



# PROCEDURE

## PROGRAMS

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Board of Education

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Gifted and Talented Pupils

### **2464 GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPILS**

#### **PROCESS OF IDENTIFICATION FOR GIFTED SERVICES GRADES 2 THROUGH 8**

##### **Identification**

Identification for gifted learners will be:

1. Inclusive, that is, any student nominated will be allowed, encouraged to take the placement test. Students could be gifted in one particular area and have special needs in another.
2. Achievement based, that is, exceptionally able students who demonstrate the highest levels of performance. Students from groups that are historically underrepresented, e.g., by ethnicity, gender, learning disability, non-native English speakers, will be supported and encouraged in their efforts for identification.

##### **Process**

Gifted and Talented selection will occur during the summer prior to the start of the academic year. Testing for the Gifted and Talented program will occur during the month of May. Students and their parents will be notified in early August of acceptance or non-acceptance to the program. Principals and teachers will work with the Assistant Superintendent to develop the Gifted and Talented Program for implementation in September.

**Step 1** -- Information will be disseminated about this program from the district office annually.

**Step 2** -- Parents, teachers, or students may submit a request for testing on behalf of a student. Students may self-nominate themselves for testing for the Gifted and Talented Program.

**Step 3** -- All recommended students will take the SCAT standardized test during the month of May of the year prior to his/her entry into grades two through eight.

**Step 4** -- Parents will be notified of students who meet the qualifying standard:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in September – score at the 98 to 100 percentile range 2 grade levels above September placement.
- 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in September – score at the 98 to 100 percentile range 3 grade levels above September placement.



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All will be notified in early August of their child's admittance or non-admittance to the Gifted and Talented Program.

### History

For many years, Haddonfield Public Schools espoused the philosophy that children have many talents and varied capabilities. Primarily, adaptations to meet the needs of students were intended to occur within the regular classroom at the elementary and middle levels and by allowing students at the high school to accelerate by taking college level courses or pursuing independent study. There was, however, no formalized selection or identification process in place to identify Gifted Students.

Changes in the New Jersey Administrative Code require all districts to identify students who are gifted and talented. The code states, "Gifted and talented students means those exceptionally able students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modifications of their program if they are to achieve in accordance with their abilities." The code further states that, "District boards of education shall be responsible for identifying gifted and talented students and shall provide them with appropriate instructional adaptations."

Understanding the charge from the State of New Jersey, Haddonfield Public Schools continues to believe and recognize that we have many bright, capable students in our district who are best served by a classroom program that provides regular opportunities for enrichment and where appropriate and greater support takes place when needed for those who require it. Thus, the district is committed to providing all faculty with quality professional development for a variety of programs and practices in order to help all students achieve individual academic excellence. This commitment is reflected in Strategy One of the Haddonfield Public Schools Strategic Plan.

However, while the faculty, community members, parents, administrators and the Board of Education who worked on Strategy One agreed that nearly all of our best and brightest students should be regularly served through enrichment for all, there is a recognition that an additional small group of students, perhaps as small as one to two percent of the district population, may benefit from additional services. The Board of Education deliberated very carefully and thoughtfully on how this recommendation from the various constituent groups should be implemented. The result is the identification process, outlined below, for gifted students.

The proposed identification process reflects several assumptions that emerged during these discussions. First, that the district serves many highly capable children with varied talents, skills, and interests. Second, that the intent of the administrative code is to identify "exceptionally able students," exceptionally able students learn faster, discern more deeply, and problem solve more imaginatively. They process, wonder, relate, emote, perform, empathize, and/or communicate in ways far beyond their age groups. Third, that the selection process should not be driven by a goal of identifying a fixed percent of students but rather those who are



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“exceptionally able.” Fourth, that the selection committees identify students with gifts and talents in more than just academic endeavors. Fifth, that the identification process for gifted students should be open to all students.

In order to understand the true meaning of giftedness, it is necessary that we separate the concept from achievement. High achievers are those who are motivated to do well in school. A gifted student may be a high achiever or they may be a high school dropout. They have learning needs that differ from other students, just as developmentally delayed students have differing learning needs. Such children often learn more quickly than their peers. They frequently display high sensitivity, experience life with great intensity, and pursue interests deeply. Often they wrestle with perfectionism. The selection process described is the recommended process to identify and meet the needs of this group of students.

### **DESCRIPTIONS OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENT**

The following description of behavioral manifestations of each cluster is a summary of the major concepts and conclusions emanating from the work of theorists and researchers who have examined these concepts:

#### **Exceptional Ability**

##### *General Ability*

- High levels of abstract thinking, verbal and numerical reasoning, spatial relations, memory and word fluency.
- Adaptation to the shaping of novel situations encountered in the external environment.
- The automatization of information processing; rapid, accurate, and selective retrieval of information.

##### *Specific Ability*

- The application of various combinations of the above general abilities to one or more specialized areas of knowledge or areas of human performance (e.g., the arts, leadership, administration).
- The capacity for acquiring and making appropriate use of advanced amounts of formal knowledge, tacit knowledge, technique, logistics, and strategy in the pursuit of particular problems or the manifestation of specialized areas of performance.
- The capacity to sort out relevant and irrelevant information associated with a particular problem or areas of study or performance.

##### *Task Commitment*

- The capacity for high levels of interest, enthusiasm, fascination, and involvement in a particular problem area of study, or form of human expression.



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- The capacity for perseverance, endurance, determination, hard work, and dedicated practice. Self-confidence, a strong ego, and a belief in one's ability to carry out important work, freedom from inferiority feelings, drive to achieve.
- The ability to identify significant problems within specialized reason; the ability to tune in to major channels of communication and new developments within given fields. Setting high standards for one's work; maintaining openness to self and external criticism; developing an aesthetic sense of taste, quality, and excellence about one's own work and the work of others.

### *Creativity*

- Fluency, flexibility, and originality of thought.
- Openness to experience; receptive to that which is new and different (even irrational) in thoughts, actions, and products of oneself and others.
- Curious, speculative, adventurous, and "mentally playful" willing to take risks in thought and action, even to the point of being uninhibited.
- Sensitive to detail, aesthetic characteristics of ideas and things; willing to act on and react to external stimulation and one's own ideas and feelings.

As is always the case with lists of traits such as the above, there are overlaps among individual items, and an interaction among the general categories and the specific traits. It is important to point out that all the traits need not be present in any given individual or situation to produce a display of gifted behaviors. It is for this reason that the "three cluster conception of giftedness" emphasizes the interaction among the clusters rather than any single cluster. It should also be emphasized that the exceptional ability cluster is a constant in the identification system described. In other words, the exceptional ability group represents the target population and the starting point for the identification process and it will be students in this category that are selected through the use of multiple criteria.

### **GIFTED PROGRAM SERVICES**

In grades kindergarten and first, the needs of gifted learners will be met through a program of differentiated instruction delivered at the classroom level. When needed, consultants with skills in gifted strategies will be available to meet with and support the regular education teacher in delivering such services. Principals will have the discretion to cluster gifted students when appropriate.

In grades two through eight, the needs of gifted learners will be met through the provision of individual opportunities for enrichment provided within the regular classroom. In addition, the district will provide a limited supplemental position for gifted services. This individual(s) will support gifted students grades two through eight who wish to pursue independent or collaborative, investigative projects. These opportunities will be provided in small groups outside the regular school day. Gifted students electing to participate will pursue first hand



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research or study that will culminate in an original product, performance, or service.

In grades 9-12, extensive opportunities abound for students to self-select accelerated academic programs, music, art, and other electives. An apparatus for independent study is long established and regularly used. Individual program accommodations to allow for higher-level study at the university or college level, through internships, in areas of special artistic or athletic endeavor will continue to be honored. Further, under state education code students can elect a "Plan B" program leading to high school graduation that allows more flexibility in pursuing individual interests. As at other levels in the district, opportunities to differentiate instruction will present themselves in the regular classroom.

Updated August 26, 2007



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Dear Parents:

The purpose of the Haddonfield Schools' Gifted and Talented Program is to identify the "exceptionally able" students who comprise the top 1 to 2 percent of the students in a particular grade level. As we begin the process of identification for the 2009-2010 school year, we are seeking parent or student nominations for children currently in grades one through seven. A nomination form is located on the district website on the Curriculum page under the Gifted and Talented heading: <http://www.Haddonfield.k12.nj.us>. Please note that students who are currently in the Gifted and Talented Program do not need to re-qualify for the program.

All students nominated will take the SCAT test—a test specifically designed by Johns Hopkins University to identify gifted students— between May 18 and May 29. Using the criteria set for the Haddonfield program, students who will be in grades 2 through 5 for the 2009-10 school year must perform at the 98<sup>th</sup> to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile, two grade levels above their placement in September. Thus, a student going into fourth grade must perform at the 98<sup>th</sup> to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile using the sixth grade norms. Similarly, students entering grades 6, 7 and 8 must perform at the 98<sup>th</sup> to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile three grade levels above their September placement. In other words, a student going into sixth grade must perform at the 98<sup>th</sup> to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile using the ninth grade norms.

Students and their parents will be notified in early August of the results of the SCAT testing and the status of the student's admittance to the Gifted and Talented Program. A more complete program description will be provided if your child qualifies and is accepted into the program. It is anticipated that the Gifted and Talented Program for the 2009-2010 school year will be similar to this year's program. We plan to have the program once again take place after school.

If you have any questions about the process for identification, please contact your building principal or me. Further information is also available on the district website in the Curriculum section: <http://www.haddonfield.k12.nj.us>.

Yours truly,

*Dyanne Kerecman*  
Dyanne L. Kerecman, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent



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## **Nomination Form And Permission to Administer the SCAT Test**

I nominate my child \_\_\_\_\_ to be considered for the Haddonfield Gifted and Talented Program. In addition, I give permission for my child to participate in district sponsored testing for the gifted and talented program.

I understand that my child will be administered the test between May 17 and May 28 and that the principal of my child's school will correspond with me as to the exact time and date of the test. The test will be given during the school day.

Results of the test will be shared with me in early August.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
School/Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

**Please return this form to your child's principal  
no later than 3:00 PM, Thursday, May 13, 2010**