

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT FOR GIFTED EDUCATION

Northampton County School System believes that academic excellence is job number one, and in an effort to serve all students demonstrating exceptional abilities, we, the Northampton County School System, acknowledge the importance of discovering, nurturing, and developing the potential of each student.

As a region of rich cultural diversity, we recognize the importance of identifying talented students from diverse backgrounds and walks of life. We further recognize that just as our students exhibit a multiplicity of diverse backgrounds, their talents show great diversity as well. We recognize the need to develop talents in order to manifest greatness. We seek to do this by providing a variety of service options.

As members of a broader community, we recognize our charge to provide students with the skills for independent, lifelong learning, as well as Northampton's obligation to nurture the students desire to use these skills toward successful outcomes.

Purpose

The purpose of the Academically Intellectually Gifted Program in Northampton County is to provide students with the opportunity to reach their maximum academic and social potential through an enriching continuum of services. These procedures and guidelines include: screening, identification and placement, various settings to meet the needs of diverse students, measurable objectives, staff development, program evaluation, parent/family and community involvement, personnel implementation and procedures to resolve disputes. Our responsibility is to discover, to nurture, and to develop the

abilities of the total school population. Within this framework is a range of specific differentiated educational options for academically gifted students.

Screening, Identification and Placement

Each year school personnel will conduct a search of all students K-12 who are potential candidates for differentiated services. This search is a review of all students who may need further assessment and/or a differentiated education plan. The comprehensive search will give attention to the potential of students, including minority students, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and other under served groups. Each student should be viewed as an individual without limiting giftedness to any one score or measure.

Referral for consideration of differentiated services may be made at any time during any school year. If any one individual (school staff, K-12 parent, 6-12 student) advocates for referring a student that student will be referred to the Needs Determination Team.

The screening process establishes a broad pool of students for consideration for possible placement in service delivery options of academically/intellectually gifted students and includes diverse sources of data for the most complete picture of the student whose needs for programming are being assessed. Following are examples of data used to identify students needing differentiated services.

- Use of standardized instruments

(Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT); Kuhlman Anderson; Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (English or Spanish))

- Use of process and performance indicators

- Use of diverse sources of data (e.g., student, teacher, parent, peers, community) and multiple criteria for assessment. No one criterion should exclude a student from consideration for placement.

Each school will conduct an Annual Student Search for students who may need differentiated instruction. Additionally, students will be referred as needed throughout the year.

Each student will have a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) that is updated no less than annually and more often as needed. The DEP lists the appropriate service option(s) for that student at each grade. Also, the DEP lists the learning environments, content modifications, and special programs available to the student during that year. Individual student evaluation is a continuous process. Since the academically/intellectually gifted program is based on a student's demonstrated need for differentiated services, the student's progress will be evaluated regularly. Documentation of the student's work, completed as a result of participation in a specific option, shall be maintained, as well as a review of the test scores and grades that will assist in determining whether or not a student continues to need services.

