

**District:** Lafayette County School District  
**Section:** I - Instructional Program  
**Policy Code:** IDE - Gifted Education Program

## **MISSION**

The mission of Lafayette County School District gifted program is to provide students who are identified as intellectually gifted and talented an exceptional education that fosters and encourages creativity, advanced thinking, social-emotional growth and the opportunity to maximize their personal potential.

## **GOALS**

To provide a differentiated curriculum that incorporates student interests, strengths, and learning styles while meeting cognitive, affective, and social needs.

To provide a rigorous enrichment program and integrated arts that supports diversity in learning styles and individual responsibility.

To enhance and develop student self-awareness

To develop creativity and thinking skills

To develop skills necessary to become future leaders

To provide a curriculum that promotes lifelong learning and career development

To foster beneficial relationships with our community

## **MDE DEFINITION OF INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED**

The State of Mississippi defines “intellectually gifted children” as those children and youth who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of intelligence as documented through the identification process. The needs of these students should be addressed based on the program options provided in the Outcomes for Intellectually Gifted Education Programs in Mississippi. Although the State of Mississippi recognizes permissive programming for academically gifted students in grades 9-12; artistically gifted children in grades 2-12; and creatively gifted children in grades 2-12, only intellectually gifted programs in grades 2-6 are mandated by law.

## **STUDENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESS**

The student identification processes are separated into six stages which include referral, Local Survey Committee (LSC) review of referral data, parental permission for testing, assessment, assessment report, and the LSC eligibility determination stage.

The identification process consists of a combination of subjective and objective measures to determine eligibility for the gifted program and includes an equitable opportunity for the inclusion of students with who are culturally diverse, underachieving, or disabled under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guidelines, physically handicapped, ADD/ADHD, as well as students who exhibit classroom behavior such as extreme shyness, short

attention spans, disruptiveness, continual questioning, and anxiety. Throughout the identification process, district personnel are careful to select measures that target the student's strengths.

All data collected as part of the identification process is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Access to this information is restricted to those personnel working directly with the identification process, working directly in the gifted education program, or that have a documented need to access. Parents will be informed of the information/data collected and may gain access to their children's records by written request to gifted education personnel at any time.

**Out-of-state gifted eligibilities:**

Each state has a unique set of eligibility criteria for placement in a gifted program. Hence, a student moving to Mississippi with a gifted eligibility from another state must satisfy Mississippi eligibility criteria before being considered for placement in the gifted program. The eligibility ruling from another state may be used to initiate the referral process in Mississippi. There is no temporary placement in the gifted program while the student goes through the eligibility process within the local district.

**STAGE 1: REFERRAL**

There are two types of gifted referral processes:

- Type One - Mass Screening Referral Process addresses those students who are mass screened for gifted eligibility.
- Type Two - Individual Referral Process addresses those students who are referred by a parent, teacher, counselor, administrator, or others who have reason to believe that the student might be intellectually gifted.

**Mass Screening Referral Process**

The Lafayette County School District will screen all students in first grade each year using a normed group measure of intelligence. Students who obtain a full scale/composite score at or above the 90th percentile on the normed group measure of intelligence shall move forward in the referral process. Students who score at or above the 85th percentile but lower than the 90th percentile on the normed group measure of intelligence shall be subject to the Emerging Potential for Gifted Referral Checklist. If these students meet the criteria on the checklist, they shall move forward in the referral process.

In addition to the normed group measure of intelligence obtained in the mass screening, a student shall satisfy two of the following additional criteria before moving forward to Stage 2 in the LSC Review of Referral Data:

1. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published characteristics of

- giftedness checklist,
2. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of creativity,
  3. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of leadership,
  4. a score at or above the 90th percentile on total language, total math, total reading, total science, total social studies, or the composite on a normed achievement test,
  5. a score at or above the 90th percentile on a normed measure of cognitive ability,
  6. a score at or above the 90th percentile on an existing measure of individual intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months, and/or
  7. other measures that are documented in the research on identification of intellectually gifted students.

### **Individual Referral Process**

A student may be referred by a parent, teacher, counselor, administrator, peer, self, or anyone else having reason to believe that the student might be intellectually gifted. The person initiating the referral shall sign the referral form and date it. Once the student is referred, district personnel shall collect the data required to satisfy the referral criteria. Once a referral form has been initiated, signed, and dated, only the LSC or parents can stop the identification process. Students participating in the Individual Referral Process shall satisfy three of the following criteria before moving forward to the LSC Review of Referral Data Stage:

1. a score at or above the 90th percentile on a group measure of intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months,
2. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published characteristics of giftedness checklist,
3. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of creativity,
4. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of leadership,
5. a score at or above the 90th percentile on total language, total math, total reading, total science, total social studies, or the composite on a normed achievement test,
6. a score at or above the 90th percentile on a normed measure of cognitive ability,
7. a score at or above the 90th percentile on an existing measure of individual intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months, and/or other measures that are documented in the research on identification of intellectually gifted students.

### **STAGE 2: LSC REVIEW OF REFERRAL DATA**

Once the referral data have been collected, the LSC shall review all data and make one of the following recommendations:

1. the student has satisfied minimal criteria on at least three measures and should move forward to the assessment stage; or

2. the student has not satisfied minimal criteria on at least three measures, however, the LSC feels strongly that additional data should be collected and the student reconsidered at that time, or
3. the student has not satisfied minimal criteria on at least three measures and the identification process should stop.

### **Provisions for Emerging Potential for Gifted Populations**

At this point, the LSC shall make the decision as to the possibility that the student could be eligible for consideration as a candidate for an emerging potential for gifted assessment. If it is believed that the student might have emerging gifted potential, then the Emerging Potential for Intellectually Gifted Assessment Checklist will be completed for possible use during the assessment process. The Emerging Potential for Gifted category makes provisions for factors that exist and may put the student at a disadvantage when inappropriate instruments are used during the assessment process.

### **STAGE 3: PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR TESTING**

At this time, district personnel shall obtain written parental permission for testing. District personnel shall also notify parents in writing about their rights under FERPA.

### **STAGE 4: ASSESSMENT**

Once the LSC has determined that a student has satisfied minimal referral criteria in order to move forward to the assessment stage, district personnel shall review and compile all data available on the student. This data shall also be made available to a licensed examiner.

The assessment stage is the individual test of intelligence, which shall be administered by a licensed examiner. In no case will the examiner be related to the student being tested. The examiner shall review all available data on the student to select the most appropriate test of intelligence. The examiner shall provide a signed and dated report of the test administration to include testing conditions, scores on all subtests or subscales, and the strengths and weaknesses of the student. A student must score at or above the 91st percentile composite/full scale or the 91st percentile on approved subtests (as per publisher) in order to satisfy eligibility criteria.

### **Emerging Potential for Gifted**

Students who have satisfied criteria on the Emerging Potential for Gifted Checklist who did not satisfy minimally acceptable criteria on an individual test of intelligence, but, did score at least at the 84th percentile or have a scale score that falls within the range of the 90th percentile confidence interval of the state minimum scale/percentile score may be administered one of the following additional measures to determine eligibility:

1. A test of cognitive abilities with a minimal score at the 90th percentile,
2. A group intelligence measure with a minimal score at the 90th percentile, or

3. A district-developed matrix approved by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE).

### **Potentially Twice-Exceptional Students**

In compliance with MDE gifted regulations, students who already have an eligibility ruling under IDEA and are being assessed for an intellectually gifted eligibility will be considered potentially Twice-Exceptional. Students who did not satisfy all of the required minimal acceptable

referral criteria, but did meet at least one referral criterion, shall have their results reviewed by the LSC and a licensed examiner. If the student scores at or above the 91st percentile on the individual test of intelligence (composite score or approved subtest score) or, in the opinion of the reviewing committee, would benefit from participation in the intellectually gifted program, the

student may be granted a provisional eligibility for the intellectually gifted program for a period of one year. At the end of that year, the student's teacher of the gifted shall meet with the review committee to discuss the student's performance in the program. If the student has demonstrated success in the program, the LSC shall change the eligibility status from provisional to regular eligibility. If the student has not been successful in the program, the provisional eligibility shall be revoked.

### **STAGE 5: ASSESSMENT REPORT**

District personnel shall write an Assessment Report, which must contain the following components:

1. Student's name,
2. Name of at least three measures from Stage 1: Referral that were used to determine the need to administer an individual test of intelligence,
3. Results of each measure,
4. Name of individual who administered or completed each measure and the date administered or completed,
5. Test behaviors for any individually administered test(s),
6. Interpretation of the results of each individually administered test(s),
7. Name of the person who administered the individual test of intelligence and date test was administered,
8. Qualifications of the individual who administered the individual test of intelligence,
9. Results of the individual test of intelligence to include scores on all subtests and, identified strengths and weaknesses,
10. Name of the person responsible for writing the Assessment Report, his/her signature, and position, and
11. Date of the Assessment Report.

## **STAGE 6: LSC ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

Once the Assessment Report is finalized, the LSC shall meet to review all data and determine if eligibility criteria have or have not been satisfied. The LSC shall rule that the student is or is not eligible for the intellectually gifted program.

### **Parental Notification**

District personnel shall notify in writing the parents of each student tested for the intellectually gifted program about the assessment results.

## **PLACEMENT IN THE GIFTED PROGRAM**

After a student has been ruled eligible for the gifted program, written parental permission for placement shall be obtained before the student is placed in the program.

## **ANNUAL REASSESSMENT**

A committee shall meet at least annually to reassess each gifted student's continuation in the gifted program. The committee must include at least the student's gifted teacher and a designated administrative representative.

Since participation in the gifted program is an entitlement under law, students should remain in the gifted program as long as they are being successful in the program. Grades and/or success in the regular education program is the responsibility of the regular classroom teachers and should not be considered as a reason for removal from the gifted program.

Should the committee determine that a student should exit the QUEST program due to lack of progress and/or unsatisfactory participation in the program, the student's parents will be notified and given the opportunity to discuss the decision with the committee before the student is removed. Should the parents not agree to the removal of the student from the program, the parents have the opportunity to appeal the decision and have a hearing.

## **HEARING PROCESS**

Parents who are not in agreement with the school-based committee decision to remove a student from the gifted program will present their concerns, orally or in writing to the principal of the school. The principal and the parent will attempt to resolve the matter informally.

If the parents are not satisfied with the action taken by the principal, the parents shall, within five (5) school days after meeting with the principal, put their concerns in writing and present them to

the Lafayette County School District's gifted contact person. The gifted contact person will schedule a meeting of the LSC within five (5) school days or a timeframe agreed upon by the parents. Parents will be extended an invitation to attend the LSC meeting. The LSC will render a written decision based on information shared during the meeting.

### **REINSTATEMENT PROCEDURES**

Once a student is placed in the gifted program, he/she will most likely continue in the program. However, students who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the program may be exited.

Parents may opt out of participation for their child in the gifted program by completing an exit form.

Any student who exits the program will be removed for the remainder of the school year. Students will be considered for reinstatement in the gifted program at the beginning of each academic year at the request of the parents and with the recommendation of classroom teachers. Consideration and arrangements for reinstatement in the program will be made through the LSC. Written notification of the student's eligibility for reinstatement will be forwarded to the parents and teachers of the student. Written parental permission must be obtained before the student can be placed in the program.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

As QUEST students work under specific Instructional Management Plan objectives and time frames, withholding permission to attend gifted classes shall not be used as a disciplinary measure. The activities in the gifted class develop and enhance the process skills as established in the MDE Gifted Education Program Outcomes, the teaching strategies notebook, and required components of the gifted program standards document. A differentiated curriculum that includes short-term exploratory activities and long-term activities that enhance the integration of advanced content and individual student's interests utilizing higher-human relations exercises, leadership skills, and creative expression are provided in the gifted education program. Activities also create an appreciation for the multicultural composition of the school and community. Failure to complete gifted class assignments can be used as grounds for dismissal from the program.

### **HOMEWORK/CLASSWORK**

As outlined in MDE Gifted Regulations, gifted students may not be required to make-up class work missed when they are scheduled to be in the gifted classroom. Gifted students shall be held accountable for demonstrating mastery of concepts and information on regularly scheduled tests. It should be noted that some gifted students will not be high academic achievers for a variety of reasons. It is not reasonable to expect intellectually gifted students, by virtue of having been

granted one of those gifted eligibility rulings, to make all A's and B's nor is failure to do so a reason to remove a student from the gifted program.

**LEGAL REFERENCES:**

Mississippi Gifted Education Act of 1989, Mississippi Code Sections 37-23-171 through 37-23-181

Regulations for Gifted Education Programs in Mississippi (2013)