Gifted Education at a Glance

A practical introduction for families exploring gifted education.

A Note for Families

You may be wondering whether gifted education is the right fit for your child, or what it really means. Gifted students often learn differently, but not every bright or high-achieving student needs gifted services. This guide gives a practical overview and is not a substitute for individualized guidance.

What Is Gifted Education?

Gifted education provides additional challenge and enrichment for students who meet eligibility criteria and show a need for gifted services. Identification procedures and criteria vary by state and district.

> DEA PERSPECTIVE
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> **Gifted is about need, not a label.**
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> The goal isn't more work. It is learning that matches how a student thinks, so they stay engaged, keep growing, and continue to be challenged.

Why It Matters

Students who qualify often benefit from opportunities to think more deeply, solve complex problems, explore new ideas, and learn at a pace that matches their abilities.

Key Ideas

Eligibility	Services are for students who meet established criteria. Not every high-achieving student will qualify, and that’s okay.
Enrichment	Instruction focuses on deeper learning, critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving, not simply more assignments.
Individual Needs	Gifted learners have their own strengths and areas for growth. No two are exactly alike.
Ongoing Growth	Services should continue to challenge students as they develop academically and personally.

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Common Misconceptions

MYTH	WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW
Every bright student qualifies for gifted education.	Many students are bright and successful. Gifted education is designed for students who meet specific eligibility criteria.
Gifted students excel in every subject.	Students may show exceptional strengths in some areas while needing support in others.
A student can't be both gifted and have a disability.	Some students are both gifted and have a disability, often called twice-exceptional. Each student should be considered as an individual.

DEA PERSPECTIVE

Consider the whole child.

Academic strengths are only part of the picture. Social and emotional needs matter just as much when deciding what support will help a gifted student thrive.

Wondering if Gifted Services May Be Appropriate?

Every child is different, and no guide can determine whether gifted services are right for a specific student. If you have questions about gifted education, eligibility, or your child's needs, schedule a consultation with Distributed Education Advocacy.