



**Gifted and Talented  
Parent Handbook**

**Support Programs  
Gifted and Talented**

99. W. Broadway St.  
Keenesburg, CO  
303-536-2002



*Every Community. Every School. Every Student*

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## Mission Statement

Ensure gifted student growth and achievement through systems of support, programming, and advocacy.

Colorado Department of Education

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## Common Questions

### **What can I do if I think my child is gifted?**

The first step is to very carefully observe the child's behavior alone and with adults and other children of similar age in a variety of settings. Then listen to the child talk about how he/she views the world, nature, others, and ideas. Compare these observations with what you see and hear from other similar-aged children. The personal and web-based resources on the opposite page will describe characteristics of gifted children. Your School Gifted Liaison will also help you sort and support indicators of giftedness.

### **What can I do when my child says school is boring?**

Listening is the best initial response. Is the boredom a short- or long-term experience for your child? Is the boredom related to a particular class or subject or teacher? It's okay to ask questions too? How is your boredom helping you . . . or hurting you? Have you thought about talking with the teacher to propose some things you might do to alleviate the boredom in a class (one class/teacher at a time)? Boredom may occur when a child already knows what is being taught or learns more quickly than classmates.

### **What can I do when all my child wants to do is read?**

Voracious reading is a behavior commonly seen in gifted children. So is the ability to read and love of books before entering kindergarten or in primary grades. Readers devour books and articles on many topics of interest to them. When children read ahead of their grade peers, they or you might visit with the teacher about accommodating these interests in school during time spent "waiting." When children forego social interactions in order to read more, we might encourage them to find someone else interested in the topic to engage in discussion. But reading for some gifted children is a "need," so we can encourage them to continue reading and sharing their thoughts about their reading.

### **How can I help my child advocate for him/herself?**

Children in elementary school may gradually learn to advocate for themselves by watching parents model the process of negotiating meaningful challenges in the classroom. By fifth grade and in preparation for middle school, students benefit from successful experience advocating for themselves. A helpful guide for parents and students is "Ten Tips for Talking with Teachers" by James Delisle (available online and from your School Gifted Liaison).

## Resources

**PERSONNEL** **Director of Support Programs:** Ms. Jenny Wakeman

**School Gifted Liaisons:** Hoff, Hudson, Lochbuie, WCMS, WCHS

**WEBSITES** **District Website:** [re3j.com](http://re3j.com)

**Hoagies Gifted Education**  
[hoagiesgifted.org/parents.htm](http://hoagiesgifted.org/parents.htm)

**Supporting the Emotional Needs of Gifted (SENG)**  
[sengifted.org](http://sengifted.org)

**BOOKS** ***Parenting Gifted Kids: Tips for Raising Happy and Successful Children***, James Delisle

***The Survival Guide for Parents of Gifted Kids***, Sally Walker

***They Say My Kid's Gifted: Now What?***, F. Richard Olenchak

***A Parents Guide to Gifted Children***, James Webb

**REFERENCES** **Colorado Department of Education**  
[cde.state.co.us/gt](http://cde.state.co.us/gt)

**Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented**  
[coloradogifted.org](http://coloradogifted.org)

**National Association for Gifted Children**  
[nagc.org](http://nagc.org)

## Definition of Giftedness

Gifted and talented children are those between the ages of four and twenty-one whose aptitude or competence in abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment in one or more domains are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Gifted children are hereafter referred to as gifted students. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services. Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:

- General or specific intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities

## Gifted Liaison in Your School

The **Gifted Liaison in your school** is available to share resources, information, and forms; answer questions; and discuss your concerns about your child and all aspects of the district Gifted Program. Please call the school office to contact your school liaison.

## Myths and Truths about Gifted Learners

### Myth

Gifted students earn good grades and are enthusiastic about school.

### Reality

Although many gifted students earn good grades, others become under-achievers, behavior problems, or dropouts.

### Myth

Gifted students don't need any help; they are smart enough to do fine on their own.

### Reality

Gifted students need guidance and support to reach their potential; they need challenging work and a sense of belonging.

### Myth

All children are gifted

### Reality

All children have strengths and positive attributes, but not all children work above norms of age peers in an area of strength.

### Myth

Gifted education programs are elitist.

### Reality

Gifted learners are in all cultures, ethnic origins, and socioeconomic groups. Programming provides academic challenge and social/ emotional support.

### Myth

Children who are receiving bad grades can't be gifted.

### Reality

Underachievement describes a discrepancy between a student's performance and actual ability. Parents and educators must help students engage in their learning.

## Programming

Programming for each gifted student is based on his/her needs, interests, and strengths both academic and affective. Programming listed below is not available at all sites. Please visit with the **GT LIAISON** at your school to learn about current programming options.

### ELEMENTARY

- ◆ Band/Choir
- ◆ Spelling Bee
- ◆ Student Council
- ◆ Art Club
- ◆ Lego Club
- ◆ Movement Club
- ◆ Odyssey of the Mind
- ◆ Drama Club
- ◆ Lighthouse Team
- ◆ Yearbook Team
- ◆ Cooking Club
- ◆ Running Club
- ◆ Origami Club
- ◆ STEM

### SECONDARY

- ◆ Brain Bowl
- ◆ Student Council
- ◆ Science Club/Science Fair
- ◆ National Junior Honor Society
- ◆ National Honor Society
- ◆ Knowledge Bowl
- ◆ Theater/Drama Club
- ◆ Video Game/TSA
- ◆ Diversity Club
- ◆ Yearbook and Newspaper
- ◆ Creative Writing Club
- ◆ Future Farmers of America (FFA)
- ◆ Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)
- ◆ STEM
- ◆ LULAC (League of Latin American Citizens)
- ◆ Living History Club

## Advanced Learning Plans

### What is an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP)?

The ALP is a legal document that outlines programming for identified gifted students and is used as a guide for educational planning and decision-making. The ALP monitors the progress of the programming and social-emotional development. Teachers, student, and parents collaborate to ensure student success and share responsibilities. For secondary students, the ALP may blend with the ICAP to include goals, support, and programming.

### What do you need to know about an ALP?

- It's a tool that "drives" instruction and guides social-emotional well-being at school.
- It's a "living document" and revised as necessary.
- It's a communication tool among the student, teachers, and parents.

### What are the components of an ALP?

- A Body of Evidence identifies test data along with interests, strengths, and needs.
- Annual academic goals for area/s of strength have measureable targets and timelines. Standards-based academic goals may include original products for authentic audiences.
- Annual affective goals promote social and emotional well-being at school.
- Description of programming options and strategies are matched to strength area/s and interests and will be implemented by the school staff.
- Ongoing progress monitoring and review are described.
- Documentation of progress toward goal/s achievement will be included at the end of the year.

### What is the timeline for formal testing and ALP's?

- All formal testing is typically done in the fall and spring of each school year .
- By November 1, the ALP is signed with input from teachers, students, and parents regarding academic and affective goals.
- The ALP outlines the monitoring schedule and includes notes.
- By May 15, the ALP is signed with noted progress on goals.

## Twelve Traits of Giftedness

Trait	Description and Characteristics
<b>Motivation</b>	Evidence of desire to learn, internal drive in order to satisfy a need to know or attain a goal.
<b>Interests</b>	Intense, sometimes unusual interests. Pursues an activity beyond the group.
<b>Communication Skills</b>	Highly expressive with words, numbers, or symbols. Unusual ability to communicate with extensive vocabulary.
<b>Problem-Solving Ability</b>	Effective, often inventive strategies for recognizing and solving problems. Unusual ability to devise, adopt, or revise a strategy as needed.
<b>Memory</b>	Large storehouse of information on school or non-school topics, exceptional ability to retain and retrieve information.
<b>Inquiry/Curiosity</b>	Questions, experiments, and explores. Asks unusual questions compared to age mates.
<b>Insight</b>	Quickly grasps new concepts, sees connections, and senses deeper meanings.
<b>Reasoning</b>	Logical approaches to figuring out solutions, highly conscientious, goal oriented. Thinks critically and makes generalizations.
<b>Imagination and Creativity</b>	Produces many ideas, highly original, forms mental images. Problem solves in non-traditional patterns. Fluent, flexible thinker.
<b>Humor</b>	Conveys and picks up humor well, ability to synthesize differences in a humorous way.
<b>Intensity</b>	Strength of reactions, responses, and behaviors. Very strong, even extreme responses to physical, emotional, and sensory stimuli.
<b>Sensitivity</b>	Evidence of compassion, justice, empathy, moral and ethical sensibilities. Often self-critical.

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented provides "Twelve Traits of Giftedness" based on the work of Mary Ruth Coleman, Ph.D. Not all gifted students show evidence of all these traits which may be demonstrated in positive and negative ways at home and in the classroom. These traits are strengths to be nurtured.

# Identification Process

**NOMINATION** A parent or teacher may nominate a student for the gifted identification process with forms available from school GT liaison.

**UNIVERSAL SCREENING** All second and sixth grade students take a non-language-based test to screen candidates who continue in the GT identification process.

**COMMUNICATION** Parents, teachers, GT liaisons, and students share information and questions about ID process and gifted programming.

**BODY OF EVIDENCE** GT liaisons gather evidence that represents a student's ability with achievement scores and additional cognitive test scores. Parents, teachers, and students provide additional evidence with checklists, inventories and interviews.

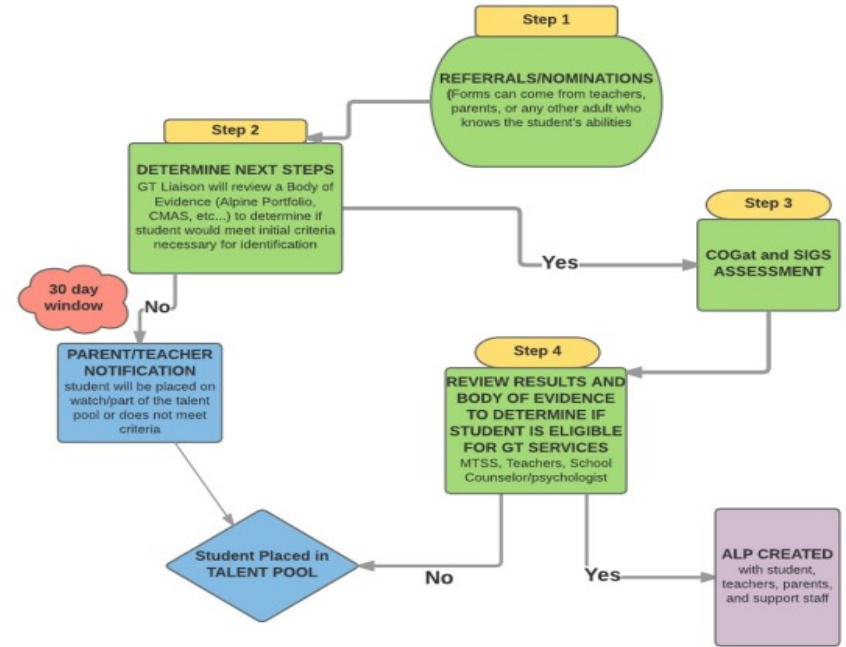
**REVIEW TEAM** Each building appoints a GT Review Team to consider the complete Body of Evidence for formal identification. The team includes a GT specialist, counselor, and/or administrator/psychologist.

**ADVANCED LEARNING PLAN (ALP)** The ALP is a legal document outlining programming for identified gifted students and is used as a guide for educational planning and decision-making.

## IDENTIFICATION PROCESS FOR UNDERACHIEVERS AND TWICE EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS:

1. NNAT screening (non-verbal assessment) for all 2nd and 6th grade students
2. Nomination Form including; *12 Nonbiased Traits*, positive and Negative manifestations, focus on behaviors/observations, *Traits for Hispanic, ELD gifted*
3. Building liaisons have information regarding appropriate testing material, screening data, state and district assessment information and observational forms to make informed decisions about underachieving and twice exceptional students
4. Information, including appropriate assessments, regarding students that are acquiring English is taken into consideration in the process of determining eligibility

# GT Qualification Process



## TIMELINES FOR GT IDENTIFICATION REFERRALS AND NEW STUDENTS WHO HAVE TRANSFERRED INTO OUR DISTRICT:

- Timeline structure for identification teams in each building consisting of no fewer than 3 people, one having expertise in the area of gifted identification, meet on a monthly basis to assure that all referrals are reviewed within 30 days.
- New students transferring into our districts with an ALP will have that ALP reviewed within 45 days of enrollment into the district and added to the roster as appropriate. We will communicate this with parents within 60 days of enrollment. If transferring information is incomplete, all efforts will be made to gather previous data as well as create a body of evidence to determine eligibility for GT services or inclusion in the talent pool.

## PROCEDURES FOR DISAGREEMENT

When a Review Team decision regarding GT identification is questioned, these steps (in order) will be followed by district GT liaisons: 1) review the body of evidence for accuracy; 2) review data with parents and clarify identification criteria; 3) determine if additional data is needed and can be provided; 4) make a final decision for the current school year; 5) refer the next level of appeal to the Director of Support Programs.