

AN OVERVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS THOUGHT TO BE MENTALLY GIFTED

CHAPTER 16

I. SCREENINGS

If a teacher or parent suspects that a child may be mentally gifted, referrals for screenings should be made directly to the School Psychologist.

The school psychologist will secure parental permission to administer a brief measure of intellectual functioning. If the student earns a composite score of 125 or higher, a referral for a formal Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) will be made.

II. THE GIFTED MULTIDISCIPLINARY EVALUATION (GMDE)

The Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education Services, School Psychologist, or Building Principal must obtain written parental consent to conduct an initial GMDE. A Notice of Parental Rights for Gifted Children must accompany the Permission to Evaluate.

The Permission to Evaluate (PTE) must list any procedures to be used to evaluate the student (assessment of intellectual functioning, assessment of academic achievement, assessment of communication skills, ecological assessment, physical therapy assessment, etc). No one test of type of test may be used as the only measure to determine giftedness. The Permission must also list the expected date(s) for the evaluation to be completed.

A parent may request a GMDE at any time, but there is a limit of one request per school term.

A Gifted Multidisciplinary Reevaluation must occur before there is a change in educational placement and upon recommendation of the GIEP team.

The Process

The School Psychologist, Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education Services, or Building Principal secures parental permission using the state promulgated Permission to Evaluate form. Once parental permission is secured, the School Psychologist, or his/her designee, will arrange for staff and specialists to gather data and participate as team members.

A request for parental information will be sent with the Permission to Evaluate form.

The Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (GMDT) shall be formed on the basis of the student's needs and shall be comprised of the student's parents, a certified school psychologist, persons familiar with the student's educational experience and performance,

one or more of the student's current teachers, persons trained in the appropriate evaluation techniques, and when possible, persons familiar with the student's cultural background. A single member of the GMDT may meet two or more of the specified qualifications.

A structured GMDT meeting is not required. However, the district has the option to hold such a meeting. (GMDT meetings are usually held for initial referrals.) Any GMDT meeting should include the parent as a team member. *Efforts to secure parent participation need to be documented.*

If unable to attend a GMDT meeting, the parent or any member may participate by phone or by submission of written information. If no GMDT meeting is held, the school psychologist will synthesize data from the various team members, including the parent information.

The gifted multidisciplinary evaluation team (GMDT) considers all evaluation data and makes recommendations as to whether the student displays characteristics of mental giftedness and whether the student is in need of specially designed instruction. If both determinations are made, the team then makes recommendations regarding special education and related services needed that will enable the student to participate in acceleration or enrichment programs, or both, as appropriate, and to receive services according to the student's intellectual and academic abilities and needs. The GMDT shall include a certified school psychologist.

The Gifted Written Report (GWR)

The gifted multidisciplinary evaluation is to be completed within 45 school days of the date the district receives parental permission. The Gifted Written Report (GWR) must be written within 10 school days after the GMDE is complete. A copy of the GWR must be given to the parent within 5 school days after its completion.

The school psychologist, or his/her designee, will act as recorder to write the report. If a meeting is held, the report can be finalized at the meeting. If no meeting is held, the recorder synthesizes information from all GMDT members to create the report. The report will also list the names and positions of the members of the GMDT. No signatures are required.

If no meeting is held, the recorder is responsible to disseminate the final report to all team members within the required timelines.

III. GIFTED INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (GIEP)

A period of 10 school days must elapse between the date of the GWR and GIEP Team meeting, however, the parent may elect to proceed with the GIEP before the expiration of this 10-day period. Documentation of parental decision to waive the 10-day period must occur.

The GIEP process requires a structured meeting to be held at a mutually agreed upon time and date. An IEP team meeting must be held within 30 calendar days of the date of the Gifted Written Report (GWR). The state promulgated "Invitation to Participate in the GIEP Team Meeting" must be sent to the parent and other team members at least 10 days prior to the proposed meeting date and time. The Notice of Parental Rights for Gifted Students must accompany the parents' invitation. *All efforts to secure parental participation in the GIEP team meeting must be documented.*

The Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education Services or the Building Principal will serve as the School District representative at the GIEP team meeting and serve as the chairperson. Other required members of the team are the student's parents; the child, if the parents choose to have him/her participate; and one or more of the child's current teachers.

The GIEP team will review the GWR and will determine if the child is mentally gifted and in need of specially designed instruction. If these determinations are made, a GIEP will be written based upon the evaluation data. Educational placement and other support services will also be determined.

The chairperson will assign a member to write the GIEP. The GIEP may not be finalized prior to the meeting.

GIEP team members are typed or printed on the first page of the GIEP. Again, no signatures are required.

The GIEP is to be implemented within 10 school days of its completion.

The GIEP must be reviewed on an annual basis.

The copy of the GIEP may be presented to the parent at the conclusion of the GIEP team meeting. If the parent was not in attendance, a copy of the GIEP must be sent certified mail or delivered in person with the Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA). A Notice of Parental Rights for Gifted Students will accompany the NORA.

IV. NOTICE OF RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT (NORA)

The NORA is issued by the Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education Services or Building Principal. The Superintendent or his board appointed designee signs it. The NORA will summarize the recommendation for the student's educational program.

The student's exceptionality, if one, will be noted in the narrative sections of the document.

The Notice of Parent's Rights for Gifted Students must be presented and explained to the parent with the NORA at the conclusion of the GIEP team meeting. If the parent did not attend the meeting the NORA, with a copy of the GIEP and Notice of Parent's Rights, will be mailed certified.

If mailed, a return envelope should be included for convenience.

Special education services are effective as soon as possible after agreement on the NORA but no longer than 10 school days following the development of the GIEP. Follow-up is necessary for any NORA which is not returned, or on which a disagreement is noted. A student cannot begin to receive special education services without a NORA signed by the parents that indicates agreement with the recommended assignment.

V. GENERAL INFORMATION

Once identified as gifted and receiving specially designed instruction, the gifted student is to receive gifted education until the student

- Graduates from high school,
- Is no longer of school age,
- A GIEP team determines that the student no longer needs gifted education.

If a student is identified with dual exceptionalities, for example Other Health Impairment and Mentally Gifted, the procedures in Chapter 14 take precedence, and the needs shall be fully addressed following Chapter 14 procedures.