

**PRENTISS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM**  
**PROGRAM HANDBOOK**  
**GRADES 2 - 8**

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**Based  
On  
*Regulations for Gifted Education Programs 2013***



# **Student Identification, Assessment, and Eligibility**

## **STAGE 1: REFERRAL**

The Prentiss County School District's Intellectually Gifted Program will utilize a multi-factored student identification process recommended by MDE to identify students who meet the criteria for intellectually gifted.

All students comprise the initial screening pool. A student may be referred for screening by a parent, teacher, counselor, administrator, peer, self, or anyone else having reason to believe that the student might be intellectually gifted. A district wide screening is conducted annually of all first and third graders and may include other grade levels.

There are two types of gifted referral processes:

- Type One - Mass Screening Referral Process addresses those students who are mass screened for gifted eligibility.
- Type Two - Individual Referral Process addresses those students who are individually referred for gifted eligibility.

### **Mass Screening Referral Process**

This process requires all Mississippi districts to screen all students in at least one grade level each year. Districts should use a normed group measure of intelligence in the Mass Screening Referral Process. This process should assist in identifying students in underrepresented populations. Students who obtain a full-scale score at or above the 90th percentile on the normed group measure of intelligence shall move forward in the referral process. Students who scored at or above the 85th percentile but lower than the 90th percentile on the normed group measure of intelligence shall be subjected to an Emerging Potential for Gifted Referral Checklist. If these students meet the criteria on the checklist, they shall move forward in the referral process.

The next step in the process will consist of the collection of substantiated student data obtained through the use of other objective and subjective measures. District personnel shall make decisions as to which measures will be used during this step of the Mass Screening Referral Process. A student shall satisfy two of the following additional criteria before moving forward to the Local Survey Committee (LSC) Review of Referral Data:

1. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published characteristics of giftedness checklist,
2. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of creativity,
3. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of leadership,

4. a score at or above the 90th percentile on total language, total math, total reading, total science, total social studies, or the composite on a normed achievement test,
5. a score at or above the 90th percentile on a normed measure of cognitive ability,
6. a score at or above the 90th percentile on an existing measure of individual intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months, and/or
7. other measures that are documented in the research on identification of intellectually gifted students.

Local Survey Committee (LSC) Each district shall establish a Local Survey Committee (LSC) for the Intellectually Gifted Education Program. The LSC shall be involved in determining a student's eligibility for the gifted program. The LSC shall include, but is not limited to, gifted education teachers and administrators. It may include regular education teachers, school psychologists and/or psychometrists, and parents. It should include a special educator when a student is being considered for an eligibility under the twice-exceptional criteria. The LSC may be a building level committee responsible for students enrolled at that school and/or a District Level Survey Committee (DLSC) which is responsible for all students in the district.

### **Individual Referral Process**

This process involves students who are individually referred for gifted eligibility. A student may be referred by a parent, teacher, counselor, administrator, peer, self, or anyone else having reason to believe that the student might be intellectually gifted. The person initiating the referral shall sign the referral form and date it. Once the student is referred, the district personnel shall collect the data required to satisfy the referral criteria. Once a referral form has been initiated, signed, and dated, only the LSC or parents can stop the identification process. Students participating in the Individual Referral Process shall satisfy three of the following criteria before moving forward to the LSC Review of Referral Data Stage:

1. a score at or above the 90th percentile on a group measure of intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months,
2. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published characteristics of giftedness checklist,
3. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of creativity,
4. a score at or above the superior range on a normed published measure of leadership,
5. a score at or above the 90th percentile on total language, total math, total reading, total science, total social studies, or the composite on a normed achievement test,
6. a score at or above the 90th percentile on a normed measure of cognitive ability,
7. a score at or above the 90th percentile on an existing measure of individual intelligence that has been administered within the past twelve months, and/or
7. other measures that are documented in the research on identification of intellectually gifted students.

Documentation of measures shall be maintained in a written document approved by the local school board indicating that the district is using the state minimal scale/percentile score criteria on all referral measures. This document shall be

distributed to district administrators, school counselors, and teachers and shall be available to parents at each school site.

**NOTE:** Any student who does not meet the minimum acceptable criteria (score in the 90th percentile) on the normed group measure of intelligence during the Mass Screening Referral Process and does not qualify for the Emerging Potential for Gifted criteria, can be referred by anyone for the Individual Referral for Screening Process. The individually referred student shall not be excluded from the referral process by their performance on the normed group measure of intelligence administered during the Mass Screening Referral Process.

## **STAGE 2: REVIEW OF REFERRAL DATA**

The Gifted Local Survey Committee (GLSC) shall review all the data and make one of the following recommendations:

1. the student has satisfied minimal criteria on at least three of the measures and should move forward to the assessment stage, or
2. the student has not satisfied minimal criteria on at least three measures, however, the GLSC feels strongly that additional data should be collected and the student reconsidered at that time, or
3. the student has not satisfied minimal criteria on at least three measures and the process should be stopped.

## **Provisions for Emerging Potential for Gifted Populations**

At this point the LSC shall make the decision as to the possibility that the student could be eligible for consideration as a candidate for an emerging potential for gifted assessment. If it is believed that the student might have emerging gifted potential, then the Emerging Potential for Intellectually Gifted Assessment Checklist should be completed for possible use during the assessment process. The Emerging Potential for Gifted category makes provisions for certain factors that exist that may put the student at a disadvantage when inappropriate instruments are used during the assessment process.

## **STAGE 3: PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR TESTING**

Written parental permission for testing shall be obtained for individual assessment. District personnel shall also notify parents in writing about their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). All data collected as part of the identification process are protected by FERPA.

## **STAGE 4: ASSESSMENT**

Once the LSC has determined that a student has satisfied minimal referral criteria in order to move forward to the assessment stage, district personnel shall review

and compile all data available on the student. This data shall also be made available to a licensed examiner. The assessment stage is the individual test of intelligence, which shall be administered by a licensed examiner. In no case will the examiner be related to the student being tested. The examiner shall review all available data on the student, whether or not it satisfies minimal identification criteria, and use that information to select the most appropriate test of intelligence. Standard operating procedures should be followed during the selection and administration of all assessments as reflected in the examiner's manuals. The examiner shall provide a signed and dated report of the test administration to include testing conditions, scores on all subtests or subscales, and the strengths and weaknesses of the student. A student must score at or above the 91st percentile composite/full scale or the 91st percentile on approved subtests (as per publisher) in order to satisfy eligibility criteria. \*PCSD utilizes this percentile.

District personnel shall make decisions as to whether the minimal acceptable criteria set in regulations will be used, or if a higher minimal acceptable criteria will be used. The assessment criteria and acceptable minimal scale/percentile scores to be used shall be documented in writing in the district's Gifted Education Program Proposal submitted to and approved by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at the MDE. If a district decides to raise its minimal acceptable scale/percentile score for gifted eligibility above the state minimum scale/percentile score, justification shall be provided to the MDE in writing. Included in the justification must be documentation that the district continuously addresses the Emerging Potential for Gifted guidelines as outlined in the regulations.

### **Emerging Potential for Gifted**

Students who have satisfied criteria on the Emerging Potential for Gifted Checklist who did not satisfy minimal acceptable criteria on an individual test of intelligence, but, did score at least at the 84th percentile or have a scale score that falls within the range of the 90th percentile confidence interval of the state minimum scale/percentile score, may be administered one of the following additional measures to determine eligibility:

1. A test of cognitive abilities with a minimal score at the 90th percentile,
2. A group intelligence measure with a minimal score at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile,  
or
3. A district-developed matrix approved by the MDE.

Identification criteria, as approved by the MDE on the local district's Gifted Education Program Proposal, must be satisfied for a student to be ruled eligible by the LSC for the intellectually gifted education program.

## **Potentially Twice-Exceptional Students**

Students who already have an eligibility ruling under Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and are being assessed for an intellectually gifted eligibility, and who did not satisfy all of the required minimal acceptable referral criteria but did meet at least one referral criterion shall have their results reviewed by the LSC and a licensed examiner. If the student scores at or above the 91st percentile on the individual test of intelligence (composite score or approved subtest score) or in the opinion of the reviewing committee, would benefit from participation in the intellectually gifted program, the student may be granted a provisional eligibility for the intellectually gifted program for a period of one year. At the end of that year, the student's teacher of the gifted shall meet with the review committee to discuss the student's performance in the program. If the student has demonstrated success in the program, the LSC shall change the eligibility status from provisional to regular eligibility. If the student has not been successful in the program, the provisional eligibility shall be revoked.

### **STAGE 5: ASSESSMENT REPORT**

District personnel shall write an Assessment Report, which must contain the following components:

1. Student's name,
2. Name of at least three measures from Stage 1: Referral that were used to determine the need to administer an individual test of intelligence,
3. Results of each measure,
4. Name of individual who administered or completed each measure and the date administered or completed,
5. Test behaviors for any individually administered test(s),
6. Interpretation of the results of each individually administered test(s),
7. Name of the person who administered the individual test of intelligence and date test was administered,
8. Qualifications of the individual who administered the individual test of intelligence,
9. Results of the individual test of intelligence to include scores on all subtests and, identified strengths and weaknesses,
10. Name of the person responsible for writing the Assessment Report, his/her signature, and position, and
11. Date of the Assessment Report.

### **STAGE 6: LSC ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

Once the Assessment Report is finalized, the LSC shall meet to review all data and determine if eligibility criteria have or have not been satisfied. The LSC shall rule that the student is or is not eligible for the intellectually gifted program.

## **District Assessment Procedure**

The PCSD gifted assessment procedure limits a student's opportunity to be tested. Therefore, the district will only administer an intelligence test no more than two (2) times.

## **Parental Notification**

District personnel shall notify in writing the parents of each student tested for the intellectually gifted program about the assessment results. District personnel shall offer to explain any of the results about which the parents have questions. District personnel shall also notify parents in writing about their rights under FERPA.

## **Out-of-State Gifted Eligibilities** (As Outlined in MDE Gifted Education Regulations)

As each state has a unique set of eligibility criteria for placement in a gifted program, a student moving to Mississippi with a gifted eligibility from another state must satisfy Mississippi eligibility criteria before being considered for placement in the intellectually gifted program. The eligibility ruling from another state may be used to initiate the referral process in Mississippi, but may not be used to determine eligibility. There is no temporary placement in the Intellectually Gifted Program while the student goes through the eligibility process within the district.

## **Access to Records**

Individual data are held confidential. Parents requesting access to their child's gifted records shall make such a request in written form to the Gifted Education Program Contact Person. A mutually agreed upon time will be set for a review of the child's records. Such records shall be viewed at the location in which the records are maintained. Test protocols will not be available for review by the parent as mandated by the test publishing companies.

## **Placement in the Gifted Program**

### **Parental Permission for Placement**

Once a student is ruled eligible for placement in the gifted program, the parent has the right to agree to placement or withhold placement of the child in the program. Written parental permission must be obtained before the child can be placed in the program.

**Participation in the Gifted Education Program is NOT a reward. It is an Entitlement under State Law (Mississippi Gifted Education Act of 1989, Mississippi Code Sections 37-23-171 through 37-23-181).**

### **Participation in Program**

Mississippi Department of Education gifted regulations require intellectually gifted students in grades two through six be provided with instruction by a teacher with gifted endorsement for a minimum of 240 minutes per week. Participation is necessary on a regular basis. A regular classroom teacher may not prevent an eligible student from attending the gifted class due to issues within the regular classroom. A student may not choose to miss a gifted class without prior consent from the teachers and the parent/guardian.

### **Homework/Class Work**

As outlined in MDE Gifted Regulations, intellectually gifted students in grades 2-6 may not be required to make up regular classroom work missed when they are in the gifted classroom. However, gifted students are responsible for homework assignments from their regular class, will take all regularly scheduled tests, and be held accountable for demonstrating mastery of concepts and information presented in the regular classroom.

### **Progress Reporting**

Parents of students participating in the Intellectually Gifted Program will be notified of progress/participation at District scheduled report card time.

### **Annual Reassessment**

A committee shall meet at least annually to reassess each gifted student's continuation in the gifted program. The committee must include at least the student's teacher of the gifted and a designated administrative representative.

As stated in the MDE Gifted Education Regulations, "since participation in the gifted program is an entitlement under the law, the student should remain in the gifted program as long as they are being successful in the program. Grades

and/or success in the regular education program are the responsibility of the regular classroom teachers and should not be considered as a reason for removal from the gifted program.”

Placement and participation in the Intellectually Gifted Program is based on a voluntary decision by the eligible student’s parent/guardian. A student may be removed and reinstated from the program with written parent/guardian consent.

If the Annual Reassessment Committee determines that a student should exit the Intellectually Gifted Program due to lack of progress, the student’s parents must be notified and given the opportunity to discuss the decision with the committee before the student is removed. The removal may be temporary or permanent. If the parent does not agree to the removal of the student from the program, the district shall grant the parents a hearing.

### **Hearing Process**

Parent (s) who are not in agreement with the Gifted Local Survey Committee’s decision to remove their child from the intellectually gifted program will present their concerns to the principal, orally or in writing, to the principal of the school. The principal and parent will attempt to resolve the matter informally.

If the parent (s) is not satisfied with the action taken by the principal, the parent (s) shall, within five (5) school days after meeting with the principal, put their concerns in writing and present them to the Gifted Education Coordinator in the Office of the Superintendent.

The Gifted Education Coordinator will schedule a meeting of the Gifted District Local Survey Committee within five (5) days or a timeframe agreed upon by the parent (s). Parent (s) will be extended an invitation to attend the meeting. The Gifted Education Coordinator will render a written decision based on the information shared during the meeting.

Once a student has been removed temporarily through the hearing process they will not be allowed to participate for the remainder of the current school year. In order for a student to be reinstated the following school year, a request for reentry must be made in writing to the principal. The request for reinstatement will follow the hearing procedure noted in the paragraph above with the Gifted Local Survey Committee and Gifted Education Coordinator in the Office of the Superintendent.