

T.A.G. PROGRAM
(Talented, Academically Gifted)

DOVER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Dover, Ohio

TALENTED AND GIFTED PROGRAM

K-5 Staff:

Carla J. Birney – Assistant Superintendent

Marina Colombo – Gifted Coordinator

Buffy Monteith - TAG Teacher Grades 3 & 4

Marina Colombo - TAG Teacher Grades 2-5

Sara Johnson - School Psychologist

Building Principals

Classroom Teachers

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILD

The gifted child is one whose high potential and psychological differences result in the need for a range and type of study different from what most pupils require. These are not the elite students of the school, but a unique group whose needs are not entirely met by the regular classroom program. Differences often exhibited by gifted children include these factors.

1. Extreme Curiosity: These children have the need to know about a lot of things.
2. Outstanding Creative/Cognitive Ability: Gifted children often are able to think of things in ways that are quite different from most children.
3. Leadership Ability: Many gifted children are able to organize groups and work with them efficiently while causing little or no friction.
4. Independent: Gifted children may have the ability to direct their own investigations into areas of interest and be able to work without adult supervision.
5. Perceptive/Sensitive: Gifted children often are very much in tune with the feelings of other persons in their environment and can identify others' needs or wants. Their own personal feelings may be deep and they may exhibit greater extremes of emotion.
6. Self-Expressive: Gifted children tend to express themselves well from very early ages. However, with all their interests and abilities, they need many different ways to present their thoughts, feelings, and inspirations. They need many avenues to the outside world.
7. Rapid Learning Pace: Some gifted children can move through various school subjects or interest areas at a very rapid pace.

DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS

Giftedness consists of an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits - these clusters being above average general abilities, high levels of task commitment, and high levels of creativity. Gifted children are those possessing or being capable of developing this composite set of traits and applying them to any potentially valuable area of human performance. Children who manifest or are capable of developing an interaction among the three clusters require a wide variety of educational opportunities and services that are not ordinarily provided through regular instructional programs.

PHILOSOPHY FOR THE INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

The philosophy of Dover City Schools includes a commitment to recognize and develop the unique interests and abilities of all students. In keeping with this belief, a program should be provided to enable each student to reach his/her potential.

Each intellectually gifted student is a unique individual having special needs and talents. The student is capable of functioning and producing at a higher level of learning in one or more areas compared to other students.

Thus, to fully realize their contributions to self and society, these students require differentiated educational programs and/or services commensurate with their abilities and beyond those normally provided by the general educational program. The program will enable the student to achieve personal fulfillment and to become a productive, contributing member of society. Our desire is to see that gifted and talented students get a public education that fulfills their needs and ability to learn, at a pace that is individually appropriate and that continues to excite, encourage, and challenge them through their senior year.

GOALS - GIFTED

1. To provide an environment that values and enhances intelligence, talent, leadership and intuitive ability.
2. To provide an environment that values and enhances affective growth.
3. To develop each individual's highest level of achievement.
4. To develop healthy self-concepts while fostering responsible interaction within their environment.
5. To establish diverse programs that meet the intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and psychological needs of these students.
6. To develop programs that are an integrated part of the total educational program and utilize all available resources within the school and community.
7. To develop communication opportunities for teachers, administrators, and parents in an effort to promote acceptance and understanding of the gifted child and program.
8. To develop evaluation techniques to assess the gifted program.

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS USED BY THE DISTRICT FOR GIFTED IDENTIFICATION

Information for Parents

The district uses the following assessment instruments for screening and identification. The screening criteria is included. For identification, see the additional brochure, *Identification of Children Who are Gifted: Excerpts from HB 282*.

Superior Cognitive Ability

(See tests in Specific Academic Ability also)

- ACT Assessment Program
 - Screening Criteria 94th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 95th percentile
- Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, 7th or 8th Ed.
 - Screening Criteria 125th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 126th percentile
- Stanford Achievement Test Series, 9th or 10th Edition
 - Screening Criteria 94th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 95th percentile
- Stanford – Binet Intelligence Scales, 5th Edition
 - Screening Criteria 126th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 127th percentile
- Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test (UNIT)
 - Screening Criteria 125th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 126th percentile
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, 4th Ed (WISC IV)
 - Screening Criteria 126th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 127th percentile
- Woodcock-Johnson III, (WJIII)
 - Screening Criteria 126th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 127th percentile

Specific Academic Ability

- ACT Assessment Program (AAP)
 - Screening Criteria 94th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 95th percentile
- Stanford Achievement Tests Series, 9th or 10th Ed.
 - Screening Criteria 94^h percentile
 - Identification Criteria 95th percentile

- Woodcock-Johnson-Revised Test of Cognitive Ability
 - Cognitive Battery
 - Screening Criteria 94th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 95th percentile
 - Form A, Achievement Battery
 - Screening Criteria 94th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 95th percentile
- Basic Achievement Skills Inventory
 - Screening Criteria 94th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 95th percentile
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, (WIAT)
 - Screening Criteria 94th percentile
 - Identification Criteria 95th percentile

Creative Thinking Ability

- Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scale (GATES), Creative Thinking: Section 4, Items #21-30
 - Screening Criteria 82
 - Identification Criteria 83
- Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, 7th or 8th Ed.
 - Screening Criteria SAI – 109 or higher
 - Identification Criteria SAI – 110 or higher
- Scales for Rating the Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students-Creativity 1997 Version (Creativity Part II)
 - Screening Criteria 50
 - Identification Criteria 51
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, 4th Ed. (WISC IV)
 - Screening Criteria Intelligence Quotient – 111 or higher
 - Identification Criteria Intelligence Quotient – 112 or higher

Visual and/or Performing Arts Ability

- ODE Rubrics for Scoring Performance Rubric, Forms A & B
 - Screening Criteria Visual Art 20, Drama 19, Music 17, Dance 25
 - Identification Criteria Visual Art 21, Drama 20, Music 18, Dance 26
- Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scale (GATES)
 - Visual Art, Drama, Music, Dance
 - Screening Criteria 77
 - Identification Criteria 78
- Scales for Rating the Behavior Characteristics of Superior Students
 - Screening Criteria Visual Art 52, Drama 47, Music 33
 - Identification Criteria Visual Art 53, Drama 48, Music 34

If you have questions, please call your building principal or Carla Birney at 364-7104.

DISTRICT POLICY AND PLAN FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN WHO ARE GIFTED

Information for Parents

Definition

"Gifted" means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment and who are identified under division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of Section 3324.03 of the Revised Code.

Screening and Assessing

The district uses a three-part approach to screen students who perform or show potential for performing at high levels of accomplishment in the areas of superior cognitive ability, specific academic ability, creativity, and visual and/or performing arts.

STAGE I:

Pre-Assessment

The pre-assessment part of the process involves gathering student data from variety of sources including teacher, parent, and peer nominations, grades, portfolios, observations, review of student records, and outstanding products or performances, etc. All students are involved in the pre-assessment pool.

By using the pre-assessment process, the district ensures access to screening and further assessment by all district children, including culturally or linguistically diverse children, children from low socioeconomic backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children for whom English is a second language.

STAGE II:

Assessment for Screening

The screening stage examines the data gathered from the pre-assessment stage and determines if additional assessment is necessary.

In making decisions about additional assessment, existing test data for students is not the sole determining criteria. School personnel examine all available information about a student to determine if an evidence of possible giftedness exists for that student and conduct necessary additional assessment.

District-determined cut-off scores, to move students from screening stage to the assessment stage, are lower than the scores necessary for identification. Parents must be notified within 30 days of the results of screening.

STAGE III:

Assessment for Identification

Assessment strategies provide additional data necessary for an identification decision and the delivery of services. Strategies for additional assessment include the individual and group testing requirements of Sections 3324.01-3324.07 of the Ohio Revised Code; and as described in the Gifted Identification pamphlet.

Once additional assessment has been completed, the data obtained throughout the stages of identification are evaluated, the identification decision is made and student's educational needs are determined.

Referral

The district ensures there are ample and appropriate scheduling procedures for assessments and reassessment using.

- Group tests
- Individually-administered tests;
- Audition, Performance;
- Display of work;
- Exhibition; and
- Checklists.

Children may be referred on an ongoing basis, based on the following:

- Child request (self-referral);
- Teacher recommendation;
- Parent/guardian request;
- Child referral of peer; and
- Other (e.g., psychologist, community members, principal, gifted coordinator, etc.)
- Referral forms may be obtained from the building principal, gifted coordinator, or from the district website www.dover.k12.oh.us

Upon receipt of a referral, the district will

- Follow the process as outlined in this brochure; and
- Notify parents of results of screening or assessment and identification.

The district shall provide at least two opportunities a year for assessment in the case of children requesting assessment or recommended for assessment by teachers, parents, or other children.

General

The district accepts scores on assessment instruments approved for use by the Ohio Department of Education provided by other school districts and/or trained personnel outside the school district.

Transfer

The district ensures that any child transferring into the district will be assessed within 90

days of the transfer at the request of the parent. Parents shall contact the building principal.

Services

The district ensures equal opportunity for all district students identified as gifted to receive any services offered by the district.

Written Education Plans

Each child who participates in the TAG program will have, on file, a Written Education Plan (WEP). Parents will meet with the TAG teacher at the fall conference where goals will be established for the student. These goals may include, but are not limited to:

- organizational skills
- study skills
- social skills
- content knowledge
- specific academic goals in content areas

Teachers and parents will meet again at the spring conference to follow-up on the goals that were set for the student. At the spring conference, goals may be discussed for the following school year. The TAG program at Dover City Schools is taught by Gifted Intervention Specialists who will be responsible for the service delivery. Parents will be provided a copy of the WEP after each conference.

Withdrawal

If at anytime, a student wishes to withdraw from gifted programs or services, the request should be written by the parent or child if they feel any section or total program is not of benefit to the child. If children request to withdraw, parents will be notified.

Appeal Procedure

An appeal by the parent is the reconsideration of the results of any part of the identification process which would include

- Screening procedure or assessment instrument (which results in identification);
- The scheduling of children for assessment;
- The placement of a student in any program; and
- Receipt of services.

Parents should submit a letter to the superintendent or designee outlining the nature of the concern.

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 decision(s).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Dover City Schools provides enrichment instruction for those students identified as talented and gifted in grades K-12. Those services may include, but are not limited to: a differentiated curriculum, cluster grouping, mentorships, accelerated course work, the post-secondary enrollment option under Chapter 3365 of the Revised Code, advanced placement, honors classes, magnet schools, self-contained classrooms, independent study, and other options identified in rules adopted by the Department of Education. In grades 3-5 the Dover gifted program will be a self-contained class that meets one half-day Monday through Friday and will serve the academic areas of math, science, and social studies. The time spent in the gifted classroom totals 165 minutes per day or 825 minutes per week that students are working directly with their intellectual peers. Third and fourth grade students are transported to South Elementary School for TAG instruction and fifth graders are transported to East Elementary School for TAG instruction. Not all those students in grades 3-5 identified as gifted according to Ohio Department of Education guidelines will be served in the self-contained TAG classroom. All students will be assessed and selected by the selection committee each year.

Special instruction by the gifted intervention specialist will be provided to all students in the district, in grades 2-5, forty minutes a week for one semester. This service is referred to as Bridging and includes lessons with higher order thinking skills, problem solving, visual thinking skills, and deductive reasoning.

The learning environment will provide a wealth of educational experiences which will allow students to develop high level cognitive creative thinking and affective skills. It will allow and encourage students to express themselves in creative ways through individual contributions and projects. By bringing students to the self-contained gifted classroom in a small group, they will be able to build group process and interpersonal skills and will have opportunities for greater student/student interaction and learning.

The classroom teacher and TAG teacher have divided the academic studies. The regular curriculum will be compacted and the learning objectives will be followed to allow the TAG students to progress to the higher levels of thinking.

The regular curriculum and objectives will be developed and evaluated. The students will be pre-tested on the learning materials to allow the teacher the opportunity to teach to the students' specific needs and to have time to introduce new materials.

In the self-contained gifted classroom component, the educational climate will be one in which each child will encounter an open and receptive environment conducive to learning, which will allow for open communication between teacher and student and among students, as well as promote exploration and experimental avenues for the gifted student. The teacher will serve as a facilitator for the learning process.

An inter-relationship between the gifted self-contained classroom and the regular school program will provide gifted students with continuity in their instructional programs.

One supporting the other seems to be the most effective and successful way of providing for the gifted child.

The cluster grouping component will allow the identified gifted students at the same grade level in each school to be grouped in the same classroom. The "cluster" teacher is trained to work with gifted students in the classroom. The cluster teacher and the TAG teacher are in contact with each other to assure a smooth program for the students.

PROCEDURE FOR PLACEMENT (Revised 6/08)

Selection of students to participate in the gifted student program will be based on the Model Policies and Plan for the Identification of Children who are Gifted instruments. Students selected for the Gifted Program will be identified as superior cognitive and specific academic in the area of mathematics. Approximately 3-5% of the district's population will be served and/or all students who meet district minimum criteria. Teacher/pupil ratio per resource teacher with a recommended student load as specified by Rules for School Foundation Units for Gifted Children will be strictly adhered to.

A student enters the candidate list at his/her score level. A student may remain in the program as long as the program is in existence and as long as the program fulfills the child's needs, or until the child chooses to exit. Students are selected from the top of the list as vacancies occur in the program. No "bumping" is permitted. New students who have been part of a gifted program in another school district will be accepted provided the assessment instruments used by the student's former district are on the list approved by the Department of Education under Section 3324.02 of the Revised Code.

Acceleration Policy

Referrals for students to be evaluated and assessed should be made to the building principal. Students referred and having parental permission will be tested using a variety of assessments. The assessments will be reviewed by an acceleration evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate and available learning environment for the students.

The acceleration committee will issue a written recommendation to the building principal and the students' parents. Parents have the right to appeal the committee's recommendation to the Superintendent or designee.

The acceleration committee will develop a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) for any student who is admitted early to kindergarten, offered whole-grade acceleration, or acceleration in one or more individual subject areas. The parents of the student are provided with a copy of the WAP.

Acceleration Strategies

Whole-grade Acceleration

The practice of assigning a student on a full-time basis to a higher grade level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities.

Individual Subject Acceleration

The practice of assigning a student to a higher grade level than is typical, given the student's age, for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in one or more subject areas.

Early Admission to Kindergarten

The practice of admitting a student to kindergarten who has not yet reached the typical age at which students are admitted to kindergarten, for the purposes of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities.

Early High School Graduation

The practice of facilitating completion of the high school program in less than four year, for the purpose of providing earlier than typical access to post-secondary educational opportunities.

REMOVAL PROCEDURES

Election to withdraw a child from the program may be initiated by parent(s) or guardian(s) who ascertains that any section or total program is not of benefit to the child.

If it is decided to withdraw the child because the program is not meeting the child's needs, the following procedure will be followed:

1. An interim report will be sent to the parent/guardian stating the child's area(s) of difficulty.
2. A follow-up conference(s) will be initiated as needed with the child, parent(s)/guardian(s), and the Placement Review Committee.
3. Preliminary data should be collected from:
 - written documentation of communications between home and school
 - conferences listed above
 - classroom performance
 - gifted program performance

4. The Placement Review Committee will formally meet to determine appropriate action regarding withdrawal.
5. All parties involved must sign the withdrawal form.

Students will exit the program at the end of a grading period, unless there is sound rationale for exits at other times of the year. Parents/guardians along with the certified staff, will sign the withdrawal form.

A student who seeks re-entry to the program will be assessed by the Placement Review Committee.

A copy of the student's identification scores and the description of our program will be sent with those students transferring to another district.

POLICY FOR WAIVER OF ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULING OF TESTS (2/10)

Students in the TAG program will not miss any assignments or tests because the district's gifted services replace regular education services.

HOW PARENTS OF A T.A.G. STUDENT CAN HELP

1. Be supportive of your child.
2. Respect education; speak well of it.
3. Help your child find opportunities to experience music, literature, all the arts.
4. Give your child extra time and attention when stresses are observed.
5. Help your child set reasonable goals, neither too high nor too low.
6. Teach your child to understand the interactions of people, to deal with jealousy, lack of sympathy, lack of respect for learning.
7. Encourage your child to participate in the group, but also allow time for privacy and a chance to think and work alone.
8. Encourage a variety of interests without overstructuring your child's time.
9. Allow your child to have experiences with many people in many situations.
10. Teach your child to meet life with good humor and affection.
11. Model an attitude of appreciation of self and others.
12. Find ways to recognize and appreciate the strengths of siblings to reduce rivalry.

Relax! Gifted children are not fragile flowers to be destroyed by one wrong move. Encourage curiosity. Help your child find resources to satisfy them, always developing an understanding of individual patterns of growth.

