

DOVER AREA SD

101 Edgeway Road

Gifted Education Plan Assurances (Chapter 16) | 2023 - 2026

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 Dover Area School District is responsible for identifying students that are in need of gifted education. A comprehensive screening for students in grades K-12 is conducted to find children who are thought to be mentally gifted. Each year, the District publishes student handbooks which contain explicit procedures with respect to gifted education services and contact information. Additionally, the Department of Exceptional Children maintains a webpage specifically dedicated to Gifted Education. Finally, the District participates with other school districts within the Lincoln Intermediate Unit to publish an annual notice in local newspapers to inform residents of procedures and contact information specifically related to Gifted Education.

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

School teams or parents who suspect that a student may be mentally gifted and in need of specially designed instruction beyond what is provided in the regular classroom may contact the school counselor and provide a written or verbal request for screening. Screening is a two step process. The first step is a systematic review of all students. This process garners information that allows the district to locate students that may be in need of gifted support services. Data sources include diagnostic and benchmark assessments, PSSA and Keystone results, and classroom achievement. Students performing at or above pre-determined levels are then observed in the classroom for typical gifted behaviors using an observation inventory. A team decision is made whether or not to pursue a screening based on the quantitative and qualitative data. If the decision is to proceed, the second step of the process takes place, with the school counselor administering a brief intelligence test and teachers and parents completing the Scales for Identifying Gifted Students. Results of the intelligence assessment, data review, and parent/teacher input are compiled into an age-specific matrix from which a determination of potential giftedness is made. The results are reported to the parent(s) via a phone call and official letter.

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

Evaluation If, at the end of the screening process, the student is thought to be gifted, a written request for further evaluation is provided to the parents. Upon receipt of the signed request, the certified school psychologist and other school personnel complete a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation within 60 calendar days. The evaluation generates data from a variety of sources. These data are then compared to pre-determined multiple criteria. Sources of data include the following: psychometric test results, achievement test results, curriculum based assessment results, observations, parent and teacher rating scales, rates of acquisition and retention, anecdotal

information, student interviews, and review of the cumulative academic record. Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) Upon completion of the psychological assessments and gathering of other multiple criteria measures, the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team is convened to determine whether or not the student qualifies for gifted support services as per Chapter 16 of the Pennsylvania School Code. A multi-criteria evaluation score sheet is used during the GMDE to determine eligibility for gifted services. It includes point values for the Individual Cognitive Test, Individual Achievement Test, Scales for Identifying Gifted Students, and Intervening Factors. The term “mentally gifted” includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher, when multiple criteria as set forth in the regulations indicate gifted ability. No one test or measure is sufficient to determine giftedness, and the evaluation and testing literature recognizes that there is a margin for error in any standardized testing. If a student’s IQ is less than 130, other factors, such as academic performance, demonstrated achievement and other observed skills must strongly indicate gifted ability in order for the student to receive gifted support services. Such data would assess the student’s rate of acquisition and retention of new material. Additional information indicating gifted ability may be exception interest and ability in a specific domain. Gifted Written Report (GWR) The information gathered by the GMDE is compiled into a Gifted Written Report. The report brings together the testing information, scholastic data, and other relevant information concerning the student’s educational needs and strengths. The report makes recommendations as to whether or not the student should begin to receive specially designed instruction or whether they should continue in their regular education program. If the GMDE recommends the child is eligible for gifted education, the district arranges for a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) meeting. If the GMDE recommends the child is not eligible for gifted education, the process is concluded with the signing of a Notice of Recommended Assignment indicating the child is not gifted and not in need of specially designed instruction. If the GMDE recommends the child is gifted but not in need of specially designed instruction, the district will arrange for a meeting in which an enrichment plan will be developed for the child to be carried out within the regular classroom.

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.

The gifted support program offers a levels-of-service approach to gifted education. Students receive differentiated instruction within the regular education classroom on a daily basis to address their learning needs. This may include enrichment, acceleration, or a combination of both based on their present levels of educational performance. There is an intentional increase in depth and complexity of thinking, and small group or individualized instruction is utilized. Goals may be written specifically to address needs within the regular classroom setting, and the regular education and gifted support teachers collaborate to ensure progress. Gifted students may receive regularly-scheduled

support within the gifted support classroom. The amount of support is dependent upon the needs of the individual student and may change from year to year. During this time, students meet with their gifted peers and the gifted support teacher in a small group setting to work toward GIEP goals. Activities include independent projects, Socratic discussions, collaborative projects, and small group explicit instruction. Based on student need, gifted support teachers may co-teach with regular education teachers to provide additional layers of in-class support. At the high school level, there is a focus on college and career readiness, with students meeting with the gifted support teacher to research college/career options, complete applications, learn how to write college essays or collaborate on Independent Studies. Students at this level may also choose to participate in shadowing experiences or extended college visits where they observe classes. The Dover Area School District has adopted an Acceleration Policy and has established guidelines for considering subject-based or whole grade level acceleration.

Chief School Administrator

Date