

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

Gifted and Talented Education in Atlanta Public Schools (APS) provides differentiated instruction for the intellectually advanced and creatively gifted student. Gifted services are available for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade who are actively enrolled 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 are broken into two timelines:

- “Second Look” screening is for students who were previously tested in “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 students who have been previously tested and found ineligible for gifted services with current data still available. These students will have data reviewed by the local school eligibility team to determine if they qualify for alternative assessments that may make them eligible for gifted services.

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

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

- I. **Automatic Screening** – The gifted eligibility team in each APS school reviews most-recent test scores of all students each fall to see if students meet any of the following criteria:
  - i. Students who scored 85%ile or higher on district administered achievement assessments will be automatically referred for testing
  - ii. Students who scored 90%ile or higher on the latest Reading/ELA or Math Georgia Milestones EOG/EOC will be automatically referred for testing
  - iii. Secondary students with a cumulative average of 90 or higher over a consecutive two-year period in core academic courses (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and full-year Foreign Language) will be automatically referred for testing
- II. **Teacher Screening** – Students who are not selected as an automatic referral and who meet additional criteria will be further assessed by certified staff completing the “Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors” (TABs) instrument. Teachers observe students for the demonstration of 10 gifted behaviors during a period of two weeks. Students receiving a TABs rating at or above the established threshold will be referred for gifted testing.
- III. **Parent Referral** – A child enrolled in an APS school may be referred for consideration for gifted eligibility testing by a parent or guardian. The Gifted Parent Referral Form (provided through local school websites) must be submitted to the local school eligibility team for review. Students referred by a parent who also score at 80<sup>th</sup> %ile or higher in Reading or Math on a district administered achievement test will be referred for testing. The parent referral window falls in October and your local school will advertise the method for parent referral. Parent requests received after the parent referral window closes will be considered the following school year.

### **If my child is screened and referred for gifted testing, what happens next?**

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

- Parent receives, signs, and returns to the local school the *Parent Notification for Testing Consent Form*
- Student is evaluated for gifted services; Eligibility is determined; Parents are notified by May

### **Can my child be assessed before the start of the school year?**

No. The screening and testing process will take place during the school year as outlined here.

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

All students tested in the previous school year are screened as possible Second Look students and will have their data reviewed in August. Students who are referred for additional Second Look testing will be tested in September-October. Parents will be notified 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. Parents will be notified of 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 October through January. First Look students who are then referred for testing will be assessed in the February-March time frame. All parents will be notified of eligibility by May.

**How long is the testing process?**

Depending on the grade level of your child and the data which needs to be gathered, gifted testing will consist of approximately one hour sessions each day for one to seven 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. Prior to testing, students’ current test scores will be reviewed to determine if any may be utilized in determining Georgia eligibility.

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

Gifted eligibility will be determined based upon the findings of Atlanta Public Schools approved assessments. Private testing or evaluations will not be accepted to establish eligibility for APS gifted services.

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

Each school in APS has a gifted eligibility chairperson and a gifted contact teacher. If you have any questions regarding the gifted program at a specific school, one of these individuals will be able 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 by providing an opportunity for gifted students to interact with their intellectual peers as they participate in classes which extend and enrich the Georgia core curriculum.

**If my child is determined eligible, how and when would his or her schedule change?**

For Elementary Students: Second Look students found eligible normally 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 school gifted students receive a minimum of five gifted segments each week from a gifted-endorsed teacher. Students are served in resource model, cluster grouping, collaboration, or advanced content. Middle school gifted students receive five segments each week through core content courses. The specific courses for a student are determined by past classroom performance, nationally normed achievement test scores, and teacher recommendations. High school gifted students receive services through Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, Internships, Directed Study, Seminar, and/or Mentorship.

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