SPECIAL PROGRAMS

GIFTED EDUCATION

Gifted and Talented Educational Services Program Policies and Procedures

Vicksburg Warren School District Board of Trustees approved October 2013

Vicksburg Warren School District Gifted and Talented Educational Services

The Vicksburg Warren School District dedicates itself to developing a comprehensive program for the identification and education of gifted and talented pupils who may need education services beyond those being provided in the regular school program. The District adheres to policies and procedures for programs for gifted students as stated in the Regulations for Gifted Programs (GEP) 2013 as issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. The Mississippi Department of Education gifted education regulations and state mandate require that intellectually gifted students in grades two through six be provided services by a teacher with gifted endorsement for a minimum of five hours per week. The District submits a proposal as required.

MDE Definition

The State of Mississippi defines “Intellectually Gifted Children” and “Gifted Education Programs as follows:

“Intellectually Gifted Children” shall mean those children and youth who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of intelligence as documented through the identification process. The needs of these students should be addressed based on the program options provided in the Outcomes for Intellectually Gifted Education Programs Grades 2-8 in Mississippi.

“Gifted Education Programs (GEP)” shall mean special programs of instruction for intellectually gifted children in grades 2-12, academically gifted children in grades 9-12, artistically gifted children in grades 2-12, and/or creatively gifted children in grades 2-12 in the public elementary and secondary schools of this state. Such programs shall be designed to meet the individual needs of gifted children and shall be in addition to and different from the regular program of instruction provided by the district.

Although the State of Mississippi recognizes permissive programming for academically gifted students in grades 9-12; artistically gifted children in grades 2-12; and creatively gifted children in grades 2-12, only intellectually gifted programs in grades 2-6 are mandated by law. At this time, the Vicksburg Warren School District offers the program for intellectually gifted children in the mandated grades, 2-6.

The identification process consists of a combination of subjective and objective measures to determine eligibility for the gifted program and includes an equitable opportunity for the inclusion of students who are culturally diverse, underachieving, disabled under IDEA guidelines, physically handicapped, or ADD/ADHD.

The specific policies and procedures outlined are in place in the district:

Mission/Philosophy Statement: The mission of the Vicksburg Warren School District’s Gifted and Talented Educational Services (GATES) programs is to develop life-long, self-motivated learners.
**Entering the Program:** All students entering the gifted program must have an intellectually gifted eligibility ruling by a license psychometrist and written parental permission for placement before being placed in the program.

**Pre-Evaluation Screening:** A student may be referred by but not limited to a teacher, parent, peer, or self for screening. Blanket screening occurs at the first grade level annually to fulfill the requirement by the Mississippi Department of Education. The Local Survey Committee will meet to consider information from intelligence tests, achievement tests, grades, and prior performance.

**Parental Permission for Evaluation:** When a student is referred for evaluation, the parents will complete the Gifted Pupil Personal Data Sheet giving written permission for an evaluation, and will be informed of their rights under the Family Rights and Privacy Act.

**Eligibility Ruling:** The Local Survey Committee will collect all screening and evaluation information as specified in the district’s proposal, complete the Gifted Pupil Personal Data Sheet, and submit the information to the District Screening Team for an eligibility ruling. The student must score in the 91st percentile on an IQ protocol in order to be eligible for gifted education services. (This equates to an IQ score of 121 or higher.)

**Parental Permission for Placement:** Parents will be sent a Written Prior Notice and invited to a meeting where the test results will be explained and the parents will give written permission for placement before the student is allowed to attend Gifted Education classes. The District’s Gifted Instructional Management Plan (IMP) will be explained to the parents and the parents will be given a copy of the Curriculum Scope and Sequence.

**Placement in the Gifted Program:** 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.

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**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).**

Once a student is determined eligible for a gifted program in Mississippi, no reevaluation testing is required to remain in the program. Although criteria may vary from district to district, and eligible determination is accepted by all school districts within the State of Mississippi.

**Annual Reassessment/Exiting the Program:** “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. Documentation of the meeting must be maintained and must include the name(s) of the student(s) discussed, a list of the committee members present, and the date of the meeting. Since participation in the gifted program is an entitlement under law, students 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 is the responsibility of the regular classroom teachers and should not be considered as a reason for removal from the gifted program. Should the committee determine that a student should exit the program due to lack of progress in the program and/or unsatisfactory participation in the program, the student’s parents must be notified and given the opportunity to discuss the decision with the committee before the student is removed. Should the parents not agree to the removal of the student from the program, the district
shall grant the parents a hearing. Each local school district should have a policy in place as to how this hearing will be conducted and how the lack of agreement will be resolved.”

**Hearing Process:** Parents who are not in agreement with the school based committee decision to remove a student from the gifted program will present their concerns, orally or in writing to the principal of the school. The principal and parent will attempt to resolve the matter informally.

If the parents are not satisfied with the action taken by the principal, the parents shall, within five (5) school days after the meeting with the principal, put their concerns in writing and present them to the Vicksburg Warren School District gifted coordinator. The gifted coordinator will schedule a meeting of the GATES District Student Assessment Team (GDSAT) within five (5) school days or a timeframe agreed upon by the parents. Parents will be extended an invitation to attend the GDSAT meeting. The GDSAT will render a written decision based on the information shared during the meeting.

**Reinstatement Procedures:** Students will be considered for reinstatement in the gifted program at the request of the parents and with the recommendation of classroom teachers. Consideration and arrangements for reinstatement in the program will be made through the Local Gifted Survey Committee and documented in the minutes. Written notification of the student’s eligibility for reinstatement will be forwarded to the parents and teachers of the students. Written parental permission must be obtained before the student can be placed in the program.

**Potentially Twice-Exceptional Students:** Students who already have an eligibility ruling under 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.

**Emerging Potential Students:** 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 90th percentile, or
3. A district-developed matrix approved by the MDE.

**Instructional Management Plan:** As GATES student work under specific Instructional Management Plan objectives and time frames, withholding permission to attend gifted classes shall not be used as a disciplinary measure. Failure to complete enrichment class assignments can be used as ground for dismissal from the program. The parent has the right to agree to placement and withhold placement of the child from the program through written consent.
Homework/Classwork: As outlined in MDE Gifted Regulations, gifted students may not be required to make up classwork missed when they are scheduled to be in the gifted classroom. Gifted students shall be held accountable for demonstrating mastery of concepts and information on regularly scheduled tests. Homework assigned to the regular classroom students on a GATES day is the responsibility and must be completed by the GATES student.

Performance in the Regular Classroom: In the event a student has difficulty keeping up with regular classroom work, a conference will be held with the parent, classroom teacher, teacher of the gifted and the student, if appropriate, to discuss the problem and to determine an appropriate course of action. The conference and plan of action will be documented and follow-up conferences will be held as needed.

As the academic progress and welfare of the students are always the prime consideration, special situations will be handled on an individual basis.

Visitors: Parents and interested parties are always welcome to visit the GATES classes. Please contact individual schools to inquire about their school visitor policies.

Out-of-State Gifted Eligibility: A student moving to Mississippi with a gifted eligibility from another state must satisfy Mississippi eligibility criteria before being considered for placement in a gifted program. The eligibility ruling from another state may be used to initiate the referral process in Mississippi. There is NO temporary placement in the gifted program while the student goes through the eligibility process within the local district.

Retesting: Students that have been given an IQ test by the Vicksburg Warren School District personnel on two occasions and scored at 99 or below both times, WILL NOT be eligible for additional testing through the local school district. In addition, if a student is tested and ruled ineligible, the student CANNOT be retested for ONE CALENDAR YEAR by the Vicksburg Warren School District.

Legal Reference:

- Regulations for the Gifted Education Programs (GEP) in Mississippi: 2013

Approved: August 6, 1987

1st Revision: May 18, 1995

2nd Revision: September 19, 1996

3rd Revision: February 24, 2005

4th Revision: June 22, 2006

5th Revision: October 31, 2013