Gifted & Talented
Parent Information

Queen Anne’s County Public Schools
April 2018
Board of Education of Queen Anne’s County

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# Table of Contents

Philosophy Statement.................................................................................................................. 4  
Identification Procedures............................................................................................................. 5  
Characteristics of Gifted Students............................................................................................... 6  
Primary Talent Development........................................................................................................ 9  
Types of Services.......................................................................................................................... 10  

Appendix.................................................................................................................................... A-1  
Nomination Forms......................................................................................................................... A-2
Philosophy

Students come to our schools with unique combinations of abilities and talents, learning rates, learning styles, and learning experiences. We believe that our schools have the responsibility to:

- recognize demonstrated and potential talents.
- provide flexible and multifaceted programs which enable students with talent to attain full potential in a variety of appropriately challenging learning environments.

The philosophy adopted by Queen Anne’s County Public Schools reflects contemporary knowledge and thinking about the nature of giftedness, recognizes “talent behaviors,” and fosters the development of an inclusive, rather than an exclusive, approach to gifted/talented education.

Definition of Giftedness

Gifted and Talented students are those students with outstanding talent and ability who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with their chronological peers. These students exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. Because of their unique ability, gifted and talented students have distinctive educational needs that require differentiated learning opportunities.
Identification System*

1. Gather all possible sources of qualitative data.
   ○ Teacher/School Nominations/Recommendations
   ○ Parent Nominations
   ○ Parent/Student Interviews
   ○ Primary Talent Development Checklists
   ○ Product/Performance Rating
   ○ Self or Peer Nomination
   ○ Other

2. Conduct a team meeting to review the data and select students for the talent pool.

3. Identify the areas of talent that will be developed/enhanced and determine how these services will be delivered.
   ○ For students with exceptional talents (97th percentile or above and/or CogAT score of 130 or above), acceleration may be an option. Notify the school’s Principal to discuss whether or not an ILP meeting is warranted.
   ○ Students with these exceptional scores should be labeled as “Gifted” in the County Student Database.
   ○ Students that are accepted into the Talent Pool (though an alternate path) and do not meet the above criteria will be considered as nominated.

4. List the resources required and design a schedule for the delivery of the services. Share student profiles with appropriate classroom teachers. Provide any professional development and support to the classroom teachers working with these students.

5. Notify students and parents. Provide an orientation to the specific services the school will be providing for the talent pool students.

6. Enter the individual student information into the County Student Database.

* This Identification Process was based on the Renzulli Identification System modeled illustrated on the next page.
Research-Based Characteristics of Gifted Students*

General Intellectual Ability
Those gifted and talented students with general intellectual ability tend to perform or show the potential to perform in several fields of study.

- Has an extensive and detailed memory, particularly in an area of interest.
- Has vocabulary advanced for age – precocious language.
- Has communication skills advanced for age and is able to express ideas and feelings.
- Asks intelligent questions.
- Is able to identify the important characteristics of new concepts and problems.
- Learns information quickly.
- Uses logic in arriving at common sense answers.
- Has a broad base of knowledge – a large quantity of information.
- Understands abstract ideas and complex concepts.
- Uses analogical thinking, problem solving, or reasoning.
- Observes relationships and sees connections.
- Finds and solves difficult and unusual problems.
- Understands principles, forms generalizations, and uses them in new situations.
- Wants to learn and is curious.
- Works conscientiously and has a high degree of concentration in areas of interest.
- Understands and uses various symbol systems.
- Is reflective about learning.

Specific Academic Fields
In this area, gifted and talented students exhibit potential or demonstrate accomplishment in one specific field of study such as language arts, mathematics, social studies, or science.

Math/Science
- Is interested in numerical analysis.
- Has a good memory for storing main features of problem and solutions.
- Appreciates parsimony, simplicity, or economy in solutions.
- Reasons effectively and efficiently.
- Solves problems intuitively using insight.
- Can reverse steps in the mental process.
- Organizes data and experiments to discover patterns or relationships.
- Improvises with science equipment and math methods.
- Is flexible in solving problems.

Research-Based Characteristics of Gifted Students*

**Social Studies/Language Arts**
- Enjoys language/verbal communication, communications skills.
- Engages in intellectual play, enjoys puns, good sense of humor.
- Organizes ideas and sequences in preparation for speaking and writing.
- Suspends judgment, entertains alternative points of view.
- Is original and creative – has unique ideas in writing or speaking.
- Is sensitive to social, ethical, and moral issues.
- Is interested in theories of causation.
- Likes independent study and research in areas of interest.
- Uses these qualities in writing; paradox, parallel structure, rhythm, visual imagery, melodic combination, reverse structure, unusual adjectives/adverbs, sense of humor, philosophical bent (Piirio, 1999, p 241).

**Creativity**
The key characteristic that is often associated with creativity is divergent thinking. As opposed to convergent thinking (arriving at a single conclusion), divergent thinking requires the gifted and talented student to produce many ideas or ideas that are different from the norm.

- Has in-depth foundational knowledge.
- Prefers complexity and open-endedness.
- Contributes new concepts, methods, products, or performance.
- Has extreme fluency of thoughts and a large number of ideas.
- Is observant and pays attention to detail.
- Uses unique solutions to problems, improvises.
- Challenges existing ideas and products.
- Connects disparate ideas.
- Is consistently asking questions.
- Criticizes constructively.
- Is a risk taker; confident.
- Is attracted to the novel, complex, and mysterious.
- Is a nonconformist, uninhibited in expression, adventurous, able to resist group pressure.
- Accepts disorder.
- Tolerates ambiguity; delays closure.
- Is persistent and task committed in area of interest.
- Has a sense of humor.
- Is intellectually playful.
- Is aware of own creativity.
- Is emotionally sensitive; sensitive to beauty.
- Is intuitive.
- Enjoys alone time.
- Is reflective about personal creative process.

Research-Based Characteristics of Gifted Students*

Artistic Area
In this area, gifted and talented students exhibit potential or demonstrate accomplishment in one or more artistic fields, such as art, drama, or music.

General (demonstrated within artistic area)

- Chooses artistic activity for projects or during free time.
- Studies or practices artistic talent without being told.
- Strives to improve artistic skills.
- Demonstrates talent for an extended period of time.
- Concentrates for long periods of time on artistic projects.
- Seeks to pick up skills in the arts with little or no instruction.
- Possesses high sensory sensitivity.
- Observes and shows interest in others who are proficient in the artistic skill.
- Uses the artistic area to communicate.
- Experiments in the artistic medium.
- Sets high standards in the artistic area.
- Demonstrates confidence in the artistic area.

Leadership
Leadership is the result of an interaction between a number of variables: the personality, status, achievement, and intelligence of the leader; the characteristics of the followers; and the situation.

- Is well organized.
- Can do backward planning.
- Is visionary, has a holistic view.
- Is a problem finder.
- Is able to see problems from multiple perspectives.
- Is adaptable to new situations.
- Can manipulate systems.
- Is highly responsible; can be counted on.
- Maintains on-task focus.
- Is self-confident.
- Is a persuasive communicator.
- Has a cooperative attitude; works well in groups.
- Participates in most social activities, enjoys being around other people.
- Influences the behavior of others; recognized as a leader by peers.
- Is respected, liked, or both by others.
- Is aware of verbal and nonverbal cues; sophisticated interpersonal skills.
- Is emotionally stable.
- Is willing to take risks.

Primary Talent Development

Primary Talent Development recognizes that the primary years offer a unique opportunity to ignite and develop the potential of young learners. It is built on best practices in the fields of early childhood and gifted education. Primary Talent Development is a concerted effort to engage all primary students (PreK-2) in learning experiences that recognize developmental norms, yet offer challenge. It promotes instruction that aligns with the Maryland State Curriculum indicators.

Goals of Primary Talent Development

- Model best practices which provide learning experiences that provide all students (PreK-2) with opportunities to demonstrate potential and/or advanced learning capabilities.
- Identify student strengths and potentials by collecting observational data over time in order to build student portfolios, guide instructional decisions, and recognize students who may be in need of gifted and talented educational services.
- Provide enrichment and differentiation for students who have been traditionally underserved and underrepresented in gifted and talented education programs.
- Provide primary teachers with resources and sustained support and staff development for implementing differentiated curriculum.

As a result of participation in Primary Talent Development experiences, each student will have a checklist and portfolio that will follow him/her from PreK to grade 2. This information can then be utilized as an additional data source for GT identification.
Types of Gifted Services

Differentiated Instruction
Modifying curriculum and instruction according to content, process, or product to meet unique student needs in the classroom.

Cluster Grouping
A grouping assignment utilized for gifted students in a heterogeneous classroom. Typically five or six gifted students with similar needs, abilities, or interests are “clustered” in the same classroom. This allows the teacher to more effectively differentiate assignments for a group of advanced learners rather than one or two students.

After School Enrichment Clubs
Interest related clubs that meet after school hours. Participation is voluntary and transportation is not provided. Examples include but are not limited to Engineering Club, Chess Club, Ecology Club, Destination Imagination, etc.

Enrichment Groups
Homogenous groups of advanced learners with similar needs, abilities, or interests that have been placed together to receive additional services on a specific topic. Typically these groups are led by an enrichment teacher or specialist and occur outside of the general education classroom on areas of study beyond the regular curriculum.

Independent Study
A self-directed learning strategy where the teacher acts as a guide or facilitator and the student plays a more active role in designing or managing his/her own learning.

Grade and Subject Acceleration
Acceleration is a strategy of progressing through education at rates faster or ages younger than the norm. Grade acceleration occurs when a student advances to the next grade level at an age younger than normal. Subject acceleration is focused on a particular area of strength such as mathematics or reading.

Early Admission
Early Admission is the movement of a student out of the normal progression of pre-kindergarten into kindergarten.

Summer Centers and Camps
MSDE has designed summer programs in partnership with public and nonpublic agencies to provide Maryland’s diverse gifted and talented students with advanced, rigorous, experiential learning opportunities that nurture these students’ talents and abilities within unique learning environments. These centers address a variety of different areas of interest and are dependent on funding.
Advanced Placement Courses
A program developed by the College Board where high schools offer courses that meet criteria established by institutions of higher learning. College credit may be earned with the successful completion of an AP exam in specific content areas.

High School Honors Courses
Honors courses are designed for students who are self-initiating and highly motivated. It builds upon the successes of earlier experiences and stimulates bright and creative minds to explore their potential. The program aims to meet the needs of students whose goals are to go beyond the foundational knowledge of the discipline.

Dual Enrollment
Dual enrollment occurs when high school students take college courses for college credit. It is a means of providing high school students greater access to a wider range of rigorous academic and technical courses.

High School Internships
The Internship program provides students an opportunity to experience career exploration at community businesses or agencies. Through such experiential learning, young people can set and test goals for future education and work, and learn what is required for success in the workplace.
Appendix A
Forms
*Nomination for current school year only.

Parent Nomination for Talent Pool

Student Name _________________________  Teacher _________________________
Date of Nomination _____________________

Please check areas of perceived talent:
___ Math                        ___ Instrumental Music
___ Reading                    ___ Vocal Music
___ Writing                    ___ Drama
___ Science                    ___ Athletics
___ Social Studies             ___ Creativity
___ Art                        ___ Leadership
___ Dance                      ___ Task Commitment

Reason for Nomination:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

For Staff Use Only:

Recommended Actions: _________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
Self-Nomination for Talent Pool

Student Name __________________________  Teacher _________________________
Date of Nomination ______________________

Please check areas of perceived talent:
___ Math  ___ Instrumental Music
___ Reading  ___ Vocal Music
___ Writing  ___ Drama
___ Science  ___ Athletics
___ Social Studies  ___ Creativity
___ Art  ___ Leadership
___ Dance  ___ Task Commitment

Reason for Nomination:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
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For Staff Use Only:

Recommended Actions: __________________________________________________
NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:

In accordance with federal laws, the laws of the State of Maryland and the policies of the School Board of Queen Anne’s County, Queen Anne’s County Public Schools (QACPS) does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, age, gender, religion, disability, genetic information, national origin, marital status, socioeconomic status, physical characteristics, or sexual orientation in the provision of employment, educational programs, and services. QACPS operates equal opportunity and affirmative action programs for students and staff. QACPS is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or Title IX issues such as gender equity and sexual harassment should be directed to the Director of Human Resources at 410-758-2403 ext. 176. Inquiries regarding ADA and Section 504 should be directed to the Supervisor of Student Support at 410-758-2403 ext. 155. Inquiries regarding Title II should be directed to the Deputy Superintendent at 410-758-2403 ext. 121. Inquiries may also be addressed in writing to the appropriate office at Queen Anne’s County Public Schools, 202 Chesterfield Ave, Centreville, Maryland 21617.

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit: http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

External Agencies

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
1-800-669-4000
1-800-669-6820 (TTY for Deaf/Hard of Hearing callers only)
1-844-234-5122 (ASL Video Phone for Deaf/Hard of Hearing callers only)

Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR)
410.767.8600 (Español-marque el 2)
1.800.637.6247
Maryland Relay 7-1-1

U.S. Department of Education (OCR)
Office for Civil Rights
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202
(202) 401-2000
1-800-872-5327
Fax: 202-453-6012; TDD: 800-877-8339

School Board contact information can be found on the QACPS website.
www.qacps.org