



Gifted Services Parent Handbook



Gifted Services
<http://sbo.nn.k12.va.us/tag>



Common Myths About Gifted Students

- Gifted students are a homogeneous group, all high achievers.
- Gifted students are gifted in all areas and do not need help in school. If they are really gifted, they can manage on their own.
- Gifted students have fewer problems than others because their intelligence and abilities somehow exempt them from the hassles of daily life.
- The future of a gifted student is assured: a world of opportunities lies before the student.
- Gifted students are self-directed and know where they are heading.
- The social and emotional development of the gifted student is at the same level as his or her intellectual development.
- Gifted students are nerds and social loners.
- The primary value of the gifted student lies in his or her brain power.
- The gifted student's family always prizes his or her abilities.
- Gifted students need to serve as examples to others and they should always assume extra responsibility.
- Gifted students make everyone else smarter.
- Gifted students can accomplish anything they put their minds to if they apply themselves.
- Gifted students are naturally creative and do not need encouragement.
- Gifted children are easy to raise.



Adapted from **College Planning for Gifted Students, 2nd edition**, by Sandra Berger.

Frequent Truths About Gifted Students

- Gifted students are often perfectionists. They may equate achievement and grades with self-esteem and self-worth. This can lead to fear of failure and interferes with achievement.
- Gifted students are asynchronous. Their chronological age, social, physical, emotional, and intellectual development may all be at different levels. For example, a 5-year-old may be able to read and comprehend a third-grade book but may not be able to write legibly and prefers to spend time with older children or adults.
- Some gifted children are "mappers" (sequential learners), while others are "leapers" (spatial learners). Leapers may not know how they got a "right answer." Mappers may get lost in the steps leading to the right answer.
- Gifted students may be so far ahead of their chronological age mates that they know more than half the curriculum before the school year begins! The lack of challenge may lead to boredom, underachievement, and frustration.
- Gifted children are problem solvers. They benefit from working on open-ended, interdisciplinary problems; for example, how to solve a shortage of community resources.
- Gifted students often refuse to work for grades alone.
- Gifted students often think abstractly and with such complexity that they may need help with concrete study and test-taking skills. They may not be able to select one answer in a multiple choice question because they see how all the answers might be correct.
- Gifted students who do well in school may define success as getting an "A" and failure as any grade less than an "A." By early adolescence they may be unwilling to try anything where they are not certain of guaranteed success.

Adapted from *College Planning for Gifted Students*, 2nd edition, by Sandra Berger.

How Can I as a Parent Help My Gifted Student? (Part 1)

At school/with schoolwork:

- Make sure your child is doing his or her homework. Skipping lessons or concepts can cause gaps in their learning.
- Don't let your child get away with complaining that the work is boring. Listen to the real reason your child is complaining. Make sure your child understands the assignment. Some gifted children don't want to admit if they don't understand something. Since many things come easily for them, gifted children may not want to make the effort to ask questions, seek assistance, or try to understand the assignment.
- Encourage your child to go beyond what is required. Brainstorm with your child what could be done. If your child loves to write poetry, he or she may want to write a set of poems to go along with the history or science topic or illustrate the story.
- Encourage your child to take responsibility for his or her own activities and education. Don't just give suggestions. Help your child take the initiative by brainstorming what he or she might do to make the work more interesting.



- Develop a positive, encouraging relationship with your child's teacher, where you can work through any concerns in a productive way. Remember that it is important to follow the procedures, protocol, and chain-of-command. Discuss concerns with the teacher first, then the principal or assistant principal, then the gifted director. Issues can often be resolved at the school level. We all want your child to be successful!

How Can I as a Parent Help My Gifted Student? (Part 2)

At home:

- Avoid an excess of TV and video game playing. Encouraging creative toys and games where the child will have to think or create. A hobby where your child becomes an expert in something he or she loves is an excellent alternative.
- Provide access to books and magazines on a wide variety of topics, both fiction and non-fiction, and on a variety of reading or comprehension levels. Libraries, book swaps, and used book sales can all provide a wide range of resources.
- Encourage originality and creativity. Let your child make his or her own models, projects, and games, or make new rules to familiar games. Provide opportunities for artistic expression through drawing, painting, sculpting with clay, papier mâché, recycled materials, or dramatic productions.
- Challenge your child to ask thought-provoking questions and use these questions in your own conversations, too. Try "What would happen if...?" or "Why do you think...?" or "How could you find a solution to...?"
- As you provide opportunities for your child to develop his or her interests and talents at home, you may consider working with the teacher to develop avenues for differentiation, independent study, or exploration of interests.
- Allow for some free time for your child to brainstorm, create, explore new ideas, be reflective, be inventive, solve problems, or just to think about the world.



Five Parent Must-Ask Questions

In order to help your child have a successful school year, you will want to know what is expected of your child academically. Here are five "must-ask" questions you may want to discuss with your child's teacher:

1. What skills and knowledge will my child be expected to master this year?
 - What will my child learn this year in subjects like math, science, history and English?
 - Are there challenging academic standards in place in this classroom/school, and how do they compare with those in other classrooms/schools?
 - How do you inform students about the academic standards they are expected to meet?
 - What kind of projects and assignments have you planned that will help my child meet higher academic standards?
2. How will my child be evaluated?
 - What kind of information do you use to evaluate students? How do you know if they are academically ready to move on to the next grade?
 - How are grades determined in your classroom?
3. What can I do to stay more involved in my child's academic progress?
 - What can I do at home to complement what is happening in the classroom?
 - How can I know on a daily basis what homework has been assigned?
 - How can I support the teachers' efforts in implementing higher academic standards?
4. How do you accommodate differences in learning?
 - What if my child is a slow learner and falls behind, or is a fast learner and is bored?
 - Are summer school, tutoring, or other programs available for students who need more help?
5. How are older students prepared for further learning after high school?
 - Are children encouraged to think about a wide variety of career interests?
 - Are all students encouraged to take algebra by the end of eighth grade?



Gifted Education Websites

Newport News Public Schools Gifted Services Website: <http://sbo.nn.k12.va.us/tag/>

Hoagies Gifted Education Website: <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/>

Virginia Department of Education- Gifted Education
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/index.shtml

Virginia Association for the Gifted: <http://www.vagifted.org/>

Center for Gifted Education at The College of William and Mary:
<http://education.wm.edu/centers/cfge/>

National Association for Gifted Children: <http://www.nagc.org>

Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth: <http://www.cty.jhu.edu>

SENG - Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted: <http://www.sengifted.org>

Council for Exceptional Children: <http://www.cec.sped.org>

Kidsource: <http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/ed.gifted.html>

GT World: <http://gtworld.org/>

Logic Puzzles, Brain Benders, and Games

Set Game: <http://www.setgame.com/>

Quiddler Word Game: <http://www.setgame.com/quiddler/index.html>

Conceptis Logic Puzzles: <http://www.conceptispuzzles.com/>

Wordies: <http://www.wordies.ca/>

Gifted Education Magazines and Journals

Creative Kids, a magazine for students, www.prufrock.com

Gifted Child Today (G/C/T), offers educators practical and timely information about motivating and educating talented learners, www.prufrock.com

Imagine. A periodical for middle and high school students who want to take control of their learning and get the most out of their precollege years, www.jhu.edu/gifted/imagine/

Parenting for High Potential is NAGC's quarterly magazine designed for parents, www.prufrock.com.

Twice Exceptional Newsletter is a newsletter that contains information on how to best help twice-exceptional students meet their learning potential. <http://2enewsletter.com/>