



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
"Making Education Work for All Georgians"

Requirements of the Gifted Education Program in Georgia for Charter Schools and Charter Systems

As the number of charter schools and charter systems in Georgia continues to increase, it is important that schools and systems operating under charter contracts continue to meet the needs of gifted learners.

Charter schools and charter systems utilizing the broad flexibility waiver may waive the provision in state law that requires them to identify and serve gifted learners. If they do so, the school and/or system will not earn any funding at the gifted Full Time Equivalent (FTE).

Gifted education funding is provided for the purpose of supporting service to gifted students. School districts may only earn FTE at the Gifted weight if they choose to identify Gifted learners using the multiple-criteria (mental ability, achievement, creativity, and motivation) required in SBOE 160-4-2-.38. It is not possible for any school or district to waive any aspect of the criteria for determining eligibility for gifted services.

In delivering services to gifted learners, however, charter schools and charter systems utilizing the broad flexibility waiver may waive the requirement to adhere to the specific delivery models defined in SBOE 160-4-2-.38. If they do so, they must document that they are providing a rigorous curriculum that enriches, extends, and accelerates learning in the gifted students' areas of strength for the number of segments claimed for FTE.

Federal civil rights requirements cannot be waived as part of a charter school or charter system contract with the State Board of Education. Charter schools and charter systems that choose to provide gifted education services should therefore be cognizant of their obligation under federal law to provide equitable access to that service.

If your school or system has any questions or concerns regarding federal regulations pertaining to gifted education, please contact gifted education staff at the Georgia Department of Education at 404-657-0182 or via email at aeger@doe.k12.ga.us.

Checklist of Requirements for Charter and Charter Systems that Choose to Identify and Serve Gifted Learners

- The district and/or school takes steps to identify students who are eligible for gifted education services, following the eligibility requirements defined in SBOE 160-4-2-.38.
- The district and/or school ensures that teachers of gifted students have a current gifted education endorsement issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
- The district and/or school provides gifted education programs to eligible gifted students.
 - The district and/or school ensures that each school's program
 - 1) Is based upon accepted research and educational theory or principles;
 - 2) Is reasonably calculated to implement the educational theory effectively; and,
 - 3) After a period of time sufficient to give the innovative program a chance to become established, produces quantifiable results showing that gifted learners are excelling in their area(s) of strength.
- The district and/or school provides research-based resources to implement its gifted education program effectively, such as: 1) whole-grade and/or subject acceleration, 2) self-contained gifted education classes, 3) specialized classes for highly gifted students, (4) the Renzulli School-wide Enrichment Model, and (5) any other research-based alternative.
- The district and schools should ensure that meaningful and equitable communication with parents and guardians of gifted students takes place by providing such parents and guardians with important notices or documents in written form.
- Districts and schools equitably include English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities, economically disadvantaged, and minority students in the gifted and talented program.