified students may spend the majority of their school time in a regular heterogeneous classroom. These students are gifted and talented 100 percent of the time, not just the percentage of time spent in a pull-out program or special class.

How have teachers in the regular classroom typically addressed the needs of gifted and talented students? A national survey of 3600 elementary teachers indicated that few, if any, modifications were made for gifted and talented students (Archambault, Westberg, Brown, Hallmark, Emmons, & Zhang, 1993). When change did occur, it was likely to be passive—an increase in the workload. The results of this survey were borne out in an observational study conducted in 46 classrooms across the nation (Westberg, Archambault, Dobyms, & Salvin, 1993). In the regular classroom, 84 percent of the instructional activities were the same for all students, whether gifted or not.

Research has shown that if every child is to be challenged to develop to maximum potential, “one size” will not “fit all.” Equal opportunity does not and should not mean identical content and activities for all students. To accommodate the needs of gifted and

talented students in the general education classroom, curriculum and instruction must be flexible in aspects such as pace, depth, complexity, and novelty.

What, then, can teachers do to meet the needs of gifted and talented students in the general education classroom? Presented in the following sections are recommended curricular and instructional provisions with regard to content, process, product, and the learning environment.

Content Recommendations

- ◆ Use pre-assessment techniques to establish what students already know. Do not re-teach the mastered content to those students.
- ◆ Increase the pace of learning for gifted and talented students by compressing the curriculum in terms of skills and/or knowledge areas.
- ◆ Adjust the complexity of objectives that gifted and talented students are required to achieve.
- ◆ Provide more complex/abstract materials for gifted and talented students.
- ◆ Provide mentors for gifted and talented students who demonstrate unusual interest in specific content areas.
- ◆ Allow students time to reflect and construct meaning.

Process Recommendations

- ◆ Teach strategies that students need to process content and to create products.
- ◆ Give students choices throughout the instructional process—in topics, ways of learning, modes of expression, and working conditions.
- ◆ Use a variety of modes to present or introduce information.
- ◆ Give students open-ended tasks to encourage exploration.
- ◆ Use flexibility in assigning groups and tasks.
- ◆ Allow students to work independently some of the time and collaboratively in groups at other times. (The majority of a student's time in groupwork should be spent with intellectual peers.)
- ◆ Structure a metacognitive approach for accomplishing academic tasks.
- ◆ Make sure that all students are actively participating in the learning process. It is essential that gifted and talented students be engaged in their learning.

Product Recommendations

- ◆ Encourage student choice and originality in the creation of products. Allow students to use a variety of media and techniques to produce their creations.
- ◆ Encourage students to create products that demonstrate more complex and in-depth mastery of content—e.g., independent study projects, special reports, research summaries, simulations, presentations, demonstrations.
- ◆ Require self-evaluation of all products as part of the metacognitive process.

Learning Environment Recommendations

- ◆ Create a safe, risk-free learning environment to facilitate student selection of appropriately challenging tasks.
- ◆ Require student-to-student dialogue and discussion.
- ◆ Balance teacher-talk with student-talk.
- ◆ Listen respectfully to what students have to say.
- ◆ Open the classroom to new ideas and resources.
- ◆ Create an inviting environment for advanced learning.
- ◆ Encourage and model acceptance of the unique abilities and needs of each student in the classroom.

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Chapter 3 - Student Assessment and Evaluation

If teachers [of the gifted and talented] think of their time with students as a conversation, then assessments are perhaps one of the most potent means of communication. Through assessment, teachers [of the gifted and talented] say to their students what they think is or is not important learning.

—James Gallagher
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Introduction

Along with specifying curriculum and instruction requirements, Regulation 43-220 calls for assessment that maximizes the potential of identified students (24 S.C. Ann. Regs. 43-220.2 (A)(1)(a) and 2(A)(2)). Assessment involves the collection and organization of data related to student performance. Evaluation involves using assessment data to determine how well a student is performing in relation to pre-established criteria. The purposes of this chapter are two-fold: (1) to describe ways of assessing student achievement of gifted and talented curriculum goals and (2) to present methods of analyzing assessment data to evaluate student performance.

The discussion of assessment and evaluation in this chapter incorporates the following principles:

1. Student assessment is an integral part of curriculum design and of each instructional unit.
2. The assessment tools used for a particular curriculum objective must be appropriate for the measurement of that objective.
3. The criteria which students are expected to meet in their performance must be presented at the beginning of instruction.

Ways of Assessing Student Achievement

Pre-Assessment Strategies

It is imperative for teachers to determine prior to instruction what students already know and can do. Only by assessing a student's current level of knowledge and skill can a teacher ensure that new learning will take place as a result of instruction. Teachers can pre-assess content knowledge and skills through a variety of strategies such as those listed below.

Pre-Assessment of Content Knowledge

- ◆ Oral questioning
- ◆ Brainstorming
- ◆ Concept maps (See pages 3-5 and 3-6.)
- ◆ “Need to Know” boards (See pages 3-6 and 3-7.)
- ◆ Checklists
- ◆ Conventional written tests

Pre-Assessment of Skills

- ◆ Portfolio reviews
- ◆ Performance tasks
- ◆ Examination or assessment of previous products
- ◆ Review of previous assessments of the skill

Assessment During Instruction

Assessment must be ongoing throughout the instructional process. Teachers collect assessment data through observing and monitoring student progress toward instructional goals. Strategies appropriate for this stage of the assessment process include those listed here.

- ◆ Observation of student involvement/interaction
- ◆ Oral questioning
- ◆ Monitoring of student practice
- ◆ Formative measure that is scored for diagnostic purposes, but not graded
- ◆ Spot checks of products in progress (not graded)
- ◆ Collection of work samples

Students should be active participants in monitoring their progress during instruction. Accordingly, teachers should guide students through the process of self-assessment—looking at their strengths and weaknesses in relation to unit goals/objectives and setting appropriate personal goals for performance. Once goals have been set, students should check themselves throughout the unit to ascertain their progress toward achieving these goals. Students can use self-assessment strategies such as those listed below.

- ◆ Learning logs or journals
- ◆ Self-checklists
- ◆ Conferencing with the teacher
- ◆ Peer review groups

Post-Assessment Strategies

To determine student progress at the conclusion of a unit of study or at specific points in a lengthy unit, the teacher should use post-assessment strategies that are consistent with the instruction provided. Post-assessment strategies must also be consistent with the assessment strategies used before and during instruction. Presented here are just a few examples of assessment strategies that teachers and students can use to culminate an instructional unit.

- ◆ **Written tests**

These should include student-constructed responses to open-ended questions that require analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

- ◆ **Concept maps** (See pages 3-5 and 3-6.)

These require students to design a visual representation of everything they now know about the unit topic. The post-assessment concept map can be compared with a pre-assessment map in order to determine student growth as a result of the instructional unit.

- ◆ **“Need to Know” boards** (See pages 3-6 and 3-7.)

The final column—“What Have I Learned?”—represents the culmination of the instructional unit.

- ◆ **Other graphic organizers**

There are many other graphic organizers that students can use to display their acquired knowledge—e.g., Venn diagrams, flow charts, matrices, spatial arrays, models, graphs, other diagrams and charts.

◆ **Performance tasks**

These tasks should require students to apply knowledge and skills acquired during the unit to a new problem, in a new situation, or in a different context.

◆ **Products, projects, and presentations**

These should require students to synthesize and transform unit learning, then communicate it effectively to a specified audience. Students should receive specific instruction in the techniques of design and construction needed for the particular type of product, project, or presentation.

◆ **Portfolios**

Most portfolios will include samples of student work completed during the unit. Samples should be arranged chronologically in order to show student progress through the course of the unit. Additional items to place in a portfolio include the following: relevant entries from student learning logs or journals, parent letters or accounts, documentation of interviews or volunteer work related to the unit content, narratives of fieldwork or out-of-class activities carried out by the student, and a bibliography of related reading completed by the student. The items included in the portfolio may be specified by the teacher and/or selected by the student. If items are student-selected, the portfolio should include a personal statement from the student explaining why each piece was chosen.

All of the assessment measures described here are criterion-referenced. These are the appropriate kinds of measures for assessing individual student progress toward mastery of specific goals or objectives. In contrast to these criterion-referenced measures, there are a number of standardized norm-referenced assessment measures—such as the *Metropolitan Achievement Tests* (MAT), *Stanford Achievement Tests* (SAT), *Terra Nova*, and *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills* (ITBS)—that can be used to identify a specific sample within a general population of students. Because norm-referenced tests have this purpose, such measures are appropriate for the identification of gifted and talented students, but they are not appropriate for the assessment of students' progress toward curriculum goals.

Ways of Evaluating Student Progress

After collecting assessment data, the teacher must evaluate the data in order to determine how the student is performing in relation to pre-established criteria. The articulation of performance or evaluation criteria is a crucial aspect of curriculum development. Evaluation criteria can address the degree of student understanding (with regard to knowledge acquisition) or the degree of student proficiency (with regard to skill development). In either case, evaluation criteria may focus on short-term progress or on growth over longer periods of time.

Evaluating Knowledge Acquisition

The most effective methods of evaluating knowledge acquisition involve comparing student responses on pre- and post-assessment measures. Pre- and post-assessments are essential for the evaluation of gifted and talented students. All too often, when pre-assessments are omitted, instruction focuses on content the students already know. Effective utilization of pre- and post-assessment comparisons can ensure that instruction focuses on new learning for the gifted and talented and, accordingly, that the culminating evaluation reflects real change in knowledge and understanding.

Using Pre/Post Test Comparisons

If written tests are used for pre- and post-assessments, the following series of questions can help to focus the evaluation on what students have learned and how well they can use the information to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate.

- ◆ **To what extent has the student increased command of the vocabulary, concepts, and information contained in the unit of study?**
 1. How much of the vocabulary is the student able to use correctly?
 2. How many of the key concepts can the student explain accurately?
 3. How much of the essential unit information is the student able to incorporate accurately into written statements about the unit topic?
- ◆ **To what extent has the student's knowledge of the unit topic increased in depth and complexity?**
 1. How well can the student use details to support generalizations?
 2. How effectively can the student use unit content to analyze or address new situations, problems, or issues?
 3. How well can the student evaluate or critique assertions of others in relation to unit content?

Pre/Post Comparisons of Concept Maps

If students have constructed concept maps at the beginning and end of the unit, the teacher can compare various characteristics of the maps to evaluate student growth in knowledge and understanding of unit content. Through concept maps, gifted and talented students should be able to demonstrate gains not only in the acquisition of content information but also in the depth and complexity of understanding. Such gains are evident in the pre- and post-assessment concept maps presented in the Sample Documents at the end of the chapter. (See Sample A, page 3-20).

Noted below are characteristics of pre- and post-assessment concept maps that can be compared in the evaluation process.

- ◆ Amount, accuracy, and significance of the content information or details that are included
- ◆ Appropriateness of the categories under which information or details are subsumed
- ◆ Complexity of categorization
- ◆ Number, accuracy, and significance of any other interrelationships shown by color, arrows, connecting lines, and/or illustrations
- ◆ Overall sophistication of conceptualization

Pre/Post Comparisons of “Need to Know” Boards

If students use “Need to Know” boards to record their learning over the course of an instructional unit, their responses in the three columns of the board—“What Do I Need to Know?”, “Where Do I Find It?”, and “What Have I Learned?”—provide evidence of student knowledge acquisition. Listed here are types of evidence that would be relevant for each column of a “Need to Know” board.

- ◆ **“What Do I Need to Know?” Column**
 - Evidence of inquiry/curiosity (number of appropriate queries)
 - Significance of queries in the context of the unit
 - Evidence of queries above the fact/detail level
 - Evidence of inquiry continuing as the unit progresses (e.g., new items/questions added as more content is learned)
- ◆ **“Where Do I Find It?” Column**
 - Appropriateness of sources used
 - Quality and variety of sources used
 - Extent to which all possible resources for the unit have been utilized
 - Evidence of persistence when initial sources do not provide adequate information

◆ **“What Have I Learned?” Column**

- Evidence of acquisition of new information
- Evidence of understanding of the significance of information in relation to the unit as a whole
- Evidence of a deepening understanding (e.g., through supported generalizations or insights)
- Evidence of complexity of understanding (e.g., through descriptions of underlying patterns or interrelationships of information)

In addition to providing information about knowledge acquisition, evaluation that addresses all columns of the “Need to Know” board can provide considerable information about how well the student is learning the skills needed for a self-directed study or inquiry.

Evaluating Skill Development

Establishing Performance Criteria

At the beginning of a unit of study that focuses on skill development, the teacher should present the criteria by which student performance will be evaluated. The criteria should vary with the skills to be assessed with a weighted emphasis on demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the skill. The sample criteria presented here might be appropriate for an instructional unit on the selection and construction of graphs to communicate research data.

Sample Performance Criteria - Graphing Research Data
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The type of graph is appropriate for the data communicated.2. The graph is properly constructed.3. The graph is properly labeled and titled.4. The graph displays the data clearly, correctly, and without distortion.5. The graph makes effective use of visual elements.6. The student summarizes and hypothesizes using the graph in class discussions.

Designing or Selecting Rubrics

Teachers should incorporate performance criteria into a scoring rubric that will be used for evaluation purposes at the end of the unit. The scoring rubric—which should be explained to students along with the performance criteria—indicates levels of proficiency in relation to each criterion. Shown here are two possible rubric formats for the graphing criteria. Format 1 provides a numerical score (1, 2, 3), signifying a specified achievement level while Format 2 provides a letter grade (E, S, N) for each criterion. Comments regarding the student’s performance relative to the criterion should be provided for complete feedback to the student.

Sample Rubric – Graphing Research Data - Format 1			
Performance Criteria	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Exemplary
1. Appropriate type of graph.	1	2	3
2. Properly constructed.	1	2	3
3. Properly labeled and titled.	1	2	3
4. Clear, correct display of data.	1	2	3
5. Effective use of visual elements.	1	2	3
6. Oral presentation accurate.	1	2	3

Sample Rubric – Graphing Research Data - Format 2		
E = Exemplary, S = Satisfactory, N = Needs Improvement		
Performance Criteria	Grade	Comments
1. Appropriate type of graph.	<i>E</i>	<i>Best type of graph for your data.</i>
2. Properly constructed.	<i>N</i>	<i>Use a protractor to divide your circle graph rather than estimating visually.</i>
3. Properly labeled and titled.	<i>E</i>	<i>Excellent labels and titles.</i>
4. Clear, correct display of data.	<i>S</i>	<i>Use of protractor would help accuracy.</i>
5. Effective use of visual elements.	<i>E</i>	<i>Nice color choice. Good contrast.</i>
6. Oral presentation accurate.	<i>E</i>	<i>Great summary explanation</i>

Other types of skill development may suggest different styles of scoring rubrics. For example, for a short story unit that focuses on literary interpretation skills, a teacher might utilize the sample scoring rubric shown below. In this sample, three criteria are denoted. The scoring rubric provides qualitative descriptions of three levels of proficiency for each criterion, along with a corresponding point value for each level. Note that the point values for more proficient work are significantly higher than the point values for more limited student responses.

Sample Scoring Rubric – Literature Interpretation
<p>1. States the main idea of the reading selection in a sentence or two.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited response that fails to capture the main idea (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> Statement about story lacking elaboration or synthesis (10 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Clear statement, indicating insight into theme (15 pts.)
<p>2. Explains the significance of the following sentence: <i>[sentence from the reading selection]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Limited response (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate but literal response (5 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretive response (10 pts.)
<p>3. Explains the author’s treatment of change and supports explanation with detail from the story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Vague or limited response (5 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Valid, understandable generalization about change supported with at least two details from the story (10 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Valid, sophisticated (for age) statement or generalization about change, well-supported with evidence from the story (15 pts.)

All scoring rubrics should specify the evaluation criteria, describe levels of performance, and provide feedback on areas of strength and areas for growth. Rubrics used with the gifted and talented should set performance standards at sufficiently high levels so that advanced students are challenged to grow and to refine their skills to the greatest extent possible.

Using Exemplars

A key to effective implementation of scoring rubrics is the use of exemplars—samples of student products or responses that illustrate the levels of proficiency described by the rubric. Exemplars can assist in the development of consistency among teachers in evaluating student work. In addition, exemplars can serve as models for students. By studying exemplars, students can see work of varying degrees of proficiency and begin to establish a sense of the quality of their own work and the changes they need to make to raise their level of performance.

Evaluating Growth Over Time

Sometimes evaluation focuses on the quality of a student product or performance following a relatively short unit of study (e.g., several weeks or a month). At other times, evaluation focuses on how the student has grown in understanding or proficiency over an extended period of time. Many of the goals of gifted and talented programs—e.g., the development of research skills, the development of problem-solving skills, the development of communication skills—require evaluation of the student’s development over the course of a year or even over a period of years.

Developing an Evaluation Plan

The evaluation of growth in student achievement over an extended period of time requires the development and implementation of a specific evaluation plan. When establishing such a plan, the teacher should identify those curriculum goals for which the focus is student growth over time. The plan should articulate evaluation procedures for each goal, specifying the following:

- ◆ the time period over which student growth will be evaluated;
- ◆ the developmental stages—and levels of proficiency at each stage—through which students can be expected to move during the designated time period;
- ◆ a list of checkpoints at which student achievement will be assessed and evaluated;
- ◆ descriptions of the documentation of student achievement or performance level that will be collected at each checkpoint.

Sample B (page 3-21) provides an example of an evaluation plan that could be used for one component of the research skills goal—constructing a bibliography. Included in the sample plan are each of the components listed above: time period, developmental stages, checkpoints, and documentation.

Using Portfolios

Teachers can use portfolios for assessment and evaluation at all levels of instruction and in a variety of subject areas. The portfolio is an excellent tool for documenting student growth—particularly growth in those performance dimensions that may take months or years for change to occur. A portfolio provides samples of a student’s work over time, stored in either a paper file or an electronic file.

To be most effective for evaluation purposes, a portfolio should contain the following elements:

- ◆ a clear statement of purpose or rationale agreed upon by student and teacher;
- ◆ a table of contents;
- ◆ work samples selected by the student and/or the teacher;
- ◆ evaluations of the student’s work samples;
- ◆ the student’s explanation of any student-selected samples;
- ◆ periodic (e.g., semester or yearly) growth goals set by the student or by the student and teacher.

Using the Evaluation Conference

A three-way (student, teacher, parent) conference can be another useful component of an evaluation plan. (See Evaluation of Growth in Sample B, page 3-17.) In such a conference, the student, teacher, and parent meet to review the documentation of the student’s growth. They analyze the student’s current performance level, the amount and quality of change since the previous conference, and areas that should be targeted for future growth.

As students become accustomed to three-way conferences, they can gradually assume greater responsibility for conducting the conference. The student-conducted conference has the added benefit of promoting self-evaluation and goal setting, two skills that are fundamental if students are to become self-directed learners.

Reporting Student Progress

Methods of reporting student progress will vary depending upon the program model and the curriculum. All gifted and talented programs should utilize reporting procedures that are appropriate to their delivery models and curricula. (See Chapter 4 of this manual for a description of program delivery models.) Regardless of the reporting methods used, all gifted and talented programs should go beyond simple grade reporting to provide more detailed information relative to student achievement and growth.

Report Cards and Grading Practices

Gifted and talented students served in special class or special school models should receive the same report cards as other students in the school district. These reports should use the district grading system and be sent home on the regular district schedule. Grades should reflect evaluation of the gifted and talented student's achievement of the special class or special school curriculum goals. In addition to these traditional report cards, gifted and talented students should receive more specific information regarding their progress in relation to the special class or special school goals—e.g., through checklists or teacher narratives.

Programs for gifted and talented students in a resource room/pull-out class or center vary in their grading procedures, the kinds of reports sent home, and the frequency of reporting (weekly, grading period, semester, or end of unit). Some programs use the district grading system, while others have developed their own grading systems.

An effective program establishes a reporting schedule at the outset of the school year so that parents know when to expect information on their students' achievement.

Exemplary Reporting Practices

Gifted and talented programs that are using best practices have a reporting system which communicates student progress on a regular basis. The reporting system should include a profile of student knowledge and proficiency in relation to gifted and talented curriculum goals.

An effective gifted and talented program utilizes more extensive reporting procedures than the traditional report card. Even when traditional report cards are used, as in a special class model, they should be supplemented with one or more of the reporting practices listed below.

- ◆ Evaluation reports on special products and performances
- ◆ Student self-reports in which the student reports to the teacher and parent his/her progress relative to specific learning goals
- ◆ Unit evaluations that communicate the student's level of skill proficiency and/or knowledge acquisition relative to unit objectives
- ◆ Gifted and talented program progress report listing curriculum goals and indicating the student's level of achievement for each
- ◆ Annual longitudinal growth conference in which the student, teacher, and parent discuss the student's growth over time

Review of Placement

The results of student assessment and evaluation may prompt questions about the appropriateness of a student's placement in the gifted and talented program. A student who finds work difficult and/or who performs poorly may seek to leave the gifted and talented program—perhaps out of concern about grade-point average or because of doubts about his/her abilities. A teacher may want a student who performs at a relatively low level to be removed from the program—perhaps because of questions about whether the student is “truly gifted and talented.” These judgments about the student and his/her abilities may or may not be valid.

Effective gifted and talented programs have clearly established and written procedures for reviewing student placement, in order to insure the following:

1. that students who do need gifted and talented programming are provided with the support they need to succeed, and
2. that students who may be mismatched with a particular class or service can have their placement adjusted to better meet their needs.

Procedures for Review of Placement

Best practices in gifted and talented education require that the individual student and his/her academic and intellectual development be the focus of all placement discussions, including the possible removal of a student. Any procedures that a district develops for reviewing a student's placement must incorporate a “child study” approach involving the gifted and talented program coordinator, student, parent/guardian, and teacher(s). The school or district Evaluation/Placement Team that carries out the evaluation step in the initial identification process shall also be involved in the review process (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(8)(c)).

Placement decisions resulting from a child study should have as their primary consideration the best instructional setting for the individual student. Sample C (page 3-22) illustrates a set of district procedures that could be used for reviewing a placement, including appropriate questions for the Evaluation/Placement Team.

Often situations which prompt a student, parent, or teacher to request review of a student's placement in the gifted and talented program are ones that can be addressed through conferencing and provision of appropriate support services rather than through withdrawal or removal of the student from the program. A child study conducted by an Evaluation/Placement Team can be helpful to the student, parent, and teacher by clarifying the situation, making recommendations for regular classroom modifications, and providing appropriate support services for the student.

Guidelines for Removal of Students

The gifted and talented program exists to provide services to identified students that will develop their unique talents and abilities. Participation in an educational program that goes beyond the services provided by the regular classroom/school program should allow these students to achieve their potential. Identified students have demonstrated high performance ability or potential and therefore have the right to these additional services. Moreover, the services provided for identified students must match their area(s) of strength(s)—the way a student qualified for gifted and talented. Gifted and talented students are sometimes twice exceptional or underachievers. Therefore, the denial of services to a student who has qualified for gifted and talented requires careful attention and serious consideration.

Regulation 43-220 required the State Department of Education (SDE) by January 1, 2005, to develop criteria for procedures for removing a student from the gifted and talented program. The regulation also requires districts to develop appropriate written procedures that are consistent with the SDE criteria for removing a student from the gifted and talented program (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.II.(B)(8)(c)). The Evaluation Placement team is responsible for developing these procedures and for final decisions relative to removal of a student from the program.

Removal is defined as discontinuing the participation of a student in the program. Prior to removal from a gifted and talented program, a student must be placed on probation.

Probation is defined as critically examining and evaluating the performance of a student with prescribed interventions for a period of time while the student remains in the program.

Both probation and removal require appropriate counseling with the student and documented conferences with the student, the student's parent(s), and teachers. Records of any assessment, evaluative measures, and other relevant student information must be maintained in a confidential manner.

Removal from the Pullout/Resource Room

Gifted and talented students served in the pullout/resource room program model often experience management problems as they learn to maintain and balance the responsibilities of the regular classroom and the resource room. The skills and strategies to function successfully in these two environments must be taught. Students should not be expected to navigate between these two educational settings without the support of the classroom teacher and the pullout/resource teacher. Frequent

interactions and joint planning between the classroom teacher and the pullout/resource room teacher are critical to the success of students.

In planning for a student to be successful in a pullout/resource room program model, the district must provide

- curriculum in the resource room that is a match with the strength area(s) of the student and
- teachers with the ability and necessary resources to differentiate instruction within the pullout/resource room.

Also, the district must have written policy addressing the essential assignments that must be completed when a student is absent from the regular classroom because of participation in the pullout/resource room program. This policy should establish

- additional time to complete the essential regular classroom assignments (i.e. Assignments missed in the regular classroom and newly assigned homework are not both due the next day.) and
- a process for defining, explaining, and providing in writing the essential assignments to the student.

Neither of the above should not create a punitive environment for the student.

Similar written policy should address assignments that must be completed as part of the gifted and talented pullout/resource room program.

Research on the performance of students in South Carolina's pullout/resource room program models suggests that students need two complete years in the program to make the adjustments of working in a regular classroom and pullout/resource room. To remove a child prior to two years of active participation in a pullout/resource program is a questionable action without substantive concerns for the student's physical, emotional, or social health.

Criteria for Removal from a pullout/resource room program

1. A child has completed two years in the program, and performance in the regular classroom and/or the pullout/resource room has not been acceptable by both the parent(s) and the teacher(s).
2. Regular conferences with the student, teachers, and parent(s) have been conducted and documented.
3. Specific strategies for supporting and improving student performance have been implemented and monitored by the student, parent(s), and teacher(s).
4. Regular counseling has been provided by the school's guidance counselor to support the student during the probation period.
5. Grade point average is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
6. Performance on PACT is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
7. Poor behavior is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
8. A student's social, emotional, or physical health is a factor related to removal from the program.

9. The student and parent(s) are advised that the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Removal from the Special Class or Special School Program Model

Gifted and talented students served in the special class or special school program model are engaged with a curriculum that reflects acceleration and enrichment in a specific discipline. Both the special class and special school model recognize that students display high ability or potential in some academic areas but not in others.

To be successful in the special class model, a gifted and talented student must be placed in a special class that corresponds with the strength(s) of the learner. For example, it would be inappropriate to place a child in a language arts special class if a child's only strengths were non-verbal/quantitative and mathematical.

To be successful in the special school model, a gifted and talented student must be provided with classes that correspond with the strength(s) of the learner and classes that compensate for and support academic weaknesses of the learner. As stated earlier, gifted and talented students may display high ability or potential in some academic areas but not necessarily in all academic areas.

In planning for a student to be successful in a special class or special school program model, the district must provide students with

- a special class or special school that is a match with the strength area(s) of the student;
- curriculum for the special class or special school that is differentiated and articulated in a written scope and sequence;
- teachers with the ability and necessary resources to differentiate instruction within the academic area(s);
- processes and strategies for gathering diagnostic data on student performance level(s) and monitoring student performance; and
- policies regarding assignments that must be completed as part of the special class program.

If a student is removed from a special class or special school and returned to the regular class or school, the ability of the student to perform adequately in the special class or special school must be addressed. Adequate performance must not be measured solely by grades. Careful consideration must be given to providing academic support, accommodating learning styles, ensuring a curriculum match with the student's strengths, addressing motivational issues, and attending to any social, emotional, or physical concerns that might affect student performance.

Criteria for Removal from a special class or special school program

1. A child has completed a minimum of one report card grading period but no more than a semester in the special class or special school, and performance has not been acceptable by both the parent(s) and the teacher(s).
2. Regular conferences with the student, teacher(s), and parent(s) have been conducted and documented throughout the grading period(s).
3. Specific strategies for supporting and improving student performance have been implemented and monitored by the student, parent(s), and teacher(s).
4. General counseling to support the student has been provided regularly by the school's guidance counselor.
5. Grade point average is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
6. Poor behavior is not the sole indicator under most circumstances.
7. A student's social, emotional, or physical health is a factor related to removal from the program.
 8. The student and parent(s) are advised that the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Removal of a Student by a Parent

If a parent wishes to remove his or her child from the gifted and talented program, the parent should complete a "Request for Removal" form specifying the reasons for this request. A sample form is provided. This form will be given to the district coordinator of gifted and talented programs who will conduct a meeting of the Evaluation Placement team with the student, parent, and teacher present. The Evaluation Placement team will have the final authority for approving or denying the request. When responding to the request of a parent, the same criteria for removal should be applied whenever possible. If a student is removed from the gifted and talented program at the request of a parent, the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Parent/Guardian Request for Removal of Student from the Gifted Program

I request that my child _____, be removed from the gifted and talented program. I understand that if my child is removed from the gifted and talented program, he/she may not participate for the remainder of this current school year. Further, I understand that my child will not be required to requalify for service in the gifted and talented program and will be eligible to return for service at the beginning of the next school year. It is my responsibility to advise the school if I wish for my child to return to the gifted and talented program since he/she will have missed a significant portion of the curriculum designed for gifted and talented students.

I am requesting the removal of my child for the following reason(s):

I understand that the Evaluation and Placement team for the gifted and talented program will review this request and notify me in writing of a date and time to discuss this request.

Date

Signature of Parent

Name of Student _____

School _____ Grade _____

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Sample Documents

Sample A - Sample Concept Maps (Pre- and Post-Assessment)

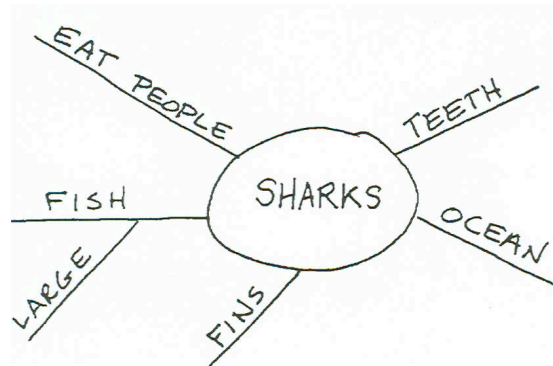
Grade Level: 4

Instructional Unit: Independent Study

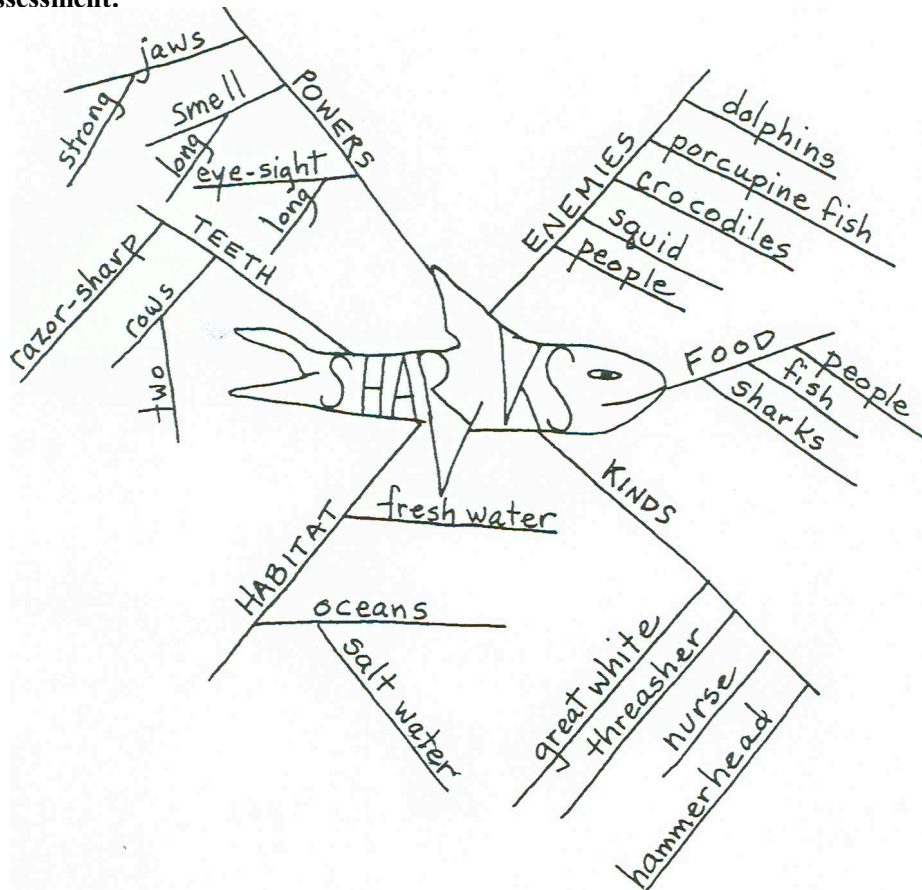
Student: (No prior experience in concept mapping)

Curriculum Theme: Power

Pre-Assessment:



Post-Assessment:



Sample B

Sample Evaluation Plan – Constructing a Bibliography
Time Period: Growth from Grade 3 through Grade 10
Developmental Stages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> No bibliography<input type="checkbox"/> Author and title on note cards<input type="checkbox"/> Written bibliography specifying author and title in correct style<input type="checkbox"/> Written bibliography specifying author, title, publisher, place of publication, and date of publication in correct style<input type="checkbox"/> Written bibliography containing complete entries in correct style for books, periodical articles, encyclopedia articles, electronic and audio-visual materials<input type="checkbox"/> Written bibliography containing complete entries in correct style for all of the above, plus interviews, observations, experimental data, electronic data, surveys, and other sources<input type="checkbox"/> Written annotated bibliography which meets all criteria listed above
Checkpoints: <p>The student's bibliography will be assembled and evaluated each year at the conclusion of the student's annual research project.</p>
Documentation: <p>The student will develop a bibliography portfolio. This may be either a paper file or an electronic file. Each year, the student will add to the portfolio a copy of the bibliography produced for that year's research project and the scoring rubric which shows the evaluation of the student's level of proficiency at that point.</p>
Evaluation of Growth: <p>Every year after the first year, the student will explain in a parent/teacher/student conference how he/she has grown from the previous checkpoint and what he/she plans to do to continue to grow from the current level of performance. The goals for growth set at each conference will be included in the student's portfolio.</p>

Sample C

Sample District Procedures for Review of Placement

Withdrawal Requests:

If a student wishes to withdraw from the gifted and talented program, he/she will complete a "Request for Withdrawal" form specifying the reason(s) for the request. The form will be given to the coordinator, and the coordinator will initiate the review process.

A parent or guardian who wishes to withdraw his/her student from the gifted and talented program will complete a "Request for Withdrawal" form and give it to the coordinator. The coordinator will initiate the review process.

Requests for Review of Placement:

A teacher who feels that a student may be misplaced in the gifted and talented program may complete a "Request for Review" form and give it to the coordinator. The coordinator will initiate the review process.

Review Process:

Upon receiving a withdrawal request or a request for review of placement, the coordinator will schedule a conference with the initiating party to gather additional information about the request. The coordinator will schedule other conferences and gather other information as needed to develop a full picture of the student's situation. The coordinator will schedule a meeting with the Evaluation/Placement Team to share the data collected and initiate a child study involving the student, parent/guardian, and teacher(s). Appropriate questions for the Evaluation/Placement Team are as follows:

- What is the reason for the request?
- Do the curriculum and instructional strategies match the student's needs?
- Are the needs of the student being met in the regular classroom?
- Is excessive homework a contributing factor?
- Are there any underlying factors that need to be addressed?
 - ◆ motivation?
 - ◆ academic strength/class mismatch?
 - ◆ skill deficits or content knowledge deficits?
 - ◆ lack of access to resources (e.g., materials, library)?
 - ◆ study skill deficits?
 - ◆ time-management problems?
 - ◆ learning style mismatch?
 - ◆ other?
- How can the situation be addressed through provision of support services?
- What interventions will be implemented and what time frame will be established?
- Is an adjustment in placement warranted? If so, what is the best placement for the student?

Chapter 4 - Program Models

The program model is the system that facilitates interaction of gifted [and talented] youth with curriculum to produce learning.

—John Feldhusen
Purdue University

Introduction

Program models manage how gifted students will be organized so that learning is most effective (Rogers, 2001). Approved program models for gifted and talented have a research base of effectiveness in improving achievement for this group of youngsters.

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented has provided the richest source of data on program models. In a two-year study, Marcia Delcourt and her colleagues (1994) collected data on program models from 83 elementary schools in 14 states. The models considered were within-class, pull-out, special class, and special school. The results of the study showed that gifted and talented students in pull-out, special class, and special school models achieve substantially more than gifted and talented students in within-class models. These findings have direct implications for the design and utilization of gifted and talented program models.

Further, Karen Rogers' (2001) systematic review of research studies on program models also indicates the most beneficial grouping arrangements for gifted students are those with full-time grouping, i.e., special school, school-within-a school, full-time gifted program, and self-contained class (Kulik & Kulik, 1982; 1984; 1987). Resource room/pull-out programs showed academic gains for students when those programs extended the regular curriculum (Vaughn, Feldhusen, & Asher, 1991). Vaughn and her colleagues found that critical and creative thinking improved in pull-out programs where those skills were emphasized for a full year. They also reported small positive self-esteem gains.

Regulation 43-220 calls for program models that facilitate the delivery of curriculum and instruction, teacher/pupil ratios that foster positive results, and appropriate and sufficient time in instruction to assure that the goals and objectives of the program are met (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(A)(c-e)). Further, the regulation specifies approved gifted and talented program models, teacher/pupil ratios, and number of

minutes of service for gifted and talented students at various grade levels (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2 (A)(4)).

Districts must request a waiver from the State Department of Education (SDE) if any program model other than the approved ones is used for primary gifted and talented service. Such requests must be submitted in writing to the Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Programs at the SDE. The request must provide a justification for the waiver, the proposed alternative(s) for delivery of gifted education services, the methods of evaluation, and a process for reporting to the SDE the effect of the model on student academic growth. Waivers are approved on an annual basis. No waivers in student-teacher ratio or minutes of instruction may be granted.

Within a particular district, a number of factors will affect which of the approved program models are selected for implementation. A major factor is the number of students eligible for gifted and talented services at a given grade level and/or school. Community demographics, values, beliefs, commitment to gifted and talented education, past experiences, and funding may also influence the program models that are chosen. Some recommendations to guide selection and development of the program models that best fit with your district are provided.

The chart below indicates the approved gifted and talented program models for South Carolina schools, along with the approved teacher/pupil ratios, appropriate grade levels, and time requirements for each model. Descriptions of the various approved program models are provided in the sections following the chart.

Approved Model (Teacher/Pupil Ratio)	Grade Levels	Minimum Minutes/Year
Regular Classroom/ Itinerant Teacher (1:10)	Grades 1 & 2*	4500
Multi-Age Classroom (Ratio Not Applicable)	Grades 1 & 2*	Full Time
Resource Room/Pull-out Class or Center (1:15 in Grades 1 & 2; 1:20 in Grades 3 – 8)	Grades 1 & 2*	4500
	Grade 3	4500
	Grades 4–8	7200
Special Class (1:25)	Grades 3–12	8100
Special School (1:25)	Grades 3–12	Full Time
*NOTE: Grades 1 and 2 are not currently funded by the state.		

A school or district may elect to serve students in any of the above approved program models through a consortium agreement with other school districts (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(A)(6)). **As described on page 4-2, any other gifted and talented program model developed by a school district must receive written approval annually from the SDE.**

Approved Program Models for Grades 1 and 2

Regular Classroom/Itinerant Teacher

This is approved as a stand-alone program model for gifted and talented students in grades 1 and 2. An itinerant teacher with an endorsement in gifted and talented education provides services to gifted and talented students in the regular or general education classroom. The itinerant teacher acts as a consultant to the regular classroom teacher—providing information, materials, and guidance on curricular and instructional issues for the gifted and talented students. The itinerant teacher may teach, on some regular basis, a cluster group of gifted and talented students in the regular classroom. A cluster group of gifted and talented students is five to eight students at a particular grade level placed in the same classroom with a teacher qualified and well-suited to work with gifted students (Rogers, 2001). In this model, the itinerant teacher and classroom teacher work together to plan and provide differentiated instruction for the gifted students. The effect size¹ of cluster grouping is .62 (Rogers, 1999). This model works well in schools with one or more “clusters” at a grade level and teachers who desire to work with cluster groups.

Multi-Age Classroom

This is approved as a stand-alone program model for gifted and talented students in grades 1 and 2. The multi-age classroom is an accelerative model in which two grades (e.g., grades 1 and 2) are combined, allowing for more appropriate pacing and challenge for gifted and talented students. This model may enable gifted and talented students to work at an advanced level in one or more curriculum areas. Districts that elect to use this model at other grade levels must request permission annually from the SDE. Permission is granted to districts which have an established written curriculum to support the combined grade levels, a planned scope and sequence with clear effectiveness measures and documentation of students’ growth.

Resource Room/Pull-out Class or Center

This program model is approved for gifted and talented students in grades 1 and 2. The resource room/pull-out class or center provides services to identified students through a self-contained class that meets away from the regular classroom. In this

¹ Effect sizes of .30 or higher are considered to have a significant impact on student learning.

model, gifted and talented students are removed from the regular classroom for a specified period each week to receive differentiated instruction. The curriculum usually focuses on enrichment that is directly related to grade level academic standards. Multi-grade grouping may be used in the resource room/pull-out class or center to constitute classes of sufficient size. If this is done, the gifted and talented curriculum should be developed on a two to three year cycle (depending on the number of grades grouped.) *R43-220* specifies minimum time requirements for each grade level. (See chart on page 4-2.) See Recommendations for using pull-out/resource room models below.

NOTE: South Carolina does not currently fund Grades 1 and 2 at the state level.

Approved Program Models for Grades 3 through 12

Resource Room/Pull-out Class or Center (Grades 3–8)

The resource room/pull-out class or center is also an approved program model for grades 3–8. See the section above for a description of this program model. Recommendations (Rogers, 2001) for using this model follow:

1. The model coordinates with and extends the regular curriculum in a planned, systematic way.
2. The model has a unified focus, rather than a potpourri of unrelated units.
3. The model has clearly identified student outcomes and academic gains are tracked.
4. The model is combined with other extension models to provide more comprehensive and complete services for gifted students. Gifted students who spend most of their time in regular classrooms need additional provisions to advance their learning.

When the resource room/pull-out model follows the recommendations above, the impact on student learning is substantial. Rogers (1999) found different effect sizes based on what was taught in the pull-out model. When the model extends the regular curriculum, .65 is the effect size. When the model has critical thinking as a focus, .44 is the effect size. When creativity is the focus, .32 is the effect size.

Special Class (Grades 3–12)

This model is a self-contained gifted and talented class organized around one or more academic disciplines. The special class delivers services to identified students through a curriculum based on state academic standards and differentiated to meet their needs. Curriculum characteristics are similar to those of special schools: the curriculum is rigorous and accelerated. Districts or schools that use this model should provide

services in more than one content or subject area since gifted and talented students may not exhibit strengths in all areas. The special class must meet the 8100 minutes time requirement to assure funding.

When the number of identified students in a special class is significantly lower than the maximum class size established in *R43-220*, the district may develop procedures and criteria for placing high-achieving students in the class to complete the teacher/pupil ratio (1:25). The district will only receive funding for those students identified as gifted and talented according to state criteria.

When there is appropriate curriculum differentiation, full-time ability grouping has an effect size of .49 for elementary students and .33 for secondary students (Rogers, 1999). This model works well in schools and districts with large numbers of identified gifted students.

Special School (Grades 3-12)

Special school is a full-time gifted and talented magnet school or a full-time gifted and talented school-within-a-school. This is a separate, self-contained school or school-within-a-school designed exclusively for gifted and talented learners. Students take their academic core courses with other gifted and talented students. Teachers are responsible for the instruction in academic core courses as well as enrichment. The curriculum is rigorous and accelerated, with instruction geared to a level appropriate to gifted and talented learners. Often, students are drawn from a wider population base than that served by the school itself.

The distinction between the magnet school and the school-within-a-school is in the degree of homogeneity that exists in the total school environment. In a school-within-a-school, gifted and talented students usually join non-identified students in the cafeteria, on the playground, in arts-related courses, and in non-academic subjects such as physical education. In a magnet school, a gifted and talented student spends the entire school day with other identified students. Both types of special schools usually have their own faculty and administration. Only students identified as gifted and talented according to the criteria established in *R43-220* can be reported for state funding.

Considerations for Program Model Selections

How does a district or school decide which model or models is the best fit? On what basis is this decision made? First, districts must establish the curriculum goals for their gifted program. “Too often, in programs for gifted students, the chosen model or models determine the goals rather than the goals determining the models used! Only after goals are developed and clarified is it appropriate to make decisions about the models to be used.” (Maker, 2004, 28). Models chosen are those most useful in meeting the program’s curriculum goals. Further, program models will guide selection of the teaching-learning models (e.g., Paul’s Reasoning Model; problem-based learning) and the development of student outcomes. Other considerations

include district size, available resources, and grade levels of service. Extension models which supplement and support program models are critical for a full continuum of services for the gifted learner

Extension Models

In addition to the approved gifted and talented program models, R43-220 encourages extension models to supplement gifted and talented services where possible (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2 (A)(5)). The chart below lists examples of extension models.

Grades	Extension Models
1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ After-School Program ◆ Grade and/or Subject Acceleration ◆ Independent Study ◆ Individual Educational Plan ◆ Summer Services ◆ Special Training/Services for Parents
3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ After School Program ◆ Independent Study ◆ Regular Classroom Cluster/Itinerant Model ◆ Regular Classroom Cluster/Itinerant Model ◆ Summer Services
6–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ After School Program ◆ Exploratory Courses ◆ Independent Study ◆ Mentorships/Internships ◆ Regular Classroom Cluster/Itinerant Model ◆ Regular Classroom Cluster/Itinerant Model ◆ Seminars ◆ Summer Services

NOTE: Extension models may not be substituted for one of the approved program models. Extension models are an important component of this continuum of services provided to gifted learners.

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Chapter 5 - Program Evaluation

Evaluation should always be directed toward bold action that hopefully will result in the improvement of services to [gifted and talented] students through the continuation, modification, or elimination of conditions which affect learning.

—Joseph Renzulli

Director of the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented

Introduction

Regulation 43-220 requires that school districts submit a gifted and talented plan every three years and report on progress annually (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2 (A)(1)(a-e)). While not a formal, external program evaluation, the process requires districts to assess current program status relative to *R43-220* and to establish goals in areas identified by the State Department of Education (SDE). This planning process offers one route to evaluate student performance and the effectiveness of educational programs for gifted and talented students.

Evaluation of program effectiveness involves a two-fold process:

- 1) ensuring that the program conforms to *R43-220* and includes all components that characterize an effective program;
- 2) designing and implementing a plan for on-going program evaluation.

This chapter addresses both aspects of the evaluation process: evaluating the current status of the school district's gifted and talented program and establishing a plan for on-going program evaluation.

Components of an Effective Gifted Education Program

To evaluate the current status of the district's gifted and talented program, school district personnel must examine the program relative to the components that characterize an effective program, making sure that the program conforms to the requirements specified in *R43-220*.

The National Association for Gifted Children in 1998 published program standards for pre-k through grade twelve to assist districts in examining the quality of their programs for gifted learners. These standards, which range from minimum to exemplary, can be an excellent resource for assessing gifted programs.

The Standards are divided into seven programming criterion areas.

Program Design

The development of appropriate gifted education programming requires comprehensive services based on sound philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support.

Program Administration and Management

Appropriate gifted education programming must include the establishment of a systematic means of developing, implementing, and managing services.

Student Identification

Gifted learners must be assessed to determine appropriate educational services.

Curriculum and Instruction

Gifted education services must include curricular and instructional opportunities directed to the unique needs of the gifted child.

Socio-Emotional Guidance and Counseling

Gifted education programming must establish a plan to recognize and nurture the unique socio-emotional development of gifted learners.

Professional Development

Gifted learners are entitled to be served by professionals who have specialized preparation in gifted education, expertise in appropriate differentiated content and instructional methods, involvement in ongoing professional development, and who possess exemplary personal and professional traits.

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is the systematic study of the value and impact of services provided.

Another significant resource for program planning and evaluation is *Designing Services and Programs for High Ability Learners: A Guidebook for Gifted Education* (2005) published by NAGC and Corwin Press. All districts should consult this resource when planning and evaluating local programs to understand best practices in gifted education.

This section describes briefly the components of an effective gifted and talented program. The Sample Documents at the end of the chapter include a checklist of these components that can be used to guide the evaluation of current program status. (See Sample A, page 5-10).

Mission Statement

The district's vision and mission should address students who are gifted and talented. The district's gifted and talented program should have a mission statement that focuses on enhancing the intellectual and academic development of gifted and talented students. The mission statement articulates clearly and succinctly the purpose of the program.

◆ **Program Goals and Objectives**

The gifted and talented program should have a set of clearly written goals and objectives to direct the program activities. These goals and objectives should be consistent with best practices for gifted and talented programs.

◆ **Program Design and Service Delivery Model(s)**

The gifted and talented program should deliver services to identified students through a model or models that facilitate achievement of the program goals. The selected model(s) should be supported by research as effective in advancing the intellectual and academic development of gifted and talented students. Approved program models are described in R43-220 and in Chapter 4 of this manual.

◆ **Written Scope and Sequence**

An effective gifted and talented program has a scope and sequence that specifies curriculum goals and objectives that will enable gifted and talented students to develop their potential to the highest possible level. The scope and sequence should be consistent with the overall goals of the gifted and talented program, the curriculum requirements stated in R43-220, and the recommendations in Chapter 2 of this manual (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(A)(1)(a) and 43-220.2(A)(2)).

◆ **Written Curriculum**

The gifted and talented program should include written curriculum units and/or syllabi that teachers can implement with students to maximize their potential and to meet the expectations set forth in the written scope and sequence. The curriculum units/syllabi should incorporate principles of differentiation for the gifted and talented and be consistent with the recommendations in Chapter 2 of this manual.

◆ **Student Assessment Procedures**

An effective program has measures to document student achievement of curriculum goals and objectives. The gifted and talented program should have procedures for assessing, evaluating, and reporting student progress at the classroom level and at the district level. (See Chapter 3 of this manual.)

R 43-220 requires districts to review annually, summarize and report gifted students' performance on PACT, AP exams, IB exams, SAT, and ACT (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(D)(2)).

Program Evaluation Design

Effective programs are constantly improving through on-going evaluation and implementation of any needed changes. The gifted and talented program should have a plan for on-going program evaluation.

◆ **Identification Procedures**

The gifted and talented program should have written identification procedures that are consistent with R43-220 and provide equity of access for qualified students (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)). These procedures should be articulated for school staff members and for parents and community members who may wish to refer a student for gifted and talented program placement. (See Chapter 8 of this manual.)

◆ **Evaluation/Placement Team**

The gifted and talented program must utilize an Evaluation/Placement Team. The evaluation step of the identification process is the responsibility of the Evaluation/Placement Team within the school or district (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(8)). R 43-220 specifies that the team should be composed of a teacher, an administrator, and a psychologist (if employed by the district) at the least. It is highly recommended that the administrator be the district gifted and talented coordinator. The team may also include a guidance counselor and a community-related person whose training and expertise qualifies him or her to appraise the special competencies of students. Districts may choose either to have one team for the district as a whole or to have a team at every school. If the latter choice is selected, one team member should serve on all teams in order to ensure consistency within the district.

The evaluation and placement team is responsible for interpreting and evaluating student data in such a way that appropriate placement in the gifted and talented program is ensured (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2 (B)(8)(b)). The team may require additional testing of a student before determining his or her placement in the gifted and talented program. (For further information, see Chapter 8 of this manual. Also, see Review of Placement in Chapter 3.)

◆ **Written Policy on Probation, Leave, and Withdrawal**

An effective gifted and talented program articulates procedures for student withdrawals and temporary leaves from programming. Programs that place students on probation should have written procedures to guide this process. (See Review of Placement, Chapter 3, pages 3-13 through 3-17.) The evaluation and placement team is responsible for developing appropriate written procedures for probation and removing a student from the gifted and talented program (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(8)(c)). The probation and removal policies of the district must conform to the state guidelines from the Office of Curriculum and Standards. Appropriate counseling with the student, as well as conferences with the student's parents/guardians and teachers, must precede his or her removal from the program. Records of any assessment and evaluative measures and other student information must be maintained in a confidential manner.

◆ **Support Services**

In addition to instructional services, gifted and talented programs must provide support services that facilitate student learning (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(A)(1)(B)). Such support services include school guidance and counseling, academic support, technology, staff development, academic competition, and parent education. (See Chapter 7 of this manual.)

◆ **Professional Development Plan**

The gifted and talented program should include professional development appropriate for total school staff, as well as for gifted and talented program personnel. Professional development related to gifted and talented education should be an integral part of the district's staff development plan. (See Chapter 6 of this manual.) Assessment of expected changes resulting from professional development activities as well as follow-up strategies should be part of an effective professional development plan.

Procedures for Record-Keeping and Reporting

R43-220 requires that gifted and talented programs keep accurate records of data for periodic reporting to the state. Documentation is also necessary for on-going program evaluation (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(D)). School district personnel should develop procedures for record keeping that will enable the district to meet the reporting and evaluating requirements for gifted and talented programs. (For information on reporting requirements, see Chapter 9 of this manual.)

◆ **Program Websites, Brochures and Handbooks**

Effective programs publish websites, brochures and handbooks to communicate program information to appropriate audiences. The district's gifted and talented program should provide public information websites, brochures and handbooks for parents and staff members. Publications should

include the state definition of gifted and talented, identification procedures, program goals, and a curriculum overview.

◆ **Rationale for Each Program Component**

The components of an effective program work together to facilitate the achievement of program goals. The gifted and talented program should have a written rationale for each component, indicating the significance of that component within the context of the entire program. The components should come together to form a coherent whole.

On-Going Program Evaluation

“The fundamental role of evaluation is to provide information that can be used to improve and advance the state of the art of gifted programs” (VanTassel-Baska, 2004, p.23). Every gifted and talented program needs a systematic plan for evaluating program effectiveness. Is the program accomplishing its goals? If not, where do adjustments need to be made? The evaluation plan should focus on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the program in meeting the needs of the students identified and served. As there is no one “right” program for gifted and talented, each gifted and talented program should be judged in terms of whether it is appropriate and effective within its own setting.

The gifted and talented program evaluation plan should provide for evaluation of all program components during a three-to-five year cycle. It should specify a reasonable timetable so that some components are assessed each year, all components are evaluated over a period of three to five years, and every component is re-evaluated on a regular basis. Provided here are steps to assist district personnel in designing an evaluation plan for a gifted and talented program.

Steps in Developing an Evaluation Design

1. Examine the goals of the program.

Effective gifted and talented programs have written goals that are clearly focused on students’ academic development. School district personnel must analyze existing program goals to insure a strong academic focus. If goals have not been established for the gifted and talented program, developing them is a priority. Key individuals in the school district, as well as outside consultants, can assist with the task of identifying goals and objectives. The district’s gifted and talented program might include goals such as those listed in the table that follows.

Sample Program Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To insure that all program components are carried out in accordance with law, regulations, and best practices in gifted and talented education.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a program design that facilitates the effective delivery of services to meet the needs of gifted and talented learners.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance the curriculum for gifted and talented learners by adjusting the pace of instruction, the depth and breadth of content, and the complexity of intellectual processes and products.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To communicate program information effectively.

2. Design a procedure to evaluate each goal.

For each goal of the program, school district personnel must determine how the goal can be measured. As each goal is considered, district personnel should address the following issues:

1. What questions need to be answered?
2. What data collection methods will be used for each question (e.g., interviews, surveys, observations, checklists, tests)?
3. How will school district personnel organize and analyze the data collected?
4. To whom will school district personnel report the data once collected? (Clearly identify each group or audience—e.g., school district administrators, program teachers, parents.)
5. How will data be reported to each group?

Sample B provides examples of responses to each of these issues, using the sample program goals from the table above.

As a part of this step in designing the evaluation plan, school district personnel should construct any observation forms, surveys, or other data collection instruments needed to implement the plan. The Sample Documents at the end of this chapter include several examples of data collection instruments—a classroom observation form compare this to form as revised (Sample C) and parent survey compare this one too (Sample D).

3. Establish a timetable for implementing the evaluation design.

School district personnel must determine how often each program goal should be evaluated in order to ensure that the program is meeting student needs in accordance with R43-220 and best practices. Some aspects of the program may need to be evaluated annually or biannually; other aspects may need to be evaluated less frequently—perhaps every three to five years. The timetable can be adjusted if an aspect of the program needs evaluating more or less frequently than originally planned. Sample E illustrates a simple timeline for implementing an evaluation plan, using the sample program goals..

4. Implement the evaluation design.

With an evaluation design in place, school district personnel can then begin to carry out the evaluation plan. Provisions should be made to review and adjust the evaluation design as needed.

5. Learn from evaluation results

As evaluation data are compiled and studied, areas that need improvement will be identified. Since the purpose of program evaluation is improving areas of weakness, school district personnel should incorporate program changes indicated by evaluation data. .



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Sample Documents

Sample A

Program Component Checklist
An effective program has the following components:
<input type="checkbox"/> Mission Statement
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Goals and Objectives
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Design and Service Delivery Model(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Written Scope and Sequence
<input type="checkbox"/> Written Curriculum
<input type="checkbox"/> Student Assessment Procedures
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Evaluation Design
<input type="checkbox"/> Identification Procedures
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation/Placement Team
<input type="checkbox"/> Written Policy on Probation, Leave, and Withdrawal
<input type="checkbox"/> Support Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development Plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Procedures for Record-Keeping and Reporting
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Websites, Brochures and Handbooks
<input type="checkbox"/> Rationale for Each Program Component

Sample B

Evaluation of Sample Program Goals					
Sample Goal	Sample Questions	Data Collection Methods	Organization & Analysis of Data	Audiences	Reporting Methods
Goal 1: Insuring that all program components are carried out in accordance with law, regulations, & best practices.	Is the program insuring equity of access to all students?	Documentation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification • census testing • referrals 	List of the requirements in law, <i>R43-220</i> , & <i>Best Practices Manual</i> , with areas of compliance & deficiency noted	Program administrator Evaluation/ Placement Team District administrators SDE	Written report
Goal 2: Providing a program design that facilitates effective delivery of services to meet student needs.	Does program model used for each grade level meet the learning needs of all identified students?	Class rosters Progress reports Student profiles Current test data Permanent records Parent interviews List of students no longer participating	Summary of student performance in program Chart of student profile vs. program placement Summary of parent survey responses Attrition rates	Program administrator Evaluation/ Placement Team Guidance counselor School & district administrators	Charts & narrative summaries
Goal 3: Enhancing the curriculum for gifted & talented learners.	Are students using complex intellectual processes in their classes?	Classroom observations	List of processes used in classes, with frequency observed	Program teachers Program administrator	Conferences with teachers Staff development session
Goal 4: Communicating program information effectively.	Are parents informed about the programs in which their children are participating?	Copies of communications Sign-in sheets from parent meetings Agendas of parent meetings Parent survey	List of types of communications List of topics on which parents: 1) have been informed, & 2) should have been informed, but were not Summary of parent survey responses.	Program administrator School & district administrators Program teachers	Summary of findings from lists, along with analysis of parent responses

Sample C

Sample Classroom Observation Form							
Observer _____		Date _____		Time _____			
School _____			Grade _____				
Teacher _____			Course/Subject/Unit Observed _____				
Student Information: Total # _____ Observed Gender: #Boys _____ #Girls _____							
Observed Ethnicity: #White ___ #AfricanAm ___ #Hispanic ___ #AsianAm ___ #Other _____							
Service Delivery Model: Self-contained Resource Room/Pull-out Special class Other _____							
Description of Lesson Observed _____ _____ _____							
Rating of Teacher Behaviors							
<i>1 = Observed 2 = Not Observed 3 = Not Applicable A = Highly Evident B = Evident C = Not Evident</i>							
Teacher Behavior	1	2	3	Comments	A	B	C
Use of activities/techniques that enable students to:							
◆ Evaluate situations, problems, issues							
◆ Compare and contrast ideas and issues							
◆ Generalize from concrete to abstract							
◆ Explore diverse points of view/ reframe ideas							
◆ Generate many diverse thoughts on ideas/issues							
◆ Infer from data and draw conclusions							
◆ Conduct inquiry and construct meetings							
◆ Solve complex problems							
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:							

NOTE: Adapted from a form developed by the Center for Gifted Education, The College of William and Mary.

Sample D

Sample Parent Survey								
<p>Dear Parents/Guardians: We are currently assessing the effectiveness with which we communicate with parents/guardians regarding the gifted and talented program and the progress of students in the program. To assist us, please complete the following survey and return it to the school office in the envelope provided.</p>								
<p>Directions: Please circle the number that indicates how well you have been informed about each of the following:</p>								
	No Information		Some Information			Well Informed		
The gifted & talented curriculum	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Your child's progress	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Field studies	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Weekly program assignments	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Gifted & talented identification	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Needs of identified students	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Parent education opportunities	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Procedures for re-evaluation of student placement	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
<p>Directions: Please circle the number that indicates how helpful you have found the following materials and opportunities:</p>								
	Didn't see or attend	Couldn't read or understand	Some help	Clear	Very helpful			
Program newsletter	0	1	2	3	4			
Letters from program teachers	0	1	2	3	4			
Parent handbook	0	1	2	3	4			
Parent orientation meeting	0	1	2	3	4			
Open House	0	1	2	3	4			
Conferences with teachers	0	1	2	3	4			
<p>Please indicate below any information you would like to receive about the gifted and talented program.</p>								

Sample E

Sample Evaluation Timetable						
	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Goal 1 (Program Components): ◆ Program delivery models ◆ Identification procedures ◆ Record-keeping and reporting NOTE: This is a partial list of Program Components.		X		X		X
Goal 2 (Delivery of Services): ◆ Elementary level ◆ Middle school level ◆ High school level	X			X		
Goal 3 (Curriculum Enhancement): ◆ Pace of instruction ◆ Depth and breadth of content ◆ Complex processes and products	X		X		X	
Goal 4 (Effective Communication): ◆ Communication with parents ◆ Communication with school staff	X	X	X	X	X	X

Chapter 6 - Professional Development

... the teacher [of the gifted and talented] has the most significant influence on a learning environment. Many factors influence the learning of a student, but within the classroom situation, the teacher is of critical importance.

—Barbara Clark
Growing Up Gifted

Introduction

Regulation 43-220 calls for staff development as part of gifted and talented support services and requires that appropriate, on-going staff development in gifted education be provided annually by districts ((24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(A)(1)(b))and (C)(2)). Furthermore, districts are required to provide training regarding characteristics of academic giftedness for all staff involved in the identification process ((24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(6)(b)(3)).

Professional development in the area of gifted and talented education should be an integral part of a school district's staff development plan. It is essential that the plan include professional development experiences for the total school staff, as well as specialized experiences for teachers in the gifted and talented program.

To assist districts in their staff development efforts, the State Department of Education (SDE) is working to provide professional development for total school staff and endorsement for teachers in gifted and talented programs. The SDE collaborates with the South Carolina Consortium for Gifted Education to provide regional and statewide professional development for gifted and talented coordinators and teachers.

This chapter addresses the professional development needs of both groups—total school staff (administrators, guidance counselors, regular classroom teachers) and teachers of the gifted and talented. Chapter 10 of this manual provides further information on the roles and responsibilities of each group with regard to the gifted and talented program.

Professional Development for Total School Staff

Administrators

Administrators must be able to communicate knowledgeably with parents and the public about the gifted and talented program. The following competencies are needed:

- ◆ Knowledge of R43-220 (amended June, 2004) to ensure district and building level compliance,
- ◆ Understanding of characteristics of gifted and talented students and their special needs as the basis for gifted and talented education, and
- ◆ Familiarity with the curriculum and the instructional practices in the gifted and talented program.

Guidance Counselors

Guidance counselors require depth of knowledge about the gifted and talented program and about gifted and talented students—their identification, needs, and special problems. The competencies required of guidance counselors include the following:

- ◆ Knowledge of R43-220 (amended June, 2004),
- ◆ Knowledge of characteristics of gifted and talented students,
- ◆ Knowledge of the identification and placement process,
- ◆ Knowledge of record keeping requirements,
- ◆ Ability to provide counseling appropriate to the special needs and problems of gifted and talented students, and
- ◆ Ability to provide appropriate academic, college, and career guidance for gifted and talented students.

Regular Classroom Teachers

To better meet the needs of gifted and talented students, teachers in the general education classroom require the following competencies:

- ◆ Knowledge of the characteristics of gifted and talented students,
- ◆ Understanding of the diversity among all students, and
- ◆ Skills in differentiating curriculum and instruction for all students in the classroom.

Professional Development for Teachers of the Gifted and Talented

Education of the gifted and talented is a form of special education with its own pedagogy specifically designed to meet the needs of this particular group of students (Borland, 1989). To enter the field of gifted education as professionals, teachers require extensive formal education in recognizing the characteristics and needs of gifted and talented students and in developing and implementing curriculum appropriate to those needs.

Teachers of the gifted and talented must possess a high level of the knowledge and skills listed for regular classroom teachers (page 6-2). In addition, they require exceptional competencies in the following areas:

- ◆ Advanced knowledge and skills in their certification area/discipline,
- ◆ Knowledge of historic and current gifted and talented issues, research, and practices,
- ◆ Skill in presenting gifted and talented topics and issues to school staff, parents, and the community,
- ◆ Skill in developing collaborative and positive relationships with all staff, families, and students,
- ◆ Skill in developing and implementing challenging educational experiences that help students go beyond their current level of competencies, and
- ◆ Skill in providing an environment conducive to exploration, trial and error learning, and investigation.

Gifted and Talented Teacher Endorsement

For a number of years, the SDE has funded graduate courses in the nature and needs of gifted learners and introduction to curriculum for gifted learners. These two courses are required for teacher endorsement in gifted education and address foundational professional development needs of teachers of the gifted and talented. Although these courses are beneficial and will continue, best practices suggest that more extensive training that is ongoing is necessary for teachers to establish full professional credentials in the field of gifted education.

On-Going Professional Development

Along with a solid foundation in gifted education provided through initial coursework, teachers of the gifted and talented require on-going professional development. It is the professional responsibility of each teacher in the gifted and talented program to seek opportunities for continued growth, such as those listed on the next page.

- ◆ Membership in relevant professional organizations—e.g.,
 - National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC): www.nagc.org
 - Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): www.cec.sped.org
 - The Association for the Gifted (TAG): <http://coehp.idbsu.edu/tag>
 - South Carolina Consortium for Gifted Education (SCCGE):
P.O. Box 255, Irmo, SC 29063 www.scgifted.org
- ◆ Subscription or access to journals in the field—e.g.,
 - *Gifted Child Quarterly*
 - *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*
 - *Roeper Review*
 - *Gifted Child Today*
- ◆ Attendance at conferences, workshops, and institutes—e.g.,
 - NAGC annual conference
 - SCCGE annual conference
 - Confratute, a two week institute held each July at University of Connecticut
 - Spring (March) and Summer (June) Conferences held at the Center for Gifted Education at The College of William and Mary
- ◆ Recent series publications and websites—e.g.,
 - *The Practical Strategies Series* (Prufrock Press www.prufrock.com)
 - *The Essential Readings Series* (Corwin Press www.corwinpress.com)
 - *The Critical Thinking Series* (Foundation for Critical Thinking www.criticalthinking.org)
 - SC Department of Education's Office of Gifted and Talented
 - National Research Center for Gifted www.gifted.uconn.edu
 - The Center for Gifted Education www.cfge.wm.edu

School districts are required to provide appropriate, on-going staff development activities for teachers of the gifted and talented (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(C)(2)). As part of this requirement, districts should support professional development opportunities such as attendance at conferences, workshops, and institutes. In addition, the district staff development plan should include in-district programs on topics such as underachievement, instructional strategies, special

populations, and differentiated curriculum. Consortia arrangements and regional groups with nearby districts can facilitate the availability of appropriate staff development for teachers of the gifted and talented.

Designing and Evaluating Professional Development for Teachers

This section summarizes several important points taken from VanTassel-Baska's article, "Planning professional development experiences in gifted education" published in the 2002 *Virginia Association for the Gifted Newsletter*.

Research-based features of highly effective professional development (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001 in VanTassel-Baska, 2002) include the following:

- A strong focus on content knowledge (especially differentiation, grouping, and assessment strategies matched to the gifted learner).
- Opportunities for active learning.
- Coherence with other learning activities.
- Sustained intensive opportunities.
- Collective participation.

Drawing on Guskey's model (2000) as a guide to planning, these questions need consideration when designing professional development.

- 1) What knowledge and skills do you want educators to acquire about gifted students and their learning?
- 2) Under what delivery mode will the educators best acquire these understandings (e.g., study groups, workshops, action research, mentoring)?
- 3) What organizational support structures are in place to facilitate change?
 - a) Are adequate resources available for classroom implementation?
 - b) Will implementation be monitored? How?
 - c) Is the climate supportive of experimentation?
- 4) How will program coordinators assess the application of the knowledge and skills acquired?
- 5) What was the impact on gifted students of educators acquiring new knowledge and skills?

Finally, VanTassel-Baska offers these professional development guidelines for educators of the gifted:

- 1) Target four workshops for all teachers on working with gifted students; target four advanced workshops for teachers specialized in gifted education, and target two abbreviated (2–3 hours) workshops for building and central office administrators.

- 2) Establish content priorities for workshops based on program needs, not individual teacher desires. Conduct a needs assessment or use recent evaluation data to determine those program needs.
- 3) Provide follow-up support in each building to ensure that teachers can implement new skills. Provide relevant book and print resources, discuss the plan for implementation with each principal, visit classrooms to “get the feel” for teacher issues and attend a faculty meeting in the building to judge climates.
- 4) Develop a system of monitoring implementation of professional development work. Visit a few classrooms each week with a checklist of teacher behaviors. Discuss observations with teachers. Ask principals to visit classrooms regularly and look for these same instructional behaviors. Work with teacher teams to develop self-monitoring strategies for implementing new strategies.
- 5) Assess gifted student impacts of professional development work through questionnaires, test scores, and/or structured interviews with students and parents.
- 6) Develop a one-year and three-year plan for professional development activities that reflects a compelling improvement plan based on needs assessment and/or evaluation data collected. If you have neither, use the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) professional development standards (NAGC, 1998) as a base to consider what needs to be done. While they do not address specific content foci, they do emphasize best practices in general process areas.
- 7) Develop a collaborative relationship with a university-based center in gifted education to tap into important resources and cost-effective professional development opportunities.
- 8) Be deliberate about all phases of professional development from planning through implementation through follow-up and assessment. Conducting workshops is only the beginning of the effort.
- 9) By incorporating a strong professional development model in your work, program improvements in curriculum, instruction, assessment, communication, and parental involvement should begin to occur.

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Westberg, K. L., Archambault, F. X., Jr., Dobyms, S., & Salvin, T. J. (1993). *An observational study of instructional and curricular practices used with gifted and talented students in regular classrooms*. Research Monograph No. 93104. Storrs, CT: University of Connecticut. National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

Annotated Bibliography

Articles Related to the Professional Development of Educators of Gifted Children Published between 2002 and 2003

Bain, S.K., Bourgeois, S.J., & Pappas, D.N. (2003). Linking Theoretical Models to Actual Practices: A Survey of Teachers in Gifted Education. *Roeper Review*, 25(4), 166–172.

Presents the results of a regional survey of the use of theoretical models for gifted and talented programs at the kindergarten through ninth-grade levels in the U.S. Background on several theoretical models for gifted education; Information on the questionnaires used in the survey; Implications of the results for the importance of the critical thinking skills of teachers in relation to the documented effectiveness of intervention.

Belcastro, F.P. (2002). Electronic Technology and Its Use With Rural Gifted Students. *Roeper Review*, 25(1), 14–16.

Electronic technology can be used to overcome many of the restrictive factors or barriers to delivering services to rural schools, and it can expand the world of rural gifted students. On-line college and high school sites offering courses are listed. Also listed is a site for tutoring and one offering help for teachers of rural gifted students. Recommendations are made for legislatures and for rural school districts.

Croft, L.J. (2003). Teachers of the Gifted: Gifted Teachers. In N. Colangelo & G.A. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of Gifted Education, 3rd Ed.*, (pp. 558–571). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Explores current research in general education about the importance of teachers, especially the unique importance of teachers in gifted education. Best practices, the varying roles expected of teachers of the gifted, and professional development programs are discussed.

Gardner, S.A. (2003). The Unrecognized Exceptionality: Teaching Gifted Adolescents with Depression. *English Journal*, 92(4), 28–32.

Presents information on teaching gifted adolescent students suffering from depression. Lack of teachers' knowledge on the exceptionality of students with mental illness or depression; reasons for the failure of teachers to recognize depression; characteristics of depressed teenagers; recognition of students who are at risk for depression.

Gavin, M.K. & Reis, S.M. (2003). Helping Teachers to Encourage Talented Girls in Mathematics. *Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 26(1), 32–45.

Focuses on the why female gifted students are lag behind in the field of mathematics. Reasons behind the problems of girls in mathematics; Courses of study intended by female high school students for college; Suggested strategies in encouraging girls in mathematics.

Hargrove, K. (2003). 'If You Build It, They Will Come'. *Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 26(1), 30–31.

Presents the comments of students in evaluating their gifted programs and teachers in the U.S. Impact of evaluation on teachers; Background on the advanced programs offered by schools such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs; Significance of the evaluations given by students.

Hargrove, K. (2003). *Images of Teaching. Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 26(3), 62–63.

Discusses different approaches to educating gifted children in the U.S. Ways of categorizing teachers; Information on teachers as instructional managers; Description of an effective teacher; Implications for teachers of gifted children.

Johnsen, S. (2003). *Adapting Instruction With Heterogeneous Groups. Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 26(3), 5.

Describes how undergraduate special education teacher candidates learned about student differences by teaching homogenous and heterogeneous groups in the U.S. Results of a pretest given to students to determine their knowledge about several topics; Information on the differences in detail and understanding among the students; Background on several independent activities conducted to teach the gifted students.

Kaplan, S.N. (2003). *Advocacy as Teaching: The Teacher as Advocate. Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 26(3), 44–45.

Focuses on the relationship between advocacy and teaching. Role and perspective of teachers of gifted children as advocates; Information on several principles of learning as bases in preparing a lesson plan; Significance of motivational strategies.

Karnes, F.A. & Nugent, S.A. (Fall 2002). *Influential people in gifted education. Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 25(4), 60–64.

The history of gifted education is rich with events and people who have influenced the field for centuries. Johnsen (1999), editor of *Gifted Child Today*, asked members of the editorial board and columnists to submit manuscripts focusing on the identification of significant events in gifted education for the last volume of the 20th century.

Mills, C.J. (2003). *Characteristics of Effective Teachers of Gifted Students: Teacher Background and Personality Styles of Students. Gifted Child Quarterly*, 47(4), 272–281.

This study was designed to explore characteristics of exceptional teachers of gifted students. Participants included 63 teachers and 1,247 highly able students. Teachers responded to 2 measures: a background questionnaire and the Myers Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI), a self-report personality inventory. Students also completed the MBTI. In response to the background questionnaire, the majority of teachers reported holding advanced degrees in a content area; most were not certified to teach and reported completing no formal coursework in gifted education. Results from the MBTI indicated that exemplary teachers were more likely to prefer N (intuition) and T

(thinking), as compared to a normative teacher sample. The personality types of teachers were in many ways similar to the personality types of the gifted students. These findings suggest that teachers who are judged to be highly effective in working with gifted students prefer abstract themes and concepts, are open and flexible, and value logical analysis and objectivity. Results suggest that teacher personality and cognitive style may play a role in his or her effectiveness in teaching gifted students.

Mulhern, J.D. (2003). The Gifted Child in the Regular Classroom. *Roeper Review*, 25(3), 112–115.

Examines the extent in which classroom teachers can use accessible information in identifying academically gifted students in the U.S. Limitations of intelligence quotient tests; Major shortcoming of the early research on the academically gifted; Common learning characteristics of the academically gifted. A reprint of the first article ever published in the *Roeper Review*, 1(1), 1978, pages 3-6. Readers can see that 25 years ago we faced many of the same concerns we see in the literature today. Following the article, Dr. Cheryl Adams, director of the Center for Gifted Studies and Talent Development at Ball State University, provides a perspective on the changes that have occurred since Dr. Mulhern's article appeared in 1978. We hope you will enjoy this retrospective.

Nugent, S.A. & Shaunessy, E. (2003). Using Film in Teacher Training: Viewing the Gifted Through Different Lenses. *Roeper Review*, 25(3), 128–134.

Describes the strategies and sample film clips used in educating teachers and graduate students about the characteristics and social-emotional needs of the gifted. Reasons behind the use of film clips as an instructional tool; Analysis of the portrayal of the gifted in cinema; List of films that illustrate the characteristics of gifted children.

Peterson, J.S. (2003). An Argument for Proactive Attention to Affective Concerns of Gifted Adolescents. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education*, 14(2), 62–71.

To meet affective needs of gifted adolescents, teachers in gifted education can avail themselves of the expertise and resources of school counselors who, especially in recent decades, have been trained to create and implement prevention-oriented, developmental guidance programs. This article provides information about what counselors can offer to gifted adolescents and their teachers, including affective curricula, training in active listening, and facilitation of discussion groups. Other strategies for addressing social and emotional concerns in programs are also presented.

Robinson, E.L. (Fall 2002). What is the School Psychologist's Role in Gifted Education? *Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 25(4), 34–37.

Why would a school psychologist be interested in gifted education and why would individuals from gifted education be interested in the field of school psychology?

Rotigel, J.V. (2003). Understanding the Young Gifted Child: Guidelines for Parents, Families, and Educators. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 30(4), 209–214.

Young children who are gifted or talented share special characteristics that impact on the way they learn and develop. Teachers and parents need to consider the unique needs of each child as they plan ways to nurture and educate these youngsters. Concerns such as uneven development, the need for acceleration and/or enrichment, appropriate socialization and peer interactions, and modification of the curriculum are some of the topics discussed. Suggestions for teachers and parents are included along with a variety of resources.

Nugent, S.A. (2003). Using Film in Teacher Training: Viewing the Gifted Through Different Lenses. *Roeper Review*, 25(3), 128–134.

Describes the strategies and sample film clips used in educating teachers and graduate students about the characteristics and social-emotional needs of the gifted. Reasons behind the use of film clips as an instructional tool; Analysis of the portrayal of the gifted in cinema; List of films that illustrate the characteristics of gifted children.

Siegle, D. (Fall, 2002). Learning Online: A New Educational Opportunity for Teachers and Parents. *Gifted Child Today Magazine*, 25(4), 30–33.

Twenty years ago, parents and teachers who wished to expand their understanding of gifted children and gifted education were limited to reading a few books and journals on the topic. They may have been fortunate enough to live near a university that offered a course in gifted education. Today the situation has changed. Thanks to the Internet, a myriad of educational opportunities exist. (includes relevant websites)

Winebrenner, S. (2003). Teaching Strategies for Twice-Exceptional Students. *Intervention in School & Clinic*, 38(3), 131–137.

For many years, parents and teachers have been perplexed about youngsters who have dramatic learning strengths in some areas and equally dramatic learning weaknesses in others. These students appear to defy accurate labeling: Are they gifted or learning disabled? Finally, the debate has stopped, and educators are now recognizing these students as “twice-exceptional.” Rather than trying to use evidence from their weak learning areas to prove they are not “truly gifted,” savvy teachers are now learning how to allow these students to experience the same opportunities available for gifted students when they are learning in their strength areas. When students are learning in their areas of weakness, teachers are learning to provide the same compensation strategies used by other students with learning disabilities. This article offers specific instruction to empower teachers to effectively teach twice-exceptional students.

Zehr, M.A. (2002). Texas Teachers Sought for Bilingual, Gifted Training. *Education Week*, 22(12), 3.

With the help of a \$1.5 million federal grant, Southern Methodist University in Dallas is starting an unusual scholarship program that will train teachers in both bilingual education and gifted education. Experts in gifted education say they do

not know of any other university that formally offers the same combination of teacher preparation. They hope the new program will give teachers better tools to help identify gifted and talented students who are learning English. They also would like to see it replicated.

Chapter 7 - Support Services

Teachers, parents, support personnel, and mentors are all critical in the development of the whole [gifted and talented] child.

—Ken Seeley
Colorado Foundation
Denver, Colorado

Introduction

All students should have access to support services, but gifted and talented students by their nature have unique needs requiring specialized services (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(A)(1)(b)). This chapter examines the following types of services or resources: school guidance, academic support (including academic competitions), technology, parent education, and national and state organizations.

School Guidance Services

Developmental Counseling

A developmental counseling program should foster both the cognitive and affective growth of gifted and talented students. One of the primary goals of the counselor should be to ensure that identified students, particularly those in underserved populations, have the support needed to remain in the gifted and talented program. An effective school guidance program must identify and implement strategies to help gifted and talented students meet success in their differentiated curriculum.

Developmental counseling should include individual and group counseling sessions. In individual sessions, gifted and talented students can learn to understand their strengths and weaknesses as decision-makers and to take responsibility for their lives. In group sessions, the counselor can address topics of common concern to gifted and talented students.

According to Colangelo (1997), school guidance services should include a developmental counseling program with the following components:

- ◆ An articulated and coherent rationale;
- ◆ A program of activities based on the affective and cognitive needs of gifted and talented students;
- ◆ Trained counselors who are well grounded in counseling and in giftedness;
- ◆ A minimum of attention to rehabilitative services, but a strong component of individual, family, and teacher consultations;
- ◆ Input and participation from teachers, administrators, parents, and the students who are served; and
- ◆ Provision for the continued professional development of the counselor so that he or she can keep pace with the latest research and practices in counseling gifted and talented students.

The developmental counseling program for gifted and talented students must recognize a consistent set of issues and concerns that can affect this population. The list below indicates the set of gifted and talented student concerns identified by Strop (1983).

- ◆ Establishing and maintaining positive relationships with peers;
- ◆ Dealing with oversensitivity to what others say and do;
- ◆ Making appropriate career choices;
- ◆ Developing the ability to relax and relieve tension;
- ◆ Maintaining the motivation and desire to achieve;
- ◆ Developing positive leadership skills;
- ◆ Getting along with siblings;
- ◆ Developing tolerance;
- ◆ Dealing with striving for perfection;
- ◆ Avoiding prolonged periods of boredom.

Similarly, Silverman (1994) lists specific issues or problems that gifted and talented students may face due to their situations or personalities.

- ◆ Underachievement
- ◆ Depression (often masked as boredom)
- ◆ Hiding abilities
- ◆ Understanding their introversion
- ◆ Uneven development
- ◆ Excessive competitiveness
- ◆ Hostility of others toward their abilities
- ◆ Feeling overly responsible for others
- ◆ Being overshadowed in the family by the oldest sibling
- ◆ Hidden handicaps
- ◆ Lack of true peers

Taking these needs into consideration, Silverman (1994) recommends the following topics for an affective program designed for gifted and talented students.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ◆ Understanding Giftedness | ◆ Social Skills |
| ◆ Self-Expectations | ◆ Dealing with Stress |
| ◆ Fear of Failure | ◆ Sensitivity |
| ◆ Expectations of Others | ◆ Tolerance |
| ◆ Feeling Different | ◆ Family Dynamics |
| ◆ Uneven Development | ◆ Responsibility for Others |
| ◆ Introversion | ◆ Developing Study Habits |
| ◆ Peer Pressure | ◆ Developing Leadership Ability |
| ◆ Competitiveness | ◆ Career Exploration |
| ◆ Guilt | |

The table below (from VanTassel-Baska, 1998) illustrates how school counselors can address the needs of the gifted and talented in a developmental counseling program.

Linkage of Counseling Needs of the Gifted to Strategies for Intervention	
Social-Emotional Needs of the Gifted	Strategies to Address the Needs
To understand the ways in which they are different from other children and the ways in which they are the same	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use bibliotherapy techniques 2. Establish group discussion seminars 3. Hold individual dialogue sessions
To appreciate and treasure their own individuality and the individual differences of others	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote biography study 2. Honor diverse talents through awards, performance sessions, special seminars, and symposia 3. Encourage contest and competitive entry
To understand and develop social skills that allow them to cope adequately within relationships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach creative problem solving in dyads and small groups 2. Create role-playing scenarios 3. Devise appropriate simulation activities
To develop an appreciation for their high-level sensitivity that may manifest itself in humor, artistic endeavors, and intensified emotional experiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage positive and expressive outlets for sensitivity, such as tutoring, volunteer work, art, music, and drama 2. Promote journal writing that captures feelings about key experiences
To gain a realistic assessment of their ability and talents and how they can be nurtured	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide for regular testing and assessment procedures 2. Provide for grouping opportunities with others of similar abilities and interest
To develop an understanding of the distinction between the “pursuit of excellence” and the “pursuit of perfection”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a “safe” environment to experiment with failure 2. Promote risk-taking behavior
To learn the art and science of compromise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide “cooperation games” 2. Work on goal setting 3. Encourage the development of a philosophy of life

Career Counseling

As with developmental counseling, school counselors must have an understanding of the unique nature and needs of the gifted and talented in order to provide effective career guidance. An often overlooked problem for multi-talented students is choosing which of their interests to pursue vocationally and which to keep as avocational. While some gifted and talented children know from an early age “what they want to be when they grow up,” others may delay their career decisions. Counselors need to understand and honor this situation while helping students explore varied career opportunities and options. The assumption that gifted and talented students do not need career counseling is false.

According to Silverman (1993), career counseling for gifted and talented students should be sensitive to their multiple interests, the existential dilemmas they face in making choices, their fear of making an error, their fear of being less than ideal or not living up to their potential, the depth of their sadness over the road not taken, and their fear that if they try to nurture all their potentials, they will end up second rate at everything.

An effective career counseling program may assist gifted and talented students by

- ◆ Preparing them for many options;
- ◆ Providing them with information about careers in which they would have the opportunity to synthesize interests from many fields;
- ◆ Allowing them to delay decision-making until college;
- ◆ Giving them real-life experiences in some of their interest fields;
- ◆ Discussing the possibility of serial or concurrent careers;
- ◆ Helping them determine which of their interests they could maintain as avocations;
- ◆ Suggesting the possibility of creating new careers;
- ◆ Exploring life themes as a basis for career choice.

Some futurists are predicting that today’s students will have several careers and many different kinds of jobs during their professional lives. Therefore, students must be given information about how their strengths and interests relate to various fields of endeavor and numerous careers. Real-life experiences can help gifted and talented students gain perspective on their career possibilities. Examples of such experiences include the Executive Internship Program, mentoring or shadowing, and service learning projects or volunteer work. Each of these opportunities is described more fully in the following table.

Examples of Real-Life Experiences
<p>Executive Internship Program</p> <p>This program enables students to spend time with professionals at the work site and in areas in which students have interests. Students keep logs of their field experiences, complete related assignments, and receive high school credit for their participation in the program.</p>
<p>Mentoring and Shadowing</p> <p>Like the Executive Internship Program, a mentoring program can provide a student with the opportunity to work with and learn from a practicing professional. Shadowing experiences can serve a similar function. The latter may be especially helpful to students who have a wide variety of interests and aptitudes.</p>
<p>Service Learning Projects & Volunteer Work</p> <p>Students can also gain real-life experiences through service learning projects and volunteer work in the community. Counselors can assist students with these opportunities by finding qualified adults or service organizations in the community, helping students plan and organize the experiences, and ensuring that students take time to reflect on their experiences.</p>

College Counseling

College counseling for gifted and talented students must begin in middle school. School counselors should steer students toward appropriate classes that will prepare them for Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate coursework in high school. Parents of gifted and talented students must understand the importance and implications of coursework selection in the middle school.

Gifted and talented students should take the most challenging courses possible to prepare them for the rigors of high school studies, the ACT/SAT, and admission to the college of their choice. Such middle school choices establish the foundation for student success in high school and beyond.

Early in high school, gifted and talented students and their parents should be given information on college requirements for admission, along with scholarship opportunities. Students should know where to obtain college catalogs and how to access college websites. Taking the PSAT/PLAN and/or SAT/ACT annually in high school enables the student to provide information to colleges and may help the student to improve his/her scores. The gifted and talented student may learn from this practice

that specific colleges are interested in having him/her on their campus. Many colleges actively recruit academically gifted and talented students based on their performance.

School counselors should make gifted and talented students aware of the many factors that competitive colleges and universities examine when considering candidates for admission. In addition to grade point averages, class rank, and ACT/SAT scores, college admission criteria usually include experiences such as extracurricular activities, community service, and leadership positions. Also of increasing importance are character traits communicated through essays and interviews.

Technology can help counselors guide students along the sometimes confusing path to higher education. Many large high schools have college and career centers equipped with the latest software to enable students to analyze career choices, compare college programs and costs, seek scholarships, and prepare polished applications. This type of service provides a competitive edge and places pressure on all high school counselors to ensure that their students have the best guidance available in the college admissions and scholarship process.

Issues for Intervention

Underachievement

Researchers have conducted a number of studies on the incidence of underachievement among gifted and talented students. Academic underachievement may start with some boys as early as kindergarten, while surfacing among girls more commonly in the middle school years. Research findings indicate that as many as half of our gifted and talented children do not perform up to their academic potential. Studies of high school dropouts show that up to twenty percent of this group may be gifted and talented (Davis & Rimm, 2004).

Researchers and educators typically define underachievement as a discrepancy between ability and performance. The Sample Documents at the end of the chapter include a checklist that can assist school counselors in identifying gifted and talented underachievers. (See Sample A, page 7-19.)

Whitmore (1980) described school environments that may contribute to underachievement of gifted and talented students. Environmental factors identified by Whitmore include a lack of respect for the individual child, a strongly competitive climate, emphasis on outside evaluation, inflexibility and rigidity, overattention to errors and failure, an “all controlling teacher, and an unrewarding curriculum.”

Some of the more prominent characteristics of gifted and talented underachievers are low self-esteem, defensive avoidance of threatening academic tasks, skill deficiencies, poor study habits, problems with peers, and discipline problems. These problems may also exist in the home.

To address the problem of underachievement, guidance counselors can set up study skills groups and time management classes, emphasize responsibility and respect for education, and assist students with peer relationships. Teachers and counselors can help underachieving students see the relationship between effort and outcome. They can also facilitate communication between home and school. Counselors can make parents aware of community resources, such as family counseling centers that may provide additional assistance.

Rimm's TRIFOCAL model (Davis & Rimm, 2004) has shown great promise for reversing underachievement in gifted and talented students. The TRIFOCAL model requires the following six steps:

1. Assessment of skills, abilities, reinforcement contingencies, and types of underachievement;
2. Communication between parents and teachers;
3. Changing the expectations of parents, teachers, peers, and siblings;
4. Encouraging identification with achieving role models (mentors);
5. Correcting skill deficiencies;
6. Modifying home and school reinforcements that currently support underachievement.

Perfectionism

Perfectionism can create great difficulties for some gifted and talented students. Perfectionism among the gifted and talented may result from receiving "all A's" and continued praise from both teachers and parents. As children internalize extreme praise over a period of years, they tend to depend on this external reward system for self-fulfillment, and they exert strong pressure on themselves to perform at a level that elicits such praise.

In addition to self-pressure, many students become victims of parent, peer, and societal pressure to achieve at higher levels. The gifted and talented student may develop unrealistic expectations of perfection in all areas of performance and, when this cannot be maintained, feel like a failure. This can result in a life filled with worry, self-imposed guilt, the tendency to overwork, or the avoidance of risk. Perfectionism is a heavy burden that, in its extreme, may cause illness or may even be associated with suicide.

Students must come to realize that perfection is impossible. They need to understand the difference between "doing your best" and "overdoing it"—between a reasonable pursuit of excellence and compulsive perfectionism. Gifted and talented students must learn that it is okay to be wrong: we learn from our mistakes. The gifted and talented must be able to take chances and laugh at themselves.

Learning to balance schoolwork, social obligations, family activities, and recreation is a life-long struggle for the perfectionist. It is the responsibility of school counselors and teachers to help gifted and talented students learn to balance all parts of their lives. Group counseling sessions—where gifted and talented students can discuss the issues of perfectionism—are appropriate. In the classroom, teachers can create a safe environment where students can experiment without fear of failure and practice risk-taking behaviors.

Often perfectionism is more apparent in the home than at school. Parents may see the child staying up late at night and/or giving up recreational activities to perfect an assignment, as well as quarreling with siblings who disturb him/her. At school, the end result (i.e., the “perfect assignment”) may be all that is noticed. The school counselor should encourage parents to report signs of excessive perfectionism in their child. In addition, counselors and teachers should look for signs of too little sleep and exquisite detail in homework assignments.

Severe cases of perfectionism should be referred to psychological or medical professionals for treatment.

Academic Support Services

A myriad of academic support programs and experiences are available to encourage gifted and talented students to reach their potential. Those opportunities include academic assistance programs, advanced coursework, school extension programs, academic recognition programs, programs offered through community organizations, and academic competitions.

Academic Assistance Programs

Some gifted and talented students may demonstrate a need for additional support in basic skill achievement. These students must receive academic assistance through appropriate programs and services. Such support could include tutoring, special classes, extended day programs, and computer assisted instruction. Gifted and talented students with special needs must be referred to appropriate special services programs and agencies.

Advanced Coursework

- ◆ Dual enrollment: the practice of enrolling in a college or university while enrolled in high school to earn high school and college credit simultaneously
- ◆ Concurrent enrollment: the practice of enrolling in a college or university to earn college credit while attending high school
- ◆ The College Board Advanced Placement Program (high school AP courses)
- ◆ The International Baccalaureate Program (prescribed programs of study for elementary, middle and high school)
- ◆ The Governor’s School for Arts and Humanities (residential program in Greenville, SC, for grade 11 and 12 and special summer programs)
- ◆ The Governor’s School for Math and Science (residential program in Hartsville, SC, for grades 11 and 12 and special summer programs)

School Extension Programs

- ◆ Saturday Academies: enrichment and preparatory programs
- ◆ Seminars
- ◆ Summer enrichment and preparatory programs
- ◆ Extended day experiences

Academic Recognition Programs

- ◆ South Carolina Junior Scholars Program
- ◆ Duke University Talent Identification Program (See page 7-12.)
- ◆ Johns Hopkins University Summer Program for Mathematically Precocious Youth and similar programs at other colleges and universities
- ◆ The Presidential Academic Fitness Program
- ◆ National Honor Societies
- ◆ Beta Clubs
- ◆ Local school and community programs

Opportunities Offered Through Community Organizations

- ◆ Business partnerships, apprenticeships, and mentoring programs

- ◆ Civic clubs (e.g., Scouts, 4-H Club, Boys and Girls Clubs)
- ◆ Civic organization projects (e.g., Junior League, Optimists)
- ◆ Volunteer opportunities
- ◆ Religious activities
- ◆ Community resources (e.g., guest speakers and teachers)

Academic Competitions

- ◆ *American Computer Science League Contest* (Grades 7–12). Association of Computer Science Leagues, P.O. Box 40118, Providence, RI 02940.
- ◆ *Anthology of Poetry by Young Americans* (Grades K–12). American Academy of Poetry, P.O. Box 698, Asheboro, NC 27203.
- ◆ *Arts Recognition Talent Search* (Grade 12). National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts, 3915 N. Biscayne, Miami, FL 33137.
- ◆ *Creative with Words* (Ages 5–18). CWW Publications, P.O. Box 223226, Carmel, CA 93922.
- ◆ *Future Problem Solving* (Grades K–12). The Future Problem Solving Program, 318 W. Ann St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104.
- ◆ *International Children's Art Exhibition* (Grades K–9). Pentel of America, Ltd., 2805 Columbia St., Torrance, CA 90503.
- ◆ *International Physics Olympiad* (Grades 9–12). American Association of Physics Teachers, One Physics Ellipse, College Park, MD 20740-3845.
- ◆ *International Science Olympiads* (High School). Website: olympiads.win.tue.nl
- ◆ *Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary and Middle Schools*. International Math Olympiads, Department E-1, 2154 Bellmore Ave., Bellmore, NY 11710-5645. Website: www.moems.org
- ◆ *MathCounts* (Grades 7 & 8). MATHCOUNTS Foundation, 1420 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Website: www.mathcounts.org
- ◆ *Model United Nations* (High School). Website: www.amun.org
- ◆ *National Chess Championships* (Grades K–12). U.S. Chess Federation, 186 Route 9W, New Windsor, NY 12553. Website: www.uschess.org
- ◆ *National Geography Bee* (Grades 4–8). National Geographic Society, 1145 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036-4688.

- ◆ *National History Day*. 0119 Cecil Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20741. Website: www.thehistorynet.com/NationalHistoryDay
- ◆ *National Knowledge Master Open* (Grades 5–12). Academic Hallmarks, Box 998, Durango, CO 81302.
- ◆ *National Science Olympiad* (Grades K–12). Box 5477, Hauppauge, NY 11788-0121. Website: www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/Lab/9699
- ◆ *Odyssey of the Mind (OM)* (Grades K–12). OM Association, P.O. Box 547, Glassboro, NJ 08028-0547. Website: www.odyssey.org
- ◆ *Optimist International Oratorical Contest* (Ages 16 and Under). 4494 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108.
- ◆ *South Carolina Alliance for Minority Participants (SCAMP)*. USC College of Engineering, Columbia, SC 29208.
- ◆ *Stock Market Game* (Grades 4–12). 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271-0080. Website: www.smg2000.org
- ◆ *Talent Identification Program* (Grade 7). Duke University, 1121 West Main St., Suite 100, Durham, NC 27701. Website: www.shodor.org/tip
- ◆ *WordMasters Challenge* (Grades 3–8). 213 E. Allendale Ave., Allendale, NJ 07401.
- ◆ *Young Inventors Competition* (Grades 9–12). Foundation for a Creative America, 1755 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22202.
- ◆ Local, Regional, and National Science Fairs

Technology Support Services

The rapidly expanding field of technology offers an incredible range of support services to gifted and talented students, administrators, teachers, and parents. Listed here is just a sampling of the resources now available. Students, administrators, teachers, and parents need to become familiar with the use of search engines and other tools to stay abreast of current and emerging developments.

Technology for Students

- ◆ Distance learning, especially with two-way audio and video, is an excellent way to offer advanced courses in which only a few students seek to enroll. This is a particularly attractive option for students in smaller schools and districts. Middle and high school students alike can benefit greatly from such opportunities. The former can take courses for high school credit, while the latter can take courses for

college credit. At all levels, this technology can provide unique experiences for students to learn from experts in a field. The South Carolina Governor's School for Math and Science and SCETV have distance learning opportunities. Stanford University offers a number of on-line courses in mathematics and writing (EPGY). Counselors can check with South Carolina colleges and universities for other on-line course offerings.

- ◆ The World Wide Web provides research opportunities that are limited only by a student's imagination. Students must know and abide by school districts' acceptable use policies.
- ◆ E-mail and monitored chat rooms can enable students to communicate with experts anywhere in the world. Supervised chat rooms can offer gifted and talented students the opportunity to interact with other students anywhere on any topic of interest. Some Internet service providers offer supervised chat rooms.
- ◆ Other technology being used by South Carolina students includes the following: digital cameras; presentation, simulation, and word processing software; laser disc programs; and video microscopes.

Technology for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents

- ◆ The Gifted Resources Home Page (Website: www.eskimo.com/~user/kids.html) provides information for administrators, teachers, and parents, as well as links to many other sites. There is also a section for "key pals"—computer pen pals.
- ◆ The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (Website: www.gifted.uconn.edu) has a complete listing of their publications, along with selected abstracts. Several publications deal with identifying and retaining underrepresented populations in gifted and talented programs.
- ◆ The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) has a system of networks, including one called "Developing Giftedness and Talent," run by Brian Reid at the University of Alabama-Birmingham. For more information, visit the ASCD Home Page (Website: www.ascd.org); then click on "Constituent Relations," "Who We Serve," and "Networks."
- ◆ The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) is made up of 16 separate information clearinghouses, including one for Disabilities and Gifted Education. Searches for information can be conducted on-line (Website: www.ericec.org).
- ◆ GiftedNet is an on-line mailing list dealing with gifted and talented issues. Since GiftedNet is located at the College of William and Mary (Website: www.wm.edu/education/giftednet.htm), there are many discussions about their instructional units. Discussions also cover a wide range of topics, from gifted and talented math curricula to the pros and cons of acceleration. To subscribe, send e-mail to the following address: listserv@listserv.cc.wm.edu. Skip the subject

line; then, in the first text line, type the following: SUBSCRIBE GIFTEDNET-L
Firstname Lastname (e.g., SUBSCRIBE GIFTEDNET-L Jane Doe).

- ◆ Teachers can find lesson plans on-line for almost any topic imaginable. *Classroom Connect* describes many such websites, as well as information on virtual field studies.
- ◆ Teachers can get on-line assistance with problem-based learning from the Center for Problem-Based Learning. (Website: www.imsa.edu/team/cpbl/cpbl.html). This site includes sample units and tutorials on writing problem-based units.
- ◆ Information on teaching critical evaluation skills is available on-line as well (e.g., Website: www2.widener.edu/Wolfram-Memorial-Library/webeval.htm).
- ◆ U-ACHIEV is a site for the discussion of academic underachievement, including, but not limited to, gifted and talented underachievers. To subscribe to this site, send e-mail to the following address: majordomo@virginia.edu. In the subject line, type subscribe; then, in the message line, type subscribe u-achiev.
- ◆ TAG-L is an open forum that discusses general issues related to gifted and talented education. To subscribe, send e-mail to the following address: listserv@listserv.nodak.edu. Skip the subject line; then, in the first text line, type the following: SUBSCRIBE TAG-L Firstname Lastname.
- ◆ Of particular interest to parents is TAGFAM, a discussion group that supports families of gifted and talented children. Topics of discussion include parenting, home schooling, distance learning, and many others. TAGFAM generates a large number of messages. To subscribe, send e-mail to the following address: listserv@maelstrom.stjohns.edu. Skip the subject line; then, in the first text line, type the following: sub TAGFAM Firstname Lastname.
- ◆ Administrators, teachers, and parents can follow the activities of the South Carolina General Assembly at www.lpittr.state.sc.us/homepage.htm. This site includes updates on various bills that are being considered, as well as a listing of previous bills from the last several years.

As the state becomes more connected to the Internet, additional resources will become available. Readers who locate other websites that would be interest to administrators, teachers, parents, students, or others involved in gifted and talented education should contact the South Carolina Consortium for Gifted Education, P.O. Box 255, Irmo, SC 29063. Please send a brief description of the site and its address.

Parent Education Support Services

Parents are the most significant influence on the lives of their children. Consider these findings from a study of MacArthur Fellows (Cox, Daniel, & Boston, 1985):

Almost without exception the MacArthur Fellows pay tribute to their parents. While the education level of the parents varied, and the level of financial backing as well, virtually all the parents let their children know the value of learning by personal example. The parents supported without pushing. Their homes had books, journals, newspapers. They took the children to the library. The parents themselves read, and they read to their children. Most important, they respected their children's ideas. (p. 24)

Similarly, Bloom (1985) has noted the important role of parents, family support, and sacrifice in the achievement of gifted and talented individuals across various disciplines and professions.

Education programs for parents of the gifted and talented must address a number of issues and themes. A primary need of parents is assistance in providing for their gifted and talented children's cognitive and affective development. Shore, Cornell, Robinson, and Ward (1991) suggest the following as appropriate issues for parenting education programs:

- ◆ Developing awareness of how personal needs and feelings influence the relationship with the child;
- ◆ Avoiding excessive emphasis on developing the child's giftedness;
- ◆ Discouraging children's perfectionism and excessive self-criticism;
- ◆ Encouraging social as well as academic development;
- ◆ Facilitating social development through ability/peer contact;
- ◆ Fostering potential for giftedness through preschool intervention;
- ◆ Being sensitive to potential sibling adjustment problems.

Parents appreciate information on the characteristics and needs of gifted and talented children, as well as advice on problems or issues such as underachievement, carelessness, time management, and career/college choice. Also crucial for parents is information regarding the educational offerings provided by the school—through both the gifted and talented program and the general education program.

Parent Education Delivery Models

Districts can utilize various delivery models for parent education. Most districts provide parent orientation sessions to showcase their gifted and talented programs, explain the identification process, and provide parenting advice. Throughout the school year, additional parent education services may be offered—e.g., parenting sessions on particular topics; videos to demonstrate effective parenting practices, such as questioning and discussion techniques; a lending library for parents, with books and journals on gifted and talented education and parenting, as well as information on

accessing relevant websites. Many districts serve parents through an association and some have even formed foundations where parents work to provide additional financial support to the gifted and talented program. Parent education delivery models are limited only by local convention and the creativity of the gifted and talented program staff.

Gifted and talented programs must also use the print media to communicate effectively with parents. Program notice and identification procedures must be communicated to all parents. Additionally, parents of children qualified for the gifted and talented program must receive written policies and procedures, including the program's mission, curriculum goals, evaluation of student achievement, and evaluation of program effectiveness.

Most gifted and talented programs go beyond this basic level of parent communication—e.g., through the newsletters, brochures, videos, e-mail and/or websites. One South Carolina district uses parent volunteers to print and disseminate a regular newsletter that highlights educational opportunities in the community. Another has made videos to describe the curriculum, showing gifted and talented students at work on units of instruction.

Parents need access to the gifted and talented program staff for answers to their questions or concerns. Communicating with parents is a time consuming, but rewarding practice in an effective gifted and talented program.

National and State Organizations

In addition to the many resources listed and described throughout this chapter, key national and state organizations offer support services for those involved in gifted and talented education.

- ◆ The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC): www.nagc.org
- ◆ The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented:
www.gifted.uconn.edu
- ◆ The Center for Gifted Education, College of William & Mary:
www.cfge.wm.edu
- ◆ Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): www.cec.sped.org
- ◆ The South Carolina Consortium for Gifted Education (SCCGE):
P.O. Box 255, Irmo, SC 29063
- ◆ The South Carolina Department of Education: www.myscschools.com

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Sample Documents

Sample A

A Checklist to Identify Gifted and Talented Underachievers	
<p>Observe and interact with the student over a period of at least two weeks to determine if he or she possesses the following characteristics. If the student exhibits 10 or more of the listed traits—including all that are asterisked (*)—individual intelligence testing (e.g., with the Stanford-Binet or WISC-R) is recommended to establish whether he or she is a gifted and talented underachiever.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	*poor test performance
<input type="checkbox"/>	*achieving at or below grade-level expectations in one or all of the basic skill areas: reading, language arts, mathematics
<input type="checkbox"/>	*daily work frequently incomplete or poorly done
<input type="checkbox"/>	*superior comprehension and retention of concepts when interested
<input type="checkbox"/>	*vast gap between qualitative level of oral and written work
<input type="checkbox"/>	exceptionally large repertoire of factual knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/>	vitality of imagination and creativity
<input type="checkbox"/>	persistent dissatisfaction with work accomplished, even in the arts
<input type="checkbox"/>	seems to avoid trying new activities to prevent imperfect performance; evidences perfectionism, self-criticism
<input type="checkbox"/>	shows initiative in pursuing self-selected projects at home
<input type="checkbox"/>	*has a wide range of interests and possibly special expertise in an area of investigation and research
<input type="checkbox"/>	*evidences low self-esteem through tendencies to withdraw or be aggressive in the classroom
<input type="checkbox"/>	does not function comfortably or constructively in a group of any size
<input type="checkbox"/>	shows acute sensitivity and perceptions related to self, others, and life in general
<input type="checkbox"/>	tends to set unrealistic self-expectations; goals too high or too low
<input type="checkbox"/>	dislikes practice work or drill for memorization and mastery
<input type="checkbox"/>	easily distracted; unable to focus attention and concentrate efforts on tasks
<input type="checkbox"/>	has an indifferent or negative attitude toward school
<input type="checkbox"/>	resists teacher efforts to motivate or discipline behavior in class
<input type="checkbox"/>	has difficulty in peer relationships; maintains few friendships

Note: Adapted from Whitmore (1980, p. 282).

Chapter 8 - Identification

The identification process should be a needs assessment whose primary purpose is the placement of [gifted and talented] students into educational programs designed to develop their latent potential. (emphasis in the original)

—E. Susanne Richert
Global Institute for Maximizing Potential
Brigantine, New Jersey

Identification

State Board of Education Regulation 43-220 specifies requirements and procedures for identifying gifted and talented students. As described R 43-220, the purposes of the identification process are

- to find students who display characteristics of the gifted and talented (i.e., ability or potential for high performance in academic areas);
- to assess the aptitudes, attributes, and behaviors of each student; and
- to evaluate each student for the purposes of placement. (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(1))

This description reflects South Carolina’s definition of gifted and talented in R 43-220: “Gifted and talented students are those who are identified in grades one through twelve as demonstrating high performance ability or potential in academic and/or artistic areas and therefore require an educational program beyond that normally provided by the general school program in order to achieve their potential” (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.1(A)(1)).

South Carolina’s definition of gifted and talented students is in keeping with that given in the foreword to *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent* (Ross 1993), which itself is based on the definition in the federal Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1988:

Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.

Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

“To put this definition into practice,” *National Excellence* continues, “schools must develop a system to identify gifted and talented students”—a system that operates in the following manner:

- Seeks variety—looks throughout a range of disciplines for students with diverse talents;
- Uses many assessment measures—uses a variety of appraisals so that schools can find students in different talent areas and at different ages;
- Is free of bias—provides students of all backgrounds with equal access to appropriate opportunities;
- Is fluid—uses assessment procedures that can accommodate students who develop at different rates and whose interests may change as they mature;
- Identifies potential—discovers talents that are not readily apparent in students, as well as those that are obvious; and
- Assesses motivation—takes into account the drive and passion that play a key role in accomplishment. (Ross 1993, 26).

In undertaking the identification process, it is essential for district personnel to remember that, as 43-220 states, “gifted and talented students may be found within any racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group; within any nationality; within both genders; and within populations with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, or behavioral problems” (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(2)).

To be in compliance with Title IX and the Office for Civil Rights, district personnel should monitor referral, screening, and eligibility data in terms of the previously referenced groups to determine where underrepresentation might occur in the district and to implement strategies to ensure that all students have equal access to referral and are screened with valid, reliable, and appropriate assessments.

R 43-220 describes *identification* as a multistep process that must include the following:

1. notification of parents/guardians regarding gifted and talented program services and identification procedures;

2. training and guidance regarding the characteristics of academic giftedness for teachers and other district staff involved in the identification process;
3. referrals from administrators, parents, teachers, and students;
4. screening of all students with aptitude and achievement measures;
5. assessment and reassessment of student eligibility; and
6. evaluation of student data for placement.

This resource document provides an explanation of the entire identification process. Included in the appendix is the sample “Referral-Screening-Assessment Student Profile Sheet,” which can be used to facilitate that process.

Notification

According to R 43-220, school districts must provide parents/guardians with effective, written notice of the gifted education program’s existence, its screening and referral procedures, and its eligibility requirements (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(6)(b)(1)). The school district must issue this notice annually with the same level of importance that it does for other significant district activities, policies, and procedures.

Methods for disseminating this notification include brochures and flyers that are distributed during school registration and the inclusion of the notice in the school’s student handbook. To ensure broad awareness of the gifted and talented program, the district may wish to use mass media and technology to provide notice throughout all segments of the community. Along with the distribution of written notice, districts may wish to conduct annual meetings to inform parents/guardians about the program and such related issues as the characteristics of academic giftedness and the role of parents/guardians in the identification of gifted and talented students.

Districts must make certain that parents/guardians of underrepresented students receive effective notice of the gifted and talented program. According to a national survey on identification practices, underrepresented groups include economically disadvantaged students, culturally diverse students, students with minimal proficiency in English, males (when identifying verbal ability below grade five), females (when identifying mathematical ability), intellectually creative students, academically underachieving students, and physically handicapped and learning disabled students (Alvino, McDonnel, and Richert 1981).

At a minimum, notification should contain these components:

- (a) the definition of the term *academic giftedness* as put forth by R 43-220 and the State Department of Education;

- (b) the purpose of the gifted and talented program and a description of the district's program models and services;
- (c) a description of the identification process and eligibility criteria (with an explanation of Dimensions A, B, and C as delineated in R 43-220);
- (d) an explanation of the referral process, specifying who may refer a student and how and when a referral can be made;
- (e) a discussion of the screening process, explaining which tests are used, who is tested, and when the testing is done;
- (f) a statement of nondiscrimination or assurance of equity of opportunity for participation (see the sample statement in the appendix); and
- (g) a description of the process for obtaining additional information regarding identification procedures and program services, as well as a clear statement of the process by which parents/guardians may raise concerns with respect to identification, evaluation, and services.

The district should employ various strategies to determine the effectiveness of the notification procedure. For example, the annual written notice may include a form for parents to sign and return as an acknowledgement that they have received the notice. The district might also periodically conduct parent surveys to assess awareness of the gifted and talented program and to solicit suggestions for disseminating program information.

Training and Guidance

In addition to the notification requirements for parents, R 43-220 mandates that school districts provide training and guidance regarding the characteristics of academic giftedness for teachers and other district staff involved in the identification process (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(6)(b)(3)). Administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers all require knowledge of the characteristics of gifted and talented students.

To assist districts with their training efforts, the State Department of Education has created a staff development resource entitled *Gifted Students: Who Are They?* Copies of this document, which is appropriate for use with the total school staff, are available from the state's gifted and talented coordinator in the Office of Curriculum and Standards.

Districts should incorporate initial awareness of gifted students in their orientation sessions for new teachers. In addition, annual presentations and discussion on the nature and needs of gifted children should be conducted at each school to ensure that the knowledge base of administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers continues to grow.

Referrals

Referral procedures ensure that students who have demonstrated ability or potential for high performance in academic areas will have access to the gifted and talented program. In accordance with R 43-220, the district's procedures must allow for referrals from administrators, parents, teachers, and the students themselves (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(6)(a)).

Districts should select or develop referral forms that clearly describe the characteristics of gifted and talented students. These referral instruments should be relevant to the socioeconomic characteristics of the district's students and should include characteristics that are specific to the underrepresented groups in that district. As delineated in the "Notification" section, above, underrepresented groups in general are economically disadvantaged students, culturally diverse students, students with minimal proficiency in English, males (when identifying verbal ability below grade five), females (when identifying mathematical ability), intellectually creative students, academically underachieving students, and physically handicapped and learning disabled students.

The district's referral instruments should be easily accessible to administrators, parents, teachers, and students. Private test results may be considered for referral purposes, but they may not be used to determine eligibility for the gifted and talented program.

Districts must collect and maintain records of all student referrals for use during the assessment process and annual reporting. Fields in the Curriculum and Standards Atom of SASI are available to collect and report these data. Districts may use the software program called Gifted Identification Forms and Tasks (GIFT) for collection of these data on referrals as well.

Screening

R 43-220 specifies that districts must screen all students with regard to aptitude and achievement (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(6)(a)). Census testing (i.e., the testing of *every* student) for both aptitude and achievement should be administered to all second-grade students in the state.

It is recommended that census testing also be conducted at points of significant programmatic changes for students (e.g., from an elementary pull-out program to a middle school special class with a specific subject-area focus).

As a best practice, census testing for aptitude and achievement is conducted on a yearly basis for the sole purpose of finding additional students for the program. Such testing may *not* be used for the removal of students who are already placed in the program. Once identified, students do not have to requalify for the gifted and talented program each year.

Whether or not additional census testing is done, the district should develop procedures to ensure that students who have not previously qualified for the gifted and talented program are not overlooked, that students who move into the district have the opportunity to be considered for placement, and that underrepresented student populations are assessed with appropriate instruments.

CRITERIA USED IN THE SCREENING PROCESS

R 43-220 explains the criteria for the identification of gifted and talented students in terms of three dimensions (see 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(7)(c)(1–3)).

Dimension A: Reasoning Abilities

Reasoning abilities are those higher-level cognitive processes that reflect general aptitude for thought—strategies such as inferring, analyzing, and problem solving. For the purposes of identifying students with high potential in this area, nationally normed individual or group aptitude tests must be employed. Students must demonstrate high aptitude (93rd national *age* percentile or above) in one or more of the following areas: verbal/linguistic, quantitative/mathematical, nonverbal, and/or a composite of the three.

NOTE: Students may qualify for the academically gifted and talented program solely on the basis of their composite aptitude scores. Students who meet or exceed the 96th national age percentile composite score (placement into grades three through twelve) or the 98th national age percentile composite score or higher (placement into grades one through two) are not required to meet any other criteria (see 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(5)(c)).

Dimension B: High Achievement in Reading and/or Mathematics

The term *achievement* refers to academic performance in the areas of reading and/or mathematics. Students must demonstrate high achievement in at least one of these areas as measured by nationally normed achievement tests or by the South Carolina statewide assessment instrument PACT (Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests). The term *high achievement* is defined as the 94th percentile or above on the nationally normed tests or a score at the *advanced* level on the PACT. Approved subtests for nationally normed achievement tests are reading comprehension and/or mathematical concepts and problem solving. On the PACT, the only approved subtest is the reading portion of the English language arts test.

Dimension C: Intellectual/Academic Performance

Intellectual/academic performance as defined is the student's demonstration of a high degree of interest in and commitment to academic and/or intellectual pursuits. Students may also demonstrate intellectual characteristics such as curiosity/inquiry, reflection, and persistence/tenacity in the face of challenge and creative productive thinking. The acceptable

measures for placement in grades one through six are the verbal or nonverbal assessments by Project STAR. These test materials must be maintained and administered under S.C. Code Ann. § 59-1-445 (1990), “Violations of mandatory test security; penalties; investigations.”

For placement in grades seven through twelve, the acceptable measure is the student’s grade point average (GPA) in the academic disciplines: 3.75 points on a 4.0 scale.

NOTE: The only acceptable measures are those specified for each dimension. Private test results cannot be used for determining student eligibility, although they may be considered for referral purposes (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(7)(b)).

Students who meet the criteria in *two* of the three dimensions are eligible for gifted and talented services (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(5)(b)). Aptitude test results alone can qualify a student for placement. (See Dimension A). No single criterion, however, can eliminate a student from consideration for placement in a gifted and talented program (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(7)(c)(4)).

In addition to specifying eligibility requirements related to each of the three dimensions, R 43-220 states the following with regard to student eligibility for gifted and talented services:

- Students who were served and qualified by state regulations prior to 1999 are eligible for services (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(5)(a)).
- Students identified (by state criteria) in one South Carolina school district are eligible for services in any South Carolina school district (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(5)(d)).

STEPS IN THE SCREENING PROCESS

1. Administer an aptitude measure to all students at the district entry grade level (e.g., grade two-testing for grade-three placement). For all other grades, districts may use data from an aptitude test that has been administered within the past two years. If two-year-old data are not available, then the district must administer an aptitude test. The aptitude measure used may be either an individual aptitude test or a group aptitude test. These aptitude tests must have been nationally normed *within the past five years* and must render national *age* percentile scores for verbal/linguistic, quantitative/mathematical, and nonverbal components, as well as a composite score.

In accordance with R 43-220, districts must ensure that all assessment tests are reviewed for bias, that these tests accurately assess the abilities/skills/potentials intended to be measured, that these abilities/skills/potentials are consistent with the definition of giftedness, and that test administrators are properly trained (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(7)(a)).

2. Administer an *achievement measure* to all students at the district entry grade level (e.g., grade two for grade-three placement). For all other grades, districts may use achievement test data that has been obtained within the past two years. If the data test data are over two years old, then the district must administer an achievement test.

Achievement must be measured either by a nationally normed test or by the PACT, South Carolina’s statewide assessment instrument. The nationally normed test must render national

percentile scores for reading comprehension and math concepts/problem solving. The approved tests for the PACT are the reading portion of the English language arts and the mathematics test. As with the aptitude tests, school districts must ensure that achievement instruments are reviewed for bias, that they provide valid measures of relevant abilities/skills/potentials, and that they are administered by trained personnel.

Ensure that all aptitude and achievement tests are accurately scored, and conduct a thorough review of test results. (See the “Assessment” section, below.)

Assessment

During the assessment phase, district personnel must review the data obtained from the screening and referral procedures to identify students who are eligible for gifted and talented placement. Some students will meet the eligibility criteria without further assessment; others, whose screening and/or referral information suggests that they are *potential* qualifiers, may require additional testing.

The table “Criteria Used in the Assessment Process” in the appendix delineates the criteria for placing students in the academically gifted and talented program. Note that within each dimension, the criteria may vary depending on the grade level of placement.

RECOMMENDED STEPS IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Step 1. Review screening test results—aptitude and achievement test data (Dimensions A and B)—for all students.

- 1a. Identify students who are eligible for placement on the basis of their *composite aptitude scores alone*. (See Dimension A in the table “Criteria Used in the Assessment Process” in the appendix.) These students do not have to satisfy any other eligibility requirements. Proceed to step 4.

Only aptitude tests that yield a composite score may be used for placement on the basis of aptitude alone. Aptitude tests such as Ravens and Naglieri, which do not yield composite scores, are inappropriate for this purpose.

- 1b. Identify students who are eligible for placement on the basis of *aptitude and achievement*. These are students who meet the criteria for Dimension A *and* Dimension B. (See the table “Criteria Used in the Assessment Process” in the appendix.) These students do not have to satisfy any other eligibility requirements. Proceed to step 4.
- 1c. Identify students who meet the criteria for Dimension B only. Consider the appropriateness of administering an additional aptitude measure to reassess those students. Students qualifying on the additional aptitude measure are eligible for placement. They do not have to satisfy any other eligibility requirements. Proceed to step 4.
- 1d. Determine which students meet the criteria for either Dimension A *or* B but not for both. Proceed to step 2.

Step 2: Review the academic performance data (Dimension C) for students who meet the criteria for either Dimension A or Dimension B but not for both.

- 2a. Identify students from step 1d who are eligible for placement on the basis of *aptitude and academic performance*. These are students who meet the criteria for both Dimension A *and* for Dimension C. (See the table “Criteria Used in the Assessment Process” in the appendix.) These students do not have to satisfy any other eligibility requirements. Proceed to step 4.
- 2b. Identify students from step 1d who are eligible for placement on the basis of *achievement and academic performance*. These are students who meet the criteria for Dimension B *and* for Dimension C. (See the table “Criteria Used in the Assessment Process” in the appendix.) These students do not have to satisfy any other eligibility requirements. Proceed to step 4.

NOTE: Districts must administer Project STAR to obtain verbal and nonverbal performance data for students entering grades three through six. All individuals who administer Project STAR must have received training in its administration. **South Carolina test security laws and guidelines apply to this assessment.**

Step 3: Review referrals.

- 3a. From the referrals, determine which students are eligible for placement on the basis of Dimensions A, B, and/or C—students identified in steps 1a, 1b, 2a, or 2b. These students do not have to satisfy any other eligibility requirements.
- 3b. From the remaining referrals, determine which students should be recommended for additional aptitude testing. These could be students who meet the criteria for one dimension only (either Dimension A, B, or C), as well as those whose referral information suggests that alternative measures should be used. Proceed to step 4 for these students.

Step 4: Forward to the evaluation and placement team the student profiles for all students identified as eligible for placement.

Send profiles for all students identified in steps 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 3a, and 3b.

NOTE: The assessment phase of the identification process must include a procedure for resolving disagreements between parents/guardians and the school district when a student is not identified as eligible for gifted and talented program services.

Evaluation and Placement

As described in 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(8)(a), the evaluation step of the identification process is the responsibility of an evaluation and placement team within the school or district. R 43-220 specifies that the team should be composed of a teacher, an administrator, and a psychologist (if employed by the district) at the least. It is highly recommended that the administrator be the district gifted and talented coordinator. The team may also include a guidance counselor and a community-related person whose training and expertise qualifies him or her to appraise the special competencies of students. Districts may choose either to have one team for the district as a whole or to have a team at every school. If the latter choice is selected, one team member should serve on all teams in order to ensure consistency within the district.

The evaluation and placement team is responsible for interpreting and evaluating student data in such a way that appropriate placement in the gifted and talented program is ensured (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(8)(b)). The team may require additional testing of a student before determining his or her placement in the gifted and talented program.

In addition, the evaluation and placement team must develop appropriate written procedures for removing a student from the gifted and talented program (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(8)(c)). The probation and removal policies of the district must conform to the state guidelines from the Office of Curriculum and Standards. Appropriate counseling with the student, as well as conferences with the student's parents/guardians and teachers, must precede his or her removal from the program. Records of any assessment and evaluative measures and other student information must be maintained in a confidential manner.

Appendix

CRITERIA USED IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS	
<p>DIMENSION A</p> <p>Reasoning Abilities</p>	<p>Nationally normed individual or group aptitude test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a score at the 93rd national <i>age</i> percentile or higher on verbal/linguistic, quantitative/mathematical, nonverbal, and/or a composite of the three <p>Students may be eligible for placement on the basis of their <i>aptitude scores alone</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a composite score at the 98th national age percentile or higher for students entering grades one and two • a composite score at the 96th national age percentile or higher (S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(5)(c)) for students entering grades three through twelve
<p>DIMENSION B</p> <p>High Achievement</p>	<p>Nationally normed achievement test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a score at the 94th national percentile or higher on approved subtests (reading comprehension and/or mathematical concepts and problem solving) <p>If the approved subtests are unavailable, use the <i>total</i> reading and/or <i>total</i> mathematics score.</p>
	<p>PACT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>advanced</i>-level score on the reading portion of the PACT English language arts test and/or mathematics test
<p>DIMENSION C</p> <p>Academic Performance</p>	<p>Project STAR, for students entering grades three through six:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • primary verbal or nonverbal: 16 or higher for students entering grade three; 18 or higher for students entering grade four • intermediate verbal: 16 or higher for students entering grade five; 18 or higher for students entering grade six • intermediate nonverbal: 22 or higher for students entering grade five; 25 or higher for students entering grade six
	<p>Grade point average (GPA) in the academic disciplines, for students entering grades seven through twelve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.75 GPA or higher on a 4.0 scale

Students who meet the eligibility criteria in *two* of the three dimensions are eligible for gifted and talented services. Aptitude test results alone can qualify a student for placement (see Dimension A, above). No single criterion can eliminate a student from consideration (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(7)(c)(4)).

Referral-Screening-Assessment Student Profile Sheet
S.C. State-Funded Academic Gifted and Talented Program

REVISED JANUARY 2005

Student's name: _____ SSN: _____
 First Middle Last

Sex: male female Ethnicity: American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Black or African American
 Hispanic or Latino Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander White Other

Parent/guardian: _____ Home phone: _____
 area code

Mailing address: _____

District: _____ School: _____ Current grade: _____

Homeroom teacher: _____ Referred by [name]: _____

Date screened: _____ Relationship: teacher/administrator parent self
 other

Date referred: _____

Evaluation team decision: eligible ineligible reassess Date: _____

DIMENSION A Reasoning Abilities	DIMENSION B Academic Achievement	Dimension C Intellectual/Academic Performance
Aptitude Measure	Nationally Normed Achievement Measure	Project STAR (Grades 3–6)
Name of aptitude measure used:	Name of achievement measure used:	Date administered:
Date administered:	Date administered:	
Student's national age percentile: • composite: _____% • verbal/linguistic: _____% • nonverbal: _____% • quantitative: _____%	Student's national percentile: • reading comprehension: _____% • math concepts/problem solving: _____% If unavailable, then use • total reading: _____% • total math: _____%	Student's scores: verbal: _____ nonverbal: _____
Indicate criterion met. <input type="checkbox"/> 98th or higher national age percentile composite score (grade 1 or 2) <input type="checkbox"/> 96th or higher national age percentile composite score (grades 3–12) <input type="checkbox"/> 93rd or higher national age percentile composite score (grades 3–12) <input type="checkbox"/> 93rd or higher national age percentile verbal/linguistic score (grades 3–12) <input type="checkbox"/> 93rd or higher national age percentile nonverbal score (grades 3–12) <input type="checkbox"/> 93rd or higher national age percentile quantitative score (grades 3–12)	Indicate criterion met. <input type="checkbox"/> 94th national percentile or above in reading comprehension <input type="checkbox"/> 94th national percentile or above in math concepts/problem solving	Indicate criterion met For students entering grade 3: <input type="checkbox"/> primary verbal 16 or above <input type="checkbox"/> primary nonverbal 16 or above For students entering grade 4: <input type="checkbox"/> primary verbal 18 or above <input type="checkbox"/> primary nonverbal 18 or above For students entering grade 5: <input type="checkbox"/> intermediate verbal 16 or above <input type="checkbox"/> intermediate nonverbal 22 or above For students entering grade 6: <input type="checkbox"/> intermediate verbal 18 or above <input type="checkbox"/> intermediate nonverbal 25 or above
Aptitude Retesting	Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests	GPA Assessment (Grades 7–12)
Name of aptitude measure used:	Student meets <i>advanced</i> achievement level on the PACT:	Student's GPA in academic disciplines: _____
Date administered:	<input type="checkbox"/> reading <input type="checkbox"/> mathematics	At the end of what grade? <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11
Student's national age percentile: • composite: _____% • verbal/linguistic: _____% • nonverbal: _____% • quantitative: _____%		<input type="checkbox"/> Student meets GPA criterion of 3.75 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
Indicate criterion met. <input type="checkbox"/> 98th or higher national age percentile composite score (grade 1 or 2) <input type="checkbox"/> 96th or higher national age percentile composite score (grades 3–12) <input type="checkbox"/> 93rd or higher national age percentile rank score (grades 3–12)		

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

TO BE INCLUDED IN WRITTEN NOTIFICATION REGARDING THE GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

[Name of school district] does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in admission to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies should be made to *[name of contact person, address, phone number]*.

Bibliography

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- Ross, Pat O'Connell. 1993. *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. Available online at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/DevTalent/toc.html>.

Chapter 9 - Monitoring and Reporting

Introduction

Monitoring—defined here as data collection and analysis, examination of written evidence, and interviews and observation—ensures that a district’s gifted and talented program is in compliance with Regulation 43-220. The areas to be monitored include curriculum, program models, identification process (including notification and referral procedures), personnel endorsement, professional training, and student services (both support and instructional).

To ensure compliance, reporting of specific information is required annually to the State Department of Education (SDE). All South Carolina school districts must collect and maintain on a continuous basis the written evidence specified in R43-220 (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(D)). Records may be maintained as hard copy files and/or in computer databases. Districts will be informed annually by the SDE concerning processes and timelines for submitting required data and reports.

Three Year Plan with Annual Updates

Districts must develop a three-year plan for district gifted and talented programs (academic and artistic) and report annually on their progress using templates that are provided by the SDE. The SDE is responsible for these reviewing plans and providing districts with written feedback. Three-year plans must be approved by the district’s Board of Education and annual updates of the plan must be provided as information. The plan and updates will include a signed assurance by the District Superintendent that the gifted and talented program is in compliance with Regulation 43-220.

Data Collection and Analysis

Districts must report to the SDE information that includes, but is not limited to, student eligibility, screening, referrals, and students served. These data must be maintained using G.I.F.T. software, which is provided to the districts. The SDE is responsible for maintaining these data and for reporting these data to the Office for Civil Rights when requested. Districts must annually collect and maintain statistical data for the district on the following:

- ◆ Number, by race, of students referred during the identification process;

- ◆ Number, by race, of students determined eligible for gifted and talented education services;
- ◆ Number, by race, of students actually served during the school year;
- ◆ Number, by school, by grade, by program model, of students actually served during the school year.
- ◆ Artistically gifted and talented programs require similar data as above reported by arts area.

To facilitate the reporting process, districts should collect and maintain the following:

- ◆ Written notification of the identification process as communicated to students, parents, and teachers annually;
- ◆ Evidence of census screening with aptitude and achievement measures;
- ◆ All referral forms, specifying the race and gender of the student referred and the referring party;
- ◆ Student profiles on all students screened (including those who were placed and those not placed);
- ◆ Evaluation/Placement Team documentation;
- ◆ Student assessment and evaluation data (for students being served);
- ◆ Program evaluation data.

Examination of Written Evidence

For purposes of providing written evidence about the gifted and talented program, the district should have the following documentation readily available:

- ◆ Mission statement and rationale;
- ◆ Written program goals and objectives;
- ◆ Written program design (describing program models/services);
- ◆ Written scope and sequence;
- ◆ Written description of support services;
- ◆ Professional development plan;
- ◆ Policy on trial placement and removal of students;
- ◆ Program brochures, handbooks, newsletters;
- ◆ Financial records (available in district).

Interviews and Observations at Classroom Level

Interview and observations conducted at the classroom level should yield evidence about various aspects of the gifted and talented program, including the following:

- ◆ Differentiated curriculum and instructional strategies;
- ◆ Acceleration and enrichment;
- ◆ Hands-on activities;
- ◆ High student involvement.

Chapter 10 - Roles and Responsibilities of School Boards and Administrative and Instructional Staffs

Administrative support is as important to [the] success [of a gifted and talented program] as a well-chosen teacher.

—Barbara Clark
Growing Up Gifted

Introduction

The legislative mandate in South Carolina necessitates that all individuals whose duties or offices have an impact on services for gifted and talented students clearly understand and conscientiously execute their roles and responsibilities. A successful gifted and talented program depends upon collaboration and cooperation. Also, key to the program's success is a designated gifted and talented coordinator for the district. Listed in this chapter are the roles and responsibilities of school boards and administrative/instructional staffs at both the state and district level.

State Level

State Board of Education

- ◆ Recognizes the need to provide gifted and talented education services to identified students in grades 1–12
- ◆ Promulgates Regulation 43-220

State Department of Education (SDE)

State Superintendent of Education

- ◆ Recognizes the importance of and supports programs for gifted and talented students
- ◆ Ensures the implementation of R43-220

- ◆ Educates the public about the need for gifted education, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the various educational offices
- ◆ Seeks and ensures adequate funding for programs for the gifted and talented

Division of Curriculum and Assessment, Office of Curriculum and Standards

- ◆ Serves as advocate/spokesperson for gifted and talented education within the SDE
- ◆ Interprets R43-220 and guidelines to appropriate audiences
- ◆ Provides districts with pertinent information on R43-220 and guidelines in a timely manner
- ◆ Provides opportunities for open dialogue with district representatives
- ◆ Monitors districts for compliance with R43-220
- ◆ Reviews and responds to district gifted and talented plans and annual updates
- ◆ Provides technical assistance to districts
- ◆ Provides for professional development for teachers and administrators
- ◆ Serves as liaison between the SDE and the South Carolina Consortium for Gifted Education

Office of Finance

- ◆ Allocates gifted and talented program funds in accordance with laws and R43-220
- ◆ Provides funding projections in a timely manner
- ◆ Notifies districts of changes in funding in a timely manner
- ◆ Audits districts for appropriate expenditures of state funds

Office of School Quality

- ◆ Provides opportunities for study and experimentation for the purpose of gifted and talented program improvement
- ◆ Provides information and consultation to districts as they implement initiatives for program improvement

District Level

Local School Board

- ◆ Establishes policy based on law and R43-220 to provide for gifted and talented education services to identified students in grades 1–12

District Office

Superintendent

- ◆ Recognizes the need to provide gifted and talented education services to identified students in grades 1–12
- ◆ Assumes legal responsibility for the operation of the district's state-mandated gifted and talented program
- ◆ Assigns responsibility for ensuring that R43-220 and guidelines are met:
 - Delegates program oversight to personnel who have appropriate training and skills
 - Ensures that adequate administrative, instructional, guidance, and clerical support staff are assigned to the gifted and talented program
- ◆ Seeks public support for the gifted and talented program

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

- ◆ Recognizes and communicates the role of the gifted and talented program as an essential component of the district's total instructional program
- ◆ Communicates the role of the gifted and talented program within the district's total instructional program to district instructional leaders
- ◆ Ensures the implementation of R43-220 and guidelines

Financial Officer

- ◆ Informs the district gifted and talented program coordinator of state and local funding projections in a timely manner
- ◆ Assists with budgetary concerns

District Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator

- ◆ Supervises implementation of the district gifted and talented program to ensure compliance with R43-220 regarding program components/procedures:

- Identification process
 - Service and delivery models
 - Curriculum and instruction
 - Student assessment
 - Professional development
 - Program evaluation
 - Reporting and monitoring
- ◆ Serves on the Evaluation/Placement Team
 - ◆ Coordinates a district curriculum for gifted and talented students based on state recommendations and best practices
 - ◆ Develops and guides implementation of district gifted and talented three-year plan
 - ◆ Communicates current trends and appropriate gifted education practices
 - ◆ Maintains active involvement in professional gifted education organizations at state and national levels
 - ◆ Participates in professional development related to gifted education
 - ◆ Provides professional development related to gifted education for administrative and instructional staff
 - ◆ Provides parent education related to the gifted and talented program
 - ◆ Maintains accurate records for accountability purposes
 - ◆ Prepares and submits annual reports as required by Regulation 43-220

Staff Development Coordinator

- ◆ Recognizes and communicates the role of the gifted and talented program as an essential component of the district's total instructional program
- ◆ Works with the district gifted and talented program coordinator in planning and providing appropriate staff development on gifted education for total district staff and for teachers of the gifted and talented
- ◆ Informs staff about professional development opportunities in gifted education

School Psychologist

- ◆ Recognizes and communicates the role of the gifted and talented program as an essential component of the district's total instructional program
- ◆ Serves on the Evaluation/Placement Team as mandated in R43-220
- ◆ Advises in selection and administration of appropriate testing instruments
- ◆ Administers individual aptitude tests as needed
- ◆ Advises gifted and talented program personnel regarding gifted students who have special needs
- ◆ Participates in staff development pertaining to gifted education

District Test Coordinator

- ◆ Conducts and/or provides training for gifted and talented program personnel in administration, security, and interpretation of statewide assessments
- ◆ Advises and provides training for gifted and talented program personnel in procedures for achievement testing
- ◆ Provides achievement and aptitude test scores and reports in a timely manner

Building Level Personnel

Administrator

- ◆ Recognizes and communicates the role of the gifted and talented program as an essential component of the school's total instructional program
- ◆ Provides administrative support to the district gifted and talented program coordinator and to teachers of the gifted
- ◆ Communicates knowledge of curriculum and instructional practices in the gifted and talented program
- ◆ Observes instructional practices in gifted and talented classrooms
- ◆ Adheres to the requirements in R43-220
- ◆ Participates in professional development on gifted education
- ◆ Ensures that building staff members participate in appropriate professional development activities related to gifted education

Guidance Counselor

- ◆ Recognizes and communicates the role of the gifted and talented program as an essential component of the total instructional program
- ◆ Provides support and counseling services appropriate to the special needs of gifted and talented students
- ◆ Assists, as needed, in the multi-step process of gifted and talented identification and placement
- ◆ Communicates special needs and concerns to teachers of the gifted and the district gifted and talented program coordinator
- ◆ Provides accurate information about the gifted and talented program for parents
- ◆ Maintains accurate records for the gifted and talented program as needed for accountability
- ◆ Participates in professional development activities related to the identification process, characteristics and needs of gifted and talented students, and appropriate educational and career counseling practices for these students

Classroom Teacher

- ◆ Recognizes and communicates the role of the gifted and talented program as an essential component of the school's total instructional program
- ◆ Is knowledgeable about characteristics of gifted and talented students
- ◆ Communicates on a regular basis with the teacher of the gifted
- ◆ Provides differentiated curriculum to meet the needs of gifted and talented students in the regular program
- ◆ Participates in staff development on gifted education
- ◆ Refers students, as appropriate, for determination of eligibility for gifted and talented program services

Teacher of the Gifted

- ◆ Provides appropriately challenging instruction as defined by the district curriculum for gifted and talented students
- ◆ Designs instructional units to implement the district curriculum for gifted and talented students
- ◆ Assesses, evaluates, and reports student achievement of district gifted and talented curriculum goals
- ◆ Keeps accurate records of student progress and attendance
- ◆ Participates in staff development on gifted education
- ◆ Applies knowledge of the nature and needs of gifted and talented students
- ◆ Stays informed about current trends and issues in gifted education through the following activities:
 - attending conferences on the gifted and talented at the state, regional, and/or national level
 - maintaining membership and actively participating in related, appropriate professional organizations
 - reading professional literature
- ◆ Assists in the multi-step process of gifted and talented identification and placement
- ◆ Communicates about the gifted and talented program with school and district personnel and with parents and community members

GIFTED STUDENTS:

Who Are They?



Created by:
Dr. Nancy Breard
Converse College
Spartanburg, SC

Tonia Jeray
Bethel Elementary
Greenville School District

For the South Carolina Department of Education
Inez Moore Tenenbaum, State Superintendent of Education
August, 1999

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Preparation Checklist

Before the Staff Development Program ...

- Read through all materials, particularly the directions and notes for each part, before the scheduled staff development.
- Make copies of handouts.
- Make overhead transparencies or PowerPoint slides.
- Have the necessary projection equipment available at site (overhead projector if using transparencies, LCD panel or projection equipment if using PowerPoint slides, and TV and VCR for the videotape). Test the working condition of the equipment.
- Arrange seating so that participants can view presentation visuals and videotape and work with partners during the activity.

Presentation Outline

(Suggested Allocation of Time)

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| I. Introduction, including rationale and outline | (5 min.) |
| II. Activity | (15 min.) |
| III. Characteristics, with discussion | (15 min.) |
| IV. Videotape, with questions | (15 min.) |
| V. Debriefing on activity | (10 min.) |

Presentation Script

I. Introduction

Overhead #1

Introduce yourself and provide any pertinent information about yourself and the staff development session.

Present the participants with a rationale for the staff development. Here is an example:

Overhead #2

We will spend the next hour acquainting you with characteristics of academically gifted and talented students so that you can recommend students in your classroom who should be screened for the gifted and talented program. By recognizing and understanding these characteristics in your students, you will also be better able to meet their particular needs in your classroom. The regulation governing gifted and talented programs in South Carolina—*Regulation 43-220*—requires that teachers and staff be provided with training about the characteristics of academic giftedness.

II. Activity

Handouts - Case Studies

Each participant should receive a copy of the case studies (two pages). Have teachers pair up to read and discuss the five cases and rate each one according to the directions on the first page. Partners are to discuss until they agree on the rating. Allow approximately 15 minutes for this activity.

To begin our exploration of the characteristics of gifted and talented students, you will examine five case studies. Working with a partner, read and discuss each case study. Then agree on a rating for the individual who is profiled in the case study. You will have 15 minutes for this activity.

Explain to participants that you will come back to this activity, and their answers, at the end of the staff development session.

III. Characteristics

Using the overheads, review each characteristic and possible classroom behaviors. All of the characteristics are research-based, appearing on nearly every list in any text on the gifted and talented. Remember this is an awareness session for your participants. Don't get bogged down in excessive detail.

Point out to the participants that their handouts include all of the information contained on the overheads. They should not spend time taking extensive notes!

Overhead
#3

1. This is the most obvious characteristic and the one most of us think of when we consider the concepts of gifted and talented. Unfortunately what often happens in the classroom is that gifted and talented students are either wasting their time repeating content they already know or they are given twice as much work as everyone else just to keep them busy. Instead they should be challenged with assignments at the appropriate pace, depth, and complexity.
2. Again, this is an easily recognized characteristic. Several cautions are in order. First, a student may use his/her verbalism to avoid difficult thinking tasks—e.g., the student may be glib in talking his/her way out of situations. Secondly, teachers and other adults need to understand that the verbal ability may be oral or written. Furthermore, it may be in non-standard English. Use of non-standard English does not indicate a lack of potential giftedness. It merely indicates that the student's primary exposure to language has been non-standard English.
3. This characteristic can cause problems for the student. Teachers and parents often believe if a student is gifted, he/she should be gifted in everything. Expectations based on this belief create an unnecessary burden for the student.

Overhead

4. *(As you discuss this one, teachers often experience an “aha.”)*
- Let's look at arithmetic computation. When gifted and talented students have mastered computation skills, they can't understand why they must review and practice so much. They know they can do it. It is no challenge. They get bored and make mistakes or put any answer down. This is why arithmetic computation and total math are not good subscores for identifying these students. Math concepts and applications are better indicators.
 - Poor spelling skill does not indicate a lack of academic giftedness. Pair poor spellers with good spellers for editing tasks. Teach students patterns of spelling words.
 - Sometimes teachers ask about having students work to improve their handwriting. To change poor handwriting will take valuable time that could be spent learning new concepts and skills. Allow students with illegible handwriting to use the computer for written work.
5. This characteristic has an up side, as well as a down side. The positive result is an early ability to delay closure. This means the student is flexible, open to change, and unwilling to end a task or project prematurely. On the negative side, the student can become easily frustrated with demands for deadlines. Notice that “when interested” is underlined. This can work for teachers if they capitalize on student interest; however, it may work against both the student and the teacher if the student simply refuses to do the work because she/he isn't interested.

6. This reasoning ability may emerge early in the student's development—meaning that the student questions parents, as well as other adults. The frustration occurs because the logic of the student's position is crystal clear to her/him, but others don't "see" it.
7. Varied interests may send the student off in many directions, compromising his/her focus and overextending the energy level. Curiosity may take the student off on tangents unrelated to the assigned task or project.
8. Although we give lip service to creativity, in fact, it is not often rewarded in schools. The creative student seems to be going "up the down staircase" most of the time and doesn't mind being a minority of one. Creative students chafe under rigid conformity.

Point out that the first eight characteristics have been cognitive in nature. The next characteristic—sense of humor—is both cognitive and affective.

9. This characteristic is an excellent way to identify a gifted and talented student. He/she usually possesses a more sophisticated sense of humor than the same age peers do. This student will often see the humor no one else sees in a particular situation. The humor may turn hostile when the student becomes discouraged or frustrated.

As you turn to the next overhead, explain that the next set of characteristics is affective in nature.

Overhead #6

10. These high expectations may result in a student who is judgmental in his/her criticism of others, as well as self. As you might predict, peer and adult relationships may suffer.
11. Because the student is aware of and sensitive to such problems and issues, she/he may feel frustrated and/or isolated from peers who don't have the same level of awareness or sensitivity.
12. The student may feel self-conscious as a result of being "different," which may lead to low self-esteem. The emotional sensitivity may cause the student to feel highly vulnerable.
13. Inner or internal locus of control means that the student is guided in his/her actions by what is meaningful and important to him/her, not by what others think. This may isolate the student from peers or adults in authority. This early independence may lead others to perceive the student as "marching to a different drummer."
14. The main reason for this characteristic is that the student's interests are not synchronous with those of the same-aged peers. The student is actively seeking someone to talk with about his/her interests.

Before continuing, point out that the characteristics just discussed are relevant for gifted and talented students overall.

Next, you will be considering 10 characteristics that often apply to minority and/or disadvantaged students who are academically gifted and talented. Caution the participants to remember that, while these next 10 characteristics generally hold true for this population of students, they do not necessarily apply to each individual minority and/or disadvantaged student.

Overhead #7

1. The myth persists that students who speak non-standard English are “dumb.” Perhaps the environment has not provided models of standard English. It is our job to see that the student acquires standard English in addition to the language of his/her culture.
2. We need to provide activities that capitalize on these learning styles. Present material in a visual format or have students “show what they know” in a visual. Create activities that call for movement such as simulations, or allow students to do presentations that incorporate movement.
3. Given a stimulating environment with learning tasks that invite motivation, these students can learn very quickly.
4. These students had to be resourceful to be noticed. When survival is on the line, our creativity and adaptability are our strongest allies. Gifted and talented minority or disadvantaged students are often noticed for their ingenious methods of problem solving.
5. As a group, these students tend to score an average of 15-20 points below the traditional gifted and talented students. Remember, however, that there are stunning individual examples of high scores.
6. Non-verbal, non-timed tests such as the Ravens Progressive Matrices may be used successfully with this population.

#7 continued

7. These students are often very aware of how they are perceived. They can “read” people, their attitudes and motivations. They may feel a sense of obligation to their cultural community.
8. These characteristics are the same for the traditional gifted and talented students.
9. The oral tradition is strong in the culture. (Metaphorical language is part of the oral tradition, making oration and stories more colorful.) Since this is valued in the culture, gifted and talented students would be likely to excel. Remember that sense of humor is one of the best ways of identifying the traditional gifted and talented, and this holds true for minority/disadvantaged students as well.
10. To retain their identity and individuality, these students need to be able to function well in both cultures. It is our responsibility to help them build the bridge.

Overhead #8

To conclude the discussion of characteristics, ask the participants to consider the conditions that may negatively affect the referral and identification of minority and disadvantaged students for gifted and talented programs.

Our stereotypes about each condition may lead us to assume that none of these students are gifted and talented. We must examine our stereotypes to understand how they can create blinders for us when identifying gifted and talented students. There are gifted and talented students with one or more of these conditions who may need remediation in one area (e.g., language) but who exhibit gifted and talented behaviors in others (e.g., math, science).

Now let’s watch and listen to a video that will help us understand a little more about recognizing the gifted and talented student.

IV. Videotape

Have the videotape set up and ready to play. Tell participants to jot down any questions they have during the tape. After the tape, ask for the participants' questions and discuss answers with the group. You do not have to answer all of the questions yourself; you can solicit answers from other participants.

V. Debriefing on activity

Whenever an activity is used, it is important to have a debriefing. This ensures that participants reach valid conclusions—the whole purpose of the activity.

**Overheads
#9-11**

Poll several pairs of participants for their ratings and their reasons on each case study. Refer to the overheads as the participants respond.

**Overheads
#12-13**

Then reveal “the answer” to each case study.

At the conclusion of the session, direct participants' attention to the remainder of their handouts on giftedness. They may read these on their own time.

Before participants leave, ask them to complete the Feedback Form in their packet.

OVERHEADS

GIFTED STUDENTS:

Who Are They?



Created by:
Dr. Nancy Breard
Converse College
Spartanburg, SC

Tonia Jeray
Bethel Elementary
Greenville School District

For the South Carolina Department of Education
Inez Moore Tenenbaum, State Superintendent of Education
August, 1999

***Regulation 43-220,
Gifted and Talented***

(Amended June, 2004)

Section II. B. 6. b. (3)

Provide training/guidance regarding the characteristics of academic giftedness for teachers and other district staff involved in the identification process.

Approved by the South Carolina
General Assembly in June of 2004.

General Characteristics of Gifted & Talented Students

Cognitive Characteristics

1. Learns rapidly & easily; retains extraordinary quantity of information when interested

2. High level of verbal ability

3. May be lopsided intellectually

Possible Classroom Behaviors

Easily bored; impatient with others; exhibits off task behavior

Dominates discussions with extra information and questions deemed negative by teachers and fellow students

Exceptional abilities and interest in one subject area, with only average or below average performance in others

(Characteristics)

(Classroom Behaviors)

4. Average to poor in ...

- Arithmetic computations

Rejects or omits detail; considers linear tasks boring; makes numerous “careless errors” in homework assignments or lengthy tests

- Spelling

May have attempted writing words before seeing them in print

- Handwriting

May have pursued writing before fine motor skills developed

5. Capable of deep concentration and persistence when interested

Refuses to attend to assignments that are perceived as uninteresting or as unimportant “busy work”

(Characteristics)

(Classroom Behaviors)

6. Above average reasoning ability

Questions others' logic—including the teacher's; frustrated with others' lack of understanding

7. Varied interests and curiosity

Asks lots of questions, often not related to current topic; has difficulty staying focused on current task

8. Creative; playful; imaginative; original

May “zone-off” into imaginary world; ideas may be considered wild or silly; may be perceived as off task when asking “But what if...”

Both Cognitive and Affective Characteristics

9. Sense of humor

May be gentle or hostile; “class clown”; makes puns and sees the humor in abstract situations

Affective Characteristics

Possible Classroom Behaviors

- | | |
|--|--|
| 10. High expectations of self and others | Perceived as highly critical; becomes discouraged from high levels of self-criticism |
| 11. Sensitive to world problems, moral issues | Lack of understanding from peer group |
| 12. Heightened self-awareness and emotional depth | Feeling “different” or isolated; moody |
| 13. Early development of an inner locus of control | Difficulty conforming; rejection of external evaluation |
| 14. Seeks intellectual peers | “Teacher’s shadow” at recess; enjoys older students and adults |

**Characteristics Often Attributed to
Gifted and Talented
Minority and/or Disadvantaged Students**

1. Use non-standard English with standard English as a second language
2. Prefer visual and kinesthetic learning styles
3. Learn quickly with experience
4. Solve problems in resourceful and ingenious ways
5. Do not perform well on standardized measures
6. Perform better on non-verbal measures
7. Possess social intelligence with a feeling of responsibility for community
8. Exhibit alertness and curiosity
9. Perform better orally than in writing, using humor and metaphorical language
10. Demonstrate the ability to bridge two cultures successfully

**Conditions Negatively Affecting
the Referral and Identification of
Minority and/or Disadvantaged Students
for Gifted and Talented Programs**

1. Low socioeconomic status
2. Minority group membership
3. Non-standard English
4. Limited competency in English
5. Emphasis on remediation

Stereotypes based on 1-5 above

Case Studies

Directions: Read the case studies carefully. Based on your professional judgment and experience, answer the following question for each case:

“How likely is the individual to be gifted and talented?”

Circle the number that best matches your response.

(1=extremely likely to be gifted; 5=not at all likely to be gifted)

CASE #1: 1 2 3 4 5

Mary, age 14, an orphan, was willed to the custody of her grandmother by her late mother. (Mary’s mother was separated from alcoholic husband, now also deceased.) Her mother rejected the homely child who was known to lie and to steal sweets. Mary swallowed a penny at age five to attract attention. Her father was fond of the child. Mary fantasized about living as the mistress of her father’s household for years. Mary’s grandmother, who is widowed, cannot manage the girl’s four young uncles and aunts living in the household. Grandmother resolves to be stricter with granddaughter since she fears she has failed with her children. Dresses granddaughter oddly and puts her in braces to keep back straight. Refuses to let her have playmates. Did not send her to grade school. At 15, Mary is sent to a boarding school in England where, mentored by the headmistress, she exhibits academic achievement and leadership skills.

CASE #2: 1 2 3 4 5

William, a junior in high school, is a popular athlete who has already been approached by a number of colleges offering basketball scholarships. His life goal is to make a personal contribution to society. William is an excellent student, enrolling in many honors classes while maintaining a GPA of 3.8. He plays first string on the school basketball team and holds offices in several school organizations. His hobbies include chess, reading, and swimming.

CASE #3: 1 2 3 4 5

Victoria is an African American student in the fourth grade at a small rural school. One parent finished high school and the other completed grade eight. Both work—the father holding two jobs to provide the necessities for Victoria and her three siblings. The family home is a small two-bedroom bungalow. Victoria is very articulate. Her facial expressions, word choice (though not always appropriate in a school setting), and gestures hold the attention of others when she tells stories or sings the songs she has created out of her imagination. Her performance in the classroom is lackluster at best. Her homework is often missing or incomplete, as is her classwork. Victoria’s teacher is impatient with her performance and behavior in the classroom. Victoria has requested information on Shakespeare and a copy of his play, *Romeo and Juliet*.

CASE #4: 1 2 3 4 5

Sam, a high school senior, has obtained a certificate from his physician stating that a nervous breakdown makes it necessary for him to leave school for six months. He is not a good student and has no friends. Sam's teachers find him to be a problem. As a child, he spoke late and adjusted poorly at school. His father is ashamed of his son's lack of athletic ability. Sam has odd mannerisms, makes up own religion, and chants hymns to himself—his parents regard him as “different.” He often walks about oblivious to weather conditions. His academic aptitude is way above average, but his performance in school ranges from low average to below average—except in math, his primary interest.

CASE #5: 1 2 3 4 5

Thomas is a clean-cut seventh grader with a sunny disposition. In the classroom he sometimes has difficulty focusing on the assigned tasks. He tends to lose his homework and classwork in the black hole of his desk or book bag. His school performance tends to be erratic—sometimes great, sometimes not. Transition from one subject to the next poses a problem for him. There is a gap between his potential and his achievement. His teachers seem to like him, but they constantly have to remind him to finish his work and hand it in. Thomas enjoys working on complex math problems and is usually the first one in his class to solve the “problem of the week.”

Debriefing

CASE #1: This is Eleanor Roosevelt. Remember—giftedness is a dynamic quality that can only be enhanced by learning experiences that challenge and extend the person’s ability, talent, and/or interest. Placed in the challenging, yet supportive environment of the boarding school, Eleanor’s gifted behaviors emerged.

CASE #2: This is Bill Bradley—Rhodes scholar, professional basketball player for the New York Knicks, and former U.S. senator. He was the type of student easily recognized as gifted—one who exhibits many of the characteristics. (He is running for the Democratic nomination for President.)

CASE #3: This is the same Victoria you saw briefly on the tape. She would not have been identified as gifted and talented based on standardized aptitude and achievement scores. Using alternative measures that tapped her strengths—oral and written communication and creativity—and placing her in a challenging and supportive environment, she exhibits gifted and talented behaviors.

CASE #4: Sam is actually Albert Einstein. His giftedness was not obvious until adulthood. He created his own challenging environment to extend his mathematical ability.

CASE #5: Thomas represents a composite of several underachieving gifted students. He may have a mild learning disability in writing (dysgraphia) and/or he may have an attention deficit disorder. (Notice the disorganization and distractibility.) Thomas is gifted mathematically.

Case 4 and Case 5 are lopsided, not gifted and talented in all areas. Only Case 2 is easily identified. All other cases have problem areas that may mask their giftedness. We as teachers, must look beyond the problem behaviors to identify students' strengths and talent areas.

HANDOUTS

- ◆ **Case Studies (2 pages)**
- ◆ **General Characteristics of Gifted and Talented Students (2 pages)**
- ◆ **Minority and/or Disadvantaged Students (1 page)**
- ◆ **Questions to Ask (2 pages)**
- ◆ **Teacher Checklist (1 page)**
- ◆ **Basic References for Gifted Education (1 page)**
- ◆ **Feedback Form (1 page)**

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General Characteristics of Gifted & Talented Students

Cognitive Characteristics

1. Learns rapidly & easily; retains extraordinary quantity of information when interested
2. High level of verbal ability
3. May be lopsided intellectually
4. Average to poor in
 - Arithmetic computations
 - Spelling
 - Handwriting
5. Capable of deep concentration and persistence when interested.
6. Above average reasoning ability
7. Varied interests and curiosity
8. Creative; playful, imaginative; original

Possible Classroom Behaviors

- Easily bored; impatient with others; exhibits off task behavior
- Dominates discussions with extra information and questions deemed negative by teachers and fellow students
- Exceptional abilities and interest in one subject area, with only average or below average performance in others
- Rejects or omits detail; considers linear tasks boring; makes numerous “careless errors” in homework assignments or lengthy tests
- May have attempted writing words before seeing them in print
- May have pursued writing before fine motor skills developed
- Refuses to attend to assignments that are perceived as uninteresting or as unimportant “busy work”
- Questions others’ logic—including the teacher’s; frustrated with others’ lack of understanding
- Asks lots of questions, often not related to current topic; has difficulty staying focused on current task
- May “zone-off” into imaginary world; ideas may be considered wild or silly; may be perceived as off task when asking “But what if...”

(General Characteristics of Gifted & Talented Students – continued)

**Both Cognitive and Affective
Characteristics**

9. Sense of humor

Possible Classroom Behaviors

May be gentle or hostile; “class clown”;
makes puns and sees the humor in abstract
situations

Affective Characteristics

10. High expectations of self and others

Perceived as highly critical; becomes
discouraged from high levels of self-criticism

11. Sensitive to world problems,
moral issues

Lack of understanding from peer group

12. Heightened self-awareness and
emotional depth

Feeling “different” or isolated; moody

13. Early development of an inner locus
of control

Difficulty conforming; rejection of external
evaluation

14. Seeks intellectual peers

“Teacher’s shadow” at recess; enjoys older
students and adults

**Characteristics Often Attributed to
Gifted and Talented
Minority and/or Disadvantaged Students**

1. Use non-standard English, with standard English as a second language
2. Prefer visual and kinesthetic learning styles
3. Learn quickly with experience
4. Solve problems in resourceful and ingenious ways
5. Do not perform well on standardized measures
6. Perform better on non-verbal measures
7. Possess social intelligence with a feeling of responsibility for community
8. Exhibit alertness and curiosity
9. Perform better orally than in writing, using humor and metaphorical language
10. Demonstrate the ability to bridge two cultures successfully

**Conditions Negatively Affecting
the Referral and Identification of
Minority and/or Disadvantaged Students
for Gifted and Talented Programs**

1. Low socioeconomic status
2. Minority group membership
3. Non-standard English
4. Limited competency in English
5. Emphasis on remediation

Stereotypes based on 1-5 above

(Adapted from *Growing Up Gifted*, by Barbara Clark)

Questions To Ask

Does the student

- Ask a lot of questions?
- Show a lot of interest in progress?
- Have lots of information on many things?
- Want to know why or how something is so?
- Become unusually upset at injustices?
- Seem interested and concerned about social or political problems?
- Often have a better reason than you do for not doing what you want done?
- Refuse to drill on spelling, math facts, flash cards, or handwriting?
- Become impatient if work is not “perfect”?
- Seem to be a loner?
- Seem bored and often have nothing to do?
- Complete only part of an assignment or project and then take off in a new direction?
- Stick to a subject long after the class has gone on to other things?
- Seem restless, out of seat often?
- Daydream?
- Seem to understand easily?
- Like solving puzzles and problems?
- Love metaphors and abstract ideas?
- Have his or her own idea about how something should be done?
And stay with it?
- Talk a lot?
- Love debating issues?

This student may be showing giftedness cognitively.

(Adapted from *Growing Up Gifted*, by Barbara Clark)

Does the student

- Show unusual ability in some area? Maybe reading or math?
- Show fascination with one field of interest? And manage to include this interest in all discussion topics?
- Enjoy meeting or talking with experts in this field?
- Get math answers correct, but find it difficult to tell you how?
- Enjoy graphing everything? Seem obsessed with probabilities?
- Invent new obscure systems and codes?

This student may be showing giftedness academically.

Does the student

- Try to do things in different, unusual, imaginative ways?
- Have a really zany sense of humor?
- Enjoy new routines or spontaneous activities?
- Love variety and novelty?
- Create problems with no apparent solutions? And enjoy asking you to solve them?
- Love controversial and unusual questions?
- Have a vivid imagination?
- Seem never to proceed sequentially?

This student may be showing giftedness creatively.

Teacher Checklist

Characteristics of the Gifted and Talented

	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Most of the Time
a. Learns rapidly and easily.	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Thinks clearly, recognizes implied relationships, comprehends meanings.	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Reads above grade level.	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Retains what she/he has heard or read without appearing to need much rote or drill.	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. Has large vocabulary.	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. Is independent, individualistic, self-sufficient.	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Is curious, investigative.	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. Asks penetrating, searching questions.	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. Has long attention span.	_____	_____	_____	_____
j. Produces original products or ideas.	_____	_____	_____	_____
k. Prefers complex ideas.	_____	_____	_____	_____

(Adapted from *A Guide Toward Better Teaching of the Gifted*, by Ruth Martinson)

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Feedback Form

Gifted Students: Who Are They?

1. What did you learn from this presentation that you didn't already know?

2. On what specific gifted/talented topic would you like more information?