

Pennsville School District
Gifted & Talented Program
2025-2026

G&T services in the Pennsville School District are provided in the following grades in the following manner:

9-12 Honors and Advanced Placement Classes

6-8 Honors Language Arts and Honors Science

6-7 Honors Math; 8 Algebra 1

K-5 Differentiated instruction by the classroom teacher and push-in/pull-out from the Gifted and Talented Teacher

Philosophy

Programming for gifted students should be built on students' abilities and needs. The programming should be as divergent as possible and as flexible as can be expected within a public school. The basis for appropriate K-5 gifted programming is to build a foundation for intellectual questioning that will continue throughout the students' lives. This foundation is laid in many areas, regardless of how the student's program is configured. Thinking skills need to be taught and developed to build toward more abstract and involved thinking. These skills need to be nurtured so gifted students can begin to see a broad picture, in which issues may not have right or wrong answers, but be open to many interpretations.

In addition, gifted students need to develop listening and discussion skills. Fostering these skills at an early age ensures communication between individuals and requires thinking that takes into account the thoughts and feelings of others. Equally, learners need a non-threatening atmosphere for the promotion of creativity. Intellectual superiority does not guarantee creativity and creative minds contribute significantly to the advancement of society. Gifted students should be encouraged to work in various groups as well as individually to develop skills in group dynamics and leadership. We live in a world with different types of people and gifted students need opportunities to learn how to manage themselves in situations where they act as leaders and as part of a collaborative team.

Vitally important is the fact that many gifted learners are overlooked due to their status as an ELL student or a student who has other exceptionalities. Our identification procedures should be culturally responsive and consider all the ways giftedness can be expressed. The identification procedure should be consistently revamped and improved to include the identification of all types of learners.

Some General Characteristics of Gifted Children

- Exhibits superior reasoning powers and ability to handle ideas; can readily generalize from specific facts and see subtle relationships; outstanding ability to problem solve

- Exhibits continual intellectual curiosity; asks probing questions; exhibits exceptional interest in the universe and the nature of humankind
- Has a wide range of interests, often of an intellectual nature; develops one (or more than one) interest to an extensive depth
- Quality and quantity of written and spoken vocabulary is superior; is interested in the subtleties of words and their uses
- Is an avid reader and absorbs books well beyond his or her years
- Quickly and easily learns concepts and retains what is learned; recalls important details, concepts, and principles; easily comprehends
- Exhibits careful reasoning when attacking an arithmetical problem; is able to grasp mathematical concepts readily
- Shows creative ability or imaginative expression in activities such as art, music, dance, drama; exhibits sensitivity and finesse in rhythm, movement, and bodily control
- Is able to sustain concentration for lengthy periods of time; shows independence and outstanding responsibility with his or her classroom work
- Can be self-critical when evaluating his or her own efforts; sets realistically high standards for self
- Initiative and originality are exhibited in his or her work; considers problems from various viewpoints and shows flexibility in thinking
- Receptive to new ideas and observes keenly
- Exhibits an ability to communicate with adults in a mature way; shows social poise
- Is excited or enjoys intellectual challenges; shows an alert and subtle sense of humor
- Can be extraordinarily sensitive

Goals of Advanced Studies

- A differentiated curriculum that meets the unique needs of the gifted learned will be provided. The pace of instruction will be flexible and will allow for accelerated learning when it's appropriate. A continuum of differentiated curricular options, instruction approaches, and resource materials will be provided.
- The general education program will integrate gifted education. This will be achieved through specialization in grades 6-12 and differentiation in grades K-5.
- Gifted programming services will be made available to all gifted learners. This program will provide appropriate opportunities to gifted learners not only through specialized courses in grades 6-12 but also through flexible grouping and consistent differentiated instruction in the regular classroom in grades K-5.
- There will be a purposeful evaluation of the Advanced Studies program at the end of each year to determine the effectiveness of programs in meeting the unique needs of gifted learners.
- Gifted learners will be provided with an effective curriculum in which differentiated guidance is available to meet their unique socio-emotional development. Also, underachieving gifted learners will not be omitted from the program, but rather served in a way that helps him or her find a way to effectively develop their talents.

- Educators who are involved with gifted learners will be provided with continuing professional development in the field of gifted education. The educational staff working with gifted learners will help prepare and develop differentiated education plans, materials, and curriculum, as appropriate.
- A comprehensive and cohesive process for student identification for Advanced Studies will be in place. All students will be screened and multiple criteria will be used in order to determine eligibility for the program. Also, nominations for the program will be accepted from any source (teacher, parent, student, etc.)

Role of the Regular Classroom Teacher (K-5)

The regular education teacher is a facilitator of learning and is in a position to differentiate curriculum for the gifted learner on a daily basis. The regular education teacher will be able to identify those students who exhibit the characteristics of a gifted learner. When a student exhibits extensive knowledge of a particular topic or subject, it will be the role of the regular education teacher to seize the opportunity for extension and facilitate further learning for the gifted student. The regular education teacher will use their discretion to allow their curriculum to be altered or replaced, in some cases, in order to meet the unique needs of the gifted learner.

Overview of Advanced Studies

Currently, our K-5 gifted programming includes a variety of options to address needs ranging from:

Differentiation in the classroom

Enrichment/Push in (in a variety of subject areas) and pull-out

Replacement

Acceleration (done during push-in and sometimes by regular classroom teacher)

Independent study opportunities (even with students who are not identified)

Gifted teacher as a resource/consult

Appropriate intellectual challenges/rigor

Creativity options

Choice (process, product, interest/strengths)

Small group environment to enable students the opportunity to connect with similar peers (lends to gifted students' affective needs and sensitive to the socio-emotional and coping needs of special groups of learners)

Cooperative learning opportunities

Higher level thinking strategies through content, materials, instructional delivery

Use of technology

Self reflection/Evaluation

Delivery Methods:

Higher level thinking/project-based learning

Math Opportunities/enrichment not limited to Advanced Studies students

Interpretive questions/shared inquiry through literature (responding to literature-supporting ideas/opinions)

Discussion skill development (Socratic method which is also used in Wit and Widsom)

Development/Enhancement of written expression (all modes including speeches, compare and contrast, historical fiction, etc.)

Independent research skill development

Presentation skills (individual and group)

Critical thinking skills

Creative problem solving

Assessment:

Rubrics

Self evaluation/reflection

Written

Presentations

performance/project-based

Portfolio- electronic (google drive/files)

Students receive feedback through Google classroom and face to face

Time in which services are provided:

Kindergarten and First Grade

Serve primarily as a resource to K-1 teachers.

Examples of how to be a resource to K-1 teachers:

Assisting in modifying the curriculum/adding enrichment activities based on what is being taught in the classroom

Identify resources for the teacher to use for identification as well as modifications

Provide support to teachers with PD opportunities for servicing gifted students in the regular classroom setting

Assist in identifying potentially gifted students in order to know who requires modifications/enrichment

Visit the classroom for observations in order to identify and make suggestions for modifications/enrichment

Second Grade

Serve as a resource to second-grade teachers, as well as a support in the classroom (push in once a week minimum or as the schedule allows)

Examples of how to assist in the classroom setting:

During lessons, sit with potentially gifted students and extend the concept or skill they are working on in class.

Provide instruction and guidance for independent projects that students can work on and eventually present to their class.

Guidance to students can be provided through Google Classroom or in person in a “push-in” situation

Lead whole group enrichment activities that will be ultimately extended to the potentially gifted students. This will allow for more accurate identification of other students who may have been overlooked.

Examples of how I can be a resource to grade 2 teachers:

Assisting in modifying the curriculum/adding enrichment activities based on what is being taught in the classroom

Identify resources for the teacher to use for identification as well as modifications

Provide support to teachers with PD opportunities for servicing gifted students in the regular classroom setting

Assist in identifying potentially gifted students in order to know who requires modifications/enrichment

Visit the classroom for observations in order to identify and make suggestions for

modifications/enrichment

Third Grade

One hour per week of pull out services (ideally more if time/space allows)

Depending on what subject I am pulling them out of, I will be using extension/enrichment materials from Wit and Wisdom as well as iReady Math to challenge students at an appropriate level. As time permits, independent projects and opportunities to showcase creativity and talents will be offered.

A minimum of one hour per week of push-in services

Examples of how I can be a resource to grade 3 teachers in the classroom:

Assisting in modifying the curriculum/adding enrichment activities based on what is being taught in the classroom

Identify resources for the teacher to use for identification, as well as modifications

Provide support to teachers with PD opportunities for servicing gifted students in the regular classroom setting

Assist in identifying potentially gifted students in order to know who requires modifications/enrichment

Visit the classroom for observations in order to identify and make suggestions for

modifications/enrichment

Fourth and Fifth Grade

Three hours per week pull-out services (see attached curriculum for sample projects and lessons)

Provide PD opportunities for teachers in order to ensure that potentially gifted students are being served throughout the week, not just during this pull-out time

Provide instruction and guidance for independent activities that students can work on during classroom time (early finishers)

Use extension suggestions from iReady Math as well as Wit and Wisdom in order to extend learning in the regular classroom, as needed.

Please note:

Services should meet the needs of the student. Concentrating programming through ELA and Math blocks and providing options (differentiating) within assignments, integrating research-based projects and the use of technology, a wide variety of needs can be addressed through individual objectives. At the same time, there should always be the opportunity to be flexible when needed. No single program is the right answer

for all gifted students. We should consider a variety of options ranging from differentiation in the classroom, to enrichment, to replacement, to acceleration or independent studies to address needs.

Gifted Programming in New Jersey:

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/aps/cccs/gandt/>

Gifted Programming Standards (NAGC):

<https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/national-standards-gifted-and-talented-education/pre-k-grade-12>

Identification Form (see link below)

K into 1, 1 into 2, 2 into 3: All students are screened with the use of research based checklists, as well as portfolio assessments. Once those screenings are complete, the classroom teacher and the Advanced Studies teacher will discuss which students need to be considered more closely for the program. A file will be made for those students and the charts below will be used to determine eligibility. If a parent advocates for their child, the chart below will also be used as a way to help determine eligibility.

| Score | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Weight of Score |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----------------|
| Portfolio Assessments and/or Renzulli Scales (Research Based) | | | | | .50 |
| Research based checklist (homeroom teacher) | 20-25 | 15-19 | 10-14 | 5-9 | .25 |
| Other Criteria (Observations, student work samples, grades, commitment to task) | | | | | .25 |

Students scoring an average score of 3 or above are accepted into the Advanced Studies with teacher recommendation.

*Portfolio Assessment Scores (Average these two scores)

| Score | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Portfolio Assessments (Math out of possible 7 points) | 6-7 | 4-5 | 3-4 | 0-2 |

| Score | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Portfolio Assessments (Drawing Start out of 8 possible points) | 7-8 | 4-6 | 2-3 | 0-1 |

3 into 4

| Score | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Weight |
|-------|---|---|---|---|--------|
|-------|---|---|---|---|--------|

| | | | | | of Score |
|---|-----------|-------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| Two Research based Checklists (homeroom and Advanced Studies teacher) | 40-50 | 30-39 | 20-29 | 10-19 | .25 |
| NJSLA (MATH) | Exceeds | Met | Approaching | Partial | .25 |
| NJSLA(LA) | Exceeds | Met | Approaching | Partial | .25 |
| Other Criteria (Observations, student work samples, grades, commitment to task) | Excellent | Good | Fair | Needs Improve ment | .25 |

Students scoring an average score of 3 or above are accepted into Advanced Studies with two teacher recommendations.

Fourth Grade students moving into Fifth grade will be asked to self reflect at the end of every trimester. The teacher will meet with the student and with the classroom teacher to assess whether or not the Advanced Studies program continues to meet the needs of the student based on all of the criteria listed above.

New Students to the district who were in a Gifted and Talented program already will be automatically included until our district can gather enough evidence to see whether or not it will be a good fit for the student.

[Identification Charts](#)