

Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act

The New Jersey Department of Education requires that each school district provide services to meet the needs of students who have been identified as gifted and talented. Each school district must establish a process to identify students as gifted and talented using multiple measures. These students require modification to their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

Washington Township Gifted and Talented Program

Mission Statement:

The Gifted and Talented program is designed to meet the needs of those students **who require a differentiated curriculum because they have intellectual skills and abilities that significantly differ in degree and dimension from their chronological age peers.** These students come from all socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. A program of studies which differs in depth and scope from the district grade level curriculum will be provided for these students in an environment that addresses their unique learning styles, while **helping them to develop an understanding of their own talents, abilities, strengths and limitations**. This rigorous program of studies includes: challenging, relevant content requiring higher order thinking skills; a focus on the development of independent study; a supportive environment conducive to risk-taking; opportunities for creative expression and problem solving; and collaboration with other students of similar abilities. While this program does not replace the regular classroom content (math, ELA, science, social studies), teachers work collaboratively to support gifted learners in all of their learning settings.

Definition of Giftedness:

Washington Township Schools adhere to the New Jersey State definition of giftedness. Gifted students are: those 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 modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

Identification:

Washington Township School District uses multiple measures to identify the students who are in need of Gifted and Talented Services.

These measures are both qualitative and quantitative, and include standardized test scores (Measures of Academic Progress, CogAT, NJSLA, SAGES, Torrance, among others), behavioral characteristics, writing prompts, subject-area benchmarks, Continental Math League (CML), National Science League (NSL), data collected by classroom/specials teachers, and other measures. Students in the middle school have the opportunity to experience related arts/exploratory courses to meet the needs of individual learners. In addition, an exploratory course designed specifically for academically talented students is offered, or students may choose to explore other areas such as band, orchestra or STEM.

Anyone may nominate a student whom they feel may be in need of services by contacting [Dana Castellana](#) or [Matt Dauchert](#)