

### **Frequently Asked Questions: Gifted Education**

- 1) **What are the benefits of my child to be tested and what are test scores rankings, and what qualifies my child to be gifted?** The benefits for students to be tested and identified as gifted lends itself for increased opportunities for students to be with like-minded peers, receive instruction at a faster pace to best meet their instructional needs based on students' strengths and/or interest from a gifted certified/endorsed teacher that is trained in recognizing the unique needs of gifted students by providing open-ended assignments that encourage critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. According to the Georgia Department of Education's guidance and criteria is as follows: Mental Ability – 96% or higher in any subtest and/or complete composite, Achievement-90% or higher in Reading Total or Math Total, Creativity- 90% or higher and Motivation-90% or higher. The State of Georgia requires a student to meet three out of the four domains as long as one of the areas is either in Achievement or Mental Ability.
  
- 2) **How can I as a parent help my child raise their Mental Ability, in the Third grade?** Parents are encouraged to contact the local school's gifted liaison for any specific questions relative to the gifted testing process while the local schools are encouraged to communicate with their respective community groups using the calling post, website, and flyers about any testing administration windows that will take place. Parents are welcome to research the assessments to utilize the practice/sample questions offered by the website.
  
- 3) **Can we request our child to be tested?** The district implements an automatic referral process that screens all students in grades K-11 which begins with the MAP administration using the State of Georgia criteria that requires a score of 90% or higher in either reading or math. Additional screening levels will be offered to students who achieve at least in the 75th – 89th percentile in reading or mathematics from the Fall or Winter MAP may be additionally screened in the Achievement domain, using the \*Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in September (Fall) or February (Winter), or score at least in the 90th percentile or higher in both creativity and motivation from the Renzulli administration will be screened using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) for mental ability domain in February (Winter).
  
- 4) **My child's results said they need further testing, but he seemed to have passed 3 out of 4 tests. He also isn't very tech savvy. Could his subpar computer skills affect test results?** Each student has an eligibility report that shows the data sets used towards the gifted screening process. In each domain, an assessment type and score is listed along with whether the criteria set forth by the State of Georgia has been met indicated by a Y or N. Followed by Xs indicating the student's gifted status (eligible, not eligible, pending step II). If marked eligible, then the student is gifted identified. If marked not eligible, then the student did not meet the state's criteria of meeting three out of the four domains, and if marked pending step II, then further screening is needed.

- 5) **How is gifted addressed with students who have IEP's- think the term was dual exceptionality.** Any accommodation stated in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan must be adhered to in ensuring the student has access to the curriculum and/or academic standards being taught. In such cases, the student's IEP will be honored by way of the District identifying Georgia Department of Education-approved gifted assessment methods in which the student's IEP testing accommodations do not impact the scoring or norming of the assessment. These will be case-by-case decisions, depending on the child's eligibility for special education services and testing accommodations contained within the child's IEP.
- 6) **Are students retested yearly or per semester?** The district implements a Fall and a Spring assessment cycle for eligible students to be screened for gifted.
- 7) **How long should it take to get test results?** Test results will vary as all assessments must undergo a data verification process before data is uploaded for gifted use in the student information system. My child tested in the fall. We haven't heard anything despite following up. Local schools are delayed in providing parent notification for students that were screened in the Fall for creativity as we have not received those results from the vendor.
- 8) **My daughter took an assessment test last semester, how would I know she passed.** Each student has an eligibility report that shows the data sets used towards the gifted screening process. In each domain, an assessment type and score is listed along with whether the criteria set forth by the State of Georgia has been met indicated by a Y or N. Followed by Xs indicating the student's gifted status (eligible, not eligible, pending step II). If marked eligible, then the student is gifted identified. If marked not eligible, then the student did not meet the state's criteria of meeting three out of the four domains, and if marked pending step II, then further screening is needed.
- 9) **My student has scores for both Creativity and Motivation for the Renzulli, but if they can't both be used together then why would they both be given instead of let's say Torrance?** The results from the Renzulli Creativity and Renzulli Motivation can only be used one time as the Georgia Department of Education deems this instrument as a teacher rating scale. Therefore, the Renzulli scores are a baseline to determine which domain will be used and the other assessed.
- 10) **Can homeschool kids be tested for gifted through the county?** No. Students must be enrolled in and attending DeKalb County School District to participate in the gifted assessment process.
- 11) **What is the final grade to be considered for the program?** The State of Georgia identifies students for gifted services in grades K- 12.

- 12) **Children who are already in the gifted program still take tests if they've already met the criteria during the same school year?** Yes. The state and local assessments are administered to all students to measure their academic progress in mastering the State of Georgia standards.
- 13) **My daughter met the scoring for achievement, creativity and motivation. What are her next steps?** Next steps will vary depending upon the assessment types in each of the four domains. Contact your local school's gifted liaison for a conference to learn of any possible next steps.
- 14) **Has the scores gone out to the parents from the fall gifted testing? If so, did it come through mail or from the school? My child has been tested since kindergarten, but I never know the result of it.** Parent notifications were sent January 13 – 17 via the local schools' means for communicating with parents. Local schools are delayed in providing parent notification for students that were screened in the Fall for creativity as we have not received those results from the vendor. Contact your local school's gifted liaison for a conference to learn of test scores thus far from the assessments administered in your child's screening process.
- 15) **If my child is in private school and has CogAT and Iowa scores that satisfy the chart just shown, how may I qualify her for the gifted program in DeKalb County? Is there a pull out / travel option she could do to matriculate into 9th grade?** No. Students must be enrolled in and attending DeKalb County School District to participate in the gifted assessment process.
- 16) **Do we need to request for the assessment?** No. The district implements an automatic referral process that screens all students in grades K-11 which begins with the MAP administration using the State of Georgia criteria that requires a score of 90% or higher in either reading or math. Additional screening levels will be offered to students who achieve at least in the 75th – 89th percentile in reading or mathematics from the Fall or Winter MAP may be additionally screened in the Achievement domain, using the \*Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in September (Fall) or February (Winter), or score at least in the 90th percentile or higher in both creativity and motivation from the Renzulli administration will be screened using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) for mental ability domain in February (Winter).
- 17) **How do we support students during testing periods?** Parents are encouraged to contact the local school's gifted liaison for any specific questions relative to the gifted testing process while the local schools are encouraged to communicate with their respective community groups using the calling post, website, and flyers about any testing administration windows that will take place. Parents are welcome to research the assessments to utilize the practice/sample questions offered by the website.

- 18) **Is it a school's choice as to which model the school implements?** Yes. The local school's building administration has the autonomy to determine which delivery models best meet the needs of its gifted population and align with their staffing capacity. These will vary from school to school. The District's Gifted Education team remains available to school administrations to assist with selecting the local school's gifted service delivery model, based on local factors (i.e. number of students identified for gifted, teachers with gifted endorsement, school schedule, etc.).
- 19) **How can we prepare a second grader student for the IOWA assessment which is planned to happen tomorrow and we as parents are being notified today?** Parents are encouraged to contact the local school's gifted liaison for any specific questions relative to the gifted testing process and local schools are encouraged to communicate with their respective community groups using the calling post, website, and flyers about any testing administration windows that will take place.
- 20) **How many times can a prospective student be assessed in an attempt to be accepted into the gifted program?** DeKalb County School District employs two different gifted identification assessment windows during the school year: Fall (October) and Spring (February).
- 21) **How will the gifted program translate with the IB program ?** The Georgia Department of Education approves for advanced placement courses and International Baccalaureate courses to qualify as permissible gifted education service models, as long as the teacher of the course has their gifted endorsement. In high school, the most abundant gifted service model is advanced placement courses.
- 22) **What if your child scores well in these domains, but as a parent, you think they are not emotionally mature or may be easily discouraged and frustrated - would being in gifted classes help them deal with emotions when they are not #1 all of a sudden or would it just give them additional stress?** The Division of Wrap Around Services provides a variety of resources for teachers, students, and families on supporting students' mental health. This includes social emotional learning modules provided for students. If a teacher or parent desires more information on mental health matters pertaining to a student, the school counselor or school social worker are the appropriate professionals to contact at the school level for further assistance.
- 23) **If a student is not identified as gifted, can s/he take AP classes in high school?** While a parent cannot decide for themselves if their child is identified for gifted services, parents are always recommended to communicate with their child's school counselor and/or principal/designee to provide input on their child's academic setting, schedule, and course progression.

- 24) **What are the dates of the tests for high school?** Local schools are encouraged to communicate with their respective community groups using the calling post, website, and flyers about any testing administration windows that will take place.
- 25) **What if your child is tested and is admitted to gifted classes but wants to stay in non-gifted classes?** Parents that choose to no longer receive gifted services must sign and return a Parent Release from Services Form. This form is temporary release from receiving any gifted services for the remainder of the school year. **How should a parent decide which classes to put them in?** Parents are always recommended to communicate with their child's school counselor and/or principal/designee to provide input on their child's academic setting, schedule, and course progression.
- 26) **How will the Gift Program be integrated into the daily class structure?** School leaders routinely conduct learning walks, informal and formal observations of staff to determine the level of student engagement and grade appropriate assigned tasks. Written feedback is given to the teacher to make the necessary lesson plan modification. **Will students be moved to another class, pulled out for sessions with a certified Gift Program teacher, or will advanced material be provided alongside regular classwork?** The gifted delivery model will be contingent upon the number of gifted certified teachers and the number of gifted identified students attending the school.
- 27) **Do students need to annually qualify for gifted services?** No. Once a student has been identified as gifted their gifted status remains intact as long as they are able to adhere to and maintain at least a (B) / 80% or higher in their assigned gifted classes.
- 28) **My child took the CogAT in October 2024, and we received the letter of eligibility last week. Will she begin receiving gifted services in Fall 2025?** Students that were deemed gifted identified in the Fall shall be coded and begin receiving gifted services during second semester of the 2024-2025 school year.
- 29) **Is there a free tutoring option for students who would like to be in the gifted program?** Tutoring sessions offered at the local schools are designed to either enrich or remediate the academic progress of students. Student participation is optional and in no way guarantees placement in a gifted program.
- 30) **Does the district administration have any control of what goes on at the school level for gifted students?** In such cases, it is always recommended to contact the teacher directly to discuss further. If a parent/guardian is unable to reach or is dissatisfied with the communication from the teacher about the matter, the parent/guardian can contact the school's principal. If the parent is unable to reach or is dissatisfied with the communication from the principal's office, the parent/guardian can contact the school's area superintendent's office.

- 31) **My child has been testing since kindergarten and now in the 2nd grade. I never receive the results.** Parents are encouraged to contact the local school's gifted liaison for any specific questions relative to the gifted testing process and to learn of your child's test results thus far. **Does that mean she is not "gifted"?** No, it doesn't. **And if so, why do they keep asking her to test?** With your permission to evaluate, your child has met at least one of the domains to be screened further for gifted in meeting the state's three out of the four domains. **And I assume I can tell them to stop testing her, if she is not passing these tests?** Parents may mark No at any time on the Parent Consent to Evaluate form to stop any testing from being conducted.
- 32) **If identified as gifted, does this give the student an advantage when it comes to acceptance into magnet schools?** No. School Choice and being gifted identified are not synonymous.
- 33) **What happens if your gifted child's high school does not have gifted certified teachers for AP classes?** According to the State of Georgia guidelines, teachers must possess either their gifted certification or AP certification to teach AP courses. **Can they take AP classes at another school?** Students must enroll in either Dual Enrollment or School Choice to access courses offered from another school that is not their attendance zone.
- 34) **My son was absent from school and was not able to complete the gifted testing. When I received his results, he was denied gifted access because of his scores dated last year. Are there make up days for testing or must students wait?** Gifted screening occurs within a specified testing cycle which includes the administration dates and any make-up days for students that are absent on test days. Consult your local school's testing coordinator for procedures when students are absent during testing.
- 35) **After a parent signs off that our child can participate in the gifted program, should we get confirmation from the school?** The signed Continuation Agreement was your confirmation and consent to receiving gifted services. **How will we know they're in the program?** Gifted services will be reflected on the student's progress/ report card notating the courses being slated as gifted.
- 36) **Do teachers give any information about MAP or CogAT tests?** Yes. Parents should receive a student profile or individual score report from both the MAP and CogAT depicting the results. Consult your local school's testing coordinator to learn when MAP and CogAT score reports will be released.

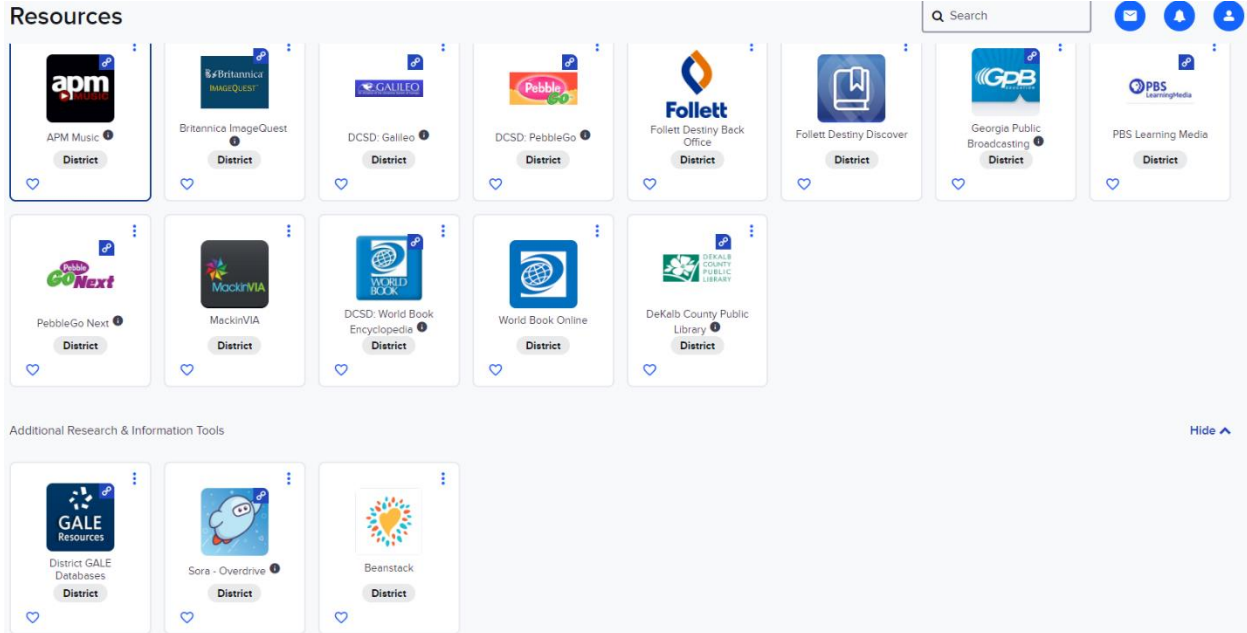
- 37) **Can a student currently in gifted be removed for poor academic performance or due to a drop in test scores?** Gifted identified students whose grade in their assigned gifted classes falls below a B or 80%, may be placed on probation for a semester and after the probationary period, if their grade of a B or 80% has not been met may be removed from receiving gifted services.
- 38) **If my child is already gifted identified, is MAP testing as important as it was the year when they were certified?** Yes. The state and local assessments are administered to all students to measure their academic progress in mastering the State of Georgia standards.
- 39) **How do I ensure that accommodations on my child's 504 Plan are being appropriately given during the next round of "identification"?** Any accommodation stated in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan must be adhered to in ensuring the student has access to the curriculum and/or academic standards being taught. In such cases, the student's IEP or 504 Plan will be honored by way of the District identifying Georgia Department of Education-approved gifted assessment methods in which the student's IEP or 504 Plan testing accommodations do not impact the scoring or norming of the assessment. These will be case-by-case decisions, depending on the child's eligibility for special education services and testing accommodations contained within the child's IEP or 504 Plan.
- 40) **What are the long-term benefits/perks of participating in the gifted program vs. "traditional" instruction?** The benefits of gifted identification will include but not limited to increased opportunities for students to be with like-minded peers, instruction at a faster pace to best meet their instructional needs, instruction based on students' strengths and/or interest, receives instruction from a gifted certified/endorsed teacher that is trained in recognizing the unique needs of gifted students by providing open-ended assignments that encourage critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving that may lead to additional academic opportunities for students. Additionally, at the high school level, gifted services are generally provided through advanced placement (AP) course scheduling.
- 41) **How can we find out the structure of the gifted program at our local school(s)?** Parents are encouraged to view their local school's gifted brochure that shares the delivery model and services offered to its gifted student population. Many schools have this information on their website via a page on the gifted liaison's site.
- 42) **Are there special scholarships for students?** There are a multitude of higher/continuing education scholarships available to students of all profiles and backgrounds. Contact your high school student's school counselor for specific information and support on accessing scholarships that fit your child's profile and background. Additional information on college financial aid within Georgia can be found at this site: <https://www.gafutures.org/>

- 43) **Does this mean that only Gifted Identified students can participate in AP/IB courses?** No, Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB) classes may be offered to students that are either gifted or highly capable.
- 44) **I have a gifted child. I've expressed to the school liaison that she has been bored in class. How can I ensure my daughter is challenged?** In such cases, it is always recommended to contact the teacher directly to discuss further. If a parent/guardian is unable to reach or is dissatisfied with the communication from the teacher about the matter, the parent/guardian can contact the school's principal. If the parent is unable to reach or is dissatisfied with the communication from the principal's office, the parent/guardian can contact the school's area superintendent's office.
- 45) **Do Horizon Schools offer services/resources for Gifted students?** Yes. All the district's Area Schools offer gifted services and resources that are available to the staff and students attending its schools.
- 46) **Does the DeKalb County gifted program have any affiliations with national organizations like Mensa?** No. Gifted services are state funded therefore there is no affiliation with any organization outside of the Georgia Department of Education.
- 47) **How is the magnet school program and gifted program different?** The magnet school program and gifted education program are different departments in DeKalb. Magnet programs are offered through the Department of School Choice; programs can be viewed at <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/school-choice/programs/>. The Department of Gifted Education addresses gifted students across the district and is part of the Division of Student Services; information can be viewed at <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/gifted/>.
- 48) **Can the links to LaunchPad/Clever be provided? How do we access Clever?** Students can access Clever on the DeKalb County School District's website. Students can look for the Clever icon which is a rocket. If a student needs assistance, ask your child to visit the teacher-librarian in the library/media center.
- 49) **Is Clever available for students at charter schools? Are these resources also available for teachers at charter schools?** Our DeKalb County School District Department of School Innovation provides regular support for and is in regular contact with charter schools authorized by the DeKalb County School District – in collaboration with multiple Divisions. <https://www.dekalbschoolsga.org/charter-schools>.

**50) Are there any online modules or interactive activities for areas like math and science?**

**We are getting a little tired of BrainPop.** Yes. There are many resources available to students through Clever. Some of the many resources are pictured below.

Resources



Additional Research & Information Tools

**51) Will these resources be available on Clever over the summer?** Yes. These resources are accessible to students during the summer.

**52) Will we have direct access to these platforms, or will we need to request anything from teachers first?** Students that utilize a district issued device may access Clever through a single sign-on access to all students. If a student needs assistance, ask your child to visit the teacher-librarian in the library/media center.

**53) I have noticed that some DCSD elementary schools are able to offer an enriched curriculum in all classes because all of their teachers are gifted certified. Does this mean that the children at other DCSD schools are at a disadvantage if they are not attending or zoned for those schools?** The local school's building administration has the autonomy to determine which delivery models best meet the needs of its gifted population and align with their staffing capacity. These will vary from school to school. The District's Gifted Education team remains available to school administrations to assist with selecting the local school's gifted service delivery model, based on local factors (i.e. number of students identified for gifted, teachers with gifted endorsement, school schedule, etc.).



January 2025

- 54) **How is a child able to attend Serendipity?** Serendipity is offered to all gifted students in grades 1-6 that are attending DeKalb County School.
- 55) **Is Serendipity available for students at a charter school?** Yes.
- 56) **Can rising gifted first graders attend the summer program?** Grade placement for Serendipity is based on the grade level completed during the 2024-2025 school year. Therefore, a kindergartner that is placed with first graders is actually with students that will be going to the second grade next school year.
- 57) **Where will Serendipity be located?** Serendipity is in the early stages of planning and has not determined a location.
- 58) **Will parents of gifted students be notified via email when more information becomes available on Serendipity, or do we need to monitor GDOE website?** Parents can expect to receive notification via the district website and rolling banner as well as all the district's means for communication to learn about all the summer learning programs being offered this summer.
- 59) **Are the summer gifted programs full time or part time? And is there a cost to participate?** Many of the summer learning programs offered by DeKalb County School District are free of charge and due to the myriads of program offerings, the start and end time will vary.