

POCONO MOUNTAIN SD

PO Box 200

Gifted Education Plan Assurances (Chapter 16) | 2021 - 2024

CHAPTER 16

Chapter 16 of the PA Code specifies how Pennsylvania will meet its obligations to suspected and identified gifted students who require gifted education to reach their potential. Gifted students are to be provided with quality gifted education services and programs. Requirements for Gifted Education Plans can be found in the Pennsylvania Code (22 Pa Code §16.32).

In accordance with 22 Pa. Code § 4.13(e) (relating to strategic plans) and 22 Pa. Code § 16.4, each school district shall develop and implement a gifted education plan every 6 years.

- a. The plan shall include the process for identifying children who are gifted and in need of specially designed instruction, as well as the gifted special education programs offered.
- b. The school districts shall make its gifted education plan available for public inspection and comment for a minimum of 28 days prior to approval of the plan by the school district's board of directors.
- c. Each school district shall provide, as the Department may require, reports of students, personnel and program elements, including the costs of the elements, which are relevant to the delivery of gifted education. (22 Pa. Code § 16.4)

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 Pocono Mountain School District posts the annual Child Find notice, as well as awareness activities to inform the public of gifted education services and programs on the district's website, in student handbooks, through the guidance offices, and other media or publication sources. If a student is thought to be mentally gifted and in need of specially designed instruction, an evaluation can be initiated at any time by the LEA or parent. The Pennsylvania State Board of Education has developed guidelines to assist local education agencies in meeting the requirements and regulations under Chapter 16. The guidelines are an overview of both acceptable and best practices, procedures, and policies designed to meet the learning needs of gifted students. These guidelines reflect Pennsylvania's continuing commitment to providing educational services appropriate for mentally gifted students that are consistent with their individual needs, outstanding abilities, and potential for performing at high levels of accomplishment.

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

A referral for a Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) may be made by a parent, teacher, or other professional school personnel when the child demonstrates high potential consistent with giftedness or a performance level that exceeds that of other students in the classroom. The following is used to locate students who are thought to be gifted and may need specially designed instruction: 1. A request has been made by the student's parents either verbally or in writing. 2. The student is thought to be gifted because the school district's screening of the student indicates high potential consistent with the definition of mentally gifted or a performance level which exceeds that of other students in the general education classroom. The Pocono Mountain School District currently utilizes the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test 2nd Edition (KBIT-2) in Grades K,1 and 4-12. Across Grades 2 and 3, the Cognitive Abilities Test (COG-AT) is administered. If a child was not administered the COG-AT, a KBIT-2 would be administered. 3. Referral from the child's teachers based upon a review of classroom performance compared to other students in the classroom, PSSA scores, Keystone Exams, or other district identified assessments. 4. A hearing officer or judicial decision orders a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation. The results of the screening, along with other measures, will help the team determine if a comprehensive evaluation is needed. If the team determines the need for a comprehensive evaluation, the Pocono Mountain School District would initiate the multidisciplinary evaluation and issue a Permission to Evaluate Form along with the Notice of Parental Rights of Gifted Students. The district must receive a parent's or guardian's signature on the Permission to Evaluate form in order to proceed with the evaluation by the certified school psychologist. The school district then has 60 calendar days to complete a Gifted Written Report from the date the Permission to Evaluate was received by the district.

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

The Pocono Mountain School District determines the student's educational strengths through a screening and evaluation process. Regardless of the referral source (parent or staff), each child will receive the KBIT-2 as an initial screening tool. Upon receipt of the permission to evaluate signed by the parent/guardian, the Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation begins. The school psychologist and Gifted Multidisciplinary Team will gather updated teacher and parent input. The certified school psychologist will administer Intellectual Ability Assessments (i.e. WISC-V) and may also administer Academic Achievement Assessments (i.e. WIAT-4 or WJ IV). When looking at the qualification for the Gifted Program, the school psychologist will look at the following considerations in determining eligibility: A. FSIQ score of 130+ (Individual Assessment) or Scores above 130 on both Verbal Comprehension and Perceptual Reasoning of the WISC-V B. FSIQ 125-129 plus Standard Scores of 125+ in Reading or Math (individual assessments) C. WISC-V standard scores 125-129 on BOTH Verbal Comprehension and Perceptual Reasoning plus Standard Scores of 125+ in Reading or Math (individual assessments) D. General Ability Index (GAI) (As per test guidelines 130+ or 125-129 plus Standard Scores of 125+ in Reading or Math (individual assessments) While the aforementioned considerations are identified in this comprehensive plan, they are a guide and not all-inclusive for the school psychologist in determining eligibility and need for potentially mentally gifted students.

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.

Below is a continuum of gifted programs and services offered to the students at Pocono Mountain School District: Ability Grouping Arranging students by ability to meet various instructional purposes. These groups are specific to the educational goal to be achieved and can be flexibly formed and reformed as needed. Acceleration Access to higher level learning activities and skill development than typically provided in general education to students of the same age. The pacing, complexity, and depth of planned coursework is modified as indicated by individual needs. Acceleration may include planned course compacting/telescoping, subject acceleration, specially designed instruction, credit by examination or performance, interdisciplinary planned courses, virtual courses, higher education level courses, independent or self-directed study. Advanced Placement Courses Planned courses of study in which secondary general education students may gain college credit and/or advanced college placement. Credit is earned by successfully meeting criteria established by higher education institutions on a nationally given and scored advanced placement examination. Authentic Assessment A student evaluation technique using student products or performance instead of traditional standardized tests. It allows for greater focus on student

individuality and creativity in the learning process. Career Based Competitions/Contests Based on interests, skills, area of study, and/or future career goals. Cluster Grouping Ability grouping within a heterogeneous classroom. Community Based Activity Students conduct service-learning projects to connect the district with the school community at large. Compacting Elimination of content that the student has already mastered allowing a faster paced learning progression based on the student's rate of acquisition/retention of new materials and skills. Continuous Monitoring Students receive appropriate instruction regularly and move ahead as they master content and skills. Cooperative Learning Groups Grouping students with varying ability levels often reflecting the full range of student achievement and aptitude to complete a common task and/or project. Curriculum Based Assessment (CBA) Assessment that is tied directly to the curriculum. Procedures for determining the instructional needs of the student based upon the student's ongoing performance within existing course content. Differentiated Instruction An organized, yet flexible way of proactively adjusting teaching content, process, product, or environment to meet students where they are and help them to achieve maximum growth as learners. Blended Learning/On-Line Learning Provides for communication via video technology, synchronously, or asynchronously from one-to-many delivery points. Educational Placement The overall educational environment in which gifted education is provided to a gifted student based on individual strengths, interests and needs. Enrichment In-depth learning experiences that provide interaction with new ideas, skills and topics that enhance the curriculum. These experiences are based upon individual student strengths, interests and needs. Flexible Grouping Arranging students by strengths, interest and/or need. Flexible Pacing Provisions that place students at an appropriate instructional level and allows them to move forward in the curriculum as they achieve mastery of content and skills. Gifted Education Specially designed instruction to meet the needs of a gifted student that is conducted in an instructional setting, provided in an instructional or skill area, provided at no cost to the parents, provided under the authority of a School District, directly, by referral or by contract, provided by an agency, individualized to meet the educational needs of the student, reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and student progress and provided in conformity with a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP). Group Investigation Students working in small groups on multi-step projects such as: Creative Problem Solving, History Day, Math Counts, Envirothon, STEM/STEAM, and Odyssey of the Mind. Heterogeneous Grouping Grouping by chronological age level and without regard for the diverse needs of students, their learning styles, or their interests. Higher Level Questioning Strategies - Questions and activities using analysis, synthesis, evaluation, or other critical thinking skills. Homogeneous Grouping Grouping by common criteria such as the student's interests, special needs, or academic abilities. Honors/Advanced Course A secondary level planned course designed to be advanced in content, process, and product and usually requiring general education students to meet prerequisite criteria before course entry. Inclusion Refers to the education of each student in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent appropriate. Independent Study Allowing students to follow individual or self-

selected areas of interest by designing and implementing their own study plans. Also called Guided Independent Study or Self-Directed Study. Individualized Instruction Content and pacing of instruction geared toward the student's strengths, abilities, needs and goals of the GIEP. Instructional Setting A classroom or other place in which students are receiving education generally by a Gifted Support Teacher. Interdisciplinary Units Instruction tied together by a key concept or idea. Information and activities are integrated from a variety of disciplines or courses that study a broad topic or concept by gathering and relating information and ideas from multiple subject areas and disciplines. Interest Centers or Interest Groups A means of providing students with meaningful study when basic assignments are completed. Learning Contract Student and teacher jointly develop a plan for the accomplishment of learning goal(s), which both sign and follow. Modifications Changing the objectives within the curriculum to meet the needs of the student. Pacing The speed at which content is presented and instruction delivered. Pacing which matches the student's rate of learning is optimal. Planned Course The common knowledge and skills in a subject area to be learned by all general education students of a particular age/grade/level as determined and approved by a local School District within the state mandate. Portfolio Assessment A collection of student products used to measure student progress and achievement. Such assessment allows for the demonstration of a wide variety of abilities and talents that do not lend themselves to traditional measures. Pre-test - A test given before instruction to determine current level of performance in a specific skill area. Process How the student will acquire the content information. Product How the student will demonstrate their understanding of the content. Skills Inventory An instrument used to describe the student's aptitudes in areas such as leadership, creativity, communication, etc. Specially Designed Instruction Adaptations or modifications to the general curriculum, instruction, instructional environments, methods, materials, or a specialized curriculum. Support Services Services as required under §16.33 (relating to support services) that assist a gifted student to benefit from gifted education. Examples of the term include psychological services, parent counseling and education, counseling services, and/or transportation to and from gifted programs to classrooms in buildings operated by the district. Tiered Instruction/Scaffolding Use of varied level of activities to ensure that students explore ideas at a level that builds on their prior knowledge and prompts continued growth within the same unit, lesson, or theme of instruction.

Dr. Elizabeth Robison
Chief School Administrator

10/05/2021
Date