

Gifted and Talented Education in Maryland



Gifted and Talented is Defined in Maryland Law

A gifted and talented student is identified as “having outstanding talent and performing, or showing the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other students” (Maryland Annotated Code § 8-201). The law recognizes that students may have different types of gifts and talents, such as intellectual ability, excelling in specific academic fields, or high performance capability in creativity, leadership, or the visual and performing arts. In addition, other students may exhibit a keen ability to lead, influence, and organize others.

Gifted and talented students are found in all Maryland schools and in all cultural, ethnic, and economic groups. The COMAR 13A.04.07 regulations establish the minimum standards for:

- **Student Identification**
Each local school system shall establish a process for identifying gifted and talented students as they are defined in § 8-201.
- **Programs and Services**
Each school system shall provide different services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to develop the gifted and talented students’ potential. Appropriately differentiated programs and services shall accelerate, extend, or enrich instructional content, strategies, and products to demonstrate and apply learning.
- **Professional Development**
Teachers and other personnel assigned specifically to work with students who have been identified as gifted and talented shall engage in professional development aligned with the competencies specified by the Gifted and Talented Education Specialist certification §13A.12.03.12.
- **State Advisory Council**
The State Superintendent of Schools shall maintain an Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education that shall advise the Superintendent on issues and best practices relevant to the education of gifted and talented students in Maryland.
- **Reporting Requirements**
Local school systems shall, in accordance with §5-401 (c), report in their Bridge to Excellence Master Plans their goals, objectives, and strategies regarding the performance of gifted and talented students along with timelines for implementation and methods for measuring progress.

Gifted and Talented Students Think and Learn Differently

These students learn rapidly in areas of interest, have excellent memories, and make unique connections among facts and ideas. They are curious and ask the “big” — hard-to-answer — questions. They can concentrate for long periods to explore an area of interest. They like to solve problems and may be sensitive beyond their years to moral and ethical issues.

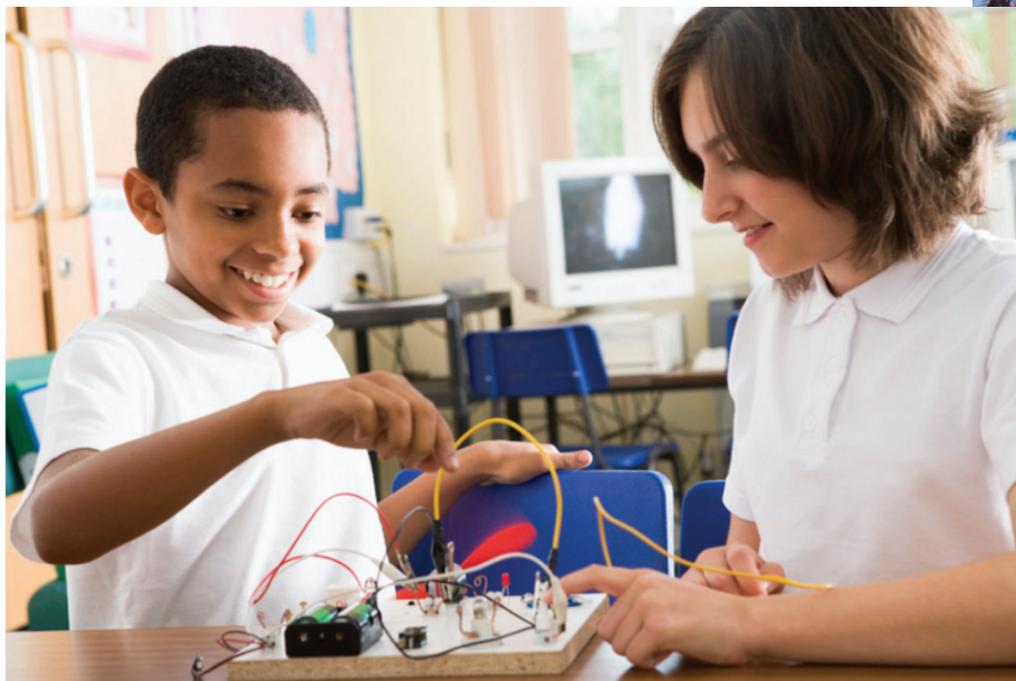
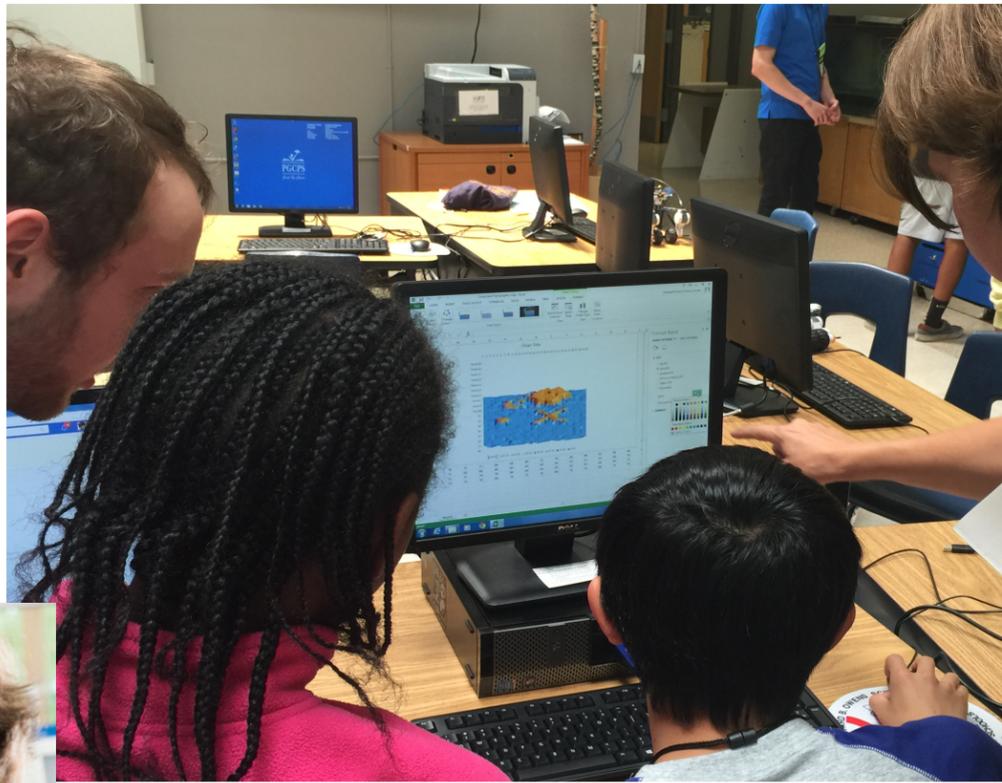
Gifts and Talents are Identified using Multiple Methods

All school systems use multiple ways to identify students’ gifts and talents. Ability and achievement test scores are typically used, but teacher and parent observations of students’ learning behaviors are also important. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has developed the Primary Talent Development Early Learning Program in which teachers systematically observe and document gifted learning behaviors in all preK-2 students. Examples of student work, such as a science experiment, model, painting, or poem may provide evidence of advanced capabilities.



Programs and Services Available

Maryland public schools offer a variety of acceleration and enrichment opportunities that include early entrance to kindergarten, advanced reading or mathematics groups, gifted and talented curriculum units, pull-out enrichment classes, single-subject or whole-grade acceleration, special magnet programs, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, International Bacclaireate (IB) Programs, original research, mentorships, grade or course acceleration, or dual enrollment in college. Check with your local school system to see which are offered in your area.



Some Gifted and Talented Students also have Learning Difficulties

Some students are “twice exceptional,” which means they are very advanced in one area, such as mathematics, but struggle with organization, writing, or reading. These students may need special education and gifted education services. To learn more, contact the Council for Exceptional Children, www.cectag.org.

Some of these students also require support of their emotional needs. Additional information is available at Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG), sengifted.org

Extracurricular Activities are Important

No curriculum can adequately address gifted and talented students’ many interests, so extracurricular programs are an essential supplement to the school schedule. Academic clubs — the debate team, the literary magazine, the French or mathematics or robotics club — do not just give students a chance to explore their chosen disciplines more deeply, they give the students a chance to socialize with others who want to do the same. Maker-type Spaces also provide opportunities for creativity and curiosity.

The MSDE GT Webpage offers some opportunities for Gifted and Talented Students. Several of these programs offer gifted and talented students in grades 4-12 challenging, hands-on learning experiences that can last one-to-two weeks and several are residential. These corporate and community sponsors offer opportunities, including global languages, Chesapeake Bay ecosystem research, space science, creativity and exploration, and a variety of other experiences. For 2019 information go to <http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Gifted-Talented/SummerCenters/index.aspx> Check the site frequently, as new information is constantly being added.

Special Training and Certification in Gifted and Talented Education is Available

Just as gifted and talented students need specialized instruction to fully develop their potential, teachers of these students need specialized training in that instruction. MSDE offers several online courses for teachers of gifted and talented students. Teachers who wish to pursue leadership roles in gifted and talented education are encouraged to obtain Gifted and Talented Education Specialist certification. For more information on the online courses, or for certification questions, go to <http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Gifted-Talented/index.aspx>

Every fall, MSDE and the Maryland Educators for Gifted Students (MEGS) sponsor the Annual Maryland State Conference on Gifted and Talented Education in October. Local colleges and universities offer graduate courses. For more information go to, www.megsonline.net.

Parent Support is Vital

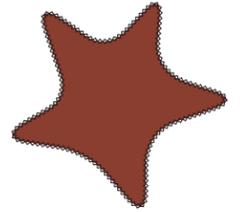
Parents need to educate themselves and help to educate others about the special needs of gifted and talented students. Become active in your local school’s PTA/PTO. Some school systems also have gifted and talented parent groups. At the State level, parents can join the Maryland Coalition for Gifted and Talented Education (MCGATE). Visit www.mcgate.org for more information.





The Structure of Gifted and Talented Programs in Maryland & the State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Students

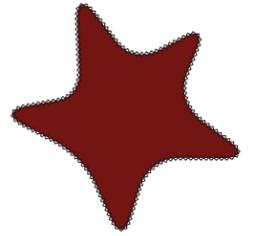
Each local school system's Board of Education is responsible for funding and managing its gifted and talented education program. MSDE provides technical assistance to school systems and sponsors quarterly State briefings, professional development courses, an annual State conference, differentiated curriculum tools, and student summer programs. The State Superintendent of Schools appoints the Maryland State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Students, which meets quarterly with the mission to encourage and support the education of students who are identified as gifted and talented.



You can get more Information

Your local school principal or your local Board of Education's coordinator of gifted and talented education or advanced programs can provide specific program information. Contact the Gifted and Talented Education Office at the Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0527 or go to <http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/pages/gifted-talented/index.aspx>

For information and resources for identifying and nurturing giftedness, go to the National Association for Gifted Children, www.NAGC.org.



GT Discover: The Website for all your GT Needs

Available in 2020, the Maryland State Department of Education, in partnership with the Johns Hopkins University IDEALS Institute, will unveil a revolutionary website that offers information, resources, research, and contacts for all of your gifted and talented needs. This is being made possible through the US Department of Education's Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Education Grant Program. More information will be available in the near future.



Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) School Awards Program

The Maryland State Department of Education and the State Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education initiated the *Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) Schools Awards Program* to honor public elementary, middle, and high schools that offer gifted and talented programs aligned with the objectives and criteria of the *Maryland Criteria for Excellence: Gifted and Talented Program Guidelines*. Each EGATE school must submit a comprehensive application providing documentation of 21 different criteria under four program objectives from the *Guidelines*.

In December of 2018, 17 new schools joined the existing ranks of EGATE schools. Since 2010, 73 schools have been awarded the EGATE designation. This includes previous awardees from Baltimore City, as well as from Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Charles, Harford, Montgomery, Prince George's, Washington, and Wicomico Counties. Eleven schools have earned the coveted EGATE designation more than once. Each school may reapply, after their three-year designation period ends.

Top Ten Myths In Gifted Education



Top Ten Myths in Gifted Education - Video

Adapted from: *Common Myths in Gifted Education*, National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). The video is a compilation of decades of research that dispels myths related to gifted education that have distorted the perception of not only what gifted students need in the classroom, but also what they can offer the nation now and into the future.

To view the video go to:

<http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Gifted-Talented/Top10MythsGiftedEducation.mp4>

Additional Resources:

Maryland State Department of Education, <http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Gifted-Talented/index.aspx>

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), www.nagc.org

US Department of Education Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Education Program, <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/javits/index.html>

Council for Exceptional Children, www.cectag.org

Maryland Coalition for Gifted and Talented Education (MCGATE), www.mcgate.org

Hoagies' Gifted Education Page, www.hoagiesgifted.org

Destination ImagiNation (DI), www.imaginthis.org

Maryland Educators of Gifted Students (MEGS), www.megsonline.net

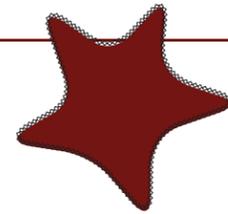
The Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth, www.cty.edu

Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted (CSDPG), csdpg.weebly.com

Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, <https://edexcellence.net>

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, <https://www.world-gifted.org>

Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted, sengifted.org



Attention Teachers!

Earn MSDE endorsement as a Gifted and Talented Education Specialist. For more information visit:

http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Gifted-Talented/COMAR_Gifted__Talented_Ed_Specialist.pdf



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