

North East School District 23-26

Chapter 16 Gifted Education Plan Assurance

October, 2023

1. Describe your district's public notice procedures conducted annually to inform the public of the gifted education services AND programs offered (newspaper, student handbooks, school website, etc.). *

The public is informed of the district's gifted education services and programs in a variety of ways. Gifted services are included in the annual public notice published by the district. The district website contains a section devoted to gifted education and includes a description of the services and programs that are offered, eligibility requirements, and additional contact information. The student handbooks as well as the calendar published and disseminated by the district include information on the gifted programs and services offered as well as contact information for more information.

2. Describe your district's process for locating students who are thought to be gifted and may need specially designed instruction. *

The North East School District uses standardized screening tools such as Acadience, NWEA MAP, Study Island Benchmarking, CDT testing, and the CoGAT to assess and screen all regular education students to determine gifted eligibility. Acadience data is collected multiple times a year for students in grades K-2. CoGAT testing takes place in first grade. NWEA and CDT data is used for students in grades 3-12. As assessment data is collected, teachers are contacted regarding student performance and additional information is gathered regarding potential giftedness. Teachers may also recommend students for a gifted screening based on their observations within the classroom. Information on student performance is reviewed with building-level teams and referrals are then made to the special education department for formal testing.

3. Describe your district's procedures for determining ELIGIBILITY (through MULTIPLE CRITERIA) and NEED (based on ACADEMIC STRENGTH) for potentially mentally gifted students (EVALUATION). *

Students with an IQ of 130 or more, as assessed by a certified school psychologist, are automatically entered into the gifted program.

If a student has an IQ less than 130, additional criteria are considered when determining gifted eligibility. Additional information collected and considered includes academic achievement data, rate of acquisition and retention, demonstrated achievement, early skill development, and teacher input.

The multi-disciplinary team also reviews and identifies possible intervening factors that may mask a student's giftedness prior to making a determination.

4. Describe the gifted programs* that are offered to provide opportunities for acceleration, enrichment, or both. *The word "programs" refers to the CONTINUUM OF SERVICES, not one particular option. *

In grades K-5, students are offered a variety of challenging and enriching opportunities within the regular education environment, the community, and other school environments. In-class enrichment includes increased rigor, differentiated projects and assignments, and the opportunity to further explore areas of interest. K-5 gifted students also participate in a variety of field trips that aim to enrich their learning and challenge them intellectually. These students are also offered additional enrichment opportunities through the art and STEM/library program with regular time scheduled for additional work in both areas. Students also have the ability to meet with the gifted coordinator to work on personal projects and goals related to their area of giftedness.

In the middle school, which includes grades 6-8, the needs of gifted students are met through classroom differentiation, leveled learning cohorts, and additional accommodations as outlined within individual Gifted IEPs. Students at the Middle School level are also provided additional opportunities to explore interests and work with the gifted coordinator to access a variety of extracurricular activities related to areas of interest/giftedness. Currently offered opportunities include content acceleration, opportunities for independent study, and content enrichment through further exploration of academic concepts.

Gifted programming at the high school, grades 9-12, offers a variety of options to accelerate or enrich identified students. Advanced Placement (AP) courses provide opportunities for students to obtain college credit and/or advanced placement through the Advanced Placement Program. Students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses may elect to take the Advanced Placement Exam for the subject in which they are enrolled, or for other subjects of high interest. High school students also have the opportunity to complete college-level courses at local universities. This is done on a part-time basis based on the student's area of giftedness and is coordinated through the guidance department. Students at the high school level are offered extracurricular programming related to areas of interest/giftedness that include Pennsylvania Governor's Schools and other summer programs throughout the area. Additionally, if a student has interests or a level of academic achievement that extends beyond what the District curriculum provides, the District works with the GIEP team to offer acceleration or enrichment opportunities in those areas. Additionally, the Gifted services team at the high school is working to incorporate the College and Career Readiness Standards into the services provided within the Gifted program. The team is currently meeting to create a plan to incorporate career exploration, opportunities for shadowing or work experience, and content-specific scheduling for gifted students with the aim of allowing these students to further explore areas of interest as well as investigate potential future careers.

When appropriate, students showing advanced ability in curricular areas are offered the opportunity to accelerate for either a specific class or overall grade. The District is currently working to revamp the acceleration criteria for gifted students. Acceleration opportunities include participating in coursework above a student's grade level and/or the option to take required courses that may be beyond the student's current grade concurrently in order to make time in their future schedules for college in the classroom or dual enrollment opportunities. When necessary, administrators work together to coordinate services so that students may continue to participate in an accelerated curriculum beyond a single course or semester.