

## **DoDEA Gifted Education A Parent's Guide to Identification of Gifted Students**

### ***Why do the DoDEA schools provide gifted education services?***

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) provides education to the children of eligible military and civilian family members, from preschool through grade 12, at sites in the United States and overseas. Our commitment is to offer an educational program in which students may grow according to their promise. Some students require gifted education services to optimize their potential. Members of the school community can work together to find students who may require such services.

### ***How do people in the school community recognize students who may need gifted program services?***

Parents often become aware of unusual behaviors in their children, some of them indicative of giftedness. A parent/guardian may refer his or her child for committee review. This request should be made to the child's classroom teacher or counselor.

Teachers and other professionals in the school see signs of exceptional performance in everyday school activities, some of them indicative of giftedness. School staff members may refer individual students. Students indicate their strengths through daily activities or test performance. Test scores, grades, and rating scales are also used to find likely program candidates.

### ***Which students at our school should be considered for gifted program services?***

Students who are recognized as demonstrating intellectual strengths that are highly unusual for their age or grade are referred to the school's Gifted Review Committee. Referrals can be made by parents, teachers, other school professionals, or the students themselves. The school Gifted Review Committee looks for students with high potential and unusual performance.

### ***What things are considered when committee members review a student's potential and achievement?***

The Gifted Review Committee considers all available information on students who are referred. Assessment data includes rating scales, observations, portfolio of student work, grades, test scores, and anecdotal information. Parents/guardians are asked to give permission for the review of information about their son or daughter as a potential candidate for gifted education services.

### ***How do school personnel determine that a student is eligible for gifted program services?***

Students who are found eligible for gifted program services have profiles that indicate potential and/or performance at the highest levels. A general guideline is performance and/or potential within the top 3 to 5 percent of our student population for any particular facet of intelligence. This means that a student's potential and/or performances are rather remarkable for that age or grade.

The school committee members review all available information on each student and recommend eligibility for those students who present extreme profiles of strength in intellectual/academic areas. No specific score or set of scores can validate eligibility for gifted program services. Students demonstrate their abilities in a wide variety of ways. It is the quality, intensity, and pattern of strengths that a student displays that provide the identification committee with the information necessary to significantly modify the regular education program for a child.

***What happens for students who have been in a gifted program in another school?***

Students coming from another DoDEA school are automatically found eligible for gifted program services if they were eligible at their previous school. Students coming from a public or private school outside of DoDEA are referred to the Gifted Review Committee for a determination of eligibility. Parents should provide information related to the gifted services the child received and the child's profile of strengths used for identification at the previous school.

***What are the steps in the identification process?***

There are four steps in the identification process. First, students are referred to the Gifted Review Committee by a parent, teacher, or someone who knows the student well. Some students are referred as the result of very high test scores; others are referred through nomination or prior participation. Second, parent/guardian permission is sought for the collection of information about a student's strengths, for any recommended testing, and for a committee review. The chairperson of the committee prepares a profile folder containing all available information about a student's strengths. Third, the committee reviews each student's profile and determines whether or not a child is eligible for gifted education services. Fourth, the committee recommends services for identified students. Parents are notified whether or not their son or daughter is eligible for services. Parents/guardians may accept or decline services for identified students.

***What about students who are not found eligible for gifted services? Does this mean that they are not gifted?***

Intelligence is multifaceted, and every child is quite remarkable in certain ways. All students benefit from enriching activities and educational experiences that recognize their strengths. When a student is found ineligible for gifted program services, it means that the student's strengths can be accommodated within the regular school program without extraordinary measures of differentiation.

School staff members recognize that classroom experiences and school activities must offer an array of opportunities for students to allow every child to reach for high standards and to participate in daily challenges. Each school offers multiple ways of enriching learning activities, both within and outside the classroom. Ask the child's principal and teachers about the variety of options available at his/her school.