

## FAQs- Frequently Asked Questions

- How do I know if my child is gifted?
  - I believe my child is gifted and would like to have him/her evaluated. What do I do?
  - When are students identified and when do they start service?
  - How will I know if my child has been identified?
  - What kind of information is used in identifying student needs?
  - What standardized tests are administered in District 196?
  - Do gifted programming efforts change as students move from elementary to middle to high school?
  - If my child was in another district's gifted program, is she guaranteed placement in District 196's program?
  - How can I find out about different extracurricular opportunities that might appeal to my gifted child?
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### **How do I know if my child is gifted?**

There is no definite way to know when a child is gifted. There are a myriad of stories which illustrate that gifted children often think and/or perform differently from other children their age. Children identified as gifted typically have mental abilities in the upper two and one-half to three percent of the population. Parents are often the first to recognize a child's giftedness. They see that their child seems advanced in language and the ability to understand and infer compared to others of the same age. If you feel your child may be gifted, please contact the district elementary or secondary gifted and talented teacher on special assignment [pam.mcdonald@district196.org](mailto:pam.mcdonald@district196.org), [Mary.Spychalla@district196.org](mailto:Mary.Spychalla@district196.org) ( link) or the gifted specialist at your elementary school. (see contacts page) (link)

### **I believe my child is gifted and would like to have him/her evaluated. What do I do?**

If you feel that your child is gifted and is currently in a District 196 school, please contact the GT specialist at your child's school or the GT coordinator at your child's middle school. If your child is a preschooler or attends a school in a different district, please contact the district elementary or secondary gifted and talented teacher on special assignment [pam.mcdonald@district196.org](mailto:pam.mcdonald@district196.org) [Mary.Spychalla@district196.org](mailto:Mary.Spychalla@district196.org) . (link)

## When are students identified and when do they start service?

While students can be identified at any time during their school career in District 196, most identification takes place at the elementary level( K-5). Currently students in grades one through five take standardized tests that help teachers make decisions about students' educational needs. A committee of educators at the elementary level meets periodically to review student profiles and make decisions about student's demonstrated educational needs.

As students move into the middle school level, this information is shared with the middle school gifted coordinators who continue the process of matching student needs with academic opportunities. Students who are new to the district in middle school should contact the building GT coordinator for more information about identification and /or academic opportunities.

During the registration process for high school, students are made aware of advanced academic opportunities by school counselors and administrative personnel. Middle School teacher recommendations and student grades can also help guide students to coursework commensurate with academic needs at the high school level.

## How will I know if my child has been identified?

Parents of students who are identified for Level Three or Four Services (see K-8 Programming Options link) in the elementary are contacted by the gifted specialist in the school the child attends. Many Level Two Services at the elementary are self selected. (see K-8 Programming Options link)

## What information is used in identifying student needs?

A variety of evidence is used to place students in levels of gifted programming. Generally measures of performance, cognition, and achievement are gathered and reviewed by district identification teams.

## What standardized tests are administered in District 196?

District 196 currently administers the follows standardized tests on the elementary level which are used as evidence in making decisions concerning gifted programming:

<b><i>Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)</i></b>	<b><i>Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)</i></b>	<b><i>Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test-version 2 (NNAT2)</i></b>
Measures student growth In reading and math	Measures verbal, nonverbal, and Quantitative aptitude	Measures nonverbal aptitude
Grades 2-5	Grades 3 and 5	Grade 1

**Do gifted programming efforts change as students move from elementary to middle to high school?**

As students grow and move from the elementary level to the middle school level to the high school level opportunities and programming efforts vary as does selection criteria for those opportunities. Gifted opportunities are available in each of our district schools. Additionally, independent selections: honors course, college prep, Advanced Placement courses, College in The Schools, and Post Secondary Educational Options are available at the High School level. For more specifics, contact the elementary or middle school building GT specialist/coordinator or the building guidance counselor at the high school level.

**If my child was in another district's gifted program, is he/ she guaranteed placement in District 196's program?**

Participation in a gifted program in another school district does not necessarily qualify a student for gifted service in District 196. We evaluate a new student's needs in the same way we evaluate the needs of all District 196 students. We review information a student brings from a former district attended as well as information that might have been generated via a private practitioner. If more information is needed on a particular student, District 196 gifted specialists will administer further assessments. At the high school level, a counselor analyzes the student's transcripts and works with the student to find appropriate course selections and extracurricular opportunities.

**How can I find out about different extracurricular opportunities that might appeal to my gifted child?**

Contacting the building gifted specialist at the elementary and middle school level is the most efficient way for options to be reviewed. At the high school level contact the guidance office.

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If your question about gifted services in District 196 was not answered in this FAQ list, please contact the elementary or secondary teacher on special assignment for gifted programming [pam.mcdonald@district196.org](mailto:pam.mcdonald@district196.org) [mary.spychalla@district196.org](mailto:mary.spychalla@district196.org) ( link) or the guidance office at the high school ( link... counseling page) you are interested in.

