

Gifted and Talented Education in Middle School Frequently Asked Questions

How will my child be served in middle school?

Atlanta Public Schools uses the Advanced Content or Collaborative Model in middle schools. In the Advanced Content Model, a gifted-endorsed teacher provides the daily instruction. So teachers can provide instruction according to the student's area of strength in the core academic areas of Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, or Science. Likewise, the Collaborative Model provides instruction in the student's area of strength. However, the teacher does not hold the gifted endorsement. Instead, the core academic teacher collaborates with a gifted-endorsed teacher to provide differentiated curricula for the student. Both models meet the requirements of the Georgia Board Rule 160-4-2-.38.

What determines which middle school gifted delivery model a school employs?

The principal, number of gifted students in the school, and number of gifted-endorsed teachers in the building determine the gifted delivery model utilized by each middle school.

How many students are in gifted classes at the middle school?

According to Georgia Board Rule 160-4-2.38, an annually approved state waiver, and the charter system status of Atlanta Public Schools, the approved middle school class size limit is 26.

How is a gifted curriculum different?

Atlanta Public Schools use the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies to inform all instructional curricula and practices. Instruction in advanced content gifted classes and collaborative settings will differentiate the curriculum through enrichment of the GSE for students according to the Gifted Standards.

The difference is not in what is taught but in how it is taught. As a result, students will have opportunities to critically and creatively demonstrate their proficiency in the GSE in an academically enriched environment. They will practice advanced research skills, ultimately preparing them for advanced learning at the high school, college, and career levels.

How will my child be evaluated in middle school?

Advanced Content and Collaborative Models are based upon daily performance and use the same grade reporting system as all other core courses. The evaluation, as in other classes, is based upon classroom assessments, assignments, performance tasks, and classroom participation. If a student shows difficulty in a gifted class, a parent conference will take place to discuss interventions and continuation options. Furthermore, students failing to maintain a B average in the gifted class may be placed on probation for at least three months. Not improving the areas of concern during the probation period could result in discontinuing gifted services.

How will my child be supported?

Gifted and Talented Education teachers not only address the learner's academic needs but also assist them in understanding the impact of their giftedness on their social and emotional well-being. The vehicle for this interaction may come through advisory, before/lunch/after school tutorials, mentorships, or enrichment activities such as Future Problem Solvers, Odyssey of the Mind, Science Olympiad, or Duke Talent Search. Academically, all students receive progress reports on the district schedule, and communication from the school is ongoing.

How can I support my gifted child in middle school?

The same ways you were able to support your gifted learner in elementary school are also applicable in middle school.

- Get to know all of your child's teachers, not just one.
- Communicate with the guidance counselor and gifted contact teacher(s).
- Read all information on school policies, curriculum, and discipline carefully.
- Stay informed about your child's grades through the Parent Portal on APS's website. This is extremely important as you know your child's strengths and weaknesses.
- Assist your child with organization and time management as much as possible; disorganization is often a gifted characteristic. Determine what works best for your child.
- Request periodic meetings with teachers. If needed, ask for an interpreter.
- Talk with your child about what happened at school each day.
- Finally, value your child's education by encouraging homework and reading.

For additional information, contact the Gifted Contact Teacher at your local school or the Office of Gifted and Talented Education at (404) 802-7585.