

## Gifted and Talented Education Screening and Referral Frequently Asked Questions

Gifted and Talented Education in Atlanta Public Schools (APS) provides differentiated instruction for intellectually advanced and creatively gifted students. Gifted services are available for actively enrolled students in kindergarten through twelfth grade in an APS school. Note that students residing in the city of Atlanta enrolled in private schools or home study programs are not eligible for APS gifted testing and services.

### **What is the process for having my child evaluated for the Gifted and Talented Education Program?**

APS annually screens all students actively enrolled in an APS school for the appropriateness of referral for gifted eligibility testing. The screening/referral and testing processes follow two timelines:

- "Second Look" screening is for students tested in the previous school year through "First Look."
- "First Look" screening is for students who do not have current gifted testing data on record

### **What is Second Look screening?**

Second Look refers to the automatic process for students with current gifted testing data showing ineligibility in the previous school year. The local school eligibility team will review these students' data to determine if anyone qualifies for alternative assessments administered in the fall semester that may make them eligible.

### **What is First Look screening?**

First Look refers to students not previously tested or who do not have current test data (less than 2 years old) available. These students are screened annually through the automatic, teacher, and parent referral processes:

1. **Automatic Screening** – The gifted eligibility team at each school reviews scores after fall semester, district-administered achievement testing. The team refers students for gifted testing who either:
  - i. Scored 85<sup>th</sup>ile or higher on the Reading or Math district achievement assessment, OR
  - ii. Were identified as eligible for gifted services in another state.
2. **Teacher Screening** – After automatic referral decisions, additional students may receive a referral from current teachers. Invited certified teachers may complete the *Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors* (TABs) Instrument used for rating a student on ten gifted behaviors demonstrated in class. The eligibility team will refer students who meet the referral threshold on the TABs instrument and possess an 80<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on the recent district-administered achievement test(s) to be referred.
3. **Parent Referral** – Any parent within APS may request referral of their child for gifted testing. Parents must submit the Online Referral Form for review *within the referral window*. Otherwise, the student will test in the following school year. Students requested to be referred by a parent must score at the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on the recent district-administered achievement test(s) to be referred.

### **What happens next if my child is screened and referred for gifted testing?**

Students screened through a second or first Look (automatic, teacher, or parent) are possibly referred for gifted testing. Once referred for testing:

1. The parent receives, signs, and returns the *Parent Consent for Testing Form* to the school.
2. The student is evaluated for gifted services; Eligibility is determined; Parents are notified by May.

### **Can my child be tested before the school year starts?**

No. The APS gifted program screening and testing process will occur during the school year as detailed here.

**When does Second Look screening/testing take place?**

All students tested in the previous school year and found ineligible are possible Second Look referrals. They will have their data reviewed in August. Students referred for additional Second Look assessments will test in September-October. The eligibility team will notify parents if a child qualifies for a Second Look. It is important to note that many alternative assessments used with Second Look students may not feel like a "test" to the student. The eligibility team notifies parents of the child's eligibility status by late October.

**When does First Look screening/testing take place?**

All students are screened through the automatic and classroom screening processes from August through January. First Look students referred for testing will test in the February-March time frame. The eligibility team will notify parents if a child qualifies for a First Look. All parents will be notified of eligibility by May.

**How long is the testing process?**

The time depends on your child's grade level and the required assessments. Gifted testing will consist of approximately one hour of testing each day for one to four days.

**What if my child was identified as gifted in another state?**

There is no reciprocity between states for gifted education. However, students with documentation of gifted eligibility in another state are referred for testing in APS for the next testing cycle. Before testing, the eligibility team will review students' current data to determine if any may be utilized in deciding Georgia eligibility.

**May I provide results from private assessments?**

No. The school's Eligibility Team determines gifted eligibility based on the findings of Atlanta Public Schools approved assessments. Therefore, private testing or evaluations will not be accepted to establish eligibility for APS gifted services.

**Whom do I contact about the gifted program at my school?**

Each school in APS has a gifted eligibility team chairperson and a gifted lead teacher to assist you.

**What are the benefits of the gifted program?**

Intellectually gifted and exceptionally creative students have unique learning characteristics, interests, personal needs, and capabilities. Gifted and Talented Education addresses these unique characteristics and needs. In addition, the program allows gifted students to interact with their intellectual peers as they participate in classes that extend and enrich the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

**If my child is determined eligible, how and when would their schedule change?**

For Elementary Students: Second Look students found eligible typically begin services as soon as possible. First Look students found eligible will begin services at the start of the following fall semester.

For Middle and High School students: Second Look students found eligible will begin services at the semester change. First Look students found eligible will begin services at the start of the following fall semester.

**How will gifted services look for my child?**

Elementary: Gifted students receive a minimum of five gifted segments per week from a gifted-endorsed teacher through either a resource model, cluster grouping, collaboration, or advanced content.

Middle/High: Gifted students receive a minimum of five segments each week through core content, AP, or IB courses. School personnel determine the specific courses for a student using past classroom performance, nationally normed achievement test scores, and teacher recommendations.

**For additional information, contact the Office of Gifted and Talented Education (404) 802-7585.**