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R2464 GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

A. Nomination, Screening, Identification & Selection

1. Nomination

All students not previously identified shall be eligible for nomination for the program each year. Nominations may be submitted by students themselves, teachers, parents or any person familiar with a student's abilities, potential, performance, and/or past records. Nominations shall be based on evidence of high level reasoning ability and/or the development of unique products that demonstrate unusual academic ability.

2. Screening

The screening stage creates a pool of students twice the size, which will be selected for the program. It uses existing data on the students at target grade levels.

Spring NJSLA results will be used for students currently in Grades 4-7 as a screening measure for achievement in academic areas assessed. *Some adjustment for ELA scores may need to be made in order to balance the size of the pools for each area.

Unit Assessments will be used for students currently in Grades 1-3 as a screening measure for achievement in academic areas assessed.

3. Identification

This stage of the process requires the use of more off-level assessments to discern who top students are in each domain. The Cognitive Abilities Test is used at all grade levels to find the most promising students in three domains: verbal, mathematical, and nonverbal. Since the program will be organized in the three areas of Mathematics, English, and Science, these aptitude scores will be useful in rank



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ordering the students within each area for selection of the top 10% in a given grade level. In addition to the COGAT, it is important to obtain teacher recommendations on these learners in their area of strength, with appropriate indicators for aptitude in these areas.

B. Multiple Measures

1. Students in the Paterson Public Schools will be assessed for Gifted and Talented starting in mid-February of each school year, using multiple measures that may include:

- Cognitive Abilities Test
- NJSLA scores
- Teacher Questionnaire/Recommendations
- Student Essay
- Unit Assessments
- Grade Point Average (Report Card)
- Attendance/Lates

C. Selection

A selection committee, whose members have received training in gifted education, will review all applications as they are received. This committee makes the final decision as to which students qualify for the program. It is important to ensure that underrepresented groups are considered for selection. The use of nonverbal measures and the use of domain-specific scores should help with inclusion. However, a selection committee will review the files of students selected for the program to ensure that these groups are adequately represented and evidence considered that would be important to their inclusion.



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D. Program

Paterson Academy for the Gifted & Talented is for students throughout the city in grades 2-8 who have qualified at the highest level through the gifted screening and identification process. These students need the challenge of a curriculum with highest rigor and expectations that will meet the students' social, emotional, and academic needs. Students are grouped together in classrooms with other high achieving students where they work at an accelerated pace in all core subject areas, as well as engage in additional differentiated lessons, activities and project based learning. To meet the diverse needs of our students, the teachers utilize strategies such as subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, tiered instruction, which provides challenge and complexity, advanced materials as appropriate, and opportunities for independent study and research related to core curriculum concepts.

Accelerated Cohort, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, Honors and Dual Enrollment is for students throughout the city in grades 9-12. All of these have a comprehensive articulated program, with the highest rigor and expectations, and a challenging curriculum designed to maximize personal growth and develop our students' unique abilities. To meet the diverse needs of our secondary students, the teachers also utilize strategies such as subject acceleration, curriculum compacting, tiered instruction, which provides challenge and complexity, advanced materials as appropriate, and opportunities for independent study and research related to core curriculum concepts.

E. Exit Procedures

The district believes that these students should have a comprehensive articulated educational program, designed to maximize their unique abilities and to enhance personal



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growth. The identification system is in place to identify students who will benefit from this academic experience. However, some students are not successful with meeting the demands of the program. Although it is our goal to maintain students in the program, there are instances when it is in the best interest of a child to exit the program. When considering the removal of a student from the gifted and talented program, special attention is given to examining the reasons for non-performance. As a result, the following procedures are in place for students to exit the program:

1. Parent requests that their child leave the program.
 - a) If the Parent/Guardian chooses to withdraw their child from the Paterson Academy for the Gifted & Talented, a written letter stating that must be sent to the school. As a result, a conference will be held with the Principal of PAGT and the teachers of that team. If the teachers believe that continuation in the program is not in the best interest of the child, the parent/guardian will be invited to a conference with the student and the Principal.
 - b) At that time, the parent will be informed that the school is in agreement that continued participation is not in the best interest of the child, and the child will return to their home school for the remainder of the year.
 - c) If the teachers believe that continuation in the program is in the best interest of the child, then the parent/guardian will be invited to a conference with the student, the Principal of PAGT, and the Team Teachers. At this conference, the Principal of PAGT and the Team Teachers will make a case with the parent as to why the child



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would benefit by continuing in the program. If the parent concludes that continued participation is not in the best interest of their child, the child will return to their home school for the remainder of the year.

2. Student requests to leave the program.
 - a) If a child chooses to withdraw from the Paterson Academy for the Gifted & Talented, that child should express their concerns with their team teachers and the Principal of PAGT.
3. Student is not performing as expected as indicated by a grade average below a 75% in a major subject area on a report card after the 2nd or 3rd marking period, and the exit procedures are initiated by a teacher as a result of their observations of the student.
 - a) After the second marking period, teachers will review the academic records of all students participating in the Gifted and Talented Program. Any student receiving a grade average below 75% during a nine-week grading period in any core class (English/Language Arts, Science, Math, and/or Social Studies) will be put on academic probation.
 - b) Notification will be provided to the parent so that collaboration and/or a plan of action may be provided and the student's progress will be monitored.

F. Probation Procedure:

One or more of the following may initiate the probation procedure: a classroom teacher, Principal, or parent(s). Probation may be called at any time the student is at risk



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of academic failure. At the end of the probationary period, the student's progress will be re-evaluated by the Team Teachers. If the student is passing all core courses, the student will be removed from probation; if not, the Team Teachers will re-evaluate.

1. The plan of action in such a case is as follows:
 - a) Team Teachers will determine specific improvements the student must make within the probation period. Team teachers will meet with the child and working together, they will develop a plan. The parents will receive the written plan and is asked to sign.
 - b) Should the student continue to struggle, the parents are contacted by one of the Team Teachers and asked to attend a conference with the child. A second plan of action and time schedule will be developed.
 - c) If the child's performance fails to improve after the second plan, the child is removed from the gifted and talented program. A letter will be signed by the parents. A copy will be placed in the student's permanent folder, and a copy given to the parents.
 - d) If the student's performance improves during the timeframe of the plan, the student will remain in the program.

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