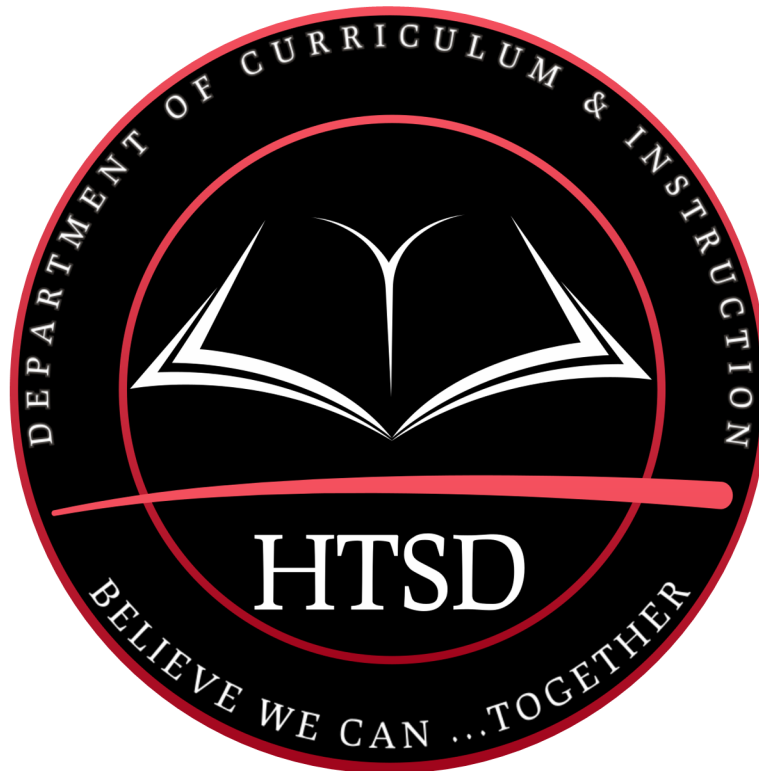


Hamilton Township School District



Gifted and Talented Program Structure 2023-24

Mission Statement

The Hamilton Township School District is dedicated to creating a safe, secure, and welcoming educational environment for all. We will inspire our diverse community in realizing their optimal potential as lifelong learners and responsible members of our community.

District Gifted and Talented Contacts

Nicholas Gabriel - Joseph Shaner School

Christina Petti – George Hess Complex

TBD William Davies Middle School

Vision

The Hamilton Township School District's Gifted and Talented Program fosters a love of learning. We believe in a program where each student's passion can be uncovered and explored.

We are committed to a model that values differentiated instruction, one in which classroom teachers work to tailor instruction and content to match student ability levels. Our Gifted and Talented Program is designed to address the unique social and emotional needs of students by promoting self-understanding, awareness of needs, and cognitive and affective growth.

We hope to inspire and support this special group of learners to embrace challenges and opportunities.

The intent of all levels of Gifted and Talented programming is to honor the "whole child, every child" in developing student competencies that forge lifelong learners and create global and world changers!

The Hamilton Township School District believes that meeting the needs of all students is paramount to providing a thorough and efficient education. Our goal is to empower students to reach their highest potential, physically, academically, emotionally, and socially. Students will find the challenge and support needed to help them function in a world that requires:

- Competence in academics and the arts
- Excellence in communications
- Adaptability, creativity, and critical thinking
- Valuing of Diversity
- Development of character

The New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) in ELA, Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), is intended to promote higher levels of learning for all students, emphasizing analytical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. These standards provide a rigorous framework for instruction at each grade level in terms of content and progression of skills. As gifted and talented students typically grasp curriculum concepts more quickly and deeply than peers their age, they also need additional learning experiences that extend and enrich the standards and require students to apply complex, creative, and innovative thinking to authentic problems.

In order to identify and provide for the many diverse talents of our students, we have developed a triad model for grades K-8. This model has been adapted from Joseph Renzulli's Schoolwide

Program and is based upon the Triad Model, which was developed and field-tested over a ten-year period throughout the United States and Canada (Renzulli, 1990). At the heart of the model is differentiation of instruction. The Triad Model is based upon the following four general goals:

- To improve the extent and quality of learning for all students and promote excellence throughout the school environment;
- To provide various types and levels of learning to a broader spectrum of the school population than usually served in traditional gifted programs;
- To enhance learning experiences in a collaborative pull-out setting;
- To minimize concerns about exclusiveness and the negative attitudes that are often expressed toward students participating in only special programs for the gifted.

Standards for Gifted and Talented

The following standards are from the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC, 2019). These standards provide a framework in which to develop opportunities for gifted and talented students.

Standard 1: Learning and Development

Description: Educators understand the variations in learning and development in cognitive, affective, and psychosocial areas between and among individuals with gifts and talents, creating learning environments that encourage awareness and understanding of interest, strengths, and needs; cognitive growth, social and emotional, and psychosocial skill development in school, home, and community settings.

Standard 2: Assessment

Description: Assessments provide information about the identification and learning progress of students with gifts and talents.

Standard 3: Curriculum & Instruction

Description: Educators apply evidence-based models of curriculum and instruction related to students with gifts and talents and respond to their needs by planning, selecting, adapting, and creating a curriculum that is responsive to diversity. Educators use a repertoire of instructional strategies to ensure specific student outcomes and measurable growth.

Standard 4: Learning Environments

Description: Learning environments foster a love for learning, personal and social responsibility, multicultural competence, and interpersonal and technical communication skills for leadership to ensure specific student outcomes.

Standard 5: Programming

Description: Educators use evidence-based practices to promote (a) the cognitive, social-emotional, and psychosocial skill development of students with gifts and talents and (b) programming that meets their interests, strengths, and needs. Educators make use of expertise systematically and collaboratively to develop, implement, manage, and evaluate services for students with a variety of gifts and talents to ensure specific student outcomes.

Standard 6: Professional Learning

Description: All educators (administrators, teachers, counselors, and other instructional support

staff) build their knowledge and skills using the NAGC-CEC Teacher Preparation Standards in Gifted and Talented Education, (NAGC-CEC) Advanced Standards in Gifted Education Teacher Preparation, and the Standards for Professional Learning. Institutions of higher education utilize these standards and the NAGC Faculty Standards to ensure quality professional learning experiences in pre-service, initial, and advanced educator preparation programs. Educators frequently assess their professional learning needs relating to the standards, develop and monitor their professional learning plans, systematically engage in coaching and learning to meet their identified needs, and align outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards. Administrators assure educators have access to sustained, intensive collaborative, job-embedded, and data-driven learning and assure adequate resources to provide for release time, fund continuing education, and offer substitute support. The effectiveness of professional learning is assessed through relevant student outcomes.

What is Giftedness?

Although interpretations of the word “gifted” seem limitless, there are a handful of foundational definitions that may be categorized from conservative (related to demonstrated high IQ) to liberal (a broadened conception that includes multiple criteria that might not be measured through an IQ test).

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

Students with gifts and talents perform - or have the capability to perform - at higher levels compared to others of the same age, experience, and environment in one or more domains. They require modification(s) to their educational experience(s) to learn and realize their potential. A student with gifts and talents:

- Come from all racial, ethnic, and cultural populations, as well as all economic strata.
- Require sufficient access to appropriate learning opportunities to realize their potential.
- Can have learning and processing disorders that require specialized intervention and accommodation.
- Need support and guidance to develop socially and emotionally as well as in their areas of talent.
- Require varied services based on their changing needs.

National Definition

This definition is taken from the Javits Act, which provides grants for education programs serving bright children from low-income families:

“Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons, who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society.

Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination:

- General intellectual ability,
- Specific academic aptitude,
- Creative or productive thinking,
- Leadership ability,
- Visual and performing arts.”

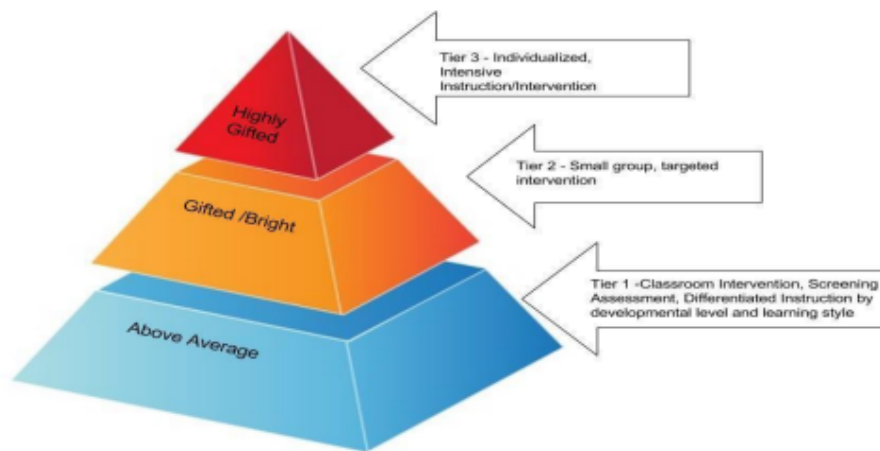
State Definitions of Gifted and Talented

Each state has its own definition of gifted and talented.

- The New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1) definition of gifted and talented students states the following: “Gifted and talented student” means a student who possesses or demonstrates a high level of ability in one or more content areas when compared to his chronological peers in the school district and who requires modifications of his educational program if he is to achieve in accordance with his capabilities.”
- Code N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)5ii requires all district boards of education to provide appropriate K-12 educational services for gifted and talented students.

Program Description

At Tier I and II levels, differentiation, within the classroom, occurs on an ongoing basis in order to provide for all students. At the Tier III level, additional intervention occurs, tailored to meet the needs of students identified as gifted and talented. This tier serves that percentage of students who exhibit high levels of ability, creativity, and task commitment in school activities and have been identified through the district’s screening process.



Beginning in Kindergarten, in addition to the differentiation that occurs for the gifted learner in the classroom, a supplemental program is utilized to enhance program offerings. This consists of instruction provided by the school’s Reading Specialist and the homeroom teacher.

Instructional services in first grade consist of a two-teacher model enrichment program. The goal of this instruction is to bring together students in order to collaborate and provide opportunities for project-based learning that extends beyond grade-level expectations. The school’s G&T teacher will work with each homeroom teacher to ensure the students complete one project per trimester. This model provides enrichment opportunities to all first-grade students and allows the teachers to observe behaviors that could potentially lead to participation in the G&T screening process.

Students who have been identified as G&T through the District's multi-faceted identification process will begin receiving more formal enrichment services in second grade. The school's G&T teacher will provide standards-based enrichment and projects for two 40 minutes per week in the classrooms of the identified students.

During grades 3 - 5, students will receive two 80-minute periods per week. The goal of these periods is for the school's G&T teacher to provide enrichment, outside of the homeroom. This will allow for more in-depth projects and enrichment of the NJSLS at a more individual level and pace.

At the Middle School level grades 6-8 differentiation for the gifted learner continues to occur throughout the school day by content area teachers. In addition, gifted students are pulled together to meet with the G&T coordinator as well as their Guidance Counselor to focus on Social Emotional Learning SEL.

Program goals are as follows:

- Develop and enhance critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills
- Accommodate individual learning styles and interests, while challenging students' cognitive abilities
- Encourage local, national, and global awareness through inquiry-based research of real-world issues/concepts
- Promote effective communication skills through public speaking and writing
- Foster collaborative relationships through team investigations and challenges

Overview of Triad Tier Model

While differentiation is a hallmark of good instruction and is expected in every class for all disciplines, the Triad Model provides additional opportunities to enhance student learning. The Triad Model provides three tiers:

1. Tier I: Whole Group Curriculum Extensions
2. Tier II: Individualized Curriculum Opportunities
3. Tier III: Gifted and Talented Program

Tier I and II involve all students in enrichment opportunities. Tier III is designed for students identified as being gifted and talented in one or more academic areas.

Tier I: Whole Group Curriculum Extensions

Tier I includes general exploratory experiences for all students designed to provide exposure to critical thinking and problem-solving opportunities within a variety of novel topics, ideas, and fields of knowledge. This type of learning is implemented into various planned activities throughout the school day. It is also built into multi-leveled tasks and projects within each discipline of our board-approved K-8 curriculum.

School-Wide Enrichment Program (SWEP) Gr. K-5 Curriculum: The SWEP is designed to supplement the regular education curriculum, implemented as both an enrichment program used with

academically gifted and talented students as well as a magnet theme/enrichment approach for all students, thus providing opportunities & experiences for underserved/under-identified students to demonstrate their abilities across content areas by using a lens of equity. The theme of the SWEP is to develop the strengths and talents of ALL students as follows:

- Materials chosen reflect the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) and Enrichment activities focus on providing students with opportunities to explore interests and strengths while promoting creativity. Throughout the year students will be presented with various dilemmas, situations, and/or tasks that will require the use of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Students under the direction of the SWEP teacher (Media Specialists) will be expected to use inquiry, investigative and exploratory skills to formulate a plan, solution, or product.
- A combination of independent, partner, and group work will be exercised to ensure student success. Teamwork and team building will be emphasized in an effort to strengthen social ties and connections among students. Student output will be shared and celebrated; reflection on the thought and learning process will be encouraged.
- Students that exhibit a high level of ability in one or more of the SWEP areas when compared to their chronological peers in the district will be discussed for a recommendation for Tier 1 of the Gifted and Talented identification process. Identification of Students for SWEP: All kindergarten through grade five students participates in the SWEP delivered by the Instructional Media Specialists.

Tier II enhances general classroom differentiation through individualized opportunities to explore curriculum concepts. It assists all students in refining and enriching their individual development of higher-order thinking processes.

Tier II opportunities vary by grade level, both in and out of the classroom. Some Tier II activities are embedded in the specific components of the daily schedule for all students (e.g., Reader's Workshop, choice time). Other activities occur weekly for students and are based on ability or interest.

Tier II Program Criteria

The following goals have been developed for Tier II activities and/or courses of study. These goals represent characteristics of intelligent behaviors adapted from the work of Arthur Costa and focus on developing and extending these characteristics over time. These include:

persistence/persevering

listening to others

flexibility in thinking

metacognition: awareness of own thinking

checking for accuracy and precision

ingenuity, originality, insightfulness: Creativity

depth of understanding/insight applying prior knowledge/making connections

Tier III: Gifted and Talented Program

Tier III involves students who have been identified as gifted and talented based on district criteria. This tier serves a small percentage of students who exhibit high levels of ability, creativity, and task

commitment in school activities (Renzulli, 1978). The goal of this tier is to enable students to become more independent, self-directed learners, leaders, and contributors to local and global society. Individuals who participate in Tier III are offered opportunities to explore real-world problems. This tier provides students with challenging and engaging instruction, materials, and collaboration to meet specific needs in varied academic curricula.

Gifted and Talented Program Identification/Selection Process

Hamilton Township School District uses multiple measures to determine if a student meets the criteria for the Gifted and Talented Program when compared to grade-level peers. This is an ongoing process throughout the school year.

Students transferring into the district who were eligible for, or were active participants in a Gifted and Talented Program in their previous district, will be considered upon entry into the Hamilton Township School District. The Gifted Education teacher will review the documentation of the student's participation in or eligibility from their previous district's program. The student's records, including any achievement test scores, will be reviewed. The decision to screen the child will be based on the validity of the child's participation in the Gifted and Talented Program in the previous school district. The child's participation in the Hamilton Township Gifted Education Program will depend upon the results of the screening.

Screening/Assessment Process

A Gifted Education Program Identification Matrix is used to create a pool of those students who perform at remarkably high levels of accomplishment relative to their age, peers, experience, or environment. The criteria used will be a combination of qualitative and quantitative instruments which include the following:

1. Trimester 1 Reading F&P level
2. Writing Pre-Assessment score
3. Fall NWEA MAP Growth Assessment RIT score in ELA and Math
4. Informal, in-class observations
5. Multiple Intelligence Survey
6. CogAt data
7. Torrance Test of Creative Abilities
8. Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test

A total number of points will be required for eligibility into the program.

***This number will vary depending on the current grade level student body.** Once the identification process is complete, parents or guardians are notified.

Hamilton Township School District
Gifted Education Program Identification Matrix

Student Name: _____ Homeroom Teacher: _____

TIER I							
Assessment Items	# of Matrix Points					Actual Score	Points
	5	4	3	2	1		
READING F&P Independent Level	Gr. 2 = N > Gr. 3 = Q > Gr. 4 = T > Gr. 5 = V > (end of 1 st Trimester)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
WRITING On-Demand Pre-Assessment	Gr. 2-5 = 3						
ELA MAP Growth Assessment RIT Score	Gr. 2 = 191 % > Gr. 3 = 213 % > Gr. 4 = 219 % > Gr. 5 = 228 % >						
MATH MAP Growth Assessment RIT Score	Gr. 2 = 194 % > Gr. 3 = 203 % > Gr. 4 = 218 % > Gr. 5 = 225 % >						
Gifted Ed Teacher In Class Observation Scale (Outliers)	Highly Recommend (May be eligible to skip Tier II)	Recommend (May be eligible to skip Tier II)	Need More Data	Neither Recommen d nor do NOT recommend	Do not recomm end		
TIER I TOTAL POINTS Must accrue 3 points minimally to move to Tier Two							
TIER II							
Actual Score	# of Matrix Points					Actual Score	Points
	5	4	3	2	1		
Multiple Intelligence Survey	176 & above	175-140	139- 120	119-100	99 & below		
Cogats (Values vary based on current grade level student bodies)	130+	128	126	124	122		
TIER II TOTAL POINTS (Varies based on student bodies) Must accrue 5 points minimally to move to Tier Three							
TIER III							
Assessment Items	# of Matrix Points					Actual Score	Points
	5	4	3	2	1		
Naglieri (Non-Verbal)	125 & above	124	123	122	121		
Torrance (Verbal)	125 & above	124	123	122	121		
TIER III TOTAL POINTS							

Program Admissions based on Tier III data:

A total number of points will be required for eligibility into the program
 (This number will vary depending on the current grade level student bodies. Exceptions may vary.)

Student Name: _____ **Grade:** ____ **Homeroom Teacher:** _____ **Multiple Intelligences Assessment-Teacher Survey**

Directions: This holistic survey is to be completed by the student’s homeroom teacher in collaboration with other teachers as needed. Teachers are to take into consideration the whole child. It is most important that the ratings are applied appropriately and without bias. All students will exhibit strengths and weaknesses.

No single area will make or break a child’s eligibility. It is meant to support a child’s eligibility for screening. This will NOT exclude them.

If you have any questions, please contact the Gifted Education Program Teacher for support and guidance. Using the scale below, please circle the number for each item that best describes the student:

- 5 – possesses this characteristic to a high degree
- 4 – often demonstrates this characteristic
- 3 – sometimes demonstrates this characteristic
- 2 – rarely demonstrates this characteristic
- 1 – has not been observed to demonstrate this characteristic

THINKING SKILLS

Learns quickly	1	2	3	4	5
Thinks quickly	1	2	3	4	5
Has a long attention span and shows perseverance	1	2	3	4	5
Has an exceptional memory	1	2	3	4	5
Is able to follow complex lines of reasoning	1	2	3	4	5
Uses abstract thinking and reasoning	1	2	3	4	5
Has a highly active imagination	1	2	3	4	5
Asks questions relentlessly; has an avid curiosity	1	2	3	4	5

Total Score: _____

VERBAL LINGUISTIC BEHAVIORS

Has an advanced vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Is an avid reader	1	2	3	4	5
Has a wide general knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
Follows complex directions	1	2	3	4	5
Understands and enjoys plays on words, word games, and sarcasm	1	2	3	4	5

Is highly articulate	1	2	3	4	5
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Total Score: _____

LOGICAL AND MATHEMATICAL BEHAVIORS

Can recognize and extend patterns	1	2	3	4	5
Is quick at solving a variety of problems	1	2	3	4	5
Likes to sort things into categories	1	2	3	4	5
Wants to know how things work	1	2	3	4	5
Enjoys and creates complicated games	1	2	3	4	5
Counts any items available	1	2	3	4	5

Total Score: _____

INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIORS

Sensitive to the moods and feelings of others	1	2	3	4	5
Is good at listening and communicating	1	2	3	4	5
Shows leadership qualities	1	2	3	4	5
Interacts well in a group	1	2	3	4	5

Total Score: _____

INTRA-PERSONAL BEHAVIORS

Is highly intuitive	1	2	3	4	5
Is self-reflective	1	2	3	4	5
Is self-reliant when forming opinions	1	2	3	4	5
Shows awareness of being different	1	2	3	4	5
Is over-sensitive to criticism	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates resilience	1	2	3	4	5

Total Score: _____

PHYSICAL BEHAVIORS

Is often fidgety and restless	1	2	3	4	5
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Uses body gestures to enhance expression	1	2	3	4	5
Is well coordinated	1	2	3	4	5
Likes to put things together and take them apart	1	2	3	4	5

Total Score: _____

VISUAL-SPATIAL BEHAVIORS

(consult & complete with art teacher; behaviors can be exhibited in classes other than art)

Shows advanced skills in pencil control	1	2	3	4	5
Has a good sense of spatial reasoning or spatial awareness.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates advanced artistic skills	1	2	3	4	5
Uses materials creatively	1	2	3	4	5

Total Score: _____

MUSICAL-RHYTHMIC BEHAVIORS

(consult & complete with music teacher; behaviors can be exhibited in classes other than music)

Can remember songs and rhymes	1	2	3	4	5
Often hums/taps/sings to self	1	2	3	4	5
Has a good ear for music	1	2	3	4	5
Incorporates music into non-musical situations	1	2	3	4	5

Total Score: _____

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES ASSESSMENT RESULTS

(homeroom teacher to tally total scores below for a comprehensive final score)

INTELLIGENCES Score

THINKING SKILLS ____

VERBAL LINGUISTIC BEHAVIORS ____

LOGICAL AND MATHEMATICAL BEHAVIORS ____

INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIORS ____

INTRA-PERSONAL BEHAVIORS ____

PHYSICAL BEHAVIORS ____

VISUAL-SPATIAL BEHAVIORS ____

MUSICAL-RHYTHMIC BEHAVIORS ____

COMPREHENSIVE FINAL ____