

# Portsmouth Public Schools



## Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted

2020-2025

<b>LEA#</b>	<b>#121</b>		
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<b>Date Approved by School Board</b>			

## **Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted**

Each school board must review and approve a comprehensive plan for the education of the gifted. That plan must provide specific explanations of the school division's implementation of the Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students. School divisions, working in conjunction with their school boards, should determine the appropriate timeframe of applicability for their division's gifted plan. Historically, division plans span five years. For the technical review, the DOE will request a division to send their most current, approved plan at the time of the review. The applicable timeframe for the division's plan does not need to correspond to the collection year of their technical review. Information on the DOE technical review schedule can be found at the gifted education homepage at the Virginia Department of Education's Gifted Education Web site [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted\\_ed/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/gifted_ed/index.shtml).

Section 8VAC20-40-60A of the Regulations states that "Each school board shall submit a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students to the Department of Education (DOE) for technical review on a schedule determined by the Department. Each school board shall approve a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students that includes the components identified in these regulations." To assist school divisions and school boards in complying with section 8VAC20-40-60A, the Virginia Department of Education has created this template for developing Local Plans for the Education of the Gifted (revised January 2011). This public document addresses all aspects of local services for gifted students, including, but not limited to, the area(s) of giftedness the school division will serve, an operational definition of giftedness in the division and its supporting identification procedures, program services, professional development, curriculum development, and parent and community involvement.

Each section of the plan should address specific procedures and information for each area of giftedness identified by the school division. If a school division identifies students in general intellectual aptitude (GIA) and specific academic aptitude-mathematics (SAA-M), then the section for referral procedures, for example, should reflect the specific referral procedures for GIA and SAA-M. Throughout the local plan template, school divisions may need to copy and paste the drop down boxes, the insert text form fields, and any pertinent information for each area of giftedness identified by the division. In order to be able to 'choose an item' from a drop down box, simply right click on the highlighted 'choose an item' wording and the drop down arrow should appear on the right. Right clicking on the arrow will then allow the drop down box choices to appear. If certain procedures or policies apply to more than one area of giftedness, simply copy and paste the drop down selection box to reflect all areas of giftedness that are applicable to the procedures or policy.

Once the completed comprehensive local plan for the education of gifted students has been approved by the local school board, the plan shall be accessible to the public through the division's Web site. The division shall ensure that printed copies of the plan are available to citizens who do not have online access.

For more information, contact the Virginia Department of Education specialist for Governor's Schools and Gifted Education at 804-225-2884.

## **General Information regarding the Gifted Program in Portsmouth Public Schools**

In section 8VAC20-40-40A of the Regulations, divisions are required to screen, refer, identify, and serve gifted students in at least general intellectual aptitude or specific academic aptitude. School divisions may identify and serve gifted students in career and technical aptitude or visual or performing arts aptitude, or both, at their discretion. On the chart below, please indicate all areas of giftedness that are identified and served within the division. Please copy and paste any additional rows as might be needed to address all areas in Specific Academic Aptitude and/or Visual and/or Performing Arts that are identified by the school division.

<b>Area of Giftedness Identified by the Division</b>	<b>Grades Served</b>
General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA)	K-12
Career and Technical Aptitude (CTA)	
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Dance	9-12
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Instrumental Music	9-12
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Theatre	9-12
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Visual Arts	9-12
Visual and/or Performing Arts Aptitude (VPA) - Vocal Music	9-12

### **Part I: Statement of Philosophy and Local Operational Definition of Giftedness for the School Division** (8VAC20-40-60A.1)

#### **A. Division Statement of Philosophy for the Education of Gifted Students**

Portsmouth Public Schools (PPS) is committed to enrich and challenge all students to excel with a mindset of **academic equity and excellence**. The district recognizes and provides appropriate instruction to support the special and unique learning styles of the gifted learner. The division recognizes that giftedness is multifaceted. Gifted teachers provide stimulating and differentiated instruction in content and processes that enrich the learning experiences of all students. Students are equipped with problem-solving, analytical, and creative thinking skills that foster collaborative practices and in-depth content knowledge.

The instruction of the gifted learner in our school division reflects an instructional model that is: research-based; differentiated in content, process, and product; and provides a variety of learning experiences. Our program allows creativity, collaboration, communication, problem-solving, and global thinking opportunities.

The Portsmouth Public Schools advanced program will meet the following criteria:

- Strongly Embedded Philosophy and Goals
- Acceleration and Enrichment Opportunities for all Students

- Multiple Options for Learning
- Student Learning Expectations
- Challenging Curriculum
- Flexibility, Creativity
- Staff Development Plan
- Guidance Component

## **B. Division Operational Definition of Giftedness**

Gifted students are those students across grade levels K-12 who demonstrate accelerated levels of accomplishment and higher levels of aptitude than their peers of the same age and experience. The General Intellectual Aptitude Program is offered in Portsmouth Public Schools K-12. Students identified for this program demonstrate advanced intellectual and academic potential when compared to their intellectual peers on a nationally ranked aptitude instrument. Other criteria may include gifted characteristics rating scales from school staff and home. Scales include, but are not limited to, demonstration of abstract thinking, complexity in thought pattern, extensive vocabulary usage, and extensive level of curiosity.

## **Part II: Program Goals and Objectives** (8VAC20-40-60A.2)

**A. Identification:** Portsmouth Public Schools Program of Gifted Services works to increase the number of students referred and identified so that gender, socioeconomic, and ethnic factors are representative of the division. The district increases representation by using identification instruments and procedures that assist in facilitating the identification of all students.

- All second-grade students are screened utilizing the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT).
- Students can be referred by parents, teachers, or other adults with knowledge of the students' abilities.
- Multiple criteria are used to determine the student's eligibility, including test scores, portfolio, parent rating, and teacher rating.

**B. Delivery of Services:** Portsmouth Public Schools Program of Gifted Services provides continuous services for identified students through diverse learning experiences that challenge the intellect in direct class instruction with academic and age-level peers.

- Gifted students at the elementary and middle levels receive additional instruction from a gifted resource teacher in either a push-in or a pull-out model.
- Middle school gifted students are encouraged to take honors classes.
- High school gifted and high-ability students are encouraged to take advantage of the honors and advanced placement classes.
- High school gifted students are also afforded the opportunity to apply for the Residential Summer Governor's School. They are encouraged to participate in course offerings such as Honors, AP, Dual Enrollment, and Governor's School of the Arts.

**C. Curriculum and Instruction:** Portsmouth Public Schools Program of Gifted Services will continue to utilize well-planned and advanced curriculum units and other resource materials to enhance identified gifted students' academic and intellectual growth.

**D. Professional Development:** Portsmouth Public Schools Program of Gifted Services will continue to maintain an aggressive approach to the presentation of professional development through seminars, workshops, focus, and study groups for staff members in the division.

- Increase the knowledge of instructional staff to recognize gifted characteristics in all students including economically disadvantaged or culturally diverse backgrounds
- Continue to develop the capacity of instructional staff to provide instruction that promotes collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, communication, citizenship, and problem solving.
- Increase knowledge and resources to improve service delivery to twice-exceptional students
- Increase the number of endorsed teachers in the school division
- Provide ongoing training to school-based administrators
  - Characteristics of Gifted Learners

- Monitoring instruction of gifted and high ability learners

**E. Equitable Representation of Students:** Portsmouth Public Schools Program of Gifted Services consistently works to ensure that every geographical area in the city is represented. Also, efforts are directed to increase the identification of traditionally underrepresented groups: (i.e., Economically disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient and Twice Exceptional)

**F. Parent and Community Involvement:** Portsmouth Public Schools Program of Gifted Services will pursue a sustained effort of communication with all stakeholders to promote and increase awareness and advocacy: (i.e.-open houses, Gifted Advisory Committee, and programs for gifted students). Portsmouth Public Schools Program of Gifted Services uses school district communication outlets to advertise regional and national opportunities.

### **Part III: Screening, Referral, Identification, and Service Procedures**

**A. Screening Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section provides screening procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures should include the annual review of student data used to create a pool of potential candidates for further assessment. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

#### **Screening Procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude**

Gifted services staff, school counselors, and gifted resource teachers in each school will confer with classroom teachers annually in grades K-6 to determine candidates for referral. The Program of Gifted Services staff at the elementary level will provide ongoing professional development and training during faculty or grade level meetings to discuss screening, identification, and referral procedures. Screening in Portsmouth Public Schools is an ongoing process designed to provide multiple opportunities for eligibility to participate in the Program of Services.

Parents new to the school division will be informed about the opportunity to request a gifted referral when they complete the student registration form. The form requests active military status to expedite the referral process for military families. School counselors and administrators will review all available standardized test data (ability and achievement tests such as Stanford Achievement Tests, Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments, PALS, benchmark tests, transfer student records, etc.) and consult with classroom teachers for consideration of referral and further evaluation.

The full battery of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) is administered to all second graders. Administering the CogAT in second grade provides a second measure of ability with sub-domains of Verbal, Non-Verbal, Quantitative, and Composite Score provided for each student. The results will be reviewed for further consideration. Students who score in the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher will comprise the talent pool of the Program of Gifted Services.

The population lists are disaggregated and reviewed separately as sub-populations. Standardized testing modifications are made in accordance with Individualized Education and English Learner Plan requirements. Students qualify for the talent pool based on performance

on one or both tests and portfolio assessments. Parents of students in the talent pool are asked to complete a behavioral checklist and grant permission for the identification process to proceed. Upon receipt of parental consent, information is gathered from the student records. Information regarding the academic and gifted behavioral performance is gathered from teachers and school staff who are knowledgeable about the student.

Portsmouth Public Schools Program of Gifted Services will design a K-2 Gifted Services Equity Initiative to increase the number of students from underserved populations who are referred and/or qualify for gifted services. Gifted Resource teachers will collaborate with K-2 classroom teachers to confer regarding student referral and screening. A list of students referred by teachers, parents, counselors, or administrative personnel is compiled by the Program of Gifted Services.

At the secondary level, the Gifted Resource teacher meets with counselors, parents, and teachers in their respective schools to determine the most educationally appropriate honors or advanced classes offerings. All teachers and administrators are provided with information regarding the screening process. Information is also available on the Program of Gifted Services website.

The Supervisor of Gifted Services and staff review the results of performance tasks examples, portfolios, or student auditions submitted for potential student referrals.

Classroom teachers, visual arts teachers, administration, school counselors, or other stakeholders may submit a referral for Visual and Performing Arts screening. Administrative staff and school counseling teams work cooperatively to inform parents and students of courses and extra-curricular enrichment opportunities that are particularly suitable. They assist students in educational planning and provide group and individual counseling as appropriate.

**Screening Procedures for VPA – Dance**

**Screening Procedures for VPA - Instrumental Music**

**Screening Procedures for VPA - Theatre**

**Screening Procedures for VPA - Visual Arts**

**Screening Procedures for VPA - Vocal Music**

Students talented in Visual and Performing Arts (VPA), grades 9-12 who qualify through the application and audition process, are served at the Governor's School for the Arts. The Governor's School for the Arts is a regional secondary arts school sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education and the public school divisions of Chesapeake, Franklin, Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Southampton, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach. All students who are accepted into the Governor's School for the Arts are designated as gifted in the area of Visual and Performing Arts. Students are admitted to the program through an application process, followed by screening which includes an audition and interview. The student must be highly rated in his/her discipline by at least two teachers. The program is housed in various facilities in the downtown Norfolk area.

## **B. Referral Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section provides referral procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures shall permit referrals from parents or legal guardians, teachers, professionals, students, peers, self, or others. These procedures should include to whom referrals are submitted and the timeline for the division to provide parents/guardians with the results of the eligibility process. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

### **Referral procedures for General Intellectual Aptitude**

Portsmouth Public Schools uses a holistic approach to identify students who demonstrate accelerated levels of academics, creative thinking patterns, and greater aptitude than their peers of the same age. This approach encompasses both quantitative and qualitative measures to assess student aptitude and potential:

- Referral
- Assessments/data collection
- Student Cumulative Record Analysis
- Eligibility/Placement Determination
- Appeal Process

There is no time constraint relative to referral submission. Referral forms are available at each school and the school district's website. The PPS referral form should be completed and returned to the Program of Gifted Services office. Students may be referred to the Program of Gifted Services by anyone familiar with the student's intellectual abilities, including a current or past teacher, parent, community member, or peer. Students may also self-refer. Upon receipt of a referral form, permission to test and home rating scales are requested of the parent/guardian. The student's current teacher is also asked to complete a teacher rating scale.

Parents receive written notification of the eligibility decision within 90 instructional days of receipt of the parent/guardian's consent for assessment. Any referral from a military transfer student will be considered upon arrival. Referrals received at the end of the school year (referrals that can't be completed within the 90 required instructional days prior to school dismissal) will be initiated and/or completed once the school session resumes in the fall.

Transfer students for whom a referral is submitted are considered for the program when their permanent record (documentation) indicates they have been identified for gifted education services in another school division. Additional data may need to be gathered to determine placement depending on availability and validity of existing information. Students previously identified as gifted in another school division must go through PPS referral and identification process to determine possible eligibility for the PPS Program of Gifted Services.



**C. Identification Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section provides identification procedures for each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. Identification in GIA programs shall be K-12 and must include a nationally norm-referenced aptitude test. Identification in SAA programs shall be K-12 or as assessment instruments exist to support identification, and must include either a nationally norm-referenced aptitude or achievement test.

Identification in CTA and VPA programs shall be at the discretion of the school division. Specific references pertaining to each area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

**1. Multiple Criteria Listing (8 VAC 20-40-40D.3)**

This section includes the three or more categories that divisions shall include to develop a profile or composite for each student being considered. This listing of categories should be repeated for each area of giftedness identified by the division. Please copy and paste the section below to support all identified areas of giftedness. NOTE: Selection of either item 5a or 5b or both counts as a single category.

**General Intellectual Aptitude**

- 1. Assessment of appropriate student products, performance, or portfolio
- 2. Record of observation of in-class behavior
- 3. Appropriate rating scales, checklists, or questionnaires
- 4. Individual interview
- 5a. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced aptitude test(s) (must be included for GIA)  
and/or
- 5b. Individual or group-administered, nationally norm-referenced achievement test(s)
- 6. Record of previous achievements (awards, honors, grades, etc.)
- 7. Additional valid and reliable measures or procedures Specify:

**2. Additional identification information for General Intellectual Aptitude:**

Once a referral is made, and parent permission to evaluate is obtained, eligibility packets are compiled by the Gifted resource teachers and reviewed by the eligibility committee.

- Information to be considered includes:
- Grades K-6:
- Ability test scores (NNAT and/or CogAT, OLSAT, SAGES)
- Parent Rating Scale
- Teacher Rating Scale

- Review of previous achievements and academic progress

English Learner (EL) students are provided with accommodations or modifications based upon the EL Test Plan. Twice-exceptional students are also provided with accommodations or modifications through a special education Individual Education Plan (IEP), a 504 Plan, or accommodations and support provided by the classroom teachers in response to their individual needs.

During the identification placement process, the committee may request additional information if needed or may defer the decision until further information is available. No single score or criterion may be used to exclude a child from eligibility in the Program of Gifted Services.

The eligibility results are given to the Gifted Resource Teachers after the meetings have concluded. Letters are then sent to parents; and administrators, school counselors, and the student’s current teacher is notified.

**D. Placement Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section provides procedures for the placement of gifted students in each area of giftedness identified and served by the division. These procedures include information about the identification and placement committee.

**1. Identification/Placement Committee (8VAC 20-40-40D)**

- a. This section includes the **number** of persons comprising the Identification/Placement Committee by category.

- Classroom Teacher(s)
- Gifted Education Resource Teacher(s)
- Counselor(s)
- School Psychologist(s)
- Assessment Specialist(s)
- Principal(s) or Designee(s)
- Gifted Education Coordinator
- Other(s) Specify: Director of Student Services; Special Education Specialist

- b. Type of Identification/Placement Committee

This section indicates the type of Identification/Placement Committee the division uses.

- School-level
- Division-level

## 2. Eligibility (8VAC20-40-60A.3)

This section includes a chart detailing all criteria that could be considered in the identification process for a specific area of giftedness identified by the division. A description of the eligibility process used by the committee to make decisions regarding eligibility for services shall follow the chart. It includes a timeline for making eligibility decisions within 90 instructional days of the school division's receipt of the parent's(s') or legal guardian's(s') consent for assessment.

### General Intellectual Aptitude

Measure	Administered/ Completed by	Scored/Reviewed by	Provided to the committee by
<i>Ex. Behaviors checklist</i>	<i>Current classroom Teacher</i>	<i>School gifted education teacher</i>	<i>School division gifted education coordinator</i>
Teacher Rating Scale	Current classroom teacher	Gifted Resource Teacher	Gifted Resource Teacher
Parent Rating Scale	Parent	Gifted Resource Teacher	Gifted Resource Teacher
Parent or Teacher Observation Narrative	Parent or Teacher	Parent or Teacher	Gifted Resource Teacher
Ability Test(s)	Classroom Teacher Gifted Resource Teacher	Gifted Staff or Company Scoring	Gifted Resource Teacher
Grades	Classroom Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Gifted Resource Teacher
SOL Scores	Classroom Teacher	Office of Research and Evaluation	Gifted Resource Teacher
Achievement Test Scores (if available)	Classroom Teacher	Office of Research and evaluation	Gifted Resource Teacher

The Division Identification/Placement Committee meets throughout the school year to review student eligibility for the Program of Gifted Services. The committee considers students' strengths as reported on the eligibility matrix through test scores, grades, teacher and parent rating scales, and other performance indicators as available. While the matrix scores document student performance and potential, the committee reserves the right to make final eligibility and placement decisions.

The committee may request additional information or testing if a final decision cannot be made. When that additional information or testing is received, the committee will make a final decision at the next scheduled meeting. No single criterion shall be used in determining a child's eligibility. Additional documented advocacy information (limited English proficiency, special education identification, socio-economic factors [Title I]) is included to ensure that all factors that could impact a student's performance are reasonably considered. The decision of the identification and placement committee is made within 90 instructional days of the receipt of the completed referral packet. Parents/guardians are notified in writing of the decision. All decisions may be appealed.

If a student is not found eligible for gifted services, the parents/guardians, teacher, school counselor, or administrator may refer the child for screening the following school year. Students may not be referred more than once in a calendar year.

### **3. Determination of Services (8VAC20-40-60A.3)**

This section describes the process of determining appropriate educational services for identified K-12 students.

#### General Intellectual Aptitude Determining Educational Services

Once the students are formally identified for gifted services, there are available service options. Gifted services are offered using the following options:

- Classroom extension lessons
- Resource Room pull out
- Modified push-in
- In-class differentiation
- Honors

**Talent Pool (K-2)** – Students identified as potentially gifted are placed into a Talent Pool program, where the gifted resource teachers can support the general education teacher to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the student. The gifted resource teacher may pull out the students for enrichment.

**Resource Pull Out (3-8)** – Identified gifted students participate in a resource pull-out program at their school with a gifted resource teacher.

**Honors Classes (7-12)** students identified for gifted services are encouraged to enroll in the honors classes offered with appropriate assistance and direction from the school guidance counselors at the middle and high schools.

#### **Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, and Regional Governor’s School for the Arts and the Governor’s Residential Summer School (9-12)**

Identified and eligible students are encouraged to enroll in the options offered with appropriate assistance and direction from the school guidance counselors at the middle and high schools. Visual and Performing Arts students selected to the Governor’s School for the Arts attend GSA each afternoon. They are offered a variety of courses within their discipline. Course offerings may be large group, small group, individual, or independent study. High school students in grades ten and eleven are offered the opportunity to apply to the Summer Residential Governor’s School program for Visual and Performing Arts. The Office of Gifted Education, school administrative teams and school counseling teams work to inform parents of these enrichment opportunities as well as other opportunities that may be available.

A. Additionally, Portsmouth Public Schools reserves the right to re-evaluate previously identified gifted Portsmouth students who have transferred from the school system and wished to re-enter the program.

B. Previously identified gifted students from another school division will go through the Identification/Placement process. Gifted data from other school districts with the same instructional option may be honored during the Identification/Placement process.

## **Part IV: Notification Procedures (8VAC20-40-60A.4)**

This section includes the procedures used for (a) notifying parents/guardians when the individual identification process is initiated; (b) requesting permission for individual testing and/or collection of additional information; (c) requesting permission for provision of appropriate service options; and, (d) parents/guardians wishing to file an appeal of the identification outcome, change in placement, or exit decision. Any procedural differences pertaining to a specific area of giftedness identified by the division should be clearly indicated.

### **General Intellectual Aptitude**

#### **Division-wide Screening**

As part of the district-wide second grade screening, parents are notified via letter of the aptitude screening process, the testing window, and result notification. Additional reminders of the testing date may be communicated to parents by the school or gifted resource teacher.

Parents/guardians are notified in writing, and permission is obtained prior to each step in the eligibility and placement process:

- a. A letter is sent to parents when a referral is received, requesting permission to evaluate. Parents are also asked to complete a parent evaluation checklist of gifted characteristics. Parent permission must be obtained for students to continue with the evaluation process.
- b. Parents are notified in writing of the eligibility decision and the right to appeal.
- c. Parents of students who qualify must give permission for the student to participate in the instructional services option offered.

#### **Appeals Process:**

- a. Eligibility or placement decisions made by the Identification Placement Committee may be appealed.
- b. First, the parent must speak to the Gifted Supervisor or designee to review and discuss the decision. Concerns can usually be resolved at this level.
- c. If the matter is not resolved, the parent is provided the appeals paperwork which must be returned in ten (10) days from receipt of the original placement. Specific reasons for requesting an appeal must be provided.

The Appeal Identification/Placement Committee will convene within thirty (30) days after the parent appeal is received. This committee makes the final decision, and the final decision is mailed to the parent via US mail.

Members of the Appeal Division Identification/Placement Committee may include:

- Gifted and Talented Supervisor
- Director of Student Services or designee
- School Psychologist
- Special Education Specialist
- School Counselor

- d. Parents/guardians will be notified by letter of the committee's decision.
- e. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final. Students who are found ineligible can be referred again in a year. A student may not be referred more than once a year.

### **Part V: Change in Instructional Services (8VAC20-40-60A.5)**

This section includes the policy for written notification to parents or legal guardians of identification and placement decisions, including initial changes in placement procedures or exit policy from the program.

#### **General Intellectual Aptitude**

Close monitoring of identified students is an essential part of the Program of Gifted Services. Student performance is monitored by the classroom teacher and the gifted resource teacher. A change in instructional status may be initiated by the home, school, or gifted program.

Parents may initiate a withdrawal from elementary gifted resource services in writing, using an instructional change request form. Upon receipt of the form, the student is exited from services; however, the student is maintained on the roster of identified gifted students. School administration and resource staff are notified of the parental request. A date for subsequent review may be requested by the parent. If an identified student is withdrawn from Portsmouth Public Schools for more than one semester, the student will need to go through the formal identification and placement process at the time of re-enrollment in Portsmouth Public Schools.

If student performance falls below the expected performance level, parent conferences will be initiated, and an intervention/remediation plan will be implemented. Should it become evident that the instructional plan does not support the overall positive academic, intellectual, social, or emotional needs, then an instructional change form is completed by the classroom teacher or the parent and returned to the Program of Gifted Services supervisor. These forms may be obtained from the gifted resource teacher. The completed form is returned to the Program of Gifted Services supervisor, who meets with the gifted resource teacher, the classroom teacher, and the parent to determine the adequate action for the student.

**Students in Talent Pool (K-2) will be eligible for placement review during the second grade and subject to the complete referral process.**

Any student who leaves the division and returns after a year or more is required to go through the established identification placement process to determine the current instructional level.

## **Part VI: Evidence of Appropriate Service Options (8VAC20-40-60A.10)**

This section provides evidence that gifted education service options from kindergarten through twelfth grade are offered continuously and sequentially, with instructional time during the school day and week to (i) work with their age-level peers, (ii) work with their intellectual and academic peers, (iii) work independently; and (iv) foster intellectual and academic growth of gifted students. Parents and legal guardians shall receive assessment of each gifted student's academic growth. Career and Technical aptitude programs and Visual and/or Performing Arts programs are offered at the discretion of the school division.

### **A. Service Options are Continuous and Sequential**

This section provides evidence that the division's program of curricula and instruction for gifted learners is continuous and sequential. General Intellectual Aptitude programs need to provide evidence from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

#### **General Intellectual Aptitude the Talent Pool Component**

Students in grades (K-2) are served through the Gifted Resource program. This component provides services for identified potentially gifted students in grades (K-2). Potentially gifted students in grades K-2 are served through the Talent Pool Program. This component provides services for students in grades K-2 who have been identified as potentially gifted.

#### **Academically Gifted Program, Grades 6-8**

Students found eligible for academically gifted services through an identification process participate in highly challenging curricula and instruction that is concept-based in the core subjects. The program is designed to meet the needs of advanced learners with a strong emphasis on higher-level thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Students have ongoing opportunities for reflection and self-assessment that develop an understanding of the characteristics, demands, and responsibilities of advanced intellectual development. Gifted resource teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to provide curricula and instruction that challenge students.

#### **Advanced Placement, Honors Classes, Dual Enrollment, and First College**

Students in grades 7-12 are served through honors, Advanced Placement, Virtual Virginia, and/or dual enrollment classes. Students in grades 10-12 may also be served through the Summer Residential Governor's Schools or World Language Academies.

**Visual and Performing Arts Programs** for those talented in the visual and performing arts include summer and afterschool enrichment activities provided by the school division. Secondary students who qualify through auditions for programs in dance, theatre, visual arts, instrumental music, and vocal music may attend the Summer Residential Governor's School. Additional opportunities for participation in intensive programs in dance, music, performing arts, theatre, and visual arts for talented, highly motivated students are offered for those who qualify for The Governor's School for the Arts. Students in grades 9-12, who have qualified for the Governor's School of the Arts, leave their home schools in the afternoon to attend the Governor's School. Students have many opportunities to interact with their age-level peers during

rehearsals, performances, and classes.

**B. Service Options Provide Instructional Time with Age-level Peers**

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies or program model that allows gifted students to interact with their age-level peers during the school day and week.

**General Intellectual Aptitude**

Students identified as gifted or potentially gifted receive instruction with their age-level peers within their respective classrooms. Classroom differentiation is delivered to address their appropriate needs. Some strategies may include flexible grouping, cluster/interest grouping, tiered assignments, and independent projects.

**C. Service Options Provide Instructional Time with Intellectual and Academic Peers**

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies used in the division to accelerate and enrich the content for gifted learners beyond the grade-level or course expectations for all learners. The description should include how these academic needs are met during the school day and week.

**General Intellectual Aptitude**

Gifted resource teachers provide advanced learners with ongoing opportunities to investigate, research, and work independently. Gifted resource teachers recognize that students differ and require varied tasks presented in numerous ways to maximize the potential and address talent. Tiered assignments, flexible grouping, contracts, and independent studies are some of the research-based strategies employed to differentiate instruction for the needs of the gifted. Students meet weekly with their assigned Gifted resource teacher and receive pull-out, push-in, or asynchronous instruction services.

**D. Service Options Provide Instructional Time to Work Independently**

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies or program models used in the division to allow gifted learners to work independently during the school day and week.

**General Intellectual Aptitude**

Within all of the components available to the potentially gifted and identified gifted students in the division, students are encouraged to pursue opportunities commensurate with their academic abilities through:

- Project-Based Learning experiences.
- Mentorship
- Research Projects
- Content related to community service
- Socratic Seminars
- Problem Solving Projects



- Academic Competitions
- Shared Inquiry
- Odyssey of the Mind
- Academic Progress Chart
- Rubrics
- Self-evaluation

These options are offered at all levels of the gifted program to support the development of critical and creative thinking skills.

### **E. Service Options Foster Intellectual and Academic Growth**

This section includes a description of the instructional strategies used in the division to foster intellectual and academic growth during the school day and week.

#### **General Intellectual Aptitude**

Various services are used throughout Portsmouth Public Schools to foster intellectual and academic growth. Students in the Gifted Program of Services participate in cluster and flexible grouping within the classroom activities to engage students in critical and creative thinking development and application. This is accomplished through Honors, AP classes, and dual enrollment. Highly gifted students who need to move at an accelerated rate and who require highly specialized and individualized instruction are given the opportunity to enroll in various advanced programs to meet their learning needs.

### **F. Procedures for Assessing Academic Growth in Gifted Students**

This section includes a description of the procedures used by the division to assess the academic growth of gifted learners.

#### **General Intellectual Aptitude**

Student growth is authenticated through the use of various assessment tools and may include:

- Pre and Post Thematic assessments
- Teacher Prepared Assessments
- Student, Parent, Teacher, Gifted Teacher Feedback Forms
- SOL and Benchmark testing
- Progress Reports issued through the gifted program
- Student and teacher-generated rubrics

Teachers continuously assess student performance and differentiate accordingly. The needs of twice-exceptional and EL students drive curriculum delivery. Copies of IEPs and 504 plans of the gifted are used to enable teachers to make appropriate accommodations.

To assess students' conceptual understanding and to evaluate learning, teachers at every level are involved in developing rubrics. Formal and informal assessments are used when appropriate. Students create products that enable them to experience success and demonstrate understanding at higher developmental levels than traditional tests allow. Performance-based assessments,

portfolios, checklists, metacognition, and journaling are also used. The division supports and continuously trains the teachers to differentiate instruction based on students' readiness levels, interest levels, prior knowledge, and various learning styles to meet the diverse needs of gifted learners. Translating this philosophy into pedagogical practice requires ongoing support in the form of staff development and coaching as teachers' progress toward responsive classrooms.

Professional development opportunities are offered to promote understanding of the use of rubrics, metacognitive strategies, checklists, and other methods to assist students with feedback from multiple sources. Students receive student growth progress reports twice a year on the elementary and middle school levels. Classroom teachers will attend workshops on the characteristics of gifted children.

## **Part VII: Program of Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction** **(8VAC20- 40-60A.11)**

The Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students defines appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction as curriculum and instruction adapted or modified to accommodate the accelerated learning aptitudes of identified students in their areas of strength. Such curriculum and instructional strategies provide accelerated and enrichment opportunities that recognize gifted students' needs for (i) advanced content and pacing of instruction; (ii) original research or production; (iii) problem finding and solving; (iv) higher level thinking that leads to the generation of products; and (v) a focus on issues, themes, and ideas within and across areas of study. Such curriculum and instruction are offered continuously and sequentially to support the achievement of student outcomes and provide support necessary for these students to work at increasing levels of complexity that differ significantly from those of their age- level peers. This section provides a description of the school division's appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction demonstrating accelerated and advanced content for gifted learners.

### **General Intellectual Aptitude**

General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA):

The PPS Program of Gifted Services utilize best-practices curricula and teaching strategies for gifted students that provide:

- Advanced content and pacing of instruction
- Problem-solving
- Higher-level thinking that promotes creativity and exploration
- Focus on issues, themes, and real-world problems within and across areas of study
- Original research and production
- Advanced language acquisition

Material and strategies used may include language arts curriculum units from the Center for Gifted Education at The College of William and Mary, Hands-on Equations mathematical units, Project M3 Mentoring Mathematical Minds, Roger Taylor Curriculum Units, Problem-Based Learning activities, vocabulary development units, higher-level novels, and Le Penseurs (curriculum designed

for gifted population).

To ensure that the curricula are taught appropriately, all full-time teachers of the gifted in Portsmouth Public Schools are required to have endorsements in gifted education or be actively working on the endorsement to have the endorsement completed within two years of hire. Regular classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators are supported in providing differentiated and advanced instruction through a variety of professional development opportunities and a division-wide emphasis on higher-level thinking, inquiry, and problem-solving.

Differentiated instruction is used to diversify content, process, and product to honor individual learning needs and to maximize students' learning potential. Content differentiation through interdisciplinary studies provides depth and complexity. Creative and productive thinking, open-ended and problem-solving tasks enhance the learning experience of the gifted learner. Products are differentiated in response to student readiness, interest, and learning style in order to demonstrate students' understanding of content and process.

Flexibility in the curriculum and acceleration during pull-out, push-in, and asynchronous instruction provides the opportunity for exposure to advanced content and skills. Enrichment extensions broaden the core curriculum by using higher-order thinking skills. Students are exposed to learning experiences that accelerate, advance, and enrich the standard curriculum.

PPS educators actively plan for students' differences so that all students can best learn. Thematic units infuse advanced content which emphasizes the application of abstract critical and creative thinking skills. Students are given the opportunity for content acceleration, compact, enrichment, independent study, and original products through the thematic units. The secondary component (grades 9-12) has a central focus of teacher, student, and curriculum connectivity through a program model that conceptualizes the three "R's" (Relationships, Relevance, and Rigor) which incorporates: independent research and projects, sustained investigation, and assessment.

## **Part VIII: Policies and Procedures for Access to Programs and Advanced Courses (8VAC20-40-60A.12)**

This section provides the school division's policies and procedures that allow access to programs of study and advanced courses at a pace and sequence commensurate with the learning needs of the gifted student.

### **General Intellectual Aptitude**

**ADVANCED PLACEMENT CLASSES AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS:** Students and their parents will be notified of the availability of dual enrollment, advanced placement classes, and Academic Year Governor's School Programs, the qualifications for enrolling in such classes and programs, and the availability of financial assistance to low-income and needy students to take the advanced placement and International Baccalaureate examinations.

Students and their parents shall also be notified of the program with a community college to enable students to complete an associate's degree or a one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies concurrent with a high school diploma. The Division Superintendent will promulgate regulations to implement this policy, which shall ensure the provision of timely and adequate notice to students and their parents.

## **ACCELERATION PROCESS**

Grade acceleration is a curriculum intervention for highly capable students who show very strong achievement in the classroom or exhibit potential to do advanced work beyond their peers. The process may be initiated at any time but should be initiated no later than the first day of the fourth quarter for the following fall grade acceleration. For Kindergarten students, acceleration can only be requested if their birthday falls within 30 days of the September 30th deadline. The grade acceleration procedures are designed to guide the process in determining if a student is a good candidate for this accommodation. **There are several steps to the process.**

Once the form is returned, the principal will hold a preliminary meeting with the parents. If it is determined that acceleration should be considered, the parent will be asked to submit a Request for Grade Acceleration Evaluation form.

In order to have sufficient information relating to the student strengths and potential for advanced work, input is required from the current teacher, and test scores are also needed. The student must be enrolled and attending our school for 30 to 60 days prior to the acceleration request.

Within 60 days, the classroom teacher will collect preliminary information about this student. This does not mean acceleration will necessarily occur. At the end of the observation period, if there is sufficient evidence for possible advancement, the principal will hold a preliminary meeting with the parents. If acceleration is determined to be considered, the parent will be asked to submit a Request for Grade Acceleration Evaluation form. Again, this does not mean acceleration will necessarily occur.

The recommendation could then be forwarded to the gifted office for consideration. by contacting. Please note:

- Acceleration is an academic intervention that moves students through an educational program at a faster rate or a younger age than typical.
- Acceleration is for highly capable students who show strong achievement in the classroom or exhibit potential to do advanced work beyond their peers.
- Acceleration can take various forms.
- Acceleration is not for everyone.

Below are a few types of acceleration:

- Subject-Matter Acceleration/Partial Acceleration
  - Receiving instruction at a higher grade level in a particular subject  
**(single-subject acceleration)**

- Enrolling in classes at two different levels at the same time (**dual/concurrent enrollment**)
- Taking distance learning courses
- Grade acceleration
- Curriculum Compacting
- Advanced Placement™/International Baccalaureate program
- Extracurricular Programs
- Combined/multi-level classes (K/1, 1/2., etc.)
- "Acceleration" is not synonymous with "grade skipping."

Please note: The Permission for Grade Acceleration Evaluation form will start the process of collecting preliminary information about this student. This does not mean acceleration will necessarily occur. Parents may choose to return this form to the Gifted Resource Teacher, school principal, or the Office of Gifted and Talented.

The gifted district coordinator will gather data and schedule tests as necessary for evaluation. Once the assessments are completed, to determine if the acceleration is to move forward, the principal will schedule a meeting to review the data gathered and assessments results with the Acceleration Committee. The committee will include some or all of the following people: parent(s)/guardian(s), principal, receiving principal when appropriate, gifted district coordinator, curriculum leaders, current classroom teacher, possible receiving classroom teacher, gifted resource teacher, school psychologist, counselor, and others as necessary. The committee will review the presented information and make a recommendation.

If grade acceleration is recommended, a plan for the student will be developed and signed by the parent(s) and members of the Acceleration Committee. The desired outcome of grade acceleration is for a student to be more appropriately challenged while continuing to excel at his or her new grade level. Acceleration requires a partnership between the school district and families. Parents of accelerated students should be aware that further accommodations, such as independent study, subject acceleration or out-of-school programming, may be necessary for future years. Educational plans should be re-evaluated yearly.

If grade acceleration is not recommended, plans for the current grade will be developed as needed. The classroom teacher and/or gifted resource teacher will continue to monitor the student's progress.

## **Part IX: Personal and Professional Development (8VAC20-40-60A.13)**

School divisions must provide evidence of professional development based on the following teacher competencies outlined in 8VAC20-542-310 below.

1. Understanding of principles of the integration of gifted education and general education, including:
  - a. Strategies to encourage the interaction of gifted students with students of similar and differing abilities; and
  - b. Development of activities to encourage parental and community involvement in the education of the gifted, including the establishment and maintenance of an effective advisory committee.
  
2. Understanding of the characteristics of gifted students, including:
  - a. Varied expressions of advanced aptitudes, skills, creativity, and conceptual understandings;
  - b. Methodologies that respond to the affective (social-emotional) needs of gifted students; and
  - c. Gifted behaviors in special populations (i.e., those who are culturally diverse, economically disadvantaged, or physically disabled).
  
3. Understanding of specific techniques to identify gifted students using diagnostic and prescriptive approaches to assessment, including:
  - a. The selection, use, and evaluation of multiple assessment instruments and identification strategies;
  - b. The use of both subjective and objective measures to provide relevant information regarding the aptitude/ability or achievement of potentially gifted students;
  - c. The use of authentic assessment tools such as portfolios to determine performance, motivation/interest and other characteristics of potentially gifted students;
  - d. The development, use, and reliability of rating scales, checklists, and questionnaires by parents, teachers and others;
  - e. The evaluation of data collected from student records such as grades, honors, and awards;
  - f. The use of case study reports providing information concerning exceptional conditions; and
  - g. The structure, training, and procedures used by the identification and placement committee.
  
4. Understanding and application of a variety of educational models, teaching methods, and strategies for selecting materials and resources that ensure:
  - a. Academic rigor through the development of high-level proficiency in all core academic areas utilizing the Virginia Standards of Learning as a baseline;
  - b. The acquisition of knowledge and development of products that demonstrate creative and critical thinking as applied to learning both in and out of the classroom; and
  - c. The development of learning environments that guide students to become self-directed, independent learners.

5. Understanding and application of theories and principles of differentiating curriculum designed to match the distinct characteristics of gifted learners to the programs and curriculum offered to gifted students, including:
  - a. The integration of multiple disciplines into an area of study;
  - b. Emphasis on in-depth learning, independent and self-directed study skills and metacognitive skills;
  - c. The development of analytical, organizational, critical, and creative thinking skills;
  - d. The development of sophisticated products using varied modes of expression;
  - e. The evaluation of student learning through appropriate and specific criteria; and
  - f. The development of advanced technological skills to enhance student performance.
  
6. Understanding of contemporary issues and research in gifted education, including:
  - a. The systematic gathering, analyzing, and reporting of formative and summative data; and
  - b. Current local, state, and national issues and concerns.

## **Professional Development**

Gifted resource teachers will hold an endorsement in gifted education. Gifted resource teachers will attend state, local, and national conferences on gifted education as budget permits. Gifted resource teachers will provide support for all teachers in meeting the needs of gifted students, recognizing the gifted potential in non-identified students, and creating an environment where students' gifts will be developed.

Full-time resource teachers must demonstrate the competencies listed during classroom observations, workshop presentations, and consultative interactions with teachers in the regular classrooms.

Gifted training opportunities for instructional staff working with gifted students may be obtained by:

- Completion of college credit classes in gifted education
- Completion of online modules and/or classes in gifted education topics
- Participation in regional or state gifted workshops, seminars, and/or conferences
- Participation in division gifted workshops and training
- Participation in book talks and study groups pertinent to gifted education
- Scheduled monthly gifted content meetings
- Gifted Teacher Professional Plan

Informational parent meetings will be held annually during the first semester for the purpose of explaining the characteristics of giftedness, the identification process, gifted programming, and ways that parents can nurture their child's gifts at home.

## **Part X: Procedures for Annual Review of Effectiveness (8VAC20-40-60A.14)**

This section provides the procedures for the annual review of the effectiveness of the school division's gifted education program, including the review of screening, referral, identification, and program procedures toward the achievement of equitable representation of students, the review of student outcomes and the academic growth of gifted students. School divisions may decide to focus on one or more areas to review each year. However, reviews shall be based on multiple criteria and shall include multiple sources of information.

### **Annual Review of Effectiveness**

The Gifted Advisory Committee has the task of reviewing the Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted to determine the effectiveness of the plan as implemented during each current year. The results of the review will be compiled in a written report which is submitted to the division superintendent.

The annual report may include, but is not limited to, the following: data reports (demographics of eligible and referred students, numbers of referrals, numbers of eligible students, numbers of students taking advanced courses, number enrolled in Governor's Schools, etc.), test scores (number of students scoring advanced proficient on SOL), student growth data as reported by the Virginia Department of Education, surveys, etc.

- Student outcomes will be reviewed through data collection from various sources:
- SOL information for identified gifted students placement in advanced proficient category and comparison with division demographics across the division
- Division Report Cards
- Gifted Progress Reports outlining gifted skills indicators
- Virginia Department of Education Growth model
- NAGC Programming Standards
- Stakeholders Feedback Survey (parents, teachers, students, and support Personnel)
- Disaggregated Division Data at Local GT level

## **Part XI: Procedures for the Establishment of the Local Advisory Committee (8VAC20-40-60B)**

Each school division shall establish a local advisory committee composed of parents, school personnel, and other community members who are appointed by the school board. This committee shall reflect the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division. This section should include the school division's procedures for the establishment of the local advisory committee for the gifted program if the division has elected to establish a committee.



Portsmouth Public Schools has established a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) for Gifted Education. The advisory committee meets at least three times yearly. Meeting dates, locations, agendas, and minutes are posted on the Portsmouth Public Schools gifted web page. Meetings are open to the public. The purpose of the committee is to advise the school board through the division superintendent of the educational needs of all gifted students in the division. As a part of this goal, the committee shall review the local plan for the education of gifted students annually and determine the extent to which the plan for the previous year was implemented. (Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students, 8VAC20-40-60.)

### **Membership**

The Gifted Education Advisory Committee membership shall include one parent representative of an identified Portsmouth Public School Division gifted student from each of the division's schools, a community representative, the Gifted Education Coordinator, and a School Board Member. All committee members are considered voting members.

- The principal or designee of each school in conjunction with the Gifted Education Coordinator shall select the parent representative for each school.
- Every effort will be made to ensure the committee membership reflects the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division.
- The parent representatives and the community representative are selected for one- or two-year terms, which may be renewed. A two-year commitment is preferred but not required. School division personnel serve as members concurrent with the assignment to their positions. Members choosing not to renew their terms shall notify the chair.
- Membership will be extended to a student representative from each high school. The student must be an identified gifted student and should be a junior or senior.
- The School Board representatives other than the voting member shall serve only as consultants to the committee.
- Nominations will then be submitted to the School Board for approval and appointment.
- The Portsmouth Public School Board shall appoint members to the Gifted Education Advisory Committee.

### **Part XII: Assurances (8VAC20-40-60A.6; A.7; A.8; A.9)**


In accordance with the Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students, the following assurance must be provided by the school division:

- Assurances that student records are maintained in compliance with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations;
- Assurances that (i) the selected and administered testing and assessment materials have been evaluated by the developers for cultural, racial, and linguistic biases; (ii) identification procedures are constructed so that those procedures may identify high potential or aptitude in any student whose accurate identification may be affected by

economic disadvantages, by limited English proficiency, or by disability; (iii) standardized tests and other measures have been validated for the purpose of identifying gifted students; and (iv) instruments are administered and interpreted by trained personnel in conformity with the developer's instructions;

- Assurances that accommodations or modifications determined by the school division's special education Individual Education Plan (IEP) team, as required for the student to receive a free appropriate public education, shall be incorporated into the student's gifted education services; and
- Assurances that a written copy of the school division's approved local plan for the education of the gifted is available to parents or legal guardians of each referred student and to others upon request.

Pursuant to these requirements, I hereby certify that the school division is in compliance with this language.

	<i>Elie Bracy, III</i>	<i>10/26/22</i>
Division Superintendent's Signature	Printed Name	Date