**Scranton Public Schools**

**Gifted and Talented Program**

**7.00 Identification and Placement Policies**

Appropriate identification of gifted and talented students is essential in order to address the special aptitudes, interests, and abilities they possess. Opportunities for activities at appropriate levels of challenge will help each student reach his/her potential. The success of the GT program is dependent upon accurate identification and placement of students who will benefit from a differentiated curriculum. The process used in the identification of students for participation in the GT program consists of six basic steps:

1. Nomination
2. Testing
3. Data Gathering
4. Portfolio of Profile Development
5. Identification
6. Placement

**Nomination and Testing**

Students may be nominated for the program by faculty/staff, parents, community members, peers, or they can nominate themselves. General nominations are received any time during the year, but are especially encouraged during September and April. All nominated students are tested and screened on the basis of previous achievement test scores, ability test(s) scores, creativity scores, parent/teacher questionnaire results, academic records, and student work samples. The files and academic records of students new to the district are screened by teachers, counselors, or the GT teacher/coordinator for possible nomination and/or placement.

**Permission and Inventory**

After nominations are received, letters are sent to parents of all candidates. The letter includes information about the identification process, a request for permission to test, and a characteristics checklist/questionnaire. Teachers of the nominees are also asked to fill out a questionnaire.

**Data Collection**

Data is collected from as many sources as are relevant to the individual candidate. A case study approach is used to start the identification process. Objective and subjective data are collected for each nominee from as many sources as possible, including:

* Teachers and administrators
* Counselors
* Parents and other family members
* Interested community members
* Peers
* Grades and academic records
* Achievement test(s)
* Ability test(s)
* Creativity inventory(s)
* Other evaluations
* Candidate interview or survey

**Testing Procedures**

The Scranton GT Program utilizes only those assessments deemed non-discriminatory for identifying students. Assessment tools used may include:

* Screening Assessment of Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students (SAGES)
* Otis-Lennon School Abilities (OLSAT)
* Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT)
* Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test
* Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) (school and home)
* Scores from state-mandated achievement tests are also included in the profile
* Scores from other districts/states may be used for placement of transfer students

**Profile Development**

A folder is compiled for each nominated student. All data collected during testing is kept in this file, as well as any other information relevant to the identification process. The assessment results for each student are transferred onto a profile sheet which presents the information in a reader-friendly format. The identification committee will use this profile for identification purposes.

**Identification**

Initial identification takes place as soon as possible after testing is completed. If current achievement scores are not available until summer, the students are identified at the beginning of the following year. All information and data collected will be studied by the identification team. This committee of at least five consists of teachers, counselors, administrators, and the GT teacher/coordinator (committee chair).

The students are identified on the basis of specific and consistent criteria in several areas which can indicate giftedness as outlined in the local definition. This includes:

* Above average intellectual ability
* Creative thinking ability
* High achievement
* Task commitment or motivation

The Identification Committee reviews data from the student profile sheet. The committee looks for students rating high or superior in a majority of areas under consideration. Placement decisions are made in the best interest of the student. Students may be served through pull-out classes, acceleration, Pre-Advanced Placement, Advanced Placement, mentorships, independent study, concurrent enrollment, and GT Seminar. No single criterion or cut-off score may be used to exclude a student from identification and placement. For example, teacher ratings may override poor test scores, and good normative information may outweigh negative teacher and/or parent ratings. Extra consideration and possible testing and data gathering may be used in the identification of culturally and/or physically handicapped or other special cases that may arise. No nominee will be discriminated against due to race, gender, or socio-economic status. A placement verification form is signed by the identification committee declaring the decision of the committee. An updated list of identified students is sent to staff members following each assessment period. Information learned during the assessment process that might be useful in meeting the needs of students is shared with appropriate staff, regardless of testing results.

**Placement and Records**

After a student is identified by the identification committee, a letter is sent to the parent informing them of the committee’s decision. Parents are invited to schedule a conference with the GT teacher to discuss their child’s results. Parental permission to participate must be obtained before a student is formally placed in the program. Placement information is disseminated to the child’s teacher(s) and all appropriate stakeholders. Records of identification, placement, and participation are placed in each student’s permanent folder. Participation in the GT program is recorded in the permanent records for each year the student meets the participation requirements. All records are kept on file for five years after the student graduates.

**Candidate Pool**

Should a student be nominated, but not identified and placed into the program, his/her file will be kept in a candidate pool for possible placement at a later date, or for further testing and/or data collection. In order for a student to be placed at a later date, the identification process must be repeated.

**Student Evaluation**

GT Students are evaluated on a continuing basis. The evaluation process includes:

* Self evaluation
* Product evaluation
* Evaluation of affective behaviors
* Evaluation by the GT Coordinator
* Classroom teacher evaluation
* Test scores and classroom grades

Assessment is based upon mastery of content, higher order thinking skills, creativity, and affective growth. Students in third and sixth grades receive annual progress reports. Students in 7th-12th grades receive grades from their secondary content, Pre-AP, and AP classes, and concurrent credit classes.

An annual review will be conducted at the end of each school year by the GT Coordinator to determine students’ continued placement in the program. Summative results from evaluations, student observations, performance in the regular classroom, and parent/teacher/student input may be considered during the annual review. Achievement test scores are perused when they become available later in the year.

**Appeals Procedure**

A parent may appeal the placement decision of the identification committee. He/she must notify the GT coordinator and explain in writing the reason for the appeal. The GT Coordinator will hold a conference with the parent regarding the issue. If needed, a meeting will be scheduled with the identification committee to reevaluate the student's file in private. The appealer will have an opportunity to present to committee, but is not present when committee reviews data and decides placement. Multiple criteria will be used, including the explanation for appeal, test scores, parent/teacher nomination form, and any other useful information that may help the identification committee in their decision. The decision will be communicated in writing to the appealer. If party still wishes to appeal, district appeal procedures will then be followed ensuring administration (principal, superintendent, etc.) have been notified. The situation will be taken to the school board for a final appeal. (It is necessary to contact the superintendent and to get the issue on the scheduled agenda, in order to be lawfully be given the opportunity to discuss and try to resolve the situation.)

**Exit Procedure**

A parent or guardian may contact the GT Coordinator and request that a student be removed from the GT program. The student may exit the program immediately.

If a teacher requests removal of a student, he/she must present the reasons to the GT coordinator. An action plan for student improvement may be devised by the GT teacher, student, and parent. Depending on student progress, a meeting of the placement committee may be held to determine continued placement or removal from the program. Committee decisions will be based on multiple criteria, including the explanation for the request, and any other pertinent information from the student, his/her file, teacher(s), and/or parents. The GT coordinator will meet with the parents and the student to inform them of the decision. Parents have the right to appeal.

If a student requests removal from the program, the GT Coordinator will conference with the student. If necessary, the parents and/or the child’s teacher(s) may be asked to examine evidence and discuss adjustments or provisions for meeting the needs of the student. The request will be heard by the members of the identification committee, who will make the final decision. All records of the process are place in the student’s file.

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