

Section 8.3 Gifted Learners

How does gifted education fit into the Response to Intervention (RTI)?

Advanced learning needs can be addressed in the general education classroom by providing instructional interventions prior to identifying students for specialized educational services. By documenting instructional interventions, the RTI process allows high-achieving students access to differentiated curriculum, flexible pacing, cluster grouping, and other universal interventions available to all students in the regular classroom.

When should students be considered for gifted education services?

If there is compelling evidence that instructional modifications have not met a student's need, local school districts should establish a decision-making process that allows professional staff members to consider all information available during the student search/nomination stage of the process and determine whether it is appropriate to proceed with a formal referral and further assessment. Factors to be considered in this screening process should include the strength of the evidence of the student's advanced learning needs, the recency and performance levels of any previous gifted program referral, circumstances which would indicate those assessment results are no longer valid, or other criteria adopted by the local system.

The term differentiation is used quite often in education. What is differentiation, and when should differentiation be used in the classroom?

Differentiation can be defined as a way of teaching in which teachers *proactively* modify curriculum, teaching methods, resources, learning activities, and student products to address the needs of individual students and /or small groups of students to maximize the learning opportunity for each student in the classroom (Carol Ann Tomlinson, 1998).

Additional information regarding Gifted Education can be found on the Georgia Department of Education website. The web address is below:

http://www.gadoe.org/ci_iap_gifted.aspx

Instructional Options for High-Ability and Gifted Students

The needs of high achievers and gifted students vary widely; therefore, an array of instructional modification options should be available to addresses all grade levels and content areas. Specific learner objectives are developed on a case-by-case basis. Tier 2 and Tier 3 options to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

Alternative Assessments

Students are offered opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of material learned in “real-world” ways.

Compacting

Students are allowed to demonstrate proficiency in curriculum outcomes, units, or courses and progress to more appropriate/challenging instruction.

Cross-Age Grouping/Multi-Age Grouping

Students of different ages/grades are grouped together for instruction for all or part of a day.

Enrichment Clusters

Students are grouped according to achievement levels for instructional purposes. Focus on student choice and students as producers of useful products.

Graduated Rubrics

The standard and level of student proficiency and accomplishments designed for students and teachers to measure learning outcomes. Graduated rubrics offer clear expectations for quality and levels of excellence to encourage optimum performance among high-ability learners.

Independent/Directed Study

Students participate in a self-initiated, teacher directed and approved course of study in an area of interest as described in a written contract, to include objective(s), research and planned presentation(s). Independent study encourages student autonomy in planning and problem-solving.

Interest Centers

Centers within the classroom that link curriculum topics to areas of student talent and interest in depth and breath.

Subject Grouping Within Class

Students are grouped according to achievement, within a classroom, for instruction in one or more subjects (i.e., students stay in assigned classroom).

Subject Grouping Across Teams/Classes

Students are grouped according to achievement, within a grade level, for instruction in one or more subjects (i.e., students go to a different classroom or team, within the same grade).

Subject Advancement Across Grades

Individual students go to a different classroom, in a higher grade, for instruction in one or more subject areas.

Tiered Assignments

Assignments designed for varying ability levels of students. More complex assignments better meet the needs of high-ability learners.

Tiered Products

Products specially designed to demonstrate understanding of a topic in a more in-depth manner.

Instructional Modification Options for High-Ability and Gifted Students

In a differentiated classroom, teachers differentiate *content*, *process*, and *product* according to a student's *readiness*, *interest*, and *learning profile*.

- ***Content-*** *what the teacher wants the student to learn and the materials or resources through which that is accomplished*
- ***Process-*** *activities designed to ensure that students use key skills to make sense out of essential ideas and information*
- ***Products-*** *vehicles through which students demonstrate and extend what they have learned*

- **Readiness**- a student's entry point relative to a particular understanding or skill
- **Learning Profile**- how an individual student learns

A range of Tier 1, 2 and 3 instructional and management opportunities with varying degrees of preparation might include:

<i>Tier 1: Low Preparation Differentiation</i>	<i>Tier 2: High Preparation Differentiation</i>
<i>Flexible-Learning Groups by Readiness, Interest, Learning Profiles</i>	<i>Students are Assessed in Multiple Ways</i>
<i>Choice of Books</i>	<i>Tiered Activities</i>
<i>Homework Options</i>	<i>Tiered Products</i>
<i>Use of Reading Buddies</i>	<i>Independent Study</i>
<i>Various Journal Prompts</i>	<i>Multiple Testing Options</i>
<i>Student/Teacher Goal Setting</i>	<i>Multiple Texts</i>
<i>Varied Pacing with Anchor Options</i>	<i>Alternative Assessments</i>
<i>Work Alone or Together</i>	<i>Subject Advancement within class/group, across teams, across grade levels</i>
<i>Flexible Seating</i>	<i>Course Compacting</i>
<i>Varied Scaffolding</i>	<i>Tiered Centers</i>
<i>Varied Computer Programs</i>	<i>Spelling by Readiness</i>
<i>Design-A-DAY</i>	<i>Varying Organizers</i>
<i>Varied Supplemental Materials</i>	<i>Community Mentorships</i>
<i>Computer Mentors</i>	<i>Stations</i>
<i>Think-Pair-Share by Readiness, Interest, Learning Profiles</i>	<i>Group Investigations</i>
<i>Open-ended Activities</i>	<i>Choice Boards</i>
<i>Explorations by Interest</i>	<i>Think-Tac-Toe</i>
<i>Options for Competition</i>	<i>Simulations</i>

Purpose of the Gifted Education Program:

Gifted Education services are designed to serve students in grades K-12 who meet the eligibility criteria as defined in SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS.

Instructional Staff:

All Gifted Education teachers must be certified staff and hold either the Gifted In-field Endorsement or the Gifted P-12 Certificate.

Eligibility:

Students in grades K-12 are eligible for Gifted Education Services if the requirements in SBOE Rule 160-4-2-.38 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS are met. The rule provides two

options to establish a student's eligibility for gifted program placement: (See <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/documents/doe/legalservices/160-4-2-.38.pdf>)

- Option 1- psychometric option uses a composite mental ability test score and achievement data; or
- Option 2- three out of four multiple-criteria eligibility option. Local school systems should give children opportunities to qualify in both ways.

Gifted Education Services Instructional Delivery Models:

There are six SBOE-approved instructional models to serve gifted students. (See http://www.gadoe.org/documents/curriculum/instruction/gifted_regulations.pdf)

Direct

- Resource Class (K-12) ~ Limited class size (grades K-5: 17; grades 6-12: 21)
- Advanced Content Class (6-12) ~ Reduced class size (21)
- Cluster Grouping (K-12) ~ Recommended class size (5-8 gifted students)

Indirect

- Collaborative Teaching (K-12)
- Mentorship/Internship (9-12)
- Joint Enrollment/Postsecondary Options

Other

- Innovative Model approved yearly by the GA DOE Gifted Education department

Class size: A Gifted Education class must follow specific class size regulations.

(See Appendix C of SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.08 CLASS SIZE – (See <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/documents/doe/legalservices/160-5-1-.08.pdf>)

SAMPLE STUDENT TALENT SEARCH FLOWCHART



