**IS MY CHILD GIFTED?**

Gifted children come in all shapes, sizes and from all cultures and income levels. They are not necessarily straight A students or even A/B students, especially if they have not been identified and their needs are going unmet. Some are noisy, some quiet. Some are bold, others shy. Some talk all the time, others very little. Some act like adults, others are immature. Some are teacher pleasers, others like to defy authority. Despite all these differences, gifted students do share some characteristics. Most gifted children do not have all these characteristics but they should have many. The following characteristics are commonalities shared by gifted students from all cultures and income levels:

- The ability to meaningfully manipulate a symbol system that they value.
- The ability to think logically, given appropriate information.
- The ability to use stored knowledge to solve problems.
- The ability to reason by analogy.
- The ability to extend or extrapolate knowledge to new situations or unique applications.
- The ability to see humor where their peers do not.
- The ability to react with intense sensitivity to issues, feelings and perceived slights, and pressures directed at themselves and others.
- The ability to connect ideas, drawing generalizations, and conclusions that age-peers overlook.
- A tendency toward high expectations for themselves and others that can lead to straight A’s, superior performances and enthusiastic participation, or to an unhealthy perfectionism and disillusionment.
- A tendency to both creative and curious.

**IDENTIFICATION/ELIGIBILITY**

Classroom teachers refer students each spring. Students may also refer themselves or may be referred by parents, peers, and community members. Although referrals are permitted throughout the year, most occur in the spring after an entire school year of comprehensive observation and the collection of many examples of classroom performance. A school-based comprehensive observation and the collection of many data, grades, performance assessment, and honors and awards received. Forms and additional information are available in the guidance office at each school.

**SUMMARY OF PHILOSOPHY**

Gifted children are those who differ from the average to such an extent that school programs must be modified in order for them to reach their potential. Gifted students, who can be found in every segment of society, are exceptional in terms of their superior capacity for rapid learning and retention, for dealing with highly complex and abstract ideas, for assuming a great deal of responsibility for their own learning, and for outstanding achievement. They are sensitive to the expectations and feelings of others and to their own high expectations, often possessing exceptional emotional depth and a keen sense of humor, as well as a heightened dimension for analogous thinking and for sensing and solving problems. They are usually unique in terms of creativity and leadership potential.

The Prince George County School Board is committed to the development and refinement of gifted programs that are differentiated, challenging, and individualized in order to enhance each student’s potential for excellence. Special efforts will be made for early and continuous identification among all segments of the school population, and differentiated programs will be provided on a continuum for kindergarteners through grade 12.

**GIFTED PROGRAMS OFFICE**

The staff of the Gifted Programs is here to serve the students, teachers, parents, and community of Prince George County. Please feel free to call, e-mail, or make an appointment to discuss any questions, concerns, and suggestions so that together we can provide excellent education for all children. Additional copies of the brochure may be obtained by contacting Willie Elliott (see back).

**GIFTED PROGRAM STAFF**

Willie L. Elliott
Director
Courtney Amaral
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Elementary
Mary Sebera
Elementary
Tonya Humphrey
Middle
Shelley Elliott & Anne Nere
Sr. High
Beth Andersen
High School

**SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE**

Superintendent
Dr. Lisa Pennycuff
Asst. Superintendent
Mr. William Barnes

**GIFTED PROGRAMS OFFICE**

Mr. Chris Johnson
Mr. Rob Eley
Mrs. Jill Andrews
Ms. Sherry Taylor
Mr. Cecil Smith

**School Board Members**

**POWERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD**

The School Board is the governing body of Prince George County Public Schools. It is composed of elected members who work with the Superintendent and other school system officials to develop policies, set goals, and allocate resources to ensure the delivery of a high-quality education to all students.

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PROGRAM OPTIONS
Prince George County offers differentiated education for identified gifted students in grades K-12.

K-SOAR & SOAR (K-12)
Studies of Advanced Reasoning
Students may be referred for the K-SOAR program throughout the school year by parents or community members. All kindergarten students experience Demonstration Shared Lessons (DSL) taught by the gifted resource teacher. At the end of the first semester, the classroom teacher refers students for the K-SOAR program. Second semester, the classroom teacher prepares lessons that are differentiated to meet the advanced needs of the identified students. There is no pullout component. In the spring, all K-SOAR students are automatically rescreened. They may continue in SOAR, or be identified for PACE, or they may be found no longer in need of gifted services.

Students who are identified for SOAR in grades 1 through 12 are grouped with teachers trained in gifted education for differentiated instruction. They are invited to two or more guidance sessions. This designation is usually for a period of one year, and at the end of the year, the child is rescreened.

SAGE (7-12)
Specific Academic Gifted Experiences
The SAGE program is designed for students with giftedness in one or more of the specific academic areas. Once identified, they are recommended for the advanced, honors, dual enrollment, and Advanced Placement (AP) classes that are available in their area of giftedness. SAGE students are encouraged to enroll in a gifted exploratory in grade 7, to pursue independent studies (grades 9-12), and seminar experiences (grades 8-12). Small group counseling sessions are also available.

Governor’s School Opportunities (6-12)
Full-time and/or summer Governor’s School options are available for a limited number of students. All qualified students are encouraged to apply for these and other opportunities.

Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School for Government and International Studies (MLWGSGIS), located in Richmond, is a high school that serves students in grades 9-12. All students who have a strong interest in government, international studies, science, mathematics, foreign language, and literature are encouraged to apply. The selection process is highly competitive. Students apply in the late fall of their eighth grade year.

Appomattox Regional Governor’s School for Arts and Technology (ARGS), located in Petersburg, is a high school that serves students in grades 9-12. Students apply in the areas of dance, literary arts, music, musical theatre, technology, theatre arts, and visual arts. All students who have a strong interest in the fine arts and/or the use of technology are encouraged to apply for the limited slots. The selection process is highly competitive. Students apply in the late fall of their eighth grade year.

Regional Governor’s School for Middle School Youth is a 2-week summer experience for selected students in grades 6-8 that is located at the Math-Science Center in Henrico. Identified gifted students who demonstrate a strong interest and advanced achievement in math and science are encouraged to apply for the limited slots. The selection process is competitive and takes place early second semester.

Summer Residential Governor’s School is a month-long summer experience for students in grades 10 & 11. Outstanding experiences are available in humanities, mathematics, science, technology, agriculture, and the visual and performing arts. All students who excel in these areas are encouraged to apply. Students apply in the late fall. This is a competitive process.

Summer Foreign Language Academies are month-long summer experiences for students in grades 10-12. All foreign language students who excel in the area of foreign language are encouraged to apply. This also is a regional and competitive process.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS
An identified gifted student will:
*Develop and pursue special interests in greater depth and breadth than is provided for in the regular curriculum.
*Develop advanced creative and critical thinking skills that they can apply to their research and in other productive ways.
*Develop self-awareness and a sense of responsibility to self, and to local, regional and global communities.
*Progress at his/her own rate of learning.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE
The gifted advisory committee (GAC) is composed of parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, psychologists, business leaders, and other members of the community. It is responsible for advising the director, the superintendent, and the school board, concerning the educational needs of all gifted students. It conducts an annual review of the local plan for gifted education. Each school has a parent and teacher representative. Meetings take place at least three times annually. Dates and times are posted on the Internet. Please join us!

In addition, the Superintendent must appoint:
*The Advisory Council of Gifted Parents and Teachers of the school district.
*The Advisory Committee of Local School Boards on Gifted Education.
*The Advisory Committee of Business Community Leaders on Gifted Education.

The responsibilities of the Advisory Council include:
*To make recommendations to the superintendent, the school board, and the county superintendent of schools on the identification and provision of services to the gifted and talented.
*To recommend to the superintendent and to the county superintendent of schools the procedures for funding and implementing special programs for the gifted and talented.
*To work with the superintendent and the county superintendent of schools to develop and review periodically a plan for the identification and provision of services to the gifted and talented.

The responsibilities of the Advisory Committee include:
*To provide an advisory role to the superintendent, the school board, and the county superintendent of schools in the identification and provision of services to the gifted and talented.
*To recommend to the superintendent and to the county superintendent of schools the procedures for funding and implementing special programs for the gifted and talented.

ROLES OF THE CLASSROOM TEACHER
Principals select the teachers who work with the identified gifted students. These teachers have training in gifted education and have demonstrated the ability to create and provide flexible, differentiated, and enriched curriculum experiences that are suited to a gifted student’s needs.

The teacher:
*Plans, documents and provides differentiated instruction to identified gifted students within the classroom setting.
*Assists with the screening and identification of gifted students.
*Requests assistance in terms of planning and obtaining appropriate materials for effective differentiation.
*Attends staff development.

ROLES OF THE RESOURCE TEACHER
The Superintendent or a designee selects resource teachers. They are trained in gifted education, have demonstrated success in the classroom with gifted students, and have demonstrated the ability to create and provide flexible, differentiated, and enriched curriculum experiences which are suited to a gifted student’s needs.

The resource teacher:
*Provides direct instructional services to identified PACE students in grades 1-7.
*Assists classroom teachers with planning and acquisition of materials for all gifted learners in grades K-12.
*Assists principals with identification procedures, scheduling options, planning and implementing special opportunities for gifted students, and planning and implementing programs within the individual schools.
*Serves as consultant to the Advisory Council and assists with data collection.
*Helps coordinate parent and community involvement.