



Elementary Gifted and Talented Identification and Instructional Recommendation Process

In accordance with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Regulation IOA-RA, *Gifted and Talented Education*, and Maryland COMAR 13A.04.07, *Gifted and Talented Education*, students participate in a universal screening process for gifted and talented identification at the elementary level. All MCPS Grade 2 students are screened as part of the Student Instructional Program Planning and Implementation (SIPPI) process. Additionally, students in Grades 3 and 5 who are new to MCPS; and students or who have been recommended for rescreening by school staff or by parent request, are also screened. This process is separate from the MCPS magnet selection process.

SIPPI is designed to capture data about students' strengths for gifted and talented identification and for instructional planning for the next school year. Regardless of the recommendations made, students' strengths that are demonstrated through these processes and through students' daily instructional performance, will be supported and extended. Students do not need to be formally identified as gifted and talented to receive enrichment and/or acceleration.

At the end of the screening processes in June, parents will receive a letter that will include their student's performance on the Cognitive Abilities Assessment Test™ (CogAT®), instructional recommendations for the next school year, and gifted and talented identification designation.

What data are gathered in the SIPPI screening processes?

The SIPPI screening process uses data from a variety of sources. Specific data sources include:

- Staff Advocacy
- Homeroom Teacher Survey
- Parent Input Form
- Oral Reading Record (Grade 2 only)
- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Reading and Mathematics
- Cognitive Abilities Test™ (CogAT®)

What cognitive assessments are administered?

Grade 2 and 3 students take the CogAT® Screener, consisting of one subtest in each area: Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Nonverbal Reasoning.

Grade 5 students take the CogAT® Full Battery, consisting of three subtests in each area: Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Nonverbal Reasoning.

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What do the CogAT® scores measure?

Cognitive assessments measure developed, not innate, reasoning abilities. The CogAT® assessment can help guide teachers to adapt instruction and provide appropriate critical thinking learning opportunities. CogAT® does not measure factors such as effort, attention, motivation, or work habits.

Verbal Reasoning

Measures flexibility, fluency, and adaptability in reasoning with verbal materials and in solving verbal problems. These reasoning abilities play an important role in reading comprehension, critical thinking, writing, and virtually all verbal learning tasks.

Quantitative Reasoning

Measures quantitative reasoning skills; flexibility and fluency in working with quantitative symbols and concepts; and the ability to organize, structure, and give meaning to an unordered set of numerals and mathematical symbols. These reasoning skills are significantly related to problem solving in mathematics and other disciplines.

Non-Verbal Reasoning

Measures reasoning using geometric shapes and figures. To perform successfully, students must invent strategies for solving new problems. They must be flexible in using these strategies and accurate in implementing them.

How are CogAT® scores reported?

CogAT® scores are reported as an age-normed national percentiles. For example, if a student scores at the 60th percentile, the student performed better than 60 percent of students of his/her age, nationally, that took this assessment. For purposes of gifted and talented identification in MCPS, an overall composite score at the 90th percentile or higher is one indicator.

How are decisions about instruction and gifted and talented identification made?

Each school convenes a diverse committee of professional school staff members to review all data gathered for each student. Committee members note strengths that have been demonstrated and make instructional recommendations in reading and mathematics for the next school year. Additionally, the data is reviewed to determine if the student meets the criteria for gifted and talented designation.

What are the criteria for GT Designation?

If a student meets three or more of the following indicators, two of which must be above level/advanced performance on the cognitive reasoning, reading or mathematics assessment; the committee will make recommendations for enriched and accelerated programming and designate the student as gifted and talented. (See chart on next page)

DATA SOURCES	INDICATORS
Cognitive Abilities Test™ (CogAT®) Grade 2 Screener Grade 3 Screener Grade 5 Full Battery	Composite Standard Age Score at or above the 90th percentile
Reading Assessment Grade 2 Oral Reading Records Grade 3 or 5 MAP Growth	Grade 2: One or more full years above grade level Grade 3 or 5: 80th percentile or above
Mathematics Assessment MAP Growth Math	80th percentile or above
Parent Input Form	Total score at or above threshold
Homeroom Teacher Survey	Total score at or above threshold in at least two out of three categories
Staff Advocacy Form (Optional)	Form completed by professional school staff

How are students recommended for rescreening?

The school committee may identify a student to be rescreened if they meet some of the required criteria or are close to meeting multiple criteria. Additionally, parents can submit a written request for rescreening even if the student was not recommended for rescreening by the school committee.

Is previous identification as gifted and talented from another school district considered?

If a student has been identified as “gifted and talented” by another school system, MCPS will consider that designation if an MSDE approved group administered assessment was used as part of the gifted identification process. The parent/guardian must submit the documentation to the local school for review. Students may be encouraged to participate in the MCPS’ screening process so schools may gather additional data to inform instructional programming decisions.

MSDE Approved Group Administered Cognitive Ability Assessments

- Cognitive Abilities Test™ (CogAT®)
- Terra Nova InView of Cognitive Skills
- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
- Otis Lennon School Ability Assessment (OLSAT)

Is individually administered cognitive ability testing by a psychologist considered?

If a student has documentation of an MSDE approved assessment, administered within the last three years by a licensed psychologist, MCPS will review the documentation as part of the gifted identification process. The parent/guardian must submit the documentation to the school for verification by the school psychologist. Students may be encouraged to participate in the MCPS' screening process so schools may gather additional data to inform instructional programming decisions.

If a student's Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) score is in the Superior or Very High score range on any of the following individually administered assessments, which are approved by MSDE for gifted identification, the committee will recommend enriched and accelerated programming and Gifted and Talented designation.

MSDE Approved Individually Administered Cognitive Ability Assessments

- Stanford/Binet
- Wechsler Preschool Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI)
- Woodcock-Johnson Test of Cognitive Ability
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)