



# Montclair Public Schools

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## K-8 Gifted and Talented Comprehensive Program Plan



# Gifted and Talented Committee 2021-2022

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Ms. Tinu Joseph, Parent

Ms. Christina Locke, Parent

Ms. Tai Matthews, Hillside School Teacher

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Dr. Kalisha Morgan, Assistant Supt. of Equity Curriculum &  
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Ms. Nandini Narula, Parent

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Ms. Raina Marie Pitts, Parent

Ms. Amber Reed, ECI Data Analyst

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Ms. Renee Townsend: NJABE

Mr. Marcos Vargas, Director of Humanities

# Who?

The NJDOE defines gifted students as:

*Those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who requires modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.*

# Mission

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Montclair Public Schools recognize that rather than any single gifted program, a continuum of programming services must exist for gifted learners as an integral part of differentiated classroom instruction. The district strives to provide an on-going educational program that identifies, develops and expands the gifts and talents of our students while monitoring the value and impact of services provided.

# Why?

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## Goals:

- Develop the academic potential of identified gifted learners
- Encourage and challenge students in their areas of specific abilities and interest by providing opportunities in their area of talent and interest
- Develop the thinking dispositions and affective skills such as risk taking, curiosity, and intrinsic motivation necessary for students to become independent learners
- Encourage opportunities for interaction with peers to develop self-awareness & efficacy
- Develop social and leadership skills, fostering a sense of societal responsibility
- Encourage creative productivity through the development of higher order thinking skills such as problem solving, decision-making and critical thinking
- Foster ongoing professional development to support classroom differentiation

# How?

Equitable  
Identification  
though:

**Referrals**

Parents/  
Guardians

Teachers

Assessment Scores  
Review including all  
demographic groups

**Data Collection**

Gr. K-8:  
aptitude and  
achievement

Teacher Rating  
Scales

Work Sample/  
Portfolio

**Data  
Interpretation  
and Service  
Match**

Student Profile:  
Score range,  
local & group  
norms

SSC reviews data  
& recommends  
services  
(Continuum)

Notify  
stakeholders of  
identification  
outcome

**Appeals**

Appeal letter  
submitted to  
committee

# Supported Measures for Identification

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## Aptitude Screener: Cognitive Abilities Test Screeners (CogAT)

- simple administration to measure the level and pattern of cognitive development of a student compared to age and grade mates
- measures three different cognitive abilities: Verbal, Quantitative, Non-Verbal
- use to build equity into the identification process

## Characteristics Scales: The Renzulli Scales

- supports identification of gifted children by rating the characteristics in comparison to their peers on a large base of observable behaviors
- measures four scales to ensure input into learning behaviors: Creativity, Learning, Motivation, Leadership
- standardized questionnaires completed by teachers

# What?

## PROGRAMS AND CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

### TALENT DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS K-8

- Courses/ special topics based on Magnet Themes
- Programs, Clubs & Competitions

### TARGETED SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- In class differentiation based on student need; determined by classroom assessments
- Cluster Grouping for identified learners (2-8)

### SMALL GROUP INVESTIGATIONS

- Research in a self-selected area of interest, with direct skill instruction in research, critical and creative thinking skills (K-8)



# Program Staffing

- Student Support Committee Members
  - Cluster Teachers
  - Support Teachers
  - General, Special, Related Arts Staff
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# Ongoing Professional Development



## Student Support Committee

- Identification Process
- Supporting gifted learners

## Administrators

- Identification Process
- Rationale and implementation of Cluster Grouping Model
- Supervisory and observation protocols that support differentiation for advanced learners and fidelity to program goals

## Counselors

- Needs and characteristics of gifted learners
- Tools and strategies to counsel gifted learners

## Teachers

- Facilitating Talent Development: integrating research, critical and creative thinking skills into tasks
- Cluster Teachers: rationale; curriculum compacting & assessment; modifying curriculum & differentiating instruction
- Support Teachers facilitating investigations: rationale; research process, research curriculum; management tools

# Timeline:

## 2021-2022: Referral & Identification

### Winter 2022

- BOE Presentation
- Staff Trainings
- Assessment Administration - CogAT & RL
- Community Information session

### Spring 2022

- Referrals Accepted
- Data Collected (Learning Characteristics & Work Samples)
- SSC review and make recommendation for services
- Notification
- Professional Development starts

## 2022-2023: Programming & Continuum of Services

### Ongoing

- Talent Development
- Differentiation/Cluster Grouping
- Small Group Investigations
- Professional Development