

The gifted student is one who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability(ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities.

(1) DEFINITIONS.

- (a) Gifted student - a student who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability(ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities.

Differentiated curriculum - courses of study in which the content, teaching strategies and expectations of student mastery have been adjusted to be appropriate for gifted students.

- (b) Probation: Student will continue with gifted services, but regular classroom progress is being monitored for a nine-week period.
- (c) Horizons Attendance Probation: Student will continue with gifted services, but attendance is being monitored for a nine-week period.
- (d) Horizons Performance Probation: Student will continue with gifted services, but Horizons progress is being monitored for a nine-week period.
- (e) Inactive: Non-participation for the remainder of the school year, due to continuation criteria. Continuation criteria must be met before services resume. If a student is placed on inactive status at the end of a school year, the student will remain inactive for the first nine-weeks of the following school year.
- (f) Voluntary inactive: Non-participation for the school year or the remainder of a school year by parent request. Services may resume the following year if continuation criteria are met.
- (g) Horizons Temporary inactive: As a safety measure, failure to return program registration forms after

the third class meeting will result in non-participation for the remaining of that nine-week grading period. Upon receipt of all registration forms, students may begin or resume services at the beginning of the next nine-week grading period if continuation criteria are met.

(h) Horizons Re-Entry: If a student has been placed on in-active or voluntary in-active status, parents will file a Re-Entry Request Form with gifted personnel, who will review the student's continuation criteria status and determine a plan for the student's success.

(i) Horizons: The Elementary (K-5) Gifted Program

(2) REQUIREMENTS.

(a) The Columbia County Board of Education shall notify parents or guardians in writing of the following:

1. The gifted education program operated by the Columbia County Board of Education, referral procedures and eligibility requirements.
2. Initial consideration of a student for gifted education services.
3. The student's eligibility status after an evaluation, at which time the parents or guardians shall be afforded an opportunity for a conference to discuss student eligibility criteria and placement.
4. The type of service to be provided annually, the teaching methods to be used and the time allotted for the student to receive gifted services. Parents or guardians shall also be informed of the objectives designed for students to meet and the manner in which evaluation of the mastery of these objectives will be conducted.
5. The performance standards the student shall meet for the continuation of gifted services (See Section 3. *Continued Participation*).
6. The length of the probationary period in which the student is in jeopardy of losing gifted services. The notice shall specify the criteria the student shall meet to

continue receiving gifted education services.

7. The student's in-active status of gifted education services in the event that the student fails to meet the continuation criteria. The notice shall contain a statement that the student shall become eligible to receive gifted education services upon meeting the criteria adopted by the local board of education regarding the continuation of services.

(b) Referral

1. Reported Referral. A student may be referred for consideration for gifted education services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities.
2. Automatic Referral. The automatic referral procedure is an opportunity to evaluate potentially eligible students who might not otherwise be referred and serves as an active child-find strategy. In Columbia County, all students scoring at or above the 90th percentile on the total battery or total math or total reading score on the most current state norm-referenced assessment are automatically referred by the school for consideration for further evaluation.

The Columbia County Board of Education shall ensure that any tests or procedures used in the referral process and to determine eligibility for gifted education services meet standards of validity and reliability for the purpose of identifying gifted students, and shall be nondiscriminatory with respect to race, religion, national origin, sex, disabilities or economic background.

- (c) Consent. The Columbia County Board of Education shall
- (d) obtain written consent for testing from parents or guardians of students who are being considered for gifted education services. Written consent from parents or guardians is also necessary before students

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determined to be eligible for gifted education services can receive these services.

Eligibility. The Columbia County Board of Education shall not adopt eligibility criteria that are inconsistent with the Georgia Board of Education rule.

- (e) State Reporting Requirements. The Columbia County Board of Education shall submit to the Georgia Department of Education a copy of its administrative procedures for the operation of a program for gifted students in Grades k-12. The Columbia County Board of Education shall review and revise (if revisions are needed) its local administrative procedures at least annually. An updated copy of the local administrative procedures shall be submitted to the Department of Education whenever changes are made.

(3) INITIAL ELIGIBILITY.

To be eligible for gifted education services, a student must either (a) score at the 99th percentile (for Grades K-2) or the 96th percentile (for Grades 3-12) on the composite or full scale score of a standardized test of mental ability and meet one of the achievement criteria described below, or (b) qualify through a multiple-criteria assessment process by meeting the criteria in any three of the following four areas: mental ability (intelligence), achievement, creativity and motivation. No more than one standardized rating scale shall be used to determine gifted eligibility.

Any test score used to establish eligibility shall be current within two-calendar years.

- 3A Students in second grade who score in the range of 96th percentile - 98th percentile on a standardized test of mental ability may be identified as eligible for gifted education services at the beginning of the third grade provided all other necessary criteria are met. Students in first grade who score in the range of 96th percentile - 98th percentile may be re-tested in mental ability in the fall of their second grade year. If an acceptable score of 99th percentile is achieved, the student may begin services (provided all other criteria have been met) after the first semester. Otherwise, the student may receive services at the beginning of the third grade year. Kindergarten students scoring below the 99th percentile may be re-tested in the spring of their second grade year. No student may receive mental ability testing twice in

the same calendar year. The above regulations apply to testing performed within the system, as well as possible outside testing by a qualified psychologist.

- 3B Achievement. Students shall (a) score greater than or equal to the 90th percentile on the total battery, total math or total reading section(s) of a standardized achievement test.

Standardized achievement tests shall be the most current editions of tests that measure reading skills, including comprehension, and shall give a total reading score and/or a total mathematics score based upon a combination of scores in math concepts and applications. These tests shall have been reviewed for bias and normed on a nationally representative sample that included minority representation within a 10-year period prior to administration. These tests shall yield percentile rankings by age(s) or grade(s).

- 3C Creativity. Students shall (a) score greater than or equal to the 90th percentile on the total battery score of a standardized test of creative thinking, or (b) receive a score greater than or equal to the 90th percentile on a standardized creativity characteristics rating scale.

Standardized tests of creative thinking shall be the most current editions of tests that provide scores of fluency, originality, and elaboration. Minimum requirements also include: (a) outside empirical support for the test; (b) long-term follow-up studies and (c) comparison measures against other recognized measures of creativity. These tests shall have been reviewed for bias and normed on a nationally representative sample that included minority representation. These tests shall yield percentile rankings by age(s) or grade(s).

Rating scales used to evaluate creativity shall relate to the construct of creativity and differentiate levels such that judgments equivalent to the 90th percentile are possible.

- 3D Motivation. Students shall receive a score equal to or greater than the 90th percentile on a standardized motivational characteristics rating scale.

Rating scales used to evaluate student motivation shall relate to the construct of motivation and differentiate levels such that judgments equivalent to the 90th percentile are possible.

- 3E Assessment data which were gathered and analyzed by a source outside the student's school or school system

must be considered as part of the nomination and evaluation process. However, these outside data will not be substituted for data the school generates during the testing/evaluation process and may never be the sole source of assessment data. Schools will never rely on them exclusively for determination of eligibility for gifted program services. Instead, outside test data may be used as part of a comprehensive profile of test and non-test evidence of advanced instructional needs. Columbia County will allow one (1) assessment instrument administered by a qualified professional to be considered in the gifted placement process. If any school elects to use outside test data to help establish students' eligibility, the Columbia County Board of Education will collect and maintain statistical data which will allow the Department of Education to evaluate the impact of this practice on the identification of gifted students from all ethnic and socioeconomic groups.

(4) CRITERIA FOR CONTINUATION.

A. GRADES K-5

PERFORMANCE

REGULAR CLASS:

Students will maintain a combined average of 80 in core subjects (language arts, math, social studies, and science). If grades drop below this level at the end of a grading period, the student may be placed on probation for the subsequent nine-week period. The homeroom teacher will notify the gifted contact, and a letter will be sent to the parents notifying them of the probationary status. A copy will also be sent to the Horizons program and the director of gifted education. If grades do not meet the continuation criteria by the end of the probationary period, the student may be placed on inactive status (See *Definition F*).

HORIZONS CLASS:

Students will maintain satisfactory performance in the various areas of study in the Horizons program, as observed by the gifted education teachers. Active participation, a positive attitude and motivation are required. If a student's performance is not satisfactory, the student will be placed on Horizons Performance Probation (See *Definition E*). Parents will be notified prior to the probationary status along with what is needed for the student to be successfully

removed from probation. If performance does not meet the continuation criteria plan for improvement; the student may be placed on inactive status (See *Definition F*) a letter will be sent to parents, the

home school, and the gifted director indicating the student's inactive status and conditions for re-entry (See *Definition I*).

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory, as placement in the elementary gifted program is a part of the student's educational plan. Any change in a student's schedule will be channeled through the school principal and the gifted director.

Upon receiving the student's Horizons schedule, a Voluntary In-Active Status (See *Definition G*) Form will be provided. Parents may indicate their child's non-participation in the Horizons program for that school year and return this form to the gifted contact. Horizons will be notified by the gifted contacts of any students on this status.

Additionally, parents will be notified that students have three (3) weeks of Horizons class meetings to return the program registration forms or the student will be placed on temporary inactive status (See *Definition H*). Due to the health and safety of the children in the program, all proper documentation is necessary for students to continue attending the gifted center. Horizons staff will notify the gifted contact of students being placed on temporary inactive status. The gifted contact will notify the parents.

Excessive absences greatly affect a student's ability to adequately perform in the elementary gifted program and will result in parental notification by the Horizons program. In addition to following the County Attendance Policy, students may be considered excused for events occurring at their regular school if prior approval was obtained. The regular school should obtain prior approval from the gifted director and inform the gifted personnel. All other absences will be considered unexcused.

Upon the student's first unexcused absence, a copy of the attendance continuation criteria will be sent home as a reminder. After two (2) additional unexcused absences, the student will be placed on Horizons Attendance Probation (See *Definition D*). If there is one (1) more unexcused absence during the probationary

period, the student will be placed on inactive status (See *Definition F*). A letter will be sent to parents, the home school, and the gifted director indicating the in-active status.

RE-ENTRY

A request for student re-entry into the program may be made by parent, classroom teacher, or gifted teacher. A student who has been on in-active status from the program may re-enter by request at the conclusion of the in-active period. At the time of the request, the student must have an 80 overall average of core subjects for the preceding grading period.

B. GRADES 6-8

PERFORMANCE

A student receiving gifted services must maintain an overall 80 average in the core subjects (math, language arts, social studies, and science) and an 80 average in each gifted class. The homeroom teacher will review the gifted student's performance at the end of each nine-week grading period and will inform the gifted contact person if the student's average falls below the established criteria. The student will then be placed on probation for the following nine-week grading period. Parents will be notified in writing of this probation by the gifted contact. A conference will be held with the student and gifted teacher to discuss strategies to enhance future academic performance.

The student will continue to receive services during the probationary period. If the student fails to meet the continuation requirements noted above, a withdrawal conference will be held at the end of the nine-week grading period. The gifted director will be informed, and the gifted contact will inform parents, in writing, of the results. Students failing to meet continuation criteria for any single gifted course, after being on probation, will be removed from gifted status only in the indicated course. This will not affect the services provided in other gifted courses.

The student may apply for re-entry into the gifted program after a period of one semester, provided criteria for continuation in the program are met for the previous grading period.

PARTICIPATION, ATTITUDE, AND MOTIVATION

Active participation, a positive attitude, and adequate motivation, as observed by gifted teachers

are required for a student's continued participation in the gifted program. Failure to comply with these standards may result in probation and, ultimately, withdrawal from the program. A final review will be held before cessation of services occurs.

C. GRADES 9-12

PERFORMANCE

In order to continue to receive gifted services in the Columbia County gifted program, a student must maintain an overall 80 average in the core subjects (math, language arts, social studies, and science), and an 80 average in each gifted class. A student's performance will be reviewed by the gifted contact and gifted teachers after each semester. This review will determine the student's status with regard to continuation of services.

A student will be placed on probation following the first semester if he/she does not meet the continuation criteria. Parents will be notified in writing of this probation, and a conference will be held to discuss performance.

The student will continue to receive gifted services during the probationary semester. Should the student fail to meet the criteria for continuation at the end of the probationary period, a final review will be held before cessation of services occurs. The gifted director will be informed, and the gifted contact will inform parents, in writing, of the results. Students failing to meet continuation criteria for any single gifted course, after being on probation, will be removed from gifted status only in the indicated course. This will not affect the services provided in other gifted courses.

The student may apply for re-entry if he/she has been out of the program for a minimum of a semester and meets the continuation criteria at the most recent grading period.

PARTICIPATION, ATTITUDE, AND MOTIVATION

Active participation, a positive attitude, and motivation, as observed by the gifted teacher, are required. Progress reports will be sent to parents. Failure to comply with these standards may result in probation and, ultimately, withdrawal from the gifted program. A final review will be held before cessation of services occurs at the end of the semester.

(5) RECIPROCITY

Any student who meets the state eligibility criteria for gifted education services shall be considered eligible to receive gifted education services in any school system within the state. A student transferring from one school system in the state to the Columbia County School System shall meet the criteria for continuation of gifted services. There is no mandated reciprocity between states.

(6) CONSECUTIVE-YEAR TESTING

Test scores are considered valid for two calendar years. Students who have undergone the testing process for identification may not repeat this process in the following year, unless the school principal requests a waiver due to extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student. This waiver must be in writing and approved by the director of gifted education.

(7) CURRICULUM AND SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

A. The Columbia County Board of Education shall develop curricula for gifted students that incorporate the state board of education-approved student competencies and quality core curriculum. Curriculum objectives shall focus on developing cognitive learning, research and reference, and meta-cognitive skills at each grade grouping, using principles of differentiation, in one or more of the following content areas: mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, foreign language, fine arts and vocation/technical education. The Columbia County Board of Education shall submit to the Georgia Department of Education a description of the differentiated curricula used for instruction of gifted students. The Columbia County Board of Education shall review and revise (if revisions are needed) its curriculum for gifted students at least annually. An updated copy of the local program description shall be submitted to the Department of Education whenever changes are made.

B. Students identified as gifted and whose participation has received parental consent shall receive at least five segments per week (or the yearly equivalent) of gifted education services, using one of the approved models described in appendix a of the Georgia Department of Education Resource Manual for Gifted Education Services.

(8) DATA COLLECTION

The Columbia County Board of Education will collect and maintain statistical data on the number of students referred for evaluation of eligibility for gifted education services, the number of students determined eligible for services, and the number of students actually served during the school year. These data shall be kept by grade level, gender, and ethnic group of the students.

Whole-Grade Acceleration in grades one through eight will only be considered in the case of students whose educational needs cannot be met through placement in the age appropriate grade. In rare cases a teacher or parent may recommend that a student be considered for whole grade acceleration. A holistic approach using a research-based scale as well as other empirical and anecdotal data will be utilized with consideration only being given to those students scoring at the highest end of that scale. A committee comprised of the child's parents, regular education teacher, gifted teacher, principal, and the Associate Superintendent or designee(s) shall meet to look at the evidence generated. Placement meetings for students will be held in the spring prior to the new school year. Whole Grade Acceleration placements are pending and will again be reviewed following the first report card in the new grade.

STATE REF.: State Board of Education Policy IDDD (2) Rule
160-4-2-.38); State Standard I 10(1f); I 20
LEGAL REF.: O.C.G.A., 20-2-152; 20-2-161 (b) (11)

ADOPTED: 11/14/89

REVISED: 3/25/97, 8/7/00, 8/13/02, 8/13/03, 8/22/05, 9/11/06

Columbia County Board of Education