

How Does A Student Receive Gifted Education Services?

If an evaluation determines a student is mentally gifted and in need of specially designed instruction, then a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) is developed to meet that student's identified academic areas of strength. The GIEP is created by a team, including family/legal guardian(s) of the child, the child's teacher(s), a designated representative from the District and any other person who is requested to be present by either the family/legal guardian(s) or the District.

The GIEP identifies present levels of academic achievement, annual goals, instruction for specially designed instruction and supports each student in developing individual strengths.

The content and design of each student's GIEP depends on the individual's academic strength areas identified for enrichment, acceleration or a combination of both.

Gifted Education Services

Supports and services for students identified as gifted align to Pennsylvania standards and encompass a high level of cognitive and metacognitive concepts and processes.

Instruction for gifted students deepens and broadens their thinking. Broad themes, appropriate to several disciplines, are used to help students connect ideas among and between various disciplines and to apply them in meaningful ways. Learning environments incorporate cognitive and metacognitive experiences to support the development of innovation, exploration, self-monitoring, creativity, decision-making, openness to new ideas, and academic risk taking.

The diversity and uniqueness of individuals and cultures is honored and integrated into substantive curricular content.



Lower Merion School District



GIFTED EDUCATION SERVICES



www.lmsd.org

What Is Giftedness?

In Pennsylvania, ‘mentally gifted’ is defined as outstanding intellectual and creative ability, the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the regular education program. The term ‘mentally gifted’ includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher or a person who meets multiple criteria indicating gifted ability.

District Contacts

Ms. Kimberly Fraser
 Director of Student Services and
 Special Education
 FraserK@lmsd.org
 610-645-1918

Dr. Percell Whittaker
 Lead Supervisor of Clinical Services and
 Gifted Education
 WhittaP@lmsd.org
 610-645-1879

Ms. Gwendolyn Nartowicz
 Coordinator of Professional Learning and
 Gifted Education
 NartowG@lmsd.org
 610-645-1841

What Might Giftedness Look Like?

In comparison to similarly-aged peers within a setting, the following observable behaviors may indicate gifted ability:

- ◆ Acquires new academic information quickly and with little practice
- ◆ Asks questions frequently; highly curious
- ◆ Retains and recalls academic information with ease
- ◆ Unusually large vocabulary
- ◆ Understands nuanced language and complex ideas
- ◆ Has well developed expressive communication
- ◆ Reasons abstractly to solve problems and puzzles
- ◆ Generalizes learned information to novel situations
- ◆ Deep, intense academic interests
- ◆ Uses high level thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation and synthesis
- ◆ Has well developed leadership skills
- ◆ Concerns for social and political issues

How Does A Student Become Eligible For Gifted Services?

The District’s established procedures for screening and evaluation for gifted education align with the Pennsylvania’s Department of Education Chapter 16 provisions. Screening is a systematic process to determine the need for evaluation for gifted education services. Evaluation is the systematic process through which the need for gifted education services is determined. Determination of gifted ability is not based on IQ score alone. A person with an IQ score lower than 130 may be eligible to receive gifted education services when other educational criteria in the person’s profile strongly indicate gifted ability.

Multiple criteria indicating gifted ability may include:

- ◆ A year or more above grade level achievement
- ◆ Demonstrated achievement, performance or expertise in one or more academic areas
- ◆ An observed accelerated rate of acquisition of new information and retention of it
- ◆ Frequent use of high level thinking skills, academic creativity, leadership skills, intense academic interests, communication skills, foreign language aptitude or technology expertise
- ◆ Evidence that factors, such as gender or race bias, socio/cultural deprivation, disabilities, or limited English proficiency, are masking gifted abilities

Gifted Education Screening* and Evaluation

*Students are universally screened in 1st and 2nd grades;
 General screening is available in all other grades

