



Savannah Chatham County Public Schools

Gifted Education Program
Parent Handbook
2017-2018

Gifted Education Program – What Do I Need to Know?

Students, grades kindergarten through twelve, in the Savannah-Chatham County School System who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual, academic, and/or creative ability are provided with special instructional services by the Program for Gifted Students. Eligibility criteria for placement in this program are determined by the State Board of Education. Referrals for consideration for eligibility for gifted services may be made by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. For a summary of eligibility criteria or for further information about Savannah-Chatham County School System Program for Gifted Students, please contact the Gifted Education Program Teacher at your child's school or contact:

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Gifted Education Program Philosophy

The philosophy of the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS) gifted education department is to meet the instructional needs of gifted learners based on each student's unique abilities. Modifications must be made in content, process, product, and pacing of curriculum. The gifted program emphasizes the gifted students' need for interaction with intellectual peers and for an educational experience that includes a high level of depth and rigor compared to students in the general population. Collaboration is encouraged between teachers, parents, and students to adapt resources and instructional methods that will allow for specialized educational experiences which will promote the development and expression of the gifted student reaching their highest potential. The SCCPSS gifted department offers nomination, testing, and services to students from all walks of life.

Gifted Student – A student who demonstrates a high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability (ies), exhibits an exceptionally high degree of motivation, and/or excels in specific academic fields, and who needs special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with his or her abilities. (SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38, p. 1) Gifted students may be found within any race, ethnicity, gender, economic class, or nationality. In addition, some students with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, or behavioral problems may be found to be gifted. The flexibility of Georgia's multiple-criteria rule will be used to promote equity in identification of gifted students from all groups.

Break In Service

If a student is an active member of the SCCPS Gifted program and leaves the public school system to attend a private institution, another school in-state or out-of-state school or voluntarily withdraws from the gifted program he/she may re-enter the SCCPS Gifted program within one calendar year without re-testing. If a student wishes to return to the public school system after one calendar year, he/she must be assessed in each of the four criteria to determine eligibility.

Voluntary Termination

There are times when a student or parent voluntarily requests they be exited from gifted services this will result in a voluntary termination from the gifted program.

At times secondary students who select a schedule that does not allow them to receive 5 segments of gifted services a week or its equivalent will need to request a voluntary exit from gifted services.

A student may not be voluntarily removed from gifted for longer than one academic year. If the student is voluntarily removed for more than one academic year they will need to complete the gifted testing process and be found eligible to be placed into gifted services.

Whole Grade Acceleration (Grade 1-12)

Academic acceleration choices for grades K-8 include: single course acceleration, curriculum compacting, gifted education services, and whole grade acceleration.

Academic Acceleration for grades 9-12 include: dual/joint enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, honors courses, gifted education services, and post secondary options.

Referral for whole grade acceleration is opens to all students, not just those identified as gifted, in grades K-8. Parents or teachers may initiate a referral for whole grade acceleration by submitting the request in writing to the school principal.

Continuation Policy

Continuation – Annually, parents will receive notification of continuation of gifted services, the teaching methods to be used and the time allotted for the student to receive gifted services. Parents or guardians shall also be informed of the objectives designed for students to meet and the manner in which evaluation of the mastery of these objectives will be conducted. Each student will have this documented in their **Annual Gifted Services Form**.

Probation (Grades 1st – 11th)

Identified gifted students must have an 80% average or above in all gifted courses to continue in good standing each semester. (This is arrived at by averaging the first and second marking period grade by individual gifted course.)

Annually student performance in classes identified as gifted by the addition of the .2 to course numbers will be reviewed by gifted teachers to insure that all gifted students have an 80% average or above in gifted courses.

A student who does not have an 80% average in a gifted course will be put on gifted academic probation. This will result in the site gifted teacher writing an improvement plan in collaboration with the teacher of the gifted course in which the student has not maintained a grade of 80% average. Each marking period there after the student's grades in the probationary gifted course will be monitored and the improvement plan adjusted as necessary. Parents will be contacted for a conference and receive a copy of improvement plans each marking period the student is on probation.

For purposes of continuation the elementary gifted progress reports will be averaged in all areas for the first and second marking period. This one average must be at least 80% for the student to remain in good standing. For continuation purposes excellent = 95%, meeting = 85% and below = 75%.

Termination

When a student has maintained probation status four consecutive marking periods termination from the gifted program of services will be initiated. Prior to termination parents must be contacted for a conference and a termination form filed with the district gifted office. Students may reapply for gifted services one year from their termination date by entering the gifted nomination process.

During probation your aim should be to assist the student in remaining in the gifted program. Work in collaboration with the regular education teachers on behalf of the student. Students continue to receive gifted services during probation.

Once the student entered the probationary process they continue in the process until the student meets the requirements to be removed from probation or terminated. The probationary process is not impacted by summer vacation, change of schools or grade levels.

Elementary Resource Progress Reports

Each marking period parents must receive a progress report documenting their child's progress in gifted resource classes.

Curriculum and Instruction – How is Curriculum Differentiated for My Child in Gifted Education Services?

Differentiated Curriculum - courses of study in which the content, teaching strategies and expectations of student mastery have been adjusted to be appropriate for gifted students. Comprehensive assessment results should be used to match gifted program services to students' documented advanced learning needs. The ability to match appropriate instructional services to student profiles is as important an equity issue as using a variety of indicators of students' potential giftedness.

The curricula developed by SCCPSS for gifted learners are based on the characteristics that generally differentiate gifted learners from more typical learners – learning at faster rate, increased capacity to find, solve and act on problems, their ability to manipulate abstract ideas and make connections, etc. The learning objectives below outline the basis for the gifted curricula used in the SCCPSS gifted program.

Gifted Standards and Rationale – Gifted Education Program

- 1) **Research Skills** - Develops advanced research skills and methods which include in-depth self-selected topics within an area of study.

Rationale/Discussion: Gifted learners possess an extensive knowledge base, learn at an accelerated pace, and are capable of advanced levels of comprehension. In addition, many gifted students are highly curious and intrinsically motivated, especially to pursue topics that interest them. As compared to their age-peers, gifted learners tend to have longer attention spans, exhibit a stronger need to know, and can follow-through with assignments. If gifted students are to benefit fully from these abilities, the gifted program must emphasize the development of skills that enable them to become effective as independent learners. Because of the advanced nature of their abilities and interests, gifted students need to learn how to access advanced-level reference materials, including a variety of print and non-print references and information retrieval systems. They need learning tasks that allow them to explore personal interests through guided research, independent study, and community involvement. In order to conduct authentic research, students need instruction and guidance in learning to ask the right kinds of questions by looking at techniques used by experts in the specific field. They need instruction in the development of a written plan of research (with emphasis on how one gathers, categorizes, analyzes, and evaluates information in particular fields); assistance in evaluating their own work; and in considering implications for future research.

- 2) **Cognitive Skills** -Develops and practices creative thinking and creative problem solving skills within a variety of complex topics.

Rationale/Discussion: Gifted learners have the ability to generate original ideas and solutions, and they characteristically see diverse and unusual relationships. Their instruction must allow opportunities to further develop and apply these skills in meaningful situations. Because gifted individuals often exhibit differential patterns of thought processing (e.g., divergent thinking, sensing consequences, making generalizations), a curricular need is to be able to explore alternatives and consequences of those choices, and to draw and test generalizations. The original thoughts and ideas often expressed by gifted students may in some settings be perceived as odd or off-task by others. This results in the inhibition of creative thinking. The gifted program must provide an environment in which students feel free and safe to stretch beyond the "right" answer that comes so easily for them. They should be encouraged to take risks and to experiment so that creativity can be developed.

- 3) **Learning Skills** - Develops and practices critical thinking and logical problem solving skills in academic areas.

Rationale/Discussion: It takes less time for gifted students to learn new material and master new skills. One strategy for differentiating instruction for gifted students is to structure lessons and units in such a way that capable students spend a larger proportion of their time on higher order thinking, using the content they have mastered to further develop their understanding of the concepts and practice the skills of critical thinking.

- 4) **Communication Skills** -Develops advanced communication skills via new techniques, materials, and formats (written, oral or visual) in products and through presentations shared with an audience.

Rationale/Discussion: It is important to remember that throughout history we have recognized "giftedness" in individuals because of the impact they have made on other individuals and society at large through their products, whether the area of giftedness is art, science, leadership, literature, etc. Feedback from real audiences provides gifted learners with a chance to further improve their communication skills. Internal motivation develops when students pursue ever-increasing levels of excellence in their final products and receive confirmation from real audiences that others value their intellectual and academic talents.

- 5) **Affective Skills** - Develops an understanding of self and how their unique characteristics may influence interactions with others.

Rationale/Discussion: Many gifted children experience difficulty in accepting some aspect of their giftedness. Their heightened self-awareness, accompanied by feelings of being different, can result in low self-esteem and inhibited growth emotionally and socially. Consequently, there is a need to provide gifted students with time for interaction with other gifted students, reflection, and discussion for the purpose of self-understanding. A strong aptitude for solving problems allows gifted students to deal effectively with these concerns when given the opportunity and guidance needed. This type of involvement can also help provide students with a foundation for leadership development.

Curricula Implementation

Students who participate in the **advanced content model of services** will receive instruction that is based on Georgia Standards, with a level of pacing and rigor that is not typical for an average student on that grade level. At the high school level advanced content models of service will be coded as Honors, Accelerated, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate.

Students who participate in the **cluster or collaborative models** of service receive differentiated instruction. This differentiated instruction is in core content areas based on Georgia Standards of Excellence. Each student who receives differentiated instructional services using either the cluster or collaborative model will have a contract completed by the gifted education program teacher and signed by the parent and classroom teacher outlining modifications that will be made for the students.

At the elementary level students who participate in the **resource model** of services use enrichment units and competitions as a basis for their instruction. Students also participate in lessons related to their social/emotional health as it is related to the Affective Domain.

Resource Curriculum Units

1st grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Primarily Plants</i> • <i>Gifts.</i> • Math Enhancement Lessons taught one per week – Solve It (Grade 2)
2 nd grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Where is the Beach?: Examining Coastal Erosion</i> • <i>Ancient China: The Middle Kingdom</i> • Math Enhancement Lessons taught one per week – Solve It (Grade 3)
3 rd grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What a Find?: Analyzing Natural and Cultural Systems</i> • <i>Ancient Egypt: Gifts of the Nile</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands On Equations
4 th grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Acid, Acid Everywhere: Exploring Chemical, Ecological, and Transportation Systems</i> • <i>The World Turned Upside Down: The American Revolution</i> • Hands On Equations
5 th grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Electricity City: Designing an Electrical System</i> • <i>A House Divided? The Civil War- Its Caused and Effects</i> • <i>Autobiographies and Memoirs</i> • Hands On Equations

Advanced Content Placement Guidelines

When forming advanced content classes, it is up to the school to decide which measure for placement best fits its student population. **To be placed into an advanced content class, a student must meet district benchmark guidelines, which may include performance on a nationally normed achievement test at the 85th percentile level or higher in the core content areas and a teacher recommendation.**

Course instructors and administrators will review student performance at the end of the first marking period. Students struggling to achieve adequate progress may be moved to a non-accelerated course for their grade level. Parents may also request students to be moved to a non-accelerated course any time during the first marking period, if they feel this course is not appropriately suited to their child’s learning needs.

Elementary/ K-8 Gifted Service

Resource— students are taught in a pull-out situation with other gifted students several times per week. Curriculum is not what students would encounter in a typical grade level classroom.

Cluster—students are grouped with other identified gifted students in a regular education classroom. Contracts are created where teachers differentiate lessons based on student strengths to allow for more depth and rigor in learning. Each year student contracts are sent home for parent review.

Advanced Content— the student’s entire class is composed of high achieving and gifted students who work at an advanced pace and depth that is indicated by the students’ advanced skills in that content area.

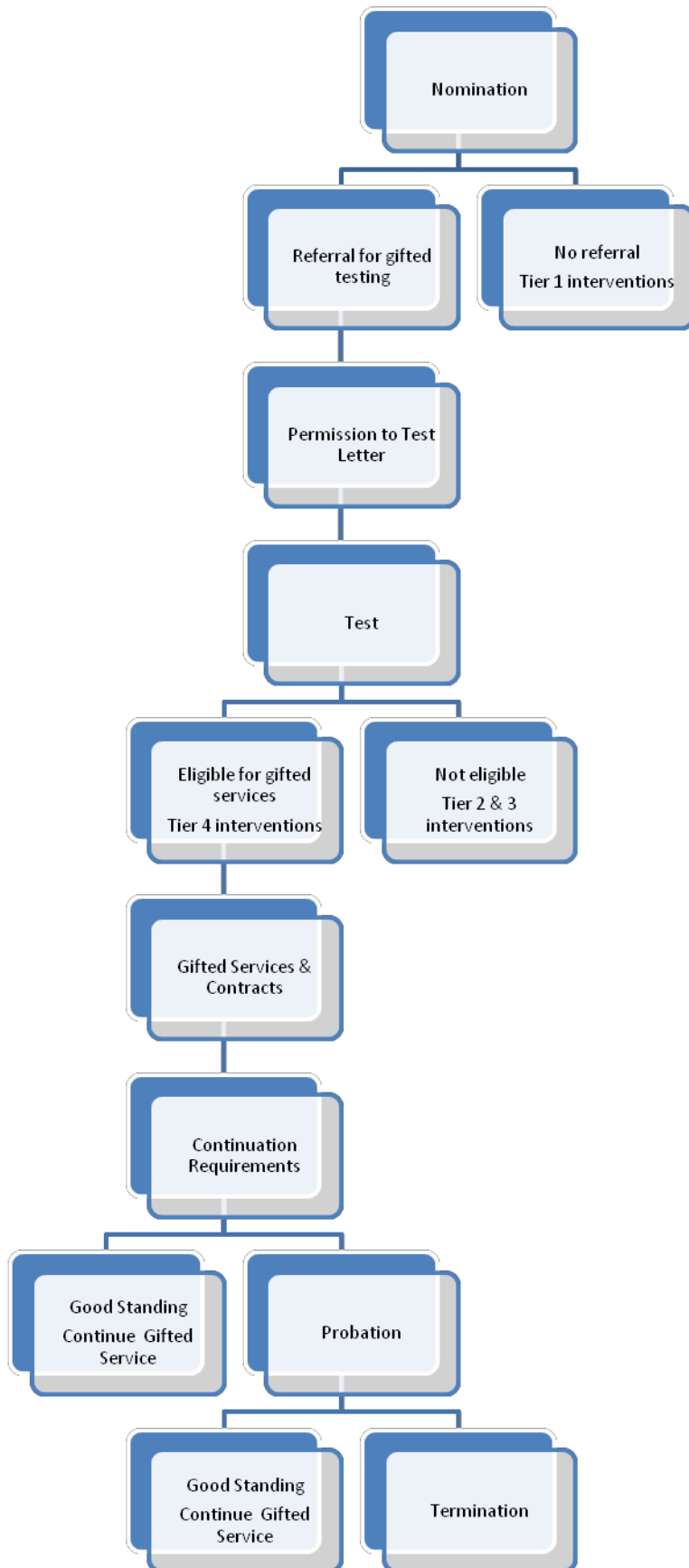
All classes are taught by gifted endorsed teachers.

Elementary Make –Up Work Policy

Gifted program students are to be held responsible for mastery of all standards. However, due to the unique nature of the Gifted Program and the workload that these students are expected to carry, they will, in most cases, be excused from daily and related homework assignments given while participating in Gifted resource classes. While all classroom assignments are important, requiring Gifted Program

students to make up all work is actually a penalty to the gifted student. The following are guidelines to be used when making decisions regarding work missed while attending Gifted Program classes:

- Students attending Gifted Program classes will be excused from daily/homework assigned during the class period(s) missed. Student will be excused from these assignments without penalty to their grades, loss of other scheduled activities, or loss of any classroom privileges.
- Mastery of standards may be determined by oral review, teacher observations, pretest, quizzes, modified assignments, and/or a few selected problems. It is the responsibility of the regular classroom teacher and student to determine mastery of objectives reflected in daily/homework assignments missed while participating in the Gifted Program.
- If mastery of standard grade appropriate objectives becomes a problem for any Gifted Program student, the class room teacher and the gifted education program teacher should work together to find a solution to the problem. Plans of Improvement through active and inactive probation are available options.
- Test, science labs, and other major or long –range assignments should not be made up before or after school. It is the responsibility of the student and classroom teacher to make alternative arrangements to ensure that the assignment is completed in a reasonable time period agreed upon by the teacher and the student.



So, you say my child's gifted...now what!?

A gifted child can be:

- Verbally Proficient
- Curious
- Creative
- Inquisitive
- A Problem Solver
- Focused, Passionate, and Intense
- A Perfectionist
- Sensitive
- Funny
- A Storehouse of knowledge
- A wild imagination

But, a gifted child can also be:

- Full of energy
- Stubborn
- A Daydreamer
- A Poor listener
- A Talker
- Impatient
- Obnoxious with questions
- The class clown
- A Doodler
- Critical of others

Encouraging Creative Thinking In Children Is Easy To Do If You Incorporate These 5 Simple Tips

Allow Them Free Time - One of the easiest things for promoting creative thinking in children is to allow them to have down time where they have time for thinking and exploring. It is important to allow this by not requiring them to participate in too many structured activities.

Limit Computer and Television Time - Limiting time on the computer and television allows for more time to pursue creative activities, like imaginative play. And when they are on the computer there are creative games and websites that can be utilized that allow for creativity, such as ones where they create art or design things like roller coasters or cities.

Provide Them with Tools for Creativity - Some examples of tools for encouraging creative thinking in children are blank drawing pads with markers and crayons, blocks for building with (ie, Legos, Lincoln Logs), ink pads for making finger print art, a camera, or any art set (ie, jewelry making, woodworking, pottery).

Allow Them to Follow Their Own Creative Path - Creativity is different for each person. One person may find sewing a creative outlet, while another might find writing a story a creative outlet. Let your children dictate their own path towards creativity, while you facilitate it with encouraging words and support.

Set An Example - There is nothing like a good example for passing our values on to the children in our lives. If we want to encourage creativity in them, why not show them that creativity is important to us as well. By making time for creative pursuits ourselves, and taking some down time of our own, we show them that creativity is an important part of life.

Encouraging creative thinking in children is a valuable way for them to explore who they are and find talents and areas of interest that they can share with the world.

Sarah Holt writes for Increase Brainpower .com. For more on Creative Thinking, and to get the Brain Power Newsletter and other free gifts, visit: <http://www.IncreaseBrainPower.com>

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Sarah_J_Holt

Books

- Adderholdt-Elliot, Miriam – *Perfectionism: What's Bad about Being Too Good?*
- Amabile, Teresa - *Growing up Creative: Nurturing a Lifetime of Creativity*
- Burns, Marilyn – *The Book of Think: Or, How to Solve a Problem Twice Your Size*
- Clark, Barbara – *Growing Up Gifted: Developing the Potential of Children At Home and School*
- Daniels, Susan Dr. – *Living With Intensity* – New from NAGC
- Delisle, James – *Gifted Kids Speak Out*
- Ehrlich, Virginia – *Gifted Children*
- Ellis, David B. - *Becoming a Master Student*
- Fertig, Carol - *Raising a Gifted Child: A Parenting Success Handbook*
- Freeman, Darlene – *A New Way to Use Your Brain*
- Galbraith, Judith – *The Gifted Kids Survival Guide* – 3 vols.
- Judy Galbraith M.A. and Ken Vinton M.A. - *You Know Your Child Is Gifted When...: A Beginner's Guide to Life on the Bright Side*
- Gladwell, Malcom – *The Outliers*
- Halstead, Judith Wynn – *Some of My Best Friends Are Books* – New from NAGC
- Isaacson, Karen - *Raisin Brains: Surviving My Smart Family*
- Kerr, Barbara – *Smart Girls, Gifted Women: A New Psychology of Girls, Women and Giftedness*
- Kerr, Barbara – *Smart Boys: Talent, Manhood and the Search for Meaning*
- Jean Sunde Peterson Ph.D - *The Essential Guide to Talking with Gifted Teens: Ready-to-Use Discussions About Identity, Stress, Relationships, and More*
- Lucy Jo Palladino - *Dreamers, Discoverers & Dynamos: How to Help the Child Who Is Bright, Bored and Having Problems in School*
- Renzulli, Dr. Joseph, and Reis, Sally M. - *Light Up Your Child's Mind* – New from NAGC
- Rimm, Sylvia – *How to Parent So Children Will Learn: Strategies for Raising Happy, Achieving Children*

Carol Addison Takacs - *Enjoy Your Gifted Child*

Webb, James T, Elizabeth A. Meckstroth, Stephanie S. Tolan - *Guiding the Gifted Child: A Practical Source for Parents and Teachers*

Wetherall, Charles – *The Gifted Kids Guide to Creative Thinking*

Fred Frankel and Barry Wetmore - *Good Friends Are Hard to Find: Help Your Child Find, Make, and Keep Friends*

Edward Zaccaro - *Primary Grade Challenge Math*

Gifted Organizations:

Georgia Association for Gifted Children (GAGC) -
<http://www.gagc.org/>

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) –
<http://www.nagc.org/>

Hoagies Gifted Education Page - Lists organizations and pertinent information for gifted students
<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/organizations.htm>

See Hoagies to find links and contact information for the following:

[Beyond IQ](#) - A conference series for and about highly and profoundly gifted children...

[Center for Talent Development](#) - Northwestern University's Gifted Center, check out the on-line newsletter, magazine, etc.

[The Center for Talented Youth \(CTY\)](#) - Johns Hopkins University's Center for Gifted Children

[The Davidson Institute for Talent Development](#) - Primary focus: exceptionally gifted young people, includes [Davidson Young Scholars](#), a program that recognizes, nurtures and supports the special needs of profoundly gifted children (children living in America, or American children residing elsewhere)

[Institute for Educational Advancement](#) - Dedicated to supporting our nation's most talented young people to identify and develop their fullest potential. Currently offering apprenticeship programs, Yunasa Summer Camp, more...

[National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented](#) - A collaborative effort of the University of Connecticut, City University of New York/City College, Stanford University, University of Virginia, Yale University and others

[Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted \(SENG\)](#) -SENG seeks to inform gifted individuals, their families, and the professionals who work with them about the unique social and emotional needs of gifted persons. We support programs that foster in gifted individuals the mental health and social competence necessary for them to be free to choose ways to develop and express their abilities and talents fully.

[Talent Identification Program \(TIP\)](#) - Duke University's Talent Search and Gifted Research Information Center