

WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT GIFTED EDUCATION

The Wyoming Valley West School District has adopted and utilizes a system to identify all students within the district who are thought to be gifted and in need of specially designed instruction. The Wyoming Valley West School District adheres to a screening and evaluation process which meets the requirements of Chapter 16 guidelines for gifted education. Awareness activities to inform the public of gifted education service and programs and the manner by which these services and programs can be requested are provided annually and include but are not limited to providing information in student handbooks, on the district web site and other media sources.

PHILOSOPHY:

In Accordance with Chapter 16, Pennsylvania Special Education for Gifted Students, The Wyoming Valley West School District will provide a quality program which will meet the unique needs of our gifted students. This program will provide gifted students with access to an accelerated and enriched program in accordance with their assessed intellectual and academic needs and abilities. The district will provide a program of differentiated instruction and curriculum for its gifted population. The program offers a more elaborate, complex and in-depth study of major ideas, problems and themes that integrate knowledge within and across systems of thought. It will provide opportunities to develop higher order thinking skills to enable students to recognize existing knowledge and/or generate new knowledge. Instruction will provide the opportunity for students to involve themselves in self-initiated and self-directed learning activities based on their interest.

We believe that the learning environment in the WVWSD schools should be one in which students are given ample opportunity to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills, productive interpersonal and social skills, and instructional activities which will enhance and stimulate each gifted student's growth and potential, addressing both strengths and needs of students.

REFERRAL PROCESS:

A referral for a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation shall be made when the student is suspected by teachers or parents of being gifted and not receiving an appropriate education under Chapter 4 and one or more of the following criteria exist:

- A request has been made by the student's parents
- The student is thought to be gifted because the school district's screening of the student indicates high potential consistent with the definition of mentally gifted or a performance level which exceeds that of other students in the regular classroom
- A hearing officer or judicial decision orders a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation.

The referral process is initiated when a teacher or other professional school personnel familiar with the child or a parent suspects that the child demonstrates high potential consistent with giftedness or a performance level that exceeds that of other students in the classroom.

- The teacher/ professional school personnel or parent notifies the school counselor in the respective home school building.
- The school counselor begins the screening process (please refer to the Screening Process in the following section) to determine if further assessment is necessary by the School Psychologist.
- If the student meets eligibility criteria for further assessment the school psychologist and special education department as well as the parent(s) are notified of the findings.
- A Permission to Evaluate for Gifted Support and Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards is forwarded by the special education office to the parent(s) within 10 calendar days.
- If a child does not meet screening criteria for further assessment the school counselor notifies the parent(s) and referring teacher/professional school personnel of the findings.

- A parent who suspects that their child is gifted may request a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation of their child at any time, with a limit of one request per school year. The request must be in writing. The school district shall make the permission to evaluate form readily available for that purpose.
- If a request is made orally to any professional employee or administrator of the school district, that individual shall notify the special education office in the district to provide a copy of the permission to evaluate form to the parents within 10 calendar days of the oral request.

SCREENING PROCEDURES:

When a teacher recommendation or parent request or other outside request is made for a gifted evaluation the School Counselor will coordinate the screening process in the following manner:

- Intelligence Screening- the School Counselor will utilize an appropriate individual screening instrument which measures intelligence to determine if the student meets screening criteria with a score of 125 or higher.
- Data Collection- the *Gifted Student Referral* form will be issued to collect and review educational history to include: grades, formal and informal achievement test results, classroom observations, demographic information, significant family/ social/developmental history, and any intervening variables.
- Parent and teachers will be provided with the multiple criteria for gifted students

- Students who meet the Screening Criteria will be referred for a ***gifted multidisciplinary evaluation*** to be conducted by a certified School Psychologist. The Permission to Evaluate from the Wyoming Valley West School District Special Education Department will be issued. Parent will receive Notice of Parental Rights and be provided a means to submit written Parent Input to be included in the GWR. *The Wyoming Valley School District recognizes the parental right to request the process proceed to a full multidisciplinary evaluation even if the screening criterion is not met.*
- ***Transfer Students***- students who have been identified gifted in another school district will have their GIEP transferred. If the previous district was in the process but had not completed the evaluation prior to the transfer the Wyoming Valley West School District will obtain records and initiate the process for that student.

Multiple Criteria for Screening

DIBELS- assessed in KDG
 Compass pre-test and post test (available all grades)
 Individual or group achievement and aptitude tests
 Report card grades (indicating continuous high achievement)
 Record of in-class observations
 Chuska Scale for Rate of Acquisition

EVALUATION PROCEDURES:

- A gifted multidisciplinary evaluation (GMDE) shall be conducted within 60 calendar days from Wyoming Valley West School District's receipt of the signed Permission to Evaluate Form.
- The Multidisciplinary evaluations shall be conducted by the Gifted Multidisciplinary Teams (GMDT). The GMDT consists of the following: a Certified School Psychologist, student's parent(s), person(s) familiar with the student's educational experience and performance, persons trained in the appropriate evaluation techniques, one or more of the student's current teachers, or other person's familiar with the student's cultural background.

- A single member of the GMDT may meet two or more qualifications specified above.
- The GMDT should be formed based on the student's needs.
- Only a certified school psychologist can administer tests and evaluation materials to determine giftedness.
- During the gifted evaluation process the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team collects and assesses data from a variety of sources including but not limited to tests of intellectual functioning, achievement tests, gifted rating scales, parent and teacher information, review of existing school records, screening data and observation.

MULTIPLE CRITERIA FOR GIFTED DETERMINATION:

- The Wyoming Valley West School District uses Multiple Criteria when determining gifted eligibility.
- Multiple criteria are considered for all students being evaluated for gifted eligibility as set forth in Chapter 16 guidelines.
- The district considers multiple criteria including achievement test scores, observed or measured rates of acquisition and retention of new academic content or skills that reflect gifted ability, demonstrated achievement, and/or performance or expertise in one or more academic area as evidenced by excellence of products, portfolios or research, as well as criterion-referenced team judgment.
- The team also considers high level thinking skills, academic creativity, leadership skills, academic interest areas, communication skills, foreign language aptitude or technology expertise, in addition to intelligence test scores.
- The team considers, validates and documents the existence of any intervening factors such as English as a second language, disabilities, gender or race bias, or socio/cultural deprivation that could mask gifted abilities.

The Wyoming Valley West School District considers the following when making gifted eligibility determination:

- An IQ score of 130 or greater on an individual test of intellectual assessment
- Standard Scores of 130 or greater on both Verbal Comprehension and Perceptual Reasoning on test of intellectual functioning
- IQ score of 125 or greater (group or individualized assessment) plus 97th percentile (reading or math, group or individualized assessments within two years) plus 90th percentile in other area on group or individualized assessment within two years plus grades within the A average range as per the district rating system. Advanced PSSA in reading or math (when percentiles are not available), with teacher input, classroom observations and checklists of leadership and creativity
- Students with a score of 125-129 on a test of intellectual functioning, who have achieved a standard score of 125 or higher in reading or math on an individual assessment
- A student who earned standard score on BOTH Verbal Comprehension and Perceptual Reasoning on tests of intellectual functioning plus a standard score of 125 or greater in reading or math on an individual assessment
- A student who has earned a General Ability Index (GAI) as per test guidelines of 130 or greater
- For the student who earns a GAI of 125-129 plus a standard score of 125 or greater in reading or math on an individual assessment.

GIFTED WRITTEN REPORT (GWR):

- Upon completion of the evaluation process the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMDT) completes the Gifted Written Report (GWR) which presents the information obtained from the evaluation or reevaluation concerning the student's educational needs and strengths.

- The recommendation is made within the report as to whether the student is gifted and in need of specially designed instruction, indicates the basis for the recommendations, and includes recommendations for the student's programming, as well as names and members of the GMDT.
- The GWR requires names and positions but not signatures.
- The GWR must be presented to the parent within 60 calendar days after receiving Permission to Evaluate or after the district receives an order from a court or hearing officer to conduct the gifted multidisciplinary evaluation, except that the calendar days from the day after the last day of the spring school term up to and including the day before the first day of the subsequent fall school term may not be counted.
- If a student is found eligible for gifted and in need of specially designed instruction, and after the GWR is presented to the parents, the team will issue a notification to the parents and others for attendance at a Gifted Individualized Education Plan Meeting (GIEP).
- This Invitation to the GIEP meeting must be presented at least ten calendar days in advance of the meeting unless otherwise waived by the parent.
- The team would then proceed to the GIEP process.
- If a student is found not to be eligible for gifted and/or not in need of specially designed instruction, the parent is presented with a Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA), at which time the recommendation for the student to remain in the regular education setting would be made.

REEVALUATION PROCEDURES:

- The Wyoming Valley West School District will conduct a reevaluation before a change in educational placement is recommended for the student.
- The gifted students may be reevaluated at any time under the recommendation of the GIEP team.
- The parent or any GIEP team member should contact the school counselor with the request.

- The school counselor will begin the data collection process and request the special education office send a Permission to Re-evaluate to the parent.
- A reevaluation must include a review of the student's GIEP, a determination of which instructional activities have been successful, and recommendations for the revision of the GIEP.
- The reevaluation timeline for gifted students is 60 calendar days, except that the calendar days from the day after the last day of the spring school term up to and including the day before the first day of the subsequent fall school term may not be counted.
- The Wyoming Valley West School District follows current Chapter 16 guidelines, which indicates that a reevaluation for gifted education is no longer required every two years.

DUAL EXCEPTIONALITIES:

Students that demonstrate dual exceptionality receive services under Chapter 14 Pennsylvania State Standards and Guidelines for special education. The Chapter 14 IEP addresses both special education and gifted needs.

- Students that are currently in gifted education and are suspected of possibly being in need of special education undergo the chapter 14 referral process which includes child study meetings and child centered data being collected.
- The Wyoming Valley West School District uses the same written procedure in place for Chapter 14 referrals when a student in gifted education is suspected of being in need of special education.

GIFTED INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (GIEP)

A GIEP is developed for all students within the Wyoming Valley West School District who have been identified as mentally gifted as determined by the gifted multidisciplinary evaluation. The GIEP team is appointed to review the recommendations resulting from the gifted multidisciplinary evaluation. Parents of the gifted student are offered the opportunity to be present at the GIEP meeting. Each GIEP includes, as required in Section 16.32 of 22 Pa Code the following:

1. a statement of the student's present levels of educational performance
2. a statement of annual goals and short term learning outcomes which are responsive to the learning needs identified in the evaluation report.
3. a statement of the specially designed instruction and support services to be provided to the student.
4. projected dates for initiation and duration of gifted education
5. appropriate objective criteria, assessment procedures and timelines for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the goals and learning outcomes are being achieved.
6. The names and positions of the GIEP team participants and the date of the meeting.

EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT AND PROGRAM ELEMENTS:

Students who meet the qualifications established under Chapter 16 of the Pa School Code will be provided with access to a high quality gifted education program within the Wyoming Valley West School District.

Placement is based on the opportunity for a student to benefit meaningfully from the rate, level and manner of instruction.

Elementary gifted education is delivered in self contained classes at Chester Street Elementary School for students in 1st-5th grade. This model of program delivery offers an accelerated and enriched curriculum which provides meaningful academic and social growth beyond the standard curriculum. The learning environment is differentiated to meet the needs of individual students. A grade level section complies with Chapter 16 regulations at 20 students per individual teacher's class roster.

Secondary Program – as students move into the Middle and High School grade levels they are provided with different curricular challenges.

The **Wyoming Valley West Middle School** offers specially designed instruction in honors courses in the core subject areas of English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Gifted students are given the opportunity to choose from these courses and Related Arts courses to enhance their strengths and abilities.

The **Wyoming Valley West High School** accommodates a students' need for specially designed instruction in honors and advanced placement courses.

Contact your student's School Counselor for more information.

Elementary School Counselors:

Mrs. Allison Cryan

Main Street, Third Avenue and Chester Street Elementary
Schools
779-9529
287-2348
288-2282

Mrs. Maureen Boich

State Street and Pringle Street
Elementary Schools
779-5381
287-5338

Mrs. Maylan Nicholson

Dana Street and Schuyler Avenue Elementary Schools 283-0591

Middle School Counselors:

Mrs. Debbie Kester

287-2131 (ext. 212)

Mr. Bob Keenan

287-2131 (ext. 302)

Mr. Shawn Kelly

287-2131 (ext. 211)

High School Counselors:

Shelley Bartolomei

779-5364 (ext. 182)

Ms. Nancy Brace

779-5364 (ext. 162)

Ms. Sue Longo

779-5364 (ext. 163)

Ms. Lynn Smith

779-5364 (ext. 164)

Director of Elementary Education

Mr. Irv DeRemer

Central Office

288-6551 (ext. 326)

Director of Secondary Education

Mr. David Tosh

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