

Meeting the Needs of Highly Capable Students

Holmdel Township School District's
Gifted and Talented Committee
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Committee Members:

Mary Beth Currie - Chairperson

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Overview of Presentation

- Provide background information on the state mandate for gifted programming;
- Highlight the differences between a gifted student and a high achiever; and,
- Introduce a comprehensive G&T program that is in compliance with the state mandate, consistent with national standards, and predicated on current research.

Did you Know?

- Up to 20% of dropouts are “gifted” students who quit school because they feel unchallenged, ignored and frustrated. (*Parade*, March 6, 2005)
- In elementary school, gifted students already have mastered 35 to 50 percent of the curriculum to be offered before they begin the school year. (U.S. Department of Education report *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent*, 1993)
- Unchallenged gifted students often display behaviors commonly seen in children with attention deficit difficulties. (NAGC, *Compass Points*, 2007)

Why Do We Need A Comprehensive K-12 Program to Meet the Needs of Our Highly Capable Students?

- Initiated in 2000 and subsequently revised in 2005, the State Board of Education adopted NJAC 6A:8, Standards and Assessment for Student Achievement, which mandates:
 - All public schools to have a board-approved gifted and talented program beginning in kindergarten.
 - Gifted students should be identified by comparing them to their peers within their home district.
 - The K-12 identification process of gifted and talented students includes multiple measures that are accessible to all learners (e.g., culture-free).
 - Programs for gifted and talented students must be predicated on the standards established by the National Association for Gifted Children.

District Alignment

- The gifted and talented committee, over the past four years, has been charged with the task of aligning the district's philosophical commitment and policy statement (Policy #6171.2) with both the state's mandate and NAGC's standards.

Identifying Giftedness

- “Gifted and talented students” means those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the local school district and who require modifications of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities (N.J.A.C.6A: 8, Standards and Assessment for Student Achievement).

Guiding Principles

- The G&T committee's proposed gifted and talented program:
 - must be in compliance with state mandates and national standards;
 - must be well-supported by current research;
 - should be multi-faceted so that there is a continuum of programming services K-12;
 - have an organized, systematic, and ongoing identification process; and
 - should undergo a formal evaluation on an annual basis.

(Sources consulted: Renzulli, J.; Rogers, K.; Tomlinson, A.; Rimm, S; Winebrenner, S.; Colangelo, N; and, Smutny, J. F.)

Identification Protocol

- Instruments used must be reliable and valid for the construct of giftedness being assessed.
- Instruments must be culture-free.
- Students cannot be assessed fully through any single assessment score.
- Identification must use a multiple measure/multiple criteria approach.
- Matrices that reduce multiple forms of data to a single score are not appropriate.
- Students must be identified and placed according to need and ability, rather than numbers of students that can be served by a program. (NAGC Standards; NJAGC Position Paper; Identifying Gifted Students)

The Identification Process has to Distinguish High Achievers from Gifted Learners

A High Achiever

Knows the answers
Has good ideas
Works hard
Commits time and effort to learning
Answers questions
Is a top student
Understands ideas
Grasps meaning
Is a good memorizer
Is receptive
Absorbs information
Listens with interest
Is pleased with own learning

A Gifted Learner

Asks the questions
Has original ideas
Performs with ease
May need less time to excel
Offers detailed & unique responses
Is beyond his or her age peers
Constructs abstractions
Draws inferences
Is insightful; makes connections
Is intense
Manipulates information
Shows strong feelings and opinions
Is highly self-critical

Program Proposal

“There is nothing so unequal as the equal treatment of unequals”
—Thomas Jefferson

Grade Levels

Program Options

K – 2nd

- **Differentiated Instruction**
 - Pre-assessments;
 - Tiered assignments; tiered learning center activities; flexible groups.

3rd – 4th

- **Differentiated Instruction**
 - Same as K - 2 *plus*
 - Cluster grouping; curriculum compacting; pull-aside; and, push in.

5th – 6th

- **Differentiated Instruction**
 - Same as 3 - 4 *plus*
 - Study guides; independent study; subject acceleration; grade acceleration; and, mentoring/residency opportunities.

7th – 8th

- **Differentiated Instruction**
 - Same as 5 - 6 *plus*
 - Honors Math and Honors English; and, interdisciplinary problem-based cycle courses.

9th – 12th

- **Differentiated Instruction**
 - Same as 7 - 8 *plus*
 - Honors and AP courses; Honors Advanced Research; course acceleration via on-line or on-site college offerings; and, internships.

What's missing? And why?

- Enrichment activities: Holmdel already offers a wide array of opportunities in the performing arts, the visual arts, athletics, and academic competitions, as well as a summer enrichment program.
- Pull-out program: In a community where the majority of students are highly academically motivated, a pull-out program would be counter-productive. A pull-aside or push-in configuration would be more beneficial because it is inclusive rather than exclusive.

Additionally, the key component of the program is differentiated instruction because gifted students are gifted all day long. Attempting to do both DI and a pull-out program simultaneously could potentially compromise the more important DI initiative.

**Year 1
(2007-2008)**

- Present G&T Program to the Board – G&T Committee
- Create implementation schedule for Year 2 – G&T Committee
- Identify criteria and qualifying instruments – G&T Committee
- Provide PD (DI for gifted students) –PD and G&T Committees
- Identify staffing needs, qualifications and job description – G&T Chair.
- Interview and hire G&T Coordinator for '08-'09 school-year per district policy – G&T Chair.
- Identify qualifying 3rd grade students – Adm., G&T Coordinator, and teachers
- Seek teacher volunteers for cluster classes – G&T Chair., and Adm.
- Design program evaluation plan – G&T Committee

**Year 2
(2008-2009)**

- Begin implementation of DI in 3rd grade cluster classes – Adm., G&T Coordinator and cluster teachers
- Help teachers develop instructional materials; offer teachers team teaching and/or model lessons –G&T Coordinator
- Continue PD (DI for gifted students) – PD Committee and G&T Coordinator
- Plan for program expansion– Adm., G&T Coordinator and G&T Committee
- Consider staffing needs for Year 3 including teacher volunteers for cluster classes–G&T Chair. and Adm.
- Identify qualifying 3rd and 4th grade students— Adm., G&T Coordinator, and teachers
- Evaluate Year 2– G&T Committee and G&T Coordinator
- Create a G&T Web page - G&T Coordinator

Proposed Identification Protocol for 3rd Grade Students

(2008-2009)

- Suburban norms on the CTP achievement scores for 2nd grade students;
- A group administered reasoning ability test;
- A behavioral checklist completed by 2nd Grade teachers;
- A behavioral checklist completed by parents;
and,
- Case study data if warranted (e.g. portfolio).

<p align="center">Year 3 (2009-2010)</p>	<p align="center">Year 4 (2010-2011)</p>	<p align="center">Year 5 (2011-2012)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Implement DI in 4th grade cluster classes – Adm., G&T Coordinator, and cluster teachers ●Help teachers develop instructional materials; offer teachers team teaching and/or model lessons – G&T Coordinator ●Continue PD (DI for gifted students) – PD Committee and G&T Coordinator ●Plan for program expansion - Adm., G&T Coordinator, and G&T Committee ●Investigate and explore scheduling implications for grade and/or subject acceleration— G&T Committee ●Explore acceleration options with local colleges and universities – G&T Coordinator ●Consider staffing needs for Year 4 including volunteer cluster teachers– G&T Chair., and Adm. ●Identify 3rd, 4th, and additional grade(s) level students per Implementation Plan – Adm., G&T Coordinator, and teachers ●Evaluate Year 3– G&T Committee, G&T Coordinator ●Add links to Web page – G&T Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Expand per Implementation Schedule - Adm., G&T Coordinator, and cluster teachers ●Help teachers develop instructional materials; offer teachers team teaching and/or model lessons –G&T Coordinator ●Continue PD (DI for gifted students) – PD and G&T Coordinator ●Plan for program expansion – Adm., G&T Coordinator, and G&T Committee. ●Implement acceleration options where appropriate – Adm., G&T Coordinator ● Investigate internships & mentor opportunities with professionals from the community – G&T Coordinator ●Consider staffing needs for Year 5 including volunteer cluster teachers– G&T Chair., and Adm. ●Identify 3rd, 4th, and additional grade(s) level students per Implementation Plan – Adm., G&T Coordinator, and teachers ●Investigate opportunities for participation in a regional consortium – G&T Committee ●Evaluate Year 4– G&T Committee, G&T Coordinator ●Update links to Web page – G&T Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●Expand per Implementation Schedule - Adm., G&T Coordinator, and cluster teachers ●Help teachers develop instructional materials; offer teachers team teaching and/or model lessons – G&T Coordinator ●Continue DP (DI for gifted students) - PD and G&T Coordinator ●Offer internship and/or mentor opportunities for students where appropriate – G&T Coordinator, Adm. ●Investigate scheduling implications for alternative delivery options (e.g., pull-out) – Adm. and G&T Coordinator ●Explore enrichment clusters – G&T Coordinator and G&T Committee ●Identify qualifying students K–12 – Adm., G&T Coordinator, and teachers ●Evaluate Year 5 – G&T Committee, G&T Coordinator ●Maintain Web page – G&T Coordinator

Q & A

