



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

June 22, 2022

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
State Superintendent of Education

RE: Gifted and Enrichment Programs, Inclusion, and Remediation of Basic Skills by Gifted Specialists

As local education agencies (LEAs) work to provide gifted services, questions have been raised concerning requirements for serving gifted students. Gifted education is mandated under Legislative Act 106, also known as the *Alabama Exceptional Child Education Act*, and the *Alabama Administrative Code (AAC)*, **290-8-9-.12 Gifted**. Therefore, all LEAs must provide services for gifted students.

There has also been confusion among some LEAs about the difference between serving gifted students through Gifted Programs and Enrichment Programs. These service delivery options are defined as follows:

- Gifted Program: A delivery model to provide services to identified gifted students using the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) *Gifted Eligibility/Screening Determination Form* and requires a gifted-certified specialist to facilitate.
- Enrichment Program: A delivery model to provide services to identified gifted students, **plus** an additional identified talent pool using a state-approved, multiple-criteria eligibility matrix. An Enrichment Program requires a gifted-certified specialist to facilitate.

An Enrichment Program should not be confused with the term “enrichment,” which is any supplemental activity that is above and beyond the core curriculum standards offered in any classroom that may be administered or facilitated by any certified teacher or mentor.

Both delivery options must acknowledge that gifted students have special learning and affective needs not ordinarily met by the general education program and must provide for these needs. Programs must include special services aimed at providing added depth, complexity, acceleration, and choice to meet cognitive needs. In addition, opportunities to encourage creativity and provide for the affective needs of students must be included.

Non-negotiables for state-approved Enrichment Programs include:

- Specific eligibility requirements consisting of multiple criteria including aptitude, creativity, gifted behaviors, and performance indicators approved by the ALSDE.
- Cluster-grouping gifted students with general education teachers who are willing to differentiate through pre-assessment and curriculum compacting and to collaborate closely with the gifted education specialist.
- Scheduled pull-out time for gifted students to work with intellectual peers and to address affective needs and creativity development through a concept-based curriculum.

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- Compliance with the AAC including Second Grade Child Find and standard referrals, caseloads and class sizes, modes of service delivery, etc.
- Maintain data on number of students served for yearly state reporting.
- Maintain records in PowerSchool Special Programs (PSSP) when students meet ALSDE eligibility criteria.

Inclusion, “push-in,” or any other practice where the gifted specialist serves gifted students by teaching whole or small groups within the general education classroom on a regular basis, is not a service delivery option for gifted services. See the AAC (290-8-9.12(6)(c)) for approvable options for service delivery.

Use of gifted specialists to remediate basic skills of gifted or other students is only permitted when the gifted specialist has time in the daily schedule to complete all of the primary duties required to meet the special needs of gifted students to include:

- Conducting Second Grade Child Find activities.
- Processing and managing referrals resulting from Second Grade Child Find and standard referrals.
- Serving identified gifted students through pull-out programs for three to five hours per week.
- Writing curriculum for pull-out classes.
- Supporting general education teachers in providing Response to Instruction (RtI) for high-end learners by sharing resources and teaching strategies through consultation in Grades K-8 and possibly Grades 9-12.
- Serving students in Grades K-2 who are potentially gifted or who have been identified as gifted through consultation with general education teachers.
- Providing professional development training to staff and administrators in recognizing gifted characteristics in general and in special populations and in the nature and needs of gifted students.
- Modeling teaching strategies/lessons differentiated for high-end learners (occasional visits to general education classrooms, followed by observation of general education teachers as they take ownership of these strategies).

However, basic skills at or above the grade levels of students should be embedded in the gifted curriculum.

As you plan for the coming school year, it is the goal of the ALSDE to assist you in meeting the requirements for your identified gifted students. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Mrs. Emily P. Hurst, Gifted Education Specialist, by email at ehurst@alsde.edu or Mrs. Ashley Strickland, Gifted Education Specialist, by email at ashley.strickland@alsde.edu or by telephone at 334-694-4782.

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FY22-2055