

Henrico County Public Schools

Gifted Education Programs

Gifted Identification Process

Frequently Asked Questions

Who may be referred for gifted services?

Any student enrolled in grades K-12 in Henrico County Public Schools may be referred for gifted services.

When may a student be referred for gifted services?

Enrolled students may be referred from September through mid-June of the academic school year. No identification is done during the summer months.

In what categories may a student be referred for gifted services?

- Intellectual aptitude which includes both language arts and mathematics (K – Grade 12)
- Language Arts (K – Grade 12)
- Mathematics (K – Grade 12)
- Visual and/or Performing Arts (Grades 9 – 12)

How are students referred for gifted services?

A student may be referred for screening by any one of the following:

- Professional educator – classroom teacher, resource teacher, school counselor, media specialist, principal, etc.
- Parent or guardian – parents/guardians need to contact the school’s Gifted Identification Coordinator
- Community member - leaders in the community familiar with a student, such as a scout leader or church leader
- Self - students may refer themselves
- Peer - peers may refer a fellow student
- Standardized aptitude or achievement test scores with national norms
 - Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) – administered to third-grade students in October
 - Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) – administered to fourth-grade students in October
- Previous gifted program in another location

Who should a parent/guardian contact if they wish to refer a student for gifted services?

Parents/Guardians should contact their student’s school to speak with the school’s Gifted Identification Coordinator. A coordinator is designated by the principal to oversee the gifted identification process at each HCPS.

What information is used to determine if a student is identified for gifted services?

The criteria used are:

- Parent/Guardian questionnaire
- Professional questionnaire
- Classroom grades of “E” or “A”, awards, honors
- Standardized test scores of 97 percentile or above – CogAT and ITBS
- Student language arts and/or math work samples/portfolio
- Performance-based math and/or language arts assessment
- Observation and/or interview

For Visual and/or Performing Arts identification, a student must also participate in the adjudication process as outlined by the Center for the Arts at Henrico High School.

How are K-2 students screened for the process?

The screening process begins with the parents/guardians discussing their student’s academic strengths with the classroom teacher or the school’s Gifted Identification Coordinator. After the discussion, screening may continue with the collection of student work samples and informal assessments conducted by the school’s Gifted Identification Coordinator and/or the Resource Teacher. If a student scores 85 percentile or higher on above grade level language arts and/or mathematics informal assessments, the student may be referred for the identification process.

Note: A student cannot be administered the CogAT twice within an eight month window. Therefore, a second-grade student may be referred during the second semester of the school year, but will be placed on monitor status and administered the test in October of the third grade year.

What kind of tests are the CogAT and the ITBS?

The CogAT is an aptitude test. Riverside Publishing states, “The *Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)* measures students’ learned reasoning abilities in the three areas most linked to academic success in school: Verbal, Quantitative and Nonverbal.”

The ITBS is an achievement test. Riverside Publishing states the purpose of the ITBS is “...to provide a comprehensive assessment of student progress in major content areas.” The test measures students’ knowledge in the areas of language arts and mathematics.

What scores on the CogAT and ITBS are used for the identification process?

The following CogAT scores are used for language arts and for mathematics:

- Two Language Arts scores: Verbal Battery and Composite
- Two Mathematics scores: Quantitative Battery or Nonverbal Battery and Composite

Note: The highest mathematic score of either the Quantitative Battery or the Nonverbal Battery will be used in addition to the Composite score.

The following ITBS scores are used for language arts and for mathematics:

- Three Language Arts scores: Reading Total, Reading Comprehension, and Total Core Battery
- Three Mathematics scores: Math Total, Math Problem Solving & Data Interpretation, and Total Core Battery

What other tests may be used for the identification process?

Any nationally norm-referenced aptitude test and/or achievement test administered within a two or three year window from the time of the student referral may be used for the process.

What happens after the information is gathered on a student’s ability and performance?

After information is gathered from multiple criteria, a meeting of the Identification/Placement Team is scheduled at the student’s school. The student’s parents/guardians are invited to attend. Every effort is made to accommodate the parents’/guardians’ attendance. The Identification/Placement Team members who must be present at the meeting are the principal or designee, the school’s Gifted Identification Coordinator, the school counselor, the classroom teacher(s), and the gifted resource teacher or high school gifted site coordinator.

At the meeting, the Identification/Placement Team reviews and evaluates the student information. Parents/guardians are invited to attend the meeting to provide input about their child’s ability in order to gain as clear a picture as possible of the child. The Identification/Placement Team makes a recommendation and forwards the student information to the Specialist for Gifted Education Programs for review. The review is to ensure consistency of the identification process established by HCPS and compliance with the Virginia Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students. Formal notification is sent to the parents/guardians from the school after the Identification/Placement Team’s recommendation is reviewed and approved by the Educational Specialist.

How is the information evaluated to determine if a student is identified for gifted services?

As stated in the Identification Procedures Manual for Henrico County Public Schools, the following criteria must be met:

Intellectual Aptitude

- Aptitude Test Scores of 97 percentile or higher require the following:
 - Five criteria supporting identification in language arts **and**
 - Five criteria supporting identification in mathematics
- Achievement Test Scores of 97 percentile or higher require the following:
 - Six criteria supporting identification in language arts **and**
 - Six criteria supporting identification in mathematics

Language Arts Aptitude

- Aptitude Test Scores of 97 percentile or higher require the following:
 - Five criteria supporting identification in language arts
- Achievement Test Scores of 97 percentile or higher require the following:
 - Six criteria supporting identification in language arts

Mathematics Aptitude

- Aptitude Test Scores of 97 percentile or higher require the following:
 - Five criteria supporting identification in mathematics
- Achievement Test Scores of 97 percentile or higher require the following:
 - Six criteria supporting identification in mathematics

What if a student has aptitude or achievement scores of 96 percentile or lower?

A student with aptitude or achievement test scores of 96 percentile or lower needs six criteria supporting identification in language arts and six for identification in mathematics.

What kinds of recommendations can the Identification/Placement Team make?

The types of recommendations that may be made include one of the following:

- identified for gifted services in intellectual aptitude (K – Grade 12);
- identified for gifted services in language arts (K – Grade 12);
- identified for gifted services in mathematics (K – Grade 12);
- identified for gifted services in visual and/or performing arts (Grades 9 – 12);
- not identified for gifted services at this time; **or**
- designated as monitor status.

What does the recommendation of monitor status mean?

The Identification/Placement Team needs additional information to complete the review and evaluation of the student. The Team indicates the additional information to be gathered and sets a specific date the information will be reviewed by the Team.

What is the timeline for the Identification/Placement Team to make a recommendation?

The process takes approximately 45 instructional days to complete.

If the recommendation is not identified for gifted services at this time, can the student be referred again?

If not identified for gifted services, students may be referred once annually during a school year for the gifted identification/placement process. For example, a student screened for the process in February may be referred and screened the following February.

How may parents appeal the Identification/Placement Team's recommendation?

Parents/guardians receive a copy of the appeal process as described in the Identification Procedures Manual at the completion of the Identification/Placement meeting. After the identification process is complete and written notification has been received, parents/guardians who disagree with the decision may contact, in writing, the school's principal. This must be done within 10 instructional days of notification. If an understanding or resolution cannot be reached, the principal may recommend a school-level review. A school-level review may be conducted if parents provide, within 30 instructional days, additional information that was not available at the time of the initial identification meeting. Alternatively, the school's principal may recommend that the parent/guardian initiate the formal appeals process.

To initiate the formal appeals process a parent/guardian must submit a written request to the principal within 10 instructional days of notification. The principal refers the appealed case to the Educational Specialist for Gifted Education Programs. The Educational Specialist for Gifted Education Programs will schedule a meeting with the Division Appeals Committee within 20 instructional days of receipt of the written request by the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians will be notified of the time and place of the Division Appeals Committee meeting and are invited to attend. A written notice to the parents of the decision of the Division Appeals Committee will be made within 10 instructional days of the meeting. All decisions made by the Division Appeals Committee are final.

Who should parents/guardians contact if they want more information about the process?

Parents/Guardians should contact their student's school to speak with the school's Gifted Identification Coordinator. Also, parents/guardians may contact the Gifted Education Programs Office at 804.652-3765.

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