



# **GIFTED SERVICES HANDBOOK**

## WHAT IS GIFTED? WHO IS GIFTED?

### DEFINITION OF GIFTED STUDENTS

Gifted students, as defined in the Ohio Revised Code (3324.01), are those who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. These students possess superior intellectual abilities, superior academic abilities, superior creative thinking, and/or superior ability in the visual and performing arts.

### OHIO LAW REGARDING GIFTED

Ohio law mandates that school districts provide opportunities to assess children for gifted identification. Using state approved assessment instruments; districts are required to provide testing opportunities to determine possible identification in the following areas:

| SUPERIOR COGNITIVE ABILITY                                                                                    | SPECIFIC ACADEMIC ABILITY                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | CREATIVE THINKING ABILITY                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | VISUAL OR PERFORMING ARTS ABILITY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Score two standard deviations above the mean minus the standard error of measurement on an intelligence test. | Perform at or above the 95 <sup>th</sup> percentile at the national level on a standardized achievement test of specific academic ability in that field. <i>A child may be identified as gifted in more than one specific academic ability field.</i> | Score one standard deviation above the mean minus the standard error of measurement on an intelligence test and attain a sufficient score, as established by the Department, on a test of creative ability or a checklist of creative behavior. | Demonstrate to a trained individual through a display of work or portfolio, an audition, or other performance or exhibition, superior ability in a visual or performing arts area and attain a sufficient score, as established by the Department, on a checklist of behaviors related to a specific arts area. |

Lakota Local Schools only selects instruments approved by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) for the screening, assessment and identification of children who are gifted. The district ensures selection of instruments that will allow for the appropriate identification of minority and disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students for whom English is a second language. Additionally, Lakota Local Schools assures that the district administers, scores, and reports testing for gifted identification in accordance with the test publisher's instructions and the Ohio Department of Education guidelines.

## HOW IS A STUDENT IDENTIFIED GIFTED?

### IDENTIFICATION

Ohio law mandates that school districts develop a plan to identify students who meet the state requirement for gifted identification in grades K through 12. Once identified as gifted, the student is included on a district report to the state of Ohio and the family is notified of the gifted identification. Also, once a student is identified, they remain identified as gifted throughout their education.

## DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION PLAN

The Lakota Local School District provides all students an equal opportunity to be screened for potential giftedness. The district employs the following procedures:

- Whole grade assessments for cognitive ability using the Inview assessment are administered in the 2nd and in the 5th grade.
- Whole grade assessments for specific academic ability in the areas of reading and math are administered two to three times per year in grades 2-8 using the MAP assessment. Whole grade assessments for specific academic ability in the areas of science and social studies using the Terra Nova assessment are administered in 5th grade.
- The district provides cognitive (only) testing opportunities during the school year upon request. A 2nd opportunity for academic identification is not offered due to the Whole Group Testing noted above already in place. The online Gifted Identification Referral Form is located on the Gifted Services page: [www.lakotaonline.com/gifted](http://www.lakotaonline.com/gifted). Navigate to the Identification and Testing Page.
- A student may be referred for gifted identification assessment by a parent/guardian, sibling, teacher, counselor, psychologist, administrator, peer, or self. A student's initial assessment shall be completed within 90 days of referral.
- The district only selects instruments approved by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) for the screening, assessment and identification of children who are gifted.
- The district ensures selection of instruments that will allow for the appropriate identification of minority and disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students for whom English is a second language.
- The district adheres to accommodations identified in a student Individualized Education Plan, 504 Plan or Language Development Plan.
- Upon request, the district reviews the cumulative records of all newly enrolled students transferring into the district. Those students meeting the criteria for gifted identification and/or service are notified. Additionally, a parent/guardian of a transfer student may request screening and the student will be assessed within 90 days of referral.
- The district accepts scores on assessment instruments approved by ODE from other school districts and trained personnel outside the school district.
- The district provides parents/guardians with written notification of any assessment results within 30 days of receiving results.
- The district provides an opportunity for parents/guardians to appeal any decision about the results of any screening procedure or assessment, the scheduling of students for assessment, the placement of a student in any program, or the receipt of services. See process at end of Handbook.

## TESTING

Whole grade assessments are administered to all students at 2nd and 5th grade. Small group screening opportunities (called Second Opportunity Testing for cognitive ID only) are offered throughout the year by request. We provide this testing during the school day. These opportunities are for students who already have a non-qualifying score on file in a given area. The online Gifted Identification Referral Form can be found on the district website [www.lakotaonline.com/gifted](http://www.lakotaonline.com/gifted).

Lakota Local School District will accept outside testing scores if administered by an appropriately licensed professional and the assessment tool is on the state of Ohio Chart of Approved Gifted Identification/Screening Instruments.

If a child does not qualify for gifted identification or service after two attempts, and parents would like a third opportunity, they may do so by scheduling a test with a licensed private psychologist at their own expense and have the results sent to the Department of Gifted Services for review.

- ★ A change of placement will not occur as a result of second opportunity testing administered during the current academic year.
- ★ All testing completed during the current academic year is for service the following year.
- ★ Students new to Lakota should contact the building principal regarding testing.

## REFERRING YOUR CHILD FOR GIFTED SCREENING & ASSESSMENT

A Parent/Guardian has the right to request that their child be screened for possible gifted identification. This request is a referral. A child may be referred for gifted identification assessment by a parent/guardian, sibling, teacher, counselor/psychologist, administrator, peer, or self.

To request an assessment please fill out the online Gifted Identification Referral Form found on the district website: <http://www.lakotaonline.com/gifted>. Navigate to the Identification and Testing Page. Gifted Services will contact the family once an assessment window has been scheduled for the student.

## STUDENTS NEW TO THE DISTRICT

Upon request, the district reviews the cumulative records of all newly enrolled students. Those students meeting the criteria for gifted identification and/or service are notified. Additionally, a parent/guardian of a transfer student may request screening. The student will be assessed within 90 days of the referral.

The department's first step is to contact the previous school to obtain test records so that we may determine if qualifying scores already exist. Unfortunately, there is no consistent pattern as to how long this takes; and, in some cases, it can take two months. Parents/Guardians can help speed up the process by either providing copies of test records or having test records sent directly to the Gifted Services Department.

Upon receipt and review of the records, parents will be informed if a child qualifies or if testing is necessary. If testing is necessary, the district offers a summer testing session. A new student can be tested once for service in the upcoming school year.

Students who enter the district during the school year are also eligible for testing for possible gifted identification. If students enter the district with current, qualifying scores on any state-approved test, the student will be provided gifted services for that grade level at the earliest possible time.

If the student arrives in the district without qualifying scores, a parent/guardian may request that tests be administered to the student, and the district will schedule testing at the earliest possible time.

## WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

### GIFTED SERVICE

In accordance with state law, the criteria for participation in Lakota's Gifted Services are established by the district. Some gifted students' needs are addressed in the regular classroom, and some gifted students may qualify for participation in additional programs. Class options vary from year to year and are dependent upon the number of students identified, the areas of identification, and staffing. Service offerings will be consistent within the district, and students who meet the service criteria will have equal access to services.

### WRITTEN EDUCATION PLANS

In order to report a student as served to the department of education, a student must have a Written Education Plan in place. Written Education Plans (WEPs) are documents outlining services for identified students. A copy of the student's WEP is accessible through the Home Access Center (HAC). The WEP describes the service(s) that a child receives, the staff member responsible for the service(s) and the goals to be met. Evaluation of the student's progress is an on-going process, and a student reflection and goal setting will be used to document the student's performance.

### A GUIDE TO LAKOTA'S GIFTED PROGRAMS

#### Gifted Criteria and Class Placement

**Kindergarten:** Teachers at the early childhood buildings rely on a variety of resources to enrich and challenge students that are beginning to show signs of advancement. Teachers communicate regularly with parents about the various enrichment opportunities occurring in the classroom. Teachers also utilize a classroom structure called "workshop" to allow students to work at different levels within the same classroom.

**First and Second Grade:** First and second grade students who are identified as gifted in either reading or math will be placed in a cluster group within a classroom. That means that groups of 5-10 identified students are placed in the same classroom to promote several benefits including students are able to work with peers of the similar ability level and teachers are able to differentiate for this group within the regular classroom setting.

**Third through Fifth Grade:** Math Plus is a math block that includes grade level math standards and personalized enrichment taught by a classroom teacher receiving specific professional learning around gifted students. The Gifted Intervention Specialist (GIS) supports the Math Plus teachers with model curriculum and by creating learning opportunities for students like the Noetic math contest. This course provides students exposure to grade level math curriculum and focuses on extending the breadth and depth of the standards. Students will apply mathematical concepts to authentic situations and enhance critical and creative thinking through project-based learning. Students are placed in Math Plus if they have been identified as gifted in math or have a superior cognitive identification. Students will not be moved into the course after the start of the school year.

ELA Plus is a reading and writing block that includes grade level ELA standards and personalized enrichment taught by a classroom teacher receiving specific professional learning around gifted students. The Gifted Intervention Specialist (GIS) supports the ELA Plus teachers with model curriculum and by creating learning opportunities for students like the WordMasters vocabulary contest. Students will be clustered together to provide them opportunity to work with like-ability peers to discuss, read and apply literary concepts in ELA. Cluster groups are groups of gifted identified students in reading or have a superior cognitive identification. Students will not be moved into the course after the start of the school year.

**Sixth Grade:** Sixth grade has advanced class offerings in math, language arts, science, and social studies. Placement is not determined through the Gifted Department. Gifted identification does not guarantee placement in these classes. Sixth grade advanced classes are available to students who have a history of strong achievement. Entrance into these classes is based on multiple data points including MAP, cognitive ability, state achievement assessments and grades. The data points have weights, and there is a threshold established each year. Please seek information from the building principal about these classes.

**Seventh Grade and beyond:** Many advanced, honors, CCP (College Credit Plus) and AP (Advanced Placement) courses are a part of the Lakota course offerings for every 7-12 student. In some instances, eighth grade students are eligible to take multiple courses for high school credit. Early graduation is also a form of secondary acceleration. Please contact the school guidance counselor to find out what programming is available to advanced learners. Gifted Services are provided to students in junior high who are either identified as cognitively gifted or identified in all four academic areas. Students will be invited to a small group monthly with a Gifted Student Advisor to focus on social emotional development, leadership and study skills.

## WHAT IS ACCELERATION?

### ACCELERATION

“Acceleration” is placement in an advanced level class or grade without taking all consecutive courses, or skipping a grade. Parents of gifted students may consider acceleration for a variety of reasons. The district accelerates students when appropriate after careful evaluation of the student’s level of performance and readiness, using the IOWA Acceleration Tool.

There are four forms of acceleration: early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, whole-grade acceleration, acceleration in individual subject areas (referred to as a single-subject acceleration), and early high school graduation. Parents considering acceleration should contact the child’s principal for information about referring the child for evaluation.

### EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN OR FIRST GRADE

Parents who see evidence that their student is advanced in ability and achievement can consider Early Entrance to Kindergarten or First Grade. Early Entrance considerations are made in late May to early June for the following year. The process involves ability and above-level testing and team consideration of social/emotional factors that will affect the child in the classroom. Please see the Acceleration and Advancement page on the Gifted Services website in order to obtain more information.

### SUBJECT ACCELERATION

In a few instances, a student’s ability in a particular subject area may be so advanced that their needs are best met by an above grade-level curriculum. Subject acceleration is considered by a whole team that includes the parent, building staff, administrators, and a representative from the Gifted Department. Multiple data points are considered when determining subject-acceleration for a child. This process begins through a discussion with the classroom /subject area teacher and the building principal.

### WHOLE GRADE ACCELERATION

In even fewer instances, a student’s ability and achievement across the entire curriculum may be so advanced that their educational needs may be best met at a higher-grade level. The decision to meet a student’s needs through whole grade acceleration is made very carefully and takes into account both academics and the social and emotional needs of the student. Whole grade acceleration is considered by a

team that includes the parent, building staff, administrators, and a representative from the Gifted Department. Multiple data points are considered and, as required by the Ohio Department of Education, are processed through the Iowa Acceleration Scale. This process begins through a discussion with the classroom and subject area teacher, along with the building principal.

## **EARLY GRADUATION**

Some students take advantage of the option to graduate in less than four years. This is processed through the counseling department at the high school and requires the student to meet the credit requirements of graduation as determined by Ohio Department of Education guidelines and Lakota Local School District guidelines.

## **LAKOTA APPEAL PROCESS**

A parent/guardian may request further consideration of a student based on the bullet points below by submitting an Appeal Form. The form can be found on the Gifted Services webpage (<http://lakotaonline.com/gifted>) and needs to be submitted to the assistant principal.

An appeal requests the reconsideration of the results of any part of the identification process, including the following:

- Screening procedure or assessment instrument (which results in identification)
- The scheduling of children for assessment
- The placement of a student in a service, or
- Receipt of services

For enrolled students, the form should be turned in to the Assistant Principal of the child's building of attendance. The appeal will be reviewed at the building level within 30 days.

For early entrance to kindergarten or first grade appeals, Lakota Board Policy 5112 outlines the appeal to be sent to the superintendent. The appeal will be reviewed within 30 days and the decision will be final.

### **Steps in the appeal process:**

- The Assistant Principal or designee will confer by phone or in person with the parent. If the dispute can be resolved at this level, the Assistant Principal or designee will give written notice of the decision within 30 days of the appeal.
- If an agreement is not reached, the Assistant Principal will convene a committee to discuss relevant information and make a decision regarding the appeal. The committee must include personnel from the Gifted Department and the building's Gifted Intervention Specialist. The parent may be invited to the meeting or may meet with a committee chair to discuss the recommendation of the committee.
- If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision, he/she must send a letter to the Gifted Department. The Director will confer with the parent/guardian in person or by phone. Other school personnel may be requested to participate in the conference. Written documentation of the decision and the reasons must be sent within 30 days of the referral.
- If a resolution is not reached, the Superintendent or designee will convene a meeting with the parent/guardian, which may include other school personnel. The Superintendent or designee will issue a written final decision within 30 days of the appeal. This written notice should include the reason for the decisions.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM GIFTED SERVICES**

If, at any time, a parent or student wishes to withdraw from gifted programs or services, a Change of Service Options Form must be completed. The form can be found on the district website and should be submitted to the building administrator. Re-entry to the program may occur in the next school year upon written request (ORC-3234.03).

Prior to submission of a Change of Service Options form, a team meeting should be held at the building level and include, but is not limited to, the parent(s), a representative of the building staff and administration, the Gifted Department, and the student (as appropriate).