

# Identification of Gifted Students

*Hide not your talents. They for use were made. What's a sundial in the shade? – Benjamin Franklin*

Gifted Education is a strength-based model that identifies students with exceptional abilities and potential. The purpose of identification is not to label a child, but to match instruction, programming and support systems to their identified area(s) of strength.

## Definition

"Gifted and talented children" means those persons between the ages of five and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services.

Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice-exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic, ethnic and cultural populations.

Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:

- General or specific intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, music , dance and psychomotor abilities

## Identification Process

The identification process begins with a referral that may come from a variety of sources such as:

- Universal Screening at second and sixth grades using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
- Parent, teacher or student referrals
- Achievement measures
- Behavioral observations
- Performance indicators

Once a student has been referred for gifted identification, a body of evidence is collected that includes quantitative and qualitative data. Criteria for identification usually requires three qualifying pieces of data that meet the state criteria of 95th percentile or higher on a norm referenced approved measurement tool or an advanced or distinguished level on a criterion referenced approved measurement tool or performance rubric.

Identification is determined by a team of educators who have been trained in the gifted identification process, procedures and criteria. Once the process is completed, students, parents and teachers are notified. Students who have a body of evidence that partially meets required criteria may be placed in a talent pool for further consideration over time.



## Colorado State Board of Education Rules for the Administration of the Exceptional Children's Educational Act

### 12.02(2)(d) Criteria for Determining Exceptional Ability (Giftedness) or Talent Pool

12.02(2)(d)(i) For each category of giftedness defined in 12.01 (16), criteria for exceptional ability means: 95 percentile or above on a standardized nationally normed test or observation tool, or a rating on a performance assessment that indicates exceptionality/ distinguished compared to age mates.

12.02(2)(d)(ii) Not meeting criteria on a single assessment tool shall not prevent further data collection or consideration for identification, if other indicators suggest exceptional potential as observed in a body of evidence.

12.02(2)(d)(iii) Criteria for screening assessments is a score range less than the 95 percentile ranking or results on observation/performance assessment tools as determined by the AU to determine referrals, further data collection and observation, and/or formation of student talent pools.

# Four Pathways to Identification: 1

## Gifted Identification Criteria: Specific Academic Aptitude (with Cognitive)



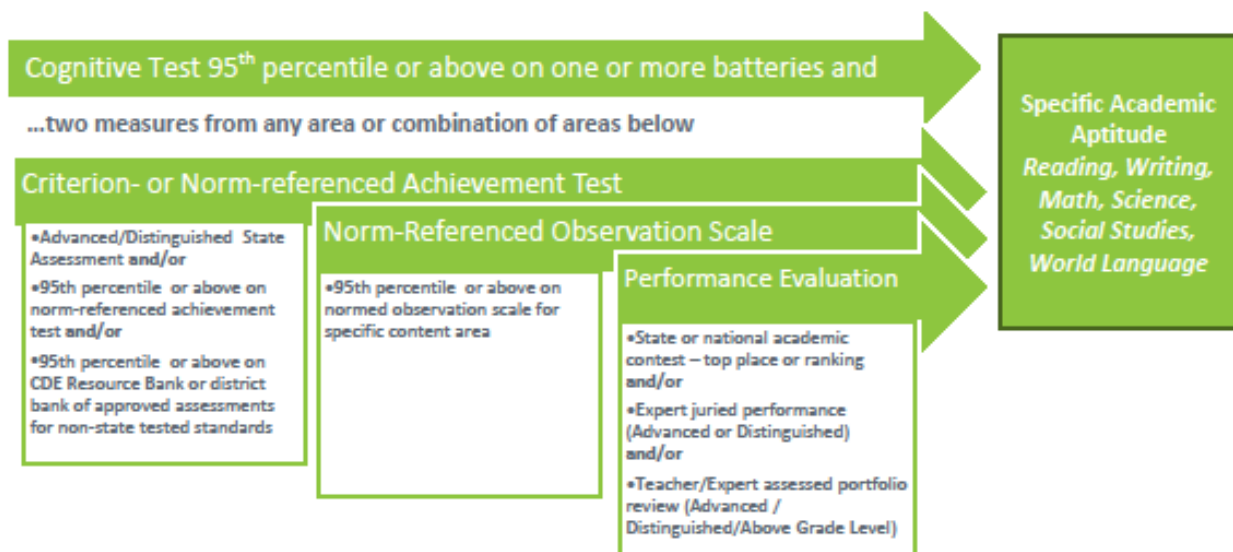
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### Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (with Cognitive)

Content areas for specific academic aptitude include: reading, writing, math, science, social studies and world language.

**Two pathways may lead to identification in the area of specific academic aptitude.**

First, a student may score 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on one or more batteries of a cognitive test and demonstrate aptitude on two specific academic measures.



# Four Pathways to Identification: 2

## Gifted Identification Criteria: Specific Academic Aptitude (without Cognitive)



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### Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (without Cognitive)

Content areas for specific academic aptitude include: reading, writing, math, science, social studies and world language. **Two pathways may lead to identification in the area of specific academic aptitude.**

Second, a student may not score 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on a cognitive assessment. However, a review team may determine a **comprehensive** body of evidence demonstrates gifted academic ability. Content specific measurement tools to meet criteria for identification should include at least three or more measures from two of the three areas below. When cognitive data does not meet gifted criteria, identification in a specific academic aptitude requires an examination of multiple data points and trends over time.

Three or more measures from two of the three areas below

#### Criterion- Norm-referenced Achievement Test

- Advanced/Distinguished State Assessment and/or
- 95th percentile or above on norm-referenced achievement test and/or
- 95th percentile or above on CDE Resource Bank or district bank of approved assessments for non-state tested standards

#### Norm-Referenced Observation Scale

- 95th percentile or above on normed observation scale for specific content area

#### Performance Evaluation

- State or national academic contest — top place or ranking and/or
- Expert juried performance (Advanced or Distinguished) and/or
- Teacher/Expert assessed portfolio review (Advanced / Distinguished/Above Grade Level)

Specific Academic  
Aptitude  
*Reading, Writing,  
Math, Science,  
Social Studies,  
World Language*

# Four Pathways to Identification: 3

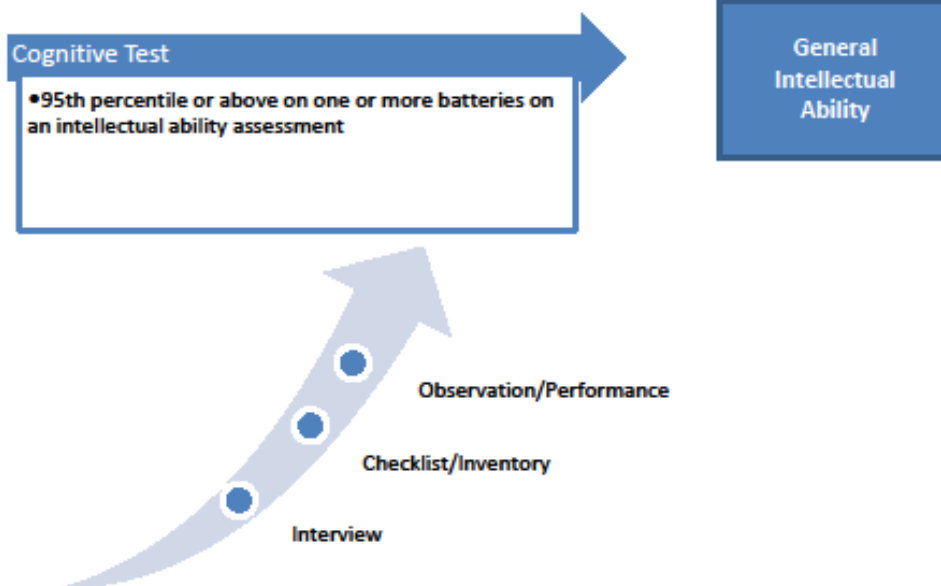
## Gifted Identification Criteria: General Intellectual Ability Department of Gifted Education



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### Area of Giftedness: General Intellectual Ability

Students may qualify in the area of general intellectual ability with a score of 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on one or more batteries of a cognitive test. The determination team must collect and review additional data for the body of evidence to develop the student's learning profile. A gifted determination based solely on a cognitive assessment score, without any other qualifying data, is the exception. A review team should use their professional judgment to determine if identification is appropriate by examining supplemental or non-traditional information collected through interviews, observations or performances beyond the academic content areas. Students from underrepresented populations may not demonstrate gifted abilities through the use of traditional assessment data. When only cognitive ability assessment data meets criteria in a body of evidence (95<sup>th</sup> percentile or above), the review team may determine that the student is identified with general or specific intellectual ability. This meets portability requirements.



# Four Pathways to Identification: 4

## Gifted Identification Criteria: Specific Talent Aptitude Department of Gifted Education



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### Area of Giftedness: Specific Talent Aptitude

Identification in the talent domains requires the examination of a variety of instruments and multiple pathways that lead to identification. Talent domains include: visual arts, performing arts, music, dance, psychomotor, creativity and leadership. Often criterion- or norm-referenced assessments are not available in a talent area; therefore performance evaluation is an important component in the body of evidence. If data from a valid and reliable test are not available to demonstrate exceptional ability, two or more indicators in the performance area may be used to meet identification criteria along with an exceptional rating on a norm-referenced observation scale. Identification in area of psychomotor is designated for national-level athletes who require programming accommodations to address the number of school days that might be missed during training and/or competitions. Districts are not required to provide or financially support athletic coaching, training or competitions for students identified in this area.

