

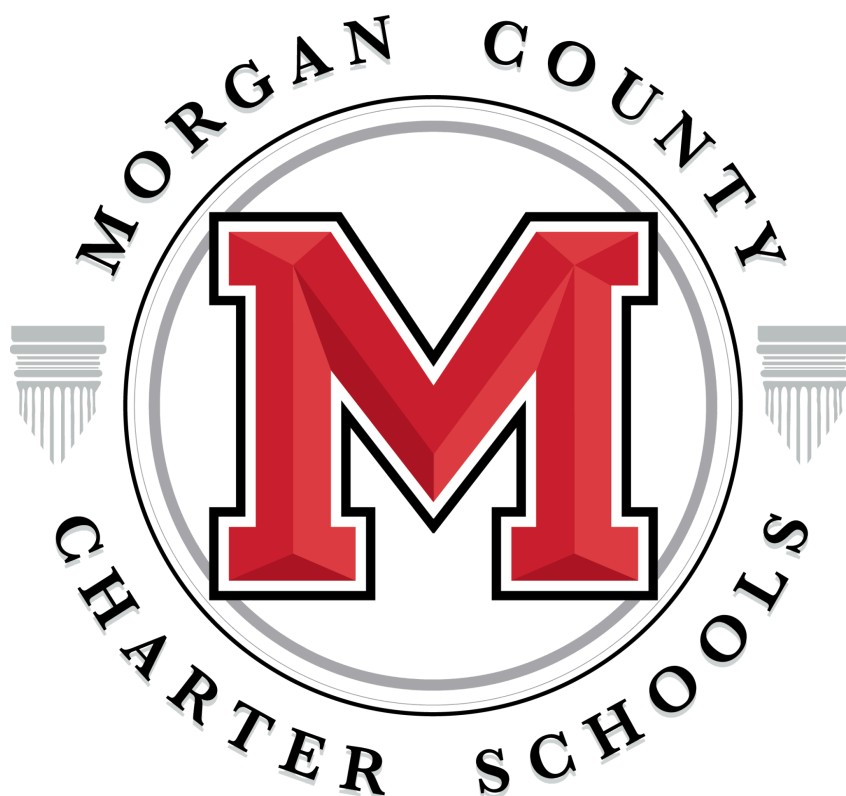
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# EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

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**Procedures Manual**

*Revised July 2024*



# MORGAN COUNTY CHARTER SCHOOL SYSTEM

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Morgan County Charter School System offers a continuum of services for gifted learners. Gifted students are defined as “a student who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability (ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities (SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38, p. 1).”

Our gifted program goals are as follows:

## Operational Goals:

1. Provide equitable access to gifted and talented services through a high-quality and unbiased identification process
2. Provide opportunities for all teachers and school staff to further develop their knowledge and skills for meeting the unique needs of gifted students

## Goals for Gifted Students:

1. Maximize social, emotional, and intellectual growth and achievement through diverse learning experiences
2. Develop advanced research and problem-solving skills that include critical and creative thinking applied to self-selected and guided topics

## GEORGIA SBOE RULES AND REGULATIONS:

The official State Board of Education SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS document can be located at <http://www.Georgia Department of Education.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/State-Board-of-Education/SBOE%20Rules/160-4-2-.38.pdf>

## SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38, EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS Requirements

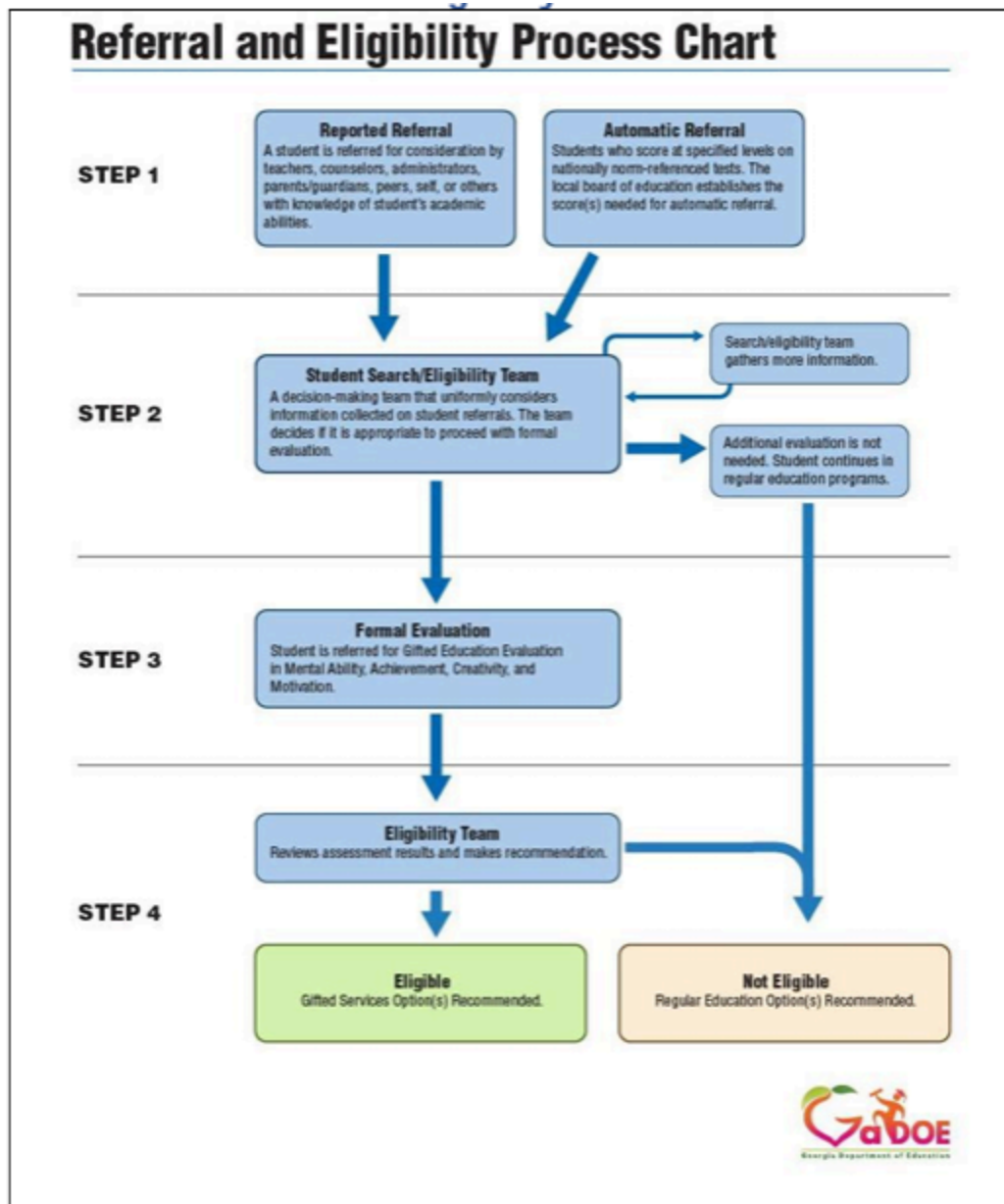
### **Student Search, Nomination, and Referral**

The Morgan County Charter School System uses a variety of communication vehicles to ensure that all members of the community have access to information about the Gifted education Program. Information about the Gifted Program and contact person is placed on system and school-level web sites and school brochures. Gifted education services are also included in student handbooks, which are given to all students/parents at the beginning of the school year. Information about Gifted Education is also featured in school newsletters that are sent to parents and are available on a monthly or quarterly basis at the Board of Education central office. School-level administrators and Instructional Lead Teachers are given updates and reviews from the Gifted Coordinator regarding identification, referral procedures, testing, eligibility, and curriculum, instruction, delivery models at least yearly (more often if changes in the rules or procedures occur). All Gifted Education teachers are given access to a current, electronic Gifted Procedures Manual, which contains the up-to-date “*Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*” from the Georgia Department of Education. All relevant forms are available via a shared Google folder entitled [Documents for Gifted Folders](#). Although Morgan County and Morgan County Charter Schools

host a small number of non-English speakers, translations of the information presented above are made available in the languages needed on an as needed basis.

### Referral Procedures and Eligibility Requirements

The flowchart below from The Georgia Department of Education represents the gifted referral process and identification process.



The Instructional Coach or Assistant Principal for Instruction at each school has the responsibility for overseeing the nomination and referral procedures at each school. At least twice a year, these school leaders meet together with the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning in order to review/learn/refine the decision-making process that allows them to facilitate the determination as to when it is appropriate to proceed with a formal referral and further assessment for the Program. This process is applied consistently to all students who meet automatic consideration criteria, as well as to those students who are nominated through a **reported referral**. At least annually, the instructional administrator at each school collects nominations for consideration from a variety of sources (teachers,

parents, administrators, counselors, peers, community members, or the students, themselves) and then sets up a Gifted Support Team meeting for each nominated student. The child's teacher(s), a gifted endorsed teacher, and school administrator are invited to participate in this meeting. Documentation regarding the date of the Gifted Support Team meeting, student identifying demographic information, names of attending team members, current test scores (norm-referenced and criterion-referenced, as available), teacher comments, source of the nomination (automatic, teacher, parent, self, etc.), and the team's decision/rationale about the referral for formal evaluation are included on the form. Factors considered by the Gifted Support Team in the screening process also include the strength of the evidence of the student's advanced learning needs and performance levels of previous referrals to the Program for the Gifted (along with a description of any circumstances which would indicate reasons those assessment results are no longer valid).

Advanced learning needs for the majority of students can be addressed in a general education classroom which offers a quality learning environment by providing instructional interventions prior to, or in lieu of, identifying students for specialized educational services. By documenting instructional interventions, the MTSS process allows gifted and high-achieving student's access to a differentiated curriculum, flexible pacing, cluster grouping, and other universal interventions. The MTSS policies for referral, evaluation, eligibility, and instruction of gifted education students is set by the State Board of Education and defined in the [2024-2025 GaDOE Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services](#).

**Document:** *Morgan County Charter School System Gifted Support Team Minutes (Tiers 1, 2, and 3)* found in [Documents for Gifted Folders](#).

The Morgan County Charter School System keeps student data by grade level, gender, and ethnic group. These data points are reviewed at least once a year as part of the system's formative evaluation of Gifted Program services. Referral data, including student demographic information and eligibility outcome is kept electronically and is reviewed by the school system on an annual basis. This information also includes the source of the referral as well as the eligibility outcome. The number of students tested for the Program during mass testing in the spring and the number eligible to receive services is reported to the Board of Education annually.

### **Referrals**

The Consideration for Gifted Education Services is a **reported referral** or an **automatic referral**.

Students who score at the 90%\* in either *Total Reading* or *Total Math* on a norm-referenced test (i-Ready Diagnostic) are **automatically referred** for consideration. The i-Ready Diagnostic Assessment is administered three times a year. \*Automatic referrals are made for consideration for initial evaluation when a student scores at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in Reading and/or Math on any i-Ready administration during the current school year.

Morgan County Charter School System ensures that all tests and procedures used in the referral process and to determine eligibility for Gifted education services meet standards of validity and reliability for the purpose of identifying Gifted students and is non-discriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background.

The entire nomination process is carefully scrutinized for any factors that may be contributing to the underrepresentation of some groups of students in the Program on an annual basis. Each year, teachers are encouraged to nominate students who may be under-represented in the Program. Administrators stress the importance of diversity to referral sources. Classroom teachers are given micro professional-learning opportunities during times of mass referrals in the spring to help them identify possible Gifted learners. Handouts on topics such as “*Characteristics of Gifted Learners*” and “*Gifted Learner/High Achiever*” are provided to classroom teachers. Gifted information sent to the public includes information that anyone can refer a child for consideration for the Program.

Referral data, including student demographic information and eligibility outcome is kept electronically and is reviewed by the school system on an annual basis. This information also includes the source of the referral as well as the eligibility outcome. The number of students tested for the Program during mass testing in the spring and the number eligible to receive services is reported to the Board of Education annually and is recorded in our Student Information System.

### **Consent**

The Morgan County Charter School System obtains written consent for testing from parents/guardians of students being considered for Gifted education services. The school system obtains written consent from parents or guardians before providing Gifted education services to students determined to be eligible for services.

Parents/guardians are notified when their child is being considered for possible Gifted Program placement before the student’s performance is evaluated in any way which is not done routinely for other children in that grade. Parental consent that allows the school system to conduct any group or individual testing or to engage in formal evaluation of student product or performance is required and obtained before testing is begun. Educators are allowed to discuss and record their observations of the student’s classroom performance and other indicators of cognitive or creative strengths. Master lists of all students’ standardized test scores may be screened for the purpose of identifying automatic referrals without parental permission.

If the decision is made to refer the student for consideration (formal evaluation for possible eligibility for the *Program for the Gifted*), the child’s parents/guardians are notified in writing (in the home language of the parent) and permission for testing is granted (or denied) by the parent’s/guardian’s signature on the form. This documentation also includes eligibility criteria for entrance into the Program.

**Document:** *Morgan County Charter School System Permission to Evaluate for the Program for the Gifted* found in [Documents for Gifted Folders](#) “Parent Letters” folder.

**Document:** *Morgan County Charter School System Consent for Placement for the Program for the Gifted* found in [Documents for Gifted Folders](#) “Parent Letters” folder.

Parents are informed of their child’s eligibility status by mail after evaluation for the *Program for the Gifted* has been completed. The “parent letter” contains information about the eligibility criteria and descriptions/names of all tests used to establish eligibility. Parents are given the opportunity for a conference about their child’s scores or status in light of state eligibility criteria and possible placement.

**Document:** *Morgan County Charter School System Parent Letter of Eligibility found in [Documents for Gifted Folders](#) “Parent Letters” folder.*

### **Eligibility**

*The Morgan County Charter School System has adopted eligibility criteria that are consistent with the SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38.*

1. To be eligible for Gifted Education services, a student must either (a) score at the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile (for grades K-2) or the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile (for grades 3-12) on the composite or full scale score of a norm-referenced test of mental ability (age norms) and meet one of the achievement (grade norms) criteria described in Table 1, or (b) qualify through a multiple-criteria assessment process by meeting the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation.
2. To be eligible for Gifted Education services, a student must meet the criterion score on a norm-referenced test and either has observational data collected on his/her performance or produce a superior product (described below). Information will be collected in each of the four areas (mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation).
3. Test scores used to establish eligibility shall have been administered within the past two calendar years, but the Morgan County Charter School System will use the most current score if two or more tests have been administered within the two year window.
4. Any data used in one area to establish a student’s eligibility shall not be used in any other data category.
  - a. Children who are being evaluated for Gifted services will be assessed in all four data categories and must have a qualifying score on a nationally-normed-referenced test. If an assessment is used in one data category it will not be used in another category.
5. Data is used for eligibility in the four areas according to the following:

### ***Table 1: Gifted Education ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA***

- In option A and B on the chart on the next page, information is gathered in each of the four categories.
- At least one of the criteria must be met by a score on a Georgia Department of Education approved nationally normed-referenced test.
- Any data used to establish eligibility in one category shall not be used to establish eligibility in another category.
- If a rating scale is used to evaluate creativity, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate motivation. If a rating scale is used to evaluate motivation, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate creativity.

Category & Current Instrument(s)	Option A	Option B
	Students must have a qualifying score in the mental ability AND achievement categories.	Student must qualify in <u>three of the four</u> categories.
<b>Mental Ability</b>  CogAT or instrument selected by school psychologist if needed; NNAT is available on a case-by-case basis.	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades K-2</b> 99 <sup>th</sup> percentile composite score on a nationally age normed mental ability test <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades 3-12</b> ≥96 <sup>th</sup> percentile composite score on a nationally age normed mental ability test	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades K-12</b> ≥96 <sup>th</sup> percentile composite score OR appropriate component score on a nationally age normed mental ability test
<b>Achievement</b>  i-Ready	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades K-12</b> 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile Total Reading, Total Math, or Complete Battery on a nationally normed achievement test	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades K-12</b> ≥90 <sup>th</sup> percentile Total Reading, Total Math, or Complete Battery on a nationally normed achievement test <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades K-12</b> Superior product/performance with a score ≥ 90 on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators
<b>Creativity</b>  Torrance Test of Creative Thinking  or  Gifted Evaluation Scale or Gifted Rating Scale - 2(if not used for Motivation)	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation data required	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades K-12</b> ≥90 <sup>th</sup> percentile on composite score on a nationally normed creativity test <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades K-12</b> Rating scales used to qualify student creativity must equate to the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades K-12</b> Superior product/performance with a score ≥ 90 on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators
<b>Motivation</b>  Gifted Evaluation Scale or	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation data required	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Grades 6-12</b> Two year average of a 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale in regular core subjects of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies,



<b>Gifted Rating Scale - 2</b>		<p>science, and full year world languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Grades K-12</b> Rating scales used to qualify student creativity must equate to the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile</li> <li>□ <b>Grades K-12</b> Superior product/performance with a score <math>\geq 90</math> on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators</li> </ul>
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\*An additional mental ability test will be administered if the student scores within one *Standard Error of Measurement*, but does not meet eligibility criteria in this area.

### **Guidelines Related to the Assessment of Mental Ability**

Students shall score at or above the 96th percentile on a composite or full-scale score or appropriate component score on a norm-referenced test of mental ability.

- a. Mental ability tests are the most current editions, or editions approved by Georgia Department of Education, of published tests that measure intelligence or cognitive ability, which have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.
- b. Mental ability tests that were designed to be administered individually are administered by a qualified psychological examiner.

For establishing the required standard in the mental ability category of Rule 160-4-2-.38, an *age norm component* or *age norm composite* score is used in the assessment process. The Morgan County Charter School System will use a component score to partially establish a student's eligibility for Gifted Program services if the assessment meets the following circumstances:

- The subtest contains enough items and enough variety of items to provide a comprehensive assessment of the student's abilities in a given content domain;
- The component battery was normed separately from the total test composite score and the other subtests;
- The test publisher recommends the use of component scores for identifying the abilities of Gifted students;
- The preponderance of both test and non-test evidence collected during the assessment process supports that component score as the best measure of the student's mental ability; and
- The local school district is able to provide a match between the student's identified strengths and Gifted Program curriculum.

### **Guidelines Related to the Assessment of Achievement**

Students shall score at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery, total math or total reading section(s) of a norm-referenced achievement test or have produced a superior student-generated product or performance, where the superior performance is one that can be translated into a numerical score at or above 90 on a 100 point scale as evaluated by a panel of qualified evaluators.



Norm-referenced achievement tests are the most current editions of tests, or editions approved by Georgia Department of Education, that measure reading skills, including comprehension, and shall yield a total reading score and/or a total mathematics score based upon a combination of scores in mathematics concepts and applications. These tests shall have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.

Performances and products are assessed by a panel of qualified evaluators and must have been produced within the two calendar years prior to evaluation.

SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 authorizes **two (2) different approaches** to the assessment of achievement:

**1. Standardized Achievement Tests**

- a. The Morgan County Charter School System is allowed to use either age or grade norms for standardized achievement test scores. (The system will use grade norms in almost all cases, since the purpose of grade norms is to evaluate the child's achievement in comparison to other children in that grade level (so that the school system can judge to what degree the child would benefit from additional challenge). However, it is recognized that there may be times when it would be appropriate to use age norms (e.g., those are the only scores available, or the child has been radically accelerated). This decision will be made by the School Psychologist based on individual, specialized circumstances.
- b. Some achievement tests provide two composite scores, derived from different subtests. For example, the ITBS complete battery yields a Composite score and a Total Core score. When using a Total Battery score to establish a student's eligibility, Morgan County will use the composite score that includes the most items from the test area (*i.e., it is the most comprehensive measure of the student's academic achievement*).

**2. Product/Performance Assessment**

***\*\* Although allowable, MCCSS does not currently utilize product/performance assessments.***

The evaluation process meets the following criteria:

- There must be at least three members on the panel of qualified evaluators that assess the student products/performances
- Panel members are provided with training in the scoring of products/performances. They are never being asked to make broad, global judgments as to a student's level of achievement. Instead, scoring rubrics should provide detailed descriptions of various levels of performance and examples of each in order to help observers clearly and consistently distinguish between superior levels of performance and those that are more typical for a student of that age.
- The Morgan County Charter School System keeps written documentation confirming the qualifications of each member of a juried panel.
- To ensure consistency in the scoring process, the evaluations are conducted simultaneously, independently, and without discussion by the panel members regarding their individual ratings. Each qualified evaluator will submit a separate evaluation, using a locally developed or adopted evaluation rubric that uses a 1-100 scale of quality. The rubric should include narrative descriptors for each area and assigned values. The independent ratings are then averaged, and the mean score is used as a measure of the student's level of performance.

**Guidelines Related to the Assessment of Creativity** Students shall score at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery score of a norm-referenced test of creative thinking, receive a score at or above the 90th percentile on a standardized creativity characteristics rating scale, or receive from a panel of

qualified evaluators a score at or above 90 on a 100 point scale on a structured observation/evaluation of creative products and/or performances.

Norm-referenced tests of creative thinking is the most current editions of tests, or editions approved by Georgia Department of Education, that provide scores of fluency, originality, and elaboration. These tests shall have been reviewed for bias and are normed on a nationally representative sample with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background within a 10-year period prior to administration.

Standardized tests of creative thinking are scored by individuals who have been trained and have reached a satisfactory level of inter-rater reliability.

Rating scales used to qualify creativity shall differentiate levels such that judgments may equate to the 90th percentile. If a rating scale is used to evaluate creativity, a rating scale shall not be used to evaluate motivation. All teachers who complete rating scales will receive training on the concept of *creativity*, the characteristics of Gifted students, how the particular scale describes those distinguishing behaviors, and how the different items on the scale should be interpreted.

- (I) As evidence of creativity, students, or individuals on behalf of students, may submit products or evidence of outstanding performances completed during the two calendar years prior to evaluation. The products or performances submitted are reviewed by a panel of qualified evaluators.

***\*\* Although allowable, MCCSS does not currently utilize product/performance assessments.***

#### **Guidelines Related to the Assessment of Motivation.**

Students shall receive a score at or above the 90th percentile on a standardized motivational characteristics rating scale, receive from a panel of qualified evaluators a score at or above 90 on a 100 point scale on a structured observation or evaluation of student-generated products and/or performances, or for grades 6-12 have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale where a 4.0 = A and 3.0 = B, or a numeric grade point average (NGA) of 90 percent on a 100 point scale where 100 = A and a 89 = B. **NOTE:** Grades used to determine the GPA or NGA must be a two-year average of regular school Program core subject grades in mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, science, and full year world languages.

Rating scales used to qualify student motivation shall differentiate levels such that judgments may equate to the 90th percentile. If a rating scale is used to evaluate motivation, a rating scale shall *not* be used to evaluate creativity. All teachers who complete rating scales receive training on the concept of *motivation*, the characteristics of Gifted students, how the particular scale describes those distinguishing behaviors, and how the different items on the scale should be interpreted.

As evidence of motivation, students, or individuals on behalf of students, may submit products or evidence of outstanding performances made during the two calendar years prior to evaluation. The products or performances submitted are reviewed by a panel of qualified evaluators.

***\*\* Although allowable, MCCSS does not currently utilize product/performance assessments.***

GPA's of students are determined by calculating the grades earned during the two years prior to evaluation in the subjects of mathematics, science, English/language arts, social studies, and full year world language (or the equivalent in block scheduling), if such language study is included in the student's records.

***\*\* Although allowable, MCCSS does not currently utilize GPA as an indicator of motivation.***

#### **Other Notes Regarding Assessment for Identification**

(NOTE: All assessment procedures selected to determine a student's need for Gifted Program services should help the Morgan County Charter School System personnel identify those students who are performing at the extremely high end of whatever performance/ability continuum is being assessed. Therefore, if a district has chosen to use GPA or NGA in the area of motivation to (partially) establish students' eligibility for Gifted Program placement, the local district must set a minimum performance standard for GPA and/or NGA. The standard must be set at a level which is achieved by no more than 10% of the students in each grade level where GPA or NGA is being used to measure motivation. For example, GPA criterion can (and probably will be) set higher than 3.5 on a 4-point scale, but under no circumstances should it be set lower than 3.5. **\*\* Although allowable, MCCSS does not currently utilize GPA as an indicator of motivation.**

Assessment data that were gathered and analyzed by a source outside the student's school system is considered as part of the referral and evaluation process. External evaluation data shall not be substituted for or used as the sole source of data the school generates during the initial eligibility process. External evaluations will be reviewed for bias with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities, and economic background.

Morgan County school system personnel review the referral and evaluation data of Gifted students entering the school system. If the referral and evaluation data was completed by a fully accredited private or public school, Morgan County may use the transferring school's referral and evaluation data to determine Gifted eligibility criteria described in *Georgia State Board Rule 160-4-2.38 Education Program for Gifted Students*. Morgan County Charter School System may accept evaluations performed by appropriately licensed "outside sources" (private and/or for profit evaluators (psychiatrist, psychologist, psychometrist, etc.). Data from outside sources shall not be the sole source of information about a student.

### **Continued Participation**

The Teacher(s) of the Gifted shall review the progress of each student receiving gifted education services each year. Any student who receives gifted education services shall continue to receive services, provided the student demonstrates satisfactory performance in gifted education classes, as described in the Morgan County Charter School System's Continuation Policy and stated in the *Continuation Policy* that is signed by the parent upon initial eligibility into the Program for the Gifted.

There are two Continuation Rules that must be met once the student enrolls in the Program for the Gifted. The student must:

- *Maintain a grade average of B or higher for all gifted segments—each individual segment (including Connections, Specials, Electives, and the Gifted class subjects) for each grading period.*

**Probationary Period:** Parents will be notified and the student will continue to receive Gifted Education services while attempting to achieve satisfactory performance during the next grading period. If grades do not meet the Continuation Policy at the time of the next report card, the student will be removed from active enrollment in the Program for the Gifted until for the rest of the school year. The student can re-enter the Program for the Gifted at the beginning of the new school year as long as Continuation Criteria (B average in all classes) were met for the last grading period of the previous school year.

- *Maintain completion of all required assignments in the Gifted class for each grading period.*

**Probationary Period:** Parents will be notified and the student will continue to receive Gifted Education services while attempting to achieve satisfactory performance during the next grading period. If required assignments are not completed at the time of the next report card, the student

will be removed from active enrollment in the Program for the Gifted until for the rest of the school year. The student can re-enter the Program for the Gifted at the beginning of the new school year.

The Morgan County Charter School System acknowledges that the key to the on-going evaluation of the match between identified students' learning needs and Gifted Program services should be reflected in the *Continuation Policy*. The rigor of the Gifted Program curriculum and the standards for continuation in the program should be high enough that children who do not have extraordinary cognitive, creative, and motivational strengths should not be able to meet the Continuation Criteria. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the student was identified initially based on exceptional abilities. Therefore, procedures, much like those used with Student Support Teams, are included in this Continuation Policy to determine why a student is not performing as expected if indeed his/her performance is not satisfactory.

### **Probationary Period**

Parents will be notified and the student will continue to receive Gifted Education services while attempting to achieve satisfactory performance during the next grading period. If grades do not meet the Continuation Policy at the time of the next report card, the student will be removed from active enrollment in the Program for the Gifted until for the rest of the school year. The student can re-enter the Program for the Gifted at the beginning of the new school year as long as Continuation Criteria were met for the last grading period of the previous school year.

Once placed on Probation, a **Plan of Improvement**, including specific goals and evaluation criteria, will be written for the amount of time the student is placed on probation. During this time, the student continues to receive Gifted Education services, but his/her eligibility for receiving gifted education services is in jeopardy. Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) will be notified and invited to attend the meeting where the Plan of Improvement is developed. Parents will be apprised of the status of the plan on an on-going basis, and if a new plan needs to be developed, they will be involved, again. At the conclusion of the Probationary Period, the Review Team will meet again to discuss the student's progress. If the student has been able to meet the prescribed goals, placement in the gifted education program continues; if the goals have not been met, gifted education services will be discontinued and parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified in writing, including specific criteria or conditions to be met for the student to resume gifted education services.

There are circumstances in which a gifted student will voluntarily withdraw from the Gifted Program, even though he/she is meeting the locally established continuation criteria. Perhaps the parents decide to home school the child or place him/her in private school, but then return to the public school. Perhaps a child that was once determined to be eligible for Gifted Program services moves away for several years and then moves back. These are examples of "*breaks in service*." If all rules for Continuation have been met during this "break" time, the student may resume Gifted Education services.

**Document:** Continuation Board Policy

**Document:** Parent Consent for Placement/Continuation Policy *found in* [Documents for Gifted Folders](#) "Parent Letters" folder.

### **Reciprocity**

Any student who meets the initial eligibility criteria in this rule for Gifted education services in one school system is considered eligible to receive Gifted education services in any local education agency/school system within the state. As described in the section on Reciprocity in the Georgia Department of Education *Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services*, a student transferring from one school system to another within the state shall meet the criteria for continuation of Gifted services

established by the local Board of Education of the receiving school system. There is no mandated reciprocity between states unless the student is a dependent of military personnel as provided in *O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2140 et. seq.*

When an eligible Gifted education student transfers from a state funded school or school district in Georgia, Morgan County will carefully review the student's Gifted education records. If Gifted education records are not available, school personnel will contact the transferring district or school to obtain the student's Gifted education records before placing the student into the Gifted education Program. Morgan County Charter School System will honor the Continuation Policy of the transferring school. In other words, if a student was on a continuation or probation plan in the transferring school or school district, then the student should complete the goals outlined in the continuation plan or probation period before entering the Morgan County Charter School System's Gifted Education Program.

Students previously identified as gifted in a state-funded school or school district in Georgia but have a gap in service due to homeschooling or enrollment in a private school will be reviewed and identified on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning for guidance on records review. Gifted education programs are not federally funded or mandated which means each state sets their own guidelines and funding standards. Therefore, a student who is eligible for services in one state is not automatically eligible in Georgia. Thus, the Morgan County Charter School System will complete an eligibility evaluation on out of state transfer students in a timely manner in order to ascertain Georgia eligibility.

#### **Data Collection.**

The Morgan County Charter School System collects and maintains statistical data on the number of students referred for evaluation of eligibility for Gifted education services, the number of students determined eligible for services, and the number of students actually served during the school year. This data is archived and maintained by subgroups, which includes at least the grade level, gender, and ethnic group of the students.

The school system shall evaluate its Gifted Program at least every three years using criteria established by the Georgia Department of Education.


#### **Public Review**

The Morgan County Charter School System makes available for review by the public and the Georgia Department of Education a copy of its administrative procedures for the operation of its Gifted education Program and the Gifted education curricula.

#### **GIFTED EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS**

*The Morgan County Charter School System provides a variety of Programming options to meet the advanced learning needs and interests of Gifted and talented students.*

Students identified as Gifted and whose participation has received parental consent receive a minimum of five segments per week (or the equivalent) of Gifted Education services, using one of the following models approved by the Georgia Department of Education. Parents are notified at the beginning of each school year about the type of services offered. Building administrators should complete a

 Gifted Model Assurances Form FY25 Template annually and submit to the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning by June 15th. Innovative models must be discussed with the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and approved by the Georgia Department of Education annually.

## **Direct Services**

### **Resource Class (K-12) (This model is currently being used by the Morgan County Primary School.)**

1. All students must have been identified as gifted by SBOE criteria.
2. The curriculum must have an academic content foundation based on the Georgia curriculum standards, but it should focus on interdisciplinary enrichment activities and not any one content area.
3. The content and pacing should be differentiated to the degree that the activities are clearly not appropriate for more typical students at that grade level.
4. Gifted students may receive no more than ten gifted FTE segments per week of resource class service.
5. To earn FTE gifted funding, the teacher must
  - have completed content-area GaPSC-approved certification and
  - have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program.

### **Advanced Content (K-12) (This model is currently being used by the Morgan County Middle and High Schools, grades 6 - 12.)**

1. Students are homogeneously grouped based on achievement and interests in any content area: ELA, math, science, social studies, world languages, fine arts, computer science, and Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education-CTAE.
2. The district may elect to include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area.
3. The local district must establish criteria and guidelines that identify gifted and regular education students who will be successful in advanced content classes. 15  
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4. The local board of education must maintain a description of the course curriculum which very clearly shows how the advanced course content, teaching strategies, pacing, process skills, and assessments differ from courses more typical for students at that grade level.
5. Identified gifted students in the advanced content course may be counted at the gifted FTE weight. Students who are not identified as gifted must be counted at the regular education FTE weight.
6. In grades K-5, gifted students may receive no more than two gifted FTE segments per day of advanced content services in the same content area.
7. Gifted Honors (6-12), Cambridge Middle School, IB Middle Years Programme (IBMYP), and Pre-AP Courses to earn FTE gifted funding must have:
  - The teacher must have the appropriate content-area GaPSC-approved certificate in the specific honors course.
  - The teacher has a current GaPSC-issued gifted endorsement.
  - The Cambridge, IB, or Pre-AP teacher must complete the appropriate professional development courses required by Cambridge, College Board, or IB.
8. Gifted FTE segment(s) may not be earned in the K-5 advanced content service model if a gifted student is already receiving a cluster or collaborative gifted FTE segment in the same content area. For example, a student could not earn a gifted FTE segment in advanced content mathematics and earn a gifted FTE segment in the cluster or collaboration model in mathematics.
9. To earn FTE gifted funding, the teacher must
  - Have completed content-area GaPSC-approved certification and
  - Have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program.



**Advanced Content Classes: Advanced Placement (AP) College Courses (9-12) and International Baccalaureate Courses (IB): College and Diploma Courses (11-12) (This model is currently used at Morgan County High School.)**

Students are homogeneously grouped based on achievement and interests in any content area: ELA, math, science, social studies, world languages, fine arts, computer science, and Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education-CTAE. The district may elect to include students who are not identified as gifted but who have demonstrated exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area.

1. The local board of education must maintain a description of the course curriculum, which is based on the College Board, the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework, or the Cambridge framework. These frameworks very clearly show how the AP, IB, and Cambridge advanced course content, teaching strategies, pacing skills, and assessments differ from the courses more typical for students at that grade level.

2. The total class size specified by the SBOE is 21 at the high school level.

3. In order to count the gifted students in grades 9-12 in AP, IB, and/or Cambridge courses at the gifted FTE weight, the teacher must have the following qualifications:

i. Advanced Placement (AP) Courses:

a. Content teacher with appropriate content-area GaPSC-approved certification AND one of the following:

- The teacher has a current GaPSC-issued gifted endorsement/certification OR
- The teacher has completed the appropriate Advanced Placement Summer Institute (APSI) training endorsed by the College Board for that specific AP course and has completed a 10-hour clock gifted professional development course in nature and needs of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted learners

ii. International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Courses or Cambridge high school courses: a. Content teacher with appropriate content-area GaPSC-approved certification AND one of the following:

- The teacher has a current GaPSC-issued gifted endorsement certification OR
- The teacher has completed the appropriate training endorsed by IB for that specific IB course or by Cambridge for that specific Cambridge course and has completed a 10-hour clock gifted professional development course in nature and needs of gifted learners and curriculum differentiation for gifted learners.

**Morgan County High School has a robust AP Capstone program and offers over 20 AP courses. We do not offer the IB program.**

**Cluster Grouping (K-12) *This model is used at Morgan County Primary School (Grades K-2<sup>nd</sup>).***

Identified gifted students are placed as a group (recommended 6-8 students) into an otherwise heterogeneous classroom, rather than being dispersed among all the rooms/courses at that grade level.

1. To earn FTE gifted funding, the teacher must

- have completed content-area GaPSC-approved certification and
- have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program.

2. A maximum of two gifted FTE segments per day may be counted at the gifted weight. The teacher must document the curriculum differentiation for the gifted student(s) by completing individual or group contracts which include the following requirements:

- A description of the course curriculum which is based on Georgia standards that very clearly shows how the advanced course content, teaching strategies, pacing, process skills, and assessments differ from courses more typical for student(s) at that grade level
- Dates and amount of time (in segments) the student(s) will be engaged in the higher-level activities and how the students will be evaluated (formative and summative)



3. The superintendent must sign assurances that this model has been used appropriately and that the proper documentation has been collected and evaluated for its effectiveness.

### **Indirect Services**

#### **Collaborative Teaching (K-12) (This model is used at Morgan County Primary School.)**

Starting the 2024-2025 school year, a maximum of 10 identified gifted students are placed as a group in an otherwise heterogeneous classroom. Direct instruction is provided by the students' regular classroom teacher who collaborates with a designated gifted teacher. Substantial, regularly scheduled collaborative planning must exist between the regular classroom teacher and the gifted teacher. The following requirements must be met to earn the gifted FTE weight:

1. The regular education teacher may only be in this collaborative gifted service delivery model for a maximum of two years.
  - During the two-year cycle, the regular education teachers should complete their gifted endorsements or for the high school regular education teachers, they should have APSI (Advanced Placement Summer Institute), IB, and/or Cambridge coursework plus 10hour clock course requirements.
  - If the endorsement or other requirements are not completed, then there will be no gifted service delivery model attached to his/her classes.
2. The collaborating gifted teacher must have a clear renewable GaPSC-approved gifted education endorsement.
  - In grades 6-12, if the gifted endorsed teacher is working with regular education teachers, the gifted endorsed teacher should have certification in the same content area or similar content areas as the regular education teacher.
  - Elementary gifted endorsed teachers should be certified in elementary education.
3. The gifted endorsed teacher must observe in the regular education teacher's class where the gifted students are served through the collaborative model at least five times per semester for at least 20 minutes per observation. These observations will be documented and submitted to the gifted coordinator or designee.
4. The gifted teacher, the regular classroom teacher, and the gifted student(s) (when appropriate) collaborate and document the development of differentiated instructional strategies, Georgia standards-based curriculum, and evaluation practices.
5. In certified personnel information, the regular education teacher is the teacher of record, and the gifted program teacher is recorded in the consultative subject code. Content areas might include English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, CTAE (Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education), fine arts, and computer science.
6. The superintendent must sign assurances that this model has been used appropriately and that the proper documentation has been collected and evaluated for its effectiveness.
7. The collaborating regular classroom teacher and gifted teacher must be provided adequate planning time which must be documented and approved by the LEA (Local Education Agency). The gifted education teacher must be given one full period each week or its monthly equivalent during which he/she has only gifted education collaborative planning responsibilities (as determined by the local system).
8. The total number of gifted students whose instruction may be modified through this collaborative approach may not exceed ten gifted students per class.
9. Instructional segments that have been modified for gifted learners may be counted at the gifted FTE weight if the gifted education teacher and regular education teacher document the curriculum modifications made by the gifted teachers in the following ways:

- District developed documentation which shows the reason(s) why any student whose instruction is counted at the gifted FTE weight needs an advanced curriculum in that specific content area (e.g., national norm-referenced tests and/or benchmark test),
- A time and discussion log of the collaborative planning sessions between the teachers, and
- Documentation in lesson plans and individual/small group learning contracts noting the differentiated learning experiences for the gifted student(s) and alternative instructional strategies utilized.

10. The gifted collaborating teacher could have a maximum of nine gifted collaborative classes with a maximum of nine regular education teachers. Further the maximum FTE segments per class could be ten. A minimum of a full period for planning per class is required per week or the equivalent.

**Preparations for local level delivery models should be made for the planned discontinuation of the Collaborative Model in FY27.**

**Internship/Mentorship (9-12) (This model is not currently used in the Morgan County Charter School System.)**

Gifted students collaborate with a mentor to explore a profession of interest. The district may include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. The local district must establish criteria and guidelines that identify gifted and regular education students who will be successful in internship/mentorship classes.

- The gifted program internship teacher (gifted endorsed) assigned to supervise the internship/mentorship program maintains close contact with both the participating student(s) and the selected mentor(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals which are based on the approved Georgia standards-based curriculum. One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted FTE weight for gifted students participating in the internship/mentorship program.
- To earn gifted FTE funding for this model, the gifted program internship teacher must have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolling/participating in a gifted endorsement program and be assigned to supervise the internship/mentorship program.
- Each internship/mentorship student must have a contract which documents the work to be completed, the learning goals for the student, the dates and amount of time the student will be participating in the internship/mentorship, how the student's learning will be assessed, and the responsibilities of the gifted program internship teacher and the mentor.
- This internship/mentorship is not intended or designed for the student to receive monetary compensation, but as an internship/mentorship designed for exploration into a profession of interest.
- To ensure adequate time for the gifted program internship teacher to monitor and assist students participating in internships/ mentorships, he/she must be given one full period each day or its weekly equivalent during which he/she has only gifted education internship/mentorship responsibilities (as determined by the local system) for every fifteen students for whom he/she is supervising the internship/mentorship experience.

**Directed Study (9-12)**

Gifted students work under the direction of a gifted endorsed teacher to explore a challenge/subject of interest. Students participate in self-initiated, teacher-directed, and approved courses of study in an area of interest as described in a written contract which is based on curriculum standards, research, and planned presentations. Independent study encourages student autonomy in planning, research, and problem-solving. The district may include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. The local district must establish criteria

and guidelines that identify gifted and regular education students who will be successful in directed study classes. The gifted teacher assigned to supervise the directed program maintains close contact with the participating student(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals which are based on the approved Georgia standards-based curriculum.

- One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted FTE weight for gifted students participating in the directed study program.
- To earn gifted FTE funding for this model, the gifted program directed study teacher must have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively enrolled/participating in a gifted endorsement program and be assigned to supervise the directed study.
- Each student in the directed study must have a contract which documents the work to be completed, the learning goals for the student, the dates and amount of time the student will be working on the directed study, how the student's learning will be assessed, and the responsibilities of the gifted program directed study teacher and any other supporting teachers/staff working with the directed study.
- To ensure adequate time for the gifted program directed study teacher to monitor and assist students participating in the directed study, he/she must be given one full period each day or its weekly equivalent during which he/she has only gifted education directed responsibilities (as determined by the local system) for every 15 students for whom he/she is supervising in the directed study.

#### **Community Service Learning (9-12)** (This model is not currently used in the Morgan County Charter School System.)

Gifted students work under the direction of a gifted endorsed teacher to complete a project(s) with community service learning. The district may include students who are not identified as gifted, but who demonstrate exceptional ability and motivation in a particular content area. The local district must establish criteria and guidelines that identify gifted and regular education students who will be successful in the community service-learning classes. The gifted teacher assigned to supervise the community service-learning program maintains close contact with the participating student(s) to ensure acceptable progress toward the student's individual learning goals which are based on the approved Georgia standards-based curriculum.

- One or two instructional segments per day may be counted at the gifted FTE weight for gifted students participating in the gifted community service-learning program.
- To earn gifted FTE funding for this model, the gifted program community service learning teacher must have a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively participating/enrolled in a gifted endorsement program and be assigned to supervise the community service learning.
- Each student in the community service-learning program must have a contract which documents the work to be completed, the learning goals for the student, the dates and amount of time the student will be working on the community service-learning project, how the student's learning will be assessed, and the responsibilities of the gifted program community service-learning teacher and any other supporting teachers/staff working with the community service-learning project.
- To ensure adequate time for the gifted program community service-learning teacher to monitor and assist students participating in community service learning, he/she must be given one full period each day or its weekly equivalent during which he/she has only gifted education community service-learning responsibilities (as determined by the local system) for every 15 students for whom he/she is supervising in the community service learning.

#### **Innovative Models** (This model is approved for use at Morgan County Elementary School for 5th grade for the 2024-25 school year.)

GaDOE encourages the development of innovative programs for gifted students which are clearly in accordance with the needs of the gifted learners and the philosophy of the district. To earn gifted FTE funding for this model, the gifted teacher for the innovative model must have an appropriate GaPSC-approved certification and a GaPSC-approved gifted endorsement or be actively participating/enrolled in a gifted endorsement program. School districts implementing a gifted program delivery model other than one of the models described above need to keep on file a plan that clearly describes the rationale for the special model, the goals and objectives for the program, the advanced nature of the curriculum which will be provided to gifted learners, how the model's effectiveness will be evaluated, how gifted FTE funding will be generated and documented, and the anticipated fiscal impact of the model (i.e., how many FTEs will be generated).

1. All Innovative model plans must be submitted to the Gifted Education and Advanced Academics unit by July 1, 2024, for review and approval.
2. To ensure appropriate development of the innovative programs for gifted students, school districts may contact the Gifted Education and Advanced Academics unit for guidance. For following years, the Innovative model plans must be submitted by April 15th of that year.
3. The Gifted Education and Advanced Academics team may approve the submissions for one or two years of implementation.
4. The superintendent must sign assurances that this model has been used appropriately and that the proper documentation has been collected and evaluated for its effectiveness.

### **GIFTED EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

*Curricula for Gifted Education learners in the Morgan County School System incorporate the State Board Of Education approved curriculum, currently the [Georgia Standards of Excellence](#).*

All Morgan County Charter School System Gifted education classes provide instruction utilizing the *Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE)*. The curriculum focuses on developing cognitive, learning, research and reference, and metacognitive skills at each grade. This differentiated curriculum for Gifted learners is reviewed and revised (when needed) at least annually. Revisions are reported to the Georgia Department of Education.

Local Board of Education curricula for Gifted students shall focus on developing cognitive learning, research and reference, and metacognitive skills at each grade grouping, using principles of differentiation. Differentiated instruction is a teaching theory based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms (Tomlinson, 2011). The model of differentiated instruction requires teachers to be flexible in their approach to teaching and adjust the curriculum and presentation of information to learners rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum (Hall, 2011).

A differentiated curriculum for Gifted learners includes the following expectations:

**Content:** Complex and challenging subject matter that:

- Requires intellectual struggle
- Utilizes primary documents
- Integrates research skills and methods
- Incorporates relevant and real-life experiences
- Integrates interdisciplinary connections

**Process:** Instructional strategies are designed to:

- Emphasize higher-order thinking, problem-solving and communications skills

- Foster self-initiated and self-directed learning
- Promote creative application of ideas
- Model and encourage academic discussion

**Product:** Gifted student products should demonstrate a developmentally appropriate capacity for:

- Self-directed learning
- Meaningful collaboration
- Effective problem solving of challenging and complex issues
- Effective communication
- Social and emotional understanding of self relative to community, culture, and physical environment

**Environmental:** Physical setting and work conditions to:

- Change the actual place where students work
- Allow flexible time
- Provide opportunities for independent study and in-depth research
- Provide opportunities for mentorship

**Assessment:** Gifted learners need various methods and opportunities to document mastery of curriculum such as:

- Pre/post tests
- Self-assessment through rubrics
- Creation of goal-based checklists
- Conferencing, commentary, and qualitative feedback (Cobb, 2012)

## **PROGRAM DESIGN**

*The Morgan County Charter School System reviews Program design annually and makes changes as appropriate to improve student growth and achievement.*

Students eligible to receive Gifted Education receive the service for a minimum of five segments a week. Progress is reviewed annually for each student in the Gifted education Program and recommendations for continuation of services are made at grading periods based on the Morgan County School System's Continuation of Services Policy/Procedure. Efforts are made at the school level to match the Gifted learner's advanced learning needs and interests, as documented by assessment results, to Programming options.

Differentiated instruction is provided in each delivery model. A variety of delivery models are utilized in the system in order to best meet the unique advanced needs of our Gifted learners. Delivery models include resources classes, collaboration, advanced content classes, and cluster grouping.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*The Morgan County Charter School System provides opportunities for high quality professional development Programs and effective activities to improve the quality of instruction and services to Gifted education students, including mentoring for teachers and other Program personnel, as it relates to the Gifted Education Program.*

Professional development opportunities focusing on activities designed to increase subject matter knowledge of teaching Gifted Education, improve the use of curricula, instructional strategies, and

assessment measures appropriate for Gifted and talented students are offered to all Gifted education teachers and administrators. Teachers and administrators are also given the opportunity, and encouraged to attend virtual or in-person state conferences, university classes, on-line opportunities, IB and/or AP training/classes, and RESA-sponsored workshops throughout the school year.

## **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

*The Morgan County Charter School System provides opportunities for family and community involvement in Gifted education services.*

Teachers of Gifted education meet with parents as part of scheduled parent conferences and/or as requested by the parent/guardian or school staff. High school parent conferences are scheduled in conjunction with the Advanced Placement Parent Involvement guidelines. During these conferences, student achievements, strengths, and weaknesses are discussed, as well as opportunities for family involvement. Parent newsletters are sent out on a scheduled basis and parent volunteers are utilized in the classroom as well. Field Trips are also planned to align with the curriculum throughout the school year and over breaks. Parents are encouraged to attend these out-of-county, out-of-state, and out-of-country excursions with their children, and they play an active role in the planning and on-the-scene instruction and follow-up.

Gifted Programs forms and letters can be found at

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1eB3DWkpzGNM2oDa1OvN3VAEvX4mdGTNJ?usp=sharing>