

Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs
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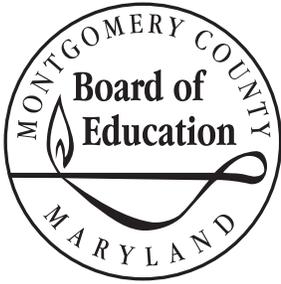
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

Twice Exceptional Students **A STAFF GUIDEBOOK**

for Supporting the Achievement of
Gifted Students with Disabilities



ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND



VISION

We inspire learning by providing the greatest public education to each and every student.

MISSION

Every student will have the academic, creative problem solving, and social emotional skills to be successful in college and career.

CORE PURPOSE

Prepare all students to thrive in their future.

CORE VALUES

*Learning
Relationships
Respect
Excellence
Equity*

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Introduction

JANE IS A STUDENT WHO HAS STRONG thinking skills, vast background knowledge, a large vocabulary, AND has significant difficulty with writing.

DAMIEN IS A STUDENT WHO HAS THE ABILITY to see and interpret the world in unique, creative ways AND has difficulty following multistep directions and keeping his materials organized.

DENNIS IS A STUDENT WHO REMEMBERS everything he has ever learned about the Civil War (or hurricanes, or dinosaurs, or rockets) AND consistently forgets spelling rules and multiplication facts.

LAUREN IS A STUDENT WHO LOVES to be read to and shows depth of understanding verbally AND reads below grade level, despite supports and interventions.

THEY ARE THE STUDENTS who may be light years ahead in math, but reading below grade level. Ask them about the Civil War, DNA cloning, lasers, or ancient civilizations and one might be bombarded with information, but ask them to write about the same topic and they may produce little or nothing. Outside of class, they are the creative problem solvers and analytical thinkers who may show strong commitment to tasks that interest them. In school, frustrated by their inability to demonstrate academic achievement commensurate with their ability, they often are at social, emotional, and academic risk.

If you have a student who has a profile of remarkable strengths and significant weaknesses, the information in this publication will help your school team to understand and serve this student.

*The purpose of **Twice Exceptional Students—A Staff Guidebook for Supporting the Achievement of Gifted Students with Disabilities** is to assist staff (it may also be useful to parents and others as well) in understanding the considerations needed for appropriate recognition, identification, and provision of services.*

Montgomery County Board of Education Policy

Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) Policy IOA, *Gifted and Talented Education*, states that “under-achieving and traditionally underserved students will be nurtured through a variety of efforts, including...distributing characteristics of gifted/learning disabled and/or under-represented groups and adaptive techniques that assist these students in mastering challenging instruction.”

This guidebook provides information to support the identification of students who exhibit these characteristics, along with strategies to help them to reach their full potential. If identified and provided with appropriately challenging instruction and supports, twice exceptional students will meet and exceed benchmarks on local, state, and national assessments and thrive in our classrooms. The majority of twice exceptional students are served appropriately in their neighborhood school; therefore, all schools must be prepared to meet their needs. Although much of this guidebook focuses on the identification and appropriate education of students who are gifted and talented (GT) and simultaneously have an educational disability, many of the suggested teaching practices and strategies will serve to help our schools nurture the gifts and talents of all students—with and without disabilities.

Population

ALTHOUGH IT IS WIDELY ACKNOWLEDGED at the national, state, and local levels that there are twice exceptional students, some parents and educators find it surprising to learn that students can be gifted AND have one or more educational disabilities, as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) or Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (Section 504).

Some students exhibit characteristics that fit neatly within one disability category, while some students possess a complex configuration of characteristics and may be more difficult to categorize with a single disability code. This section provides you with definitions and basic information about students with gifts and talents who are also identified with a specific learning disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and/or autism.

Who are students with gifts and talents?

- The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) definition:
 - “Gifted individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as an exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10% or rarer) in one or more domains. Domains include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system (e.g., mathematics, music, language) and/or set of sensorimotor skills (e.g., painting, dance, sports).” (NAGC, 2010)
- Board Policy IOA, *Gifted and Talented Education*, defines students with gifts and talents (GT) as follows:
 - Children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. (These

talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.)

- Children and youth who exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas; possess an unusual leadership capacity; or excel in specific academic fields. (They require services or activities that may go beyond those ordinarily provided by the schools.)

How Does MCPS identify students with gifts and talents?

MCPS conducts GT identification, in accordance with Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.04.07.02, for all elementary school students currently by following Student Instructional Program Planning and Implementation (SIPPI), New Student Screening, and Rescreening Processes. Students are/are not identified as GT or recommended for rescreening based on multiple criteria, including objective and subjective indicators:

- Parent input, teacher survey, and staff advocacy
- Classroom performance data
- Cognitive tests that measure critical thinking, problem solving, and verbal reasoning
- If available, individual norm-referenced assessments (such as the WISC-IV) that have been administered or considered by an MCPS school psychologist documenting superior cognitive ability*

*See Consideration of Individual Cognitive Data in the SIPPI, Rescreening, and New Student Screening Processes in addendum.

The main purpose of the SIPPI process is to collect data that will drive appropriate instructional recommendations. MSDE requires all school districts to report GT identification annually. See the MCPS SIPPI, Rescreening, and New Student Screening handbook for more information on these processes and students with disabilities.

Who are twice exceptional students?

- In MCPS, "twice exceptional students" means those students who are identified as gifted and talented who also have met criteria for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 plan.
- The National Association for Gifted Children identifies "twice-exceptional" as the most commonly used term for a gifted student with a co-occurring disability. A twice exceptional student is "A learner who evidences high performance or potential in a gift, talent, or ability area combined with one or more disabilities that may affect achievement (e.g., learning disability, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, Asperger's syndrome, or a physical or sensory disability) (NAGC, 2010).
- The national prevalence for twice exceptionality is unknown because no federal agency gathers base-rate data for this population. But, estimates suggest that there are approximately 360,000 twice exceptional students in U.S. schools (NAGC, 2009).
- The National Education Association (NEA) concludes that, "Twice-exceptional students are found within every socioeconomic, cultural, racial, and ethnic population and are present in most school classrooms." The NEA acknowledges that this group of students is among the most frequently under-identified population, placing many at risk for not achieving their potential (NEA, 2006).
- Educational disabilities can occur in students who are also gifted and/or talented. These twice exceptional students often achieve at age and grade expectations and are thus not considered to be struggling in school (Callard-Szulgit, 2008), despite showing academic, social, and emotional problems characteristic of students with educational disabilities. Often, these students can perform above age- and/or grade-based achievement levels, if provided with needed individualized learning opportunities (NJCLD, 2010).

GT STUDENTS WITH A SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY (SLD)

- In MCPS, "GT/SLD" means those students who are identified as gifted and talented who are simultaneously identified with a Specific Learning Disability in reading, writing, and/or math.
- COMAR defines SLD as follows:
 - a. "SLD" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect

ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, consistent with Department criteria.

- b. "SLD" includes conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.
- c. "SLD" does not include students who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor impairments, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

COMAR 13A.05.01.03(73)

- Policy makers, administrators, and educators should examine assessment, evaluation, and services practices to ensure that gifted students with learning disabilities are provided with learning opportunities to perform at achievement levels beyond their chronological age or grade (NJCLD, 2010).

GT STUDENTS WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

- In MCPS, "GT/ADHD" means those students who are identified as gifted and talented with ADHD who are eligible for a Section 504 plan or an IEP under the IDEA educational disability category of "Other Health Impairment."
- COMAR definition of Other Health Impairment: "Other health impairment" means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment that is adversely affecting a student's educational performance, due to chronic or acute health problems such as—
 - a. Asthma,
 - b. Attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder,
 - c. Diabetes,
 - d. Epilepsy,
 - e. A heart condition,
 - f. Hemophilia,
 - g. Lead poisoning,
 - h. Leukemia,
 - i. Nephritis,
 - j. Rheumatic fever,
 - k. Sickle cell anemia, or
 - l. Tourette syndrome.

COMAR 13A.05.01.03(73)

...the evaluation team must be careful to differentiate between disordered behavior and normal ranges of behavior of gifted children.

- ADHD frequently can coexist with other disabilities.
- ADHD can depress test scores and performance. This is problematic because, without appropriate recognition of the gifts, the student may not receive appropriately challenging instruction.
- Gifted students with ADHD often struggle with organization, executive functioning, working memory, processing speed, and written expression, despite the presence of intact (or often above-level) basic academic skills. It can be viewed as a disorder that impacts classroom performance more so than achievement, thus distinguishing it from an SLD. These students are often described as “consistently inconsistent.”
- Common behaviors of gifted children can be misinterpreted as symptoms of attention problems (e.g., intensity, drive, perfectionism, impatience, oppositionality, hyperactivity). Thus, the evaluation team must be careful to differentiate between disordered behavior and normal ranges of behavior of gifted children (Neihart, 2003).

GT STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

- Some students with gifts and talents with autism may be eligible for an IEP or a 504 plan.
 - COMAR definition of autism:
“Autism” means a developmental disability that—
 - a. Does not include emotional disability, as defined in §B(23) of this regulation;
 - b. Significantly affects verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction;
 - c. Is generally evident before 3 years old;
 - d. Adversely affects a student’s educational performance; and
 - e. May be characterized by:
 - (i) Engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements,
 - (ii) Resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and
 - (iii) Unusual responses to sensory experiences.
- COMAR 13A.05.01.03(73)

- It is important to be aware that the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th edition (DSM, 5), does not include a separate diagnostic category for Aspergers Syndrome. Persons previously diagnosed with Aspergers may be diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), based on meeting the established criteria. For more information, see the DSM-V website, which includes this helpful fact sheet www.dsm5.org/Documents/Autism%20Spectrum%20Disorder%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf
- Students with autism also can be academically and/or cognitively capable. Characteristics of giftedness can coexist with autism, but not all children with autism are gifted. Gifted students with autism may have exceptional factual knowledge and vocabulary, but may demonstrate limited inferential thinking, social communication, or reasoning skills.
- A highly gifted child’s intensity and divergent thinking may inhibit social interaction with age peers, causing educators to suspect autism. Thus, the evaluation team must be careful to differentiate between disordered behavior and normal ranges of behavior of gifted children.



Characteristics

ALTHOUGH THE CHARACTERISTICS of students who are identified as twice exceptional vary from student to student, there are some general commonalities noted in the research. The charts in this section are intended to assist school teams in better understanding the common profile of twice exceptional students.

Characteristics of Students Who Are Identified as Twice Exceptional

COGNITIVE:

- Superior reasoning (verbal/nonverbal)
- Generally creative
- Curious and driven to learn
- Difficulties organizing thinking, materials, or time
- Make good connections
- Strong problem-solving/critical-thinking capabilities
- May have processing, memory, or executive functioning difficulties

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL:

- May display frustration, anxiety, and/or low self-esteem, due to cognitive and academic dissonance
- May display work avoidance/refusal
- May display “class clown” type behaviors
- May cry frequently or have disruptive behaviors (not caused by primary mental, social emotional, or behavioral disorder)
- May attempt to hide failures through passive behaviors
- May be perfectionists or highly self-critical
- May be hypersensitive

WRITING:

- Creative, have great ideas and large oral vocabulary
- Strong “voice” in writing
- Can verbally elaborate and add unlimited description and detail
- Weaknesses impact ability to get thoughts onto paper
- May have difficulties with mechanics of writing or fine motor difficulties
- May have difficulty with conventions, sentence/paragraph structure, and/or grammar and usage
- May have difficulty generating or organizing ideas.

READING:

- Demonstrate advanced reading-comprehension skills when expressed orally (or when read to)
- Able to effectively answer higher-level thinking and metacognitive-type reading comprehensions orally
- May have difficulties understanding text when reading independently
- May have decoding and fluency needs

MATH:

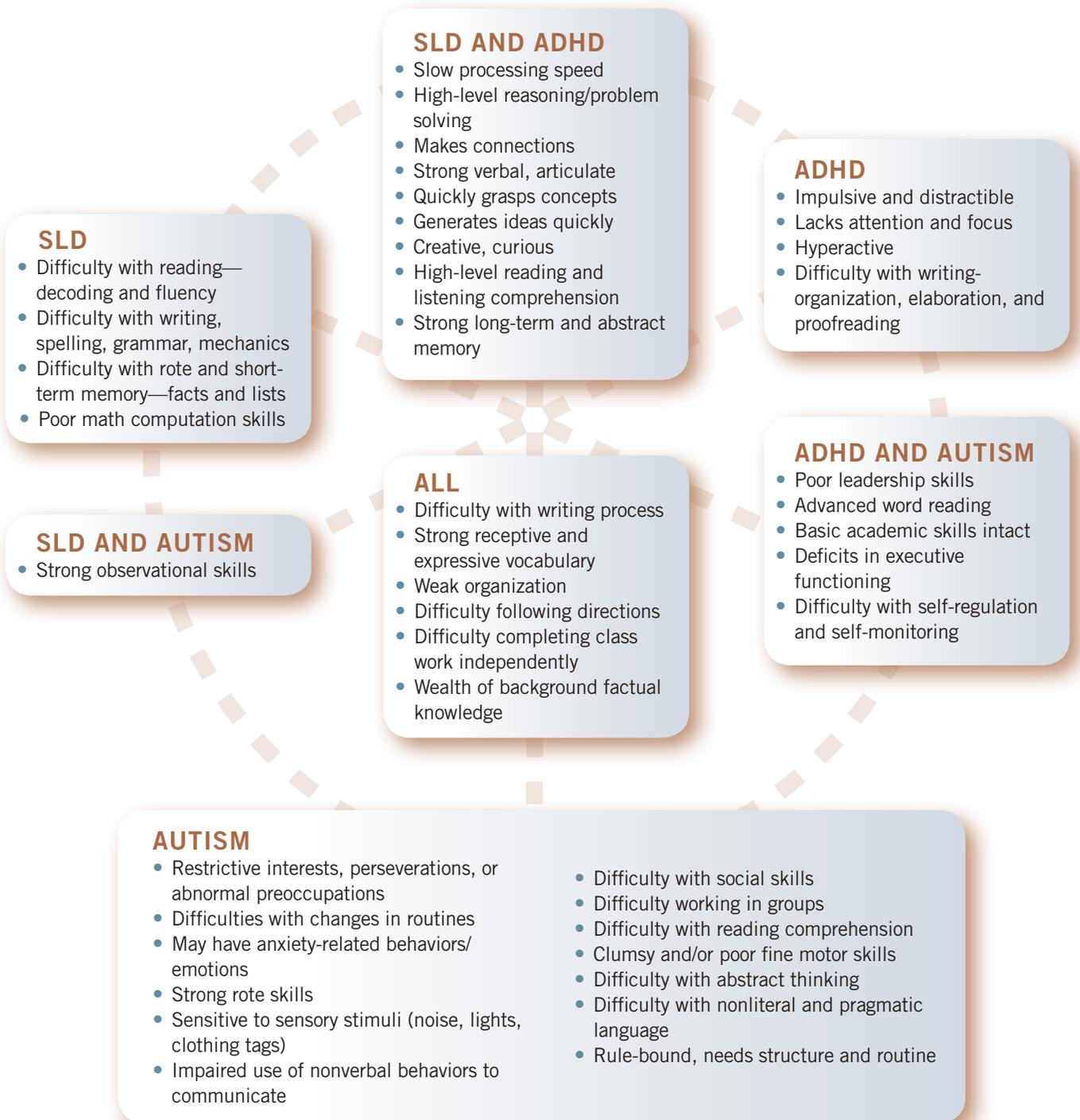
- Strong mathematical thinkers
- Grasp taught concepts quickly
- May have difficulties with calculation
- May have difficulties with basic facts
- May have difficulties with showing work
- May have difficulty with number sense and/or visual spatial skills

LANGUAGE:

- Excellent expressive language skills
- Described as highly verbal and articulate
- Have strong receptive language ability
- Learn well by listening to teachers and others
- May have difficulties with word retrieval
- May have difficulty following directions or identifying what is important

Twice Exceptional: Gifted Students with Disabilities

MCPS Resource, Developed in Collaboration with the Autism Unit Staff



Identification Considerations for Twice Exceptional Students

SUCCESSFUL IDENTIFICATION of twice exceptional students is like a puzzle, with several sets of stakeholders all holding one or more of the pieces. The puzzle pieces may not make sense in isolation, but together they provide a picture of an individual student's educational environment, history, strengths, needs, and preferences. The first step is to help those holding the individual pieces to recognize them and figure out how to put them together.

Many times, it is the educators who first see the student's gifts and learning challenges; then they set plans in motion to respond to the student's need for acceleration/enrichment and interventions/support. At other times, it is the parents of the twice exceptional student who first recognize the pattern of strengths and weaknesses; they then bring this information to the school team.

With proper recognition and services, twice exceptional students can have successful academic careers, meet and exceed benchmarks and expectations set for their grade level, and go on to postsecondary education.

Why is it important to identify twice exceptional students?

Twice exceptional students often are able to compensate using their strengths and appear to perform in the average range (especially in the earlier grades). Without appropriate

recognition and services, they may fail to make expected progress. As time passes, the gap between their potential and their skill level widens. The effort expended to perform at grade level is not always visible, causing the disability to remain hidden. Regardless of the specific disability, students who are twice exceptional often report school as being a difficult, frustrating, and sometimes boring experience. It is sometimes the behaviors associated with these school reactions that are the first sign of twice-exceptionality or underachievement for a gifted child.

With proper recognition and services, twice exceptional students can have successful academic careers, meet and exceed benchmarks and expectations set for their grade level, and go on to postsecondary education.

What are challenges to identification of students who are both gifted and disabled?

- **Lack of Awareness**
Identification of twice exceptional students may be challenging, particularly when it comes to GT students with a specific learning disability (SLD). A factor can be lack of knowledge of characteristics of twice exceptional students or an understanding that a student can be simultaneously gifted and have a disability.
- **Masking**
Another factor that impacts identification of twice exceptional students is known as masking. The student's gifts mask their difficulties and vice versa. There are three ways that twice exceptional students may be masked:
 1. **Superior gifts are masking the disability.** The student has been identified as gifted, yet is exhibiting difficulties in school and is often considered an underachiever. He or she may be working at or near grade level and underachievement may be attributed to poor self-concept, lack of motivation, or laziness.

2. **The severity of the disability is masking the giftedness.** The student has been identified as having a disability, but his or her exceptional strengths have not been recognized or addressed. The student's cognitive levels may be unknown or the measured intelligence may be an underestimate of true potential. The result is that the student's areas of giftedness may not be recognized or addressed.
3. **The giftedness and disability are masking each other.** The student may appear to possess average abilities and no disability because he or she is able to compensate well enough to perform in the average range, yet not well enough to demonstrate strengths and to access advanced instruction (Brody & Mills, 1997).

Note: In this section, masking due to a disability is discussed. However, there are many "masks of giftedness" that can prevent a student from being appropriately recognized or served as gifted and talented. Race, culture, language, poverty, teacher expectations, and life experiences can impact a student's performance AND the interpretation of performance by the adults in his or her life. Teams are strongly encouraged to seek out and nurture the strengths and talents of ALL students with disabilities, particularly those from underrepresented, diverse backgrounds. Educators should develop an understanding of nontraditional indicators of giftedness and assist families that may need support in advocating for their child or navigating the system to obtain appropriate services. The Nontraditional Indicators of Giftedness resource in the addendum can assist schools with raising awareness regarding the different ways that giftedness can manifest within students from diverse backgrounds.

- **Incongruent Beliefs, Misinformation, and Misunderstandings**

Specific criteria for the identification of special education students do not require that a student fail or demonstrate below-grade-level achievement to qualify for services, with the exception of the Specific Learning Disability (SLD) designation.

What are best practices for identification of twice exceptional students?

Teams must carefully consider the following best practices for identification:

- Collect and analyze multiple sources of data to establish a pattern of strengths and weaknesses without overreliance on any one source (e.g., report cards or multiple-choice standardized assessments) of information.
- Include information from all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, the student, and other school staff members, as all data sources are important pieces to the puzzle.
- Acknowledge the possibility that a student can be gifted and have a disability.
- Carefully consider performance benchmarks or cut-scores (low or high) used to determine appropriate services, as these students may mask ability and/or difficulty.
- Include a staff member on the team who is knowledgeable about needs and characteristics of twice exceptional students. Contact the Division of Special Education Services (DSES) and/or the Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI) for assistance if needed. (Shevitz et al., 2011).



Montgomery County Public Schools Collaborative Problem-Solving Processes (CPS)

WHEN CONCERNS ARISE related to student achievement, performance, or functioning, teams must work together using the CPS, EMT, and IEP processes in place in MCPS to make appropriate decisions for the student. This section supplements, but does not replace, MCPS CPS, EMT, and special education guidelines and procedures.

Prior to referral to an EMT or IEP team, school teams are required to use the CPS process to develop interventions that are linked to the identified problem, implement interventions with fidelity, include progress-monitoring data, and evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention(s). At any time, parents can request a meeting to consider eligibility for a Section 504 plan or an IEP, and the team must schedule a meeting in response to this request. Teams are strongly encouraged, but not required, to use the “GT/SLD Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses” staff checklist (see addendum) as a tool. Staff and parent checklists are also available on the MCPS website www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/gtld/. This tool was developed to support schools as they discuss whether or not a student may be GT/SLD.

CPS and Twice Exceptional Students

At times, a teacher or parent will recognize that a student who is gifted (or bright) is not accessing the curriculum or performing in the classroom at a level consistent with his or her apparent potential (may or may not be below grade level). The reasons may be unknown. Underachievement, a discrepancy between age or grade level (or ability) and performance (or achievement), occurs for a variety of

reasons. If the team recognizes underachievement for a student with known strengths, it is essential that they view that child’s performance in relation to his or her potential while engaging in CPS processes.

Following are a few important points to consider when problem solving for a student who may be twice exceptional:

- Review/consider all available sources of relevant data regarding the student’s strengths and weaknesses (e.g., cognitive data from the Inview, academic data, nonacademic data). For twice exceptional students, there are often highs and lows within each data set.
- Recognize and be responsive to significant and meaningful differences between strengths and weaknesses (e.g., verbal ability is strong but reading fluency and writing are weak).
- Easy is hard, hard is easy. These students often have high-level thinking and reasoning skills but have great difficulty mastering basic skills such as spelling, writing conventions, recall of math facts, decoding, and reading fluency.
- Social and/or emotional issues due to frustration and boredom may be evidenced. Look for patterns and trends in classroom avoidance, lack of interest in specific tasks, or other emerging behaviors.
- Look for unexpected weaknesses in a sea of strengths. Twice exceptional students can do so many things well that the things they can’t do may be surprising in contrast.
- Look for poor classroom performance, despite grade-level or above-achievement and/or above-average cognitive ability (e.g., from the Inview). Adverse educational impact is not defined solely by academic skill development. A student who possesses grade-level academic skills may have a disability that is adversely impacting classroom performance or social emotional functioning.

- Avoid overreliance on grades or state and local assessment scores, such as Maryland State Assessment (MSA), Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), Measures of Academic Progress-Reading (MAP-R), Measures of Academic Progress-Math (MAP-M), Measures of Academic Progress-Primary (MAP-P). Twice exceptional students can use their strengths to compensate on these measures. Twice exceptional students generally are not failing, but they are often failing to thrive or failing to access appropriately challenging general education opportunities.
- Consider day-to-day classroom performance and functioning.
- Collect data on word reading accuracy and fluency (words per minute) in grade-level text.
- Analyze multiple independent writing samples in order to meaningfully assess writing. For many twice exceptional students, writing is the most (and sometimes only) impacted academic area.
- Collect data on organizational and other learning behaviors (e.g., task initiation or completion, attention, participation) as problems in these areas often coexist with a disability or impairment.
- Ask for the parent/student perspective. The parent may be the first to suspect a student is twice exceptional. In these cases, the team may use the parent referral as the starting point for problem solving. Parental input should be considered an important source of data.
- Ask for the perspective of other staff members who work with the student. Often, nonacademic or elective teachers may see the student in a different light and may have important information regarding his or her strengths and weaknesses.
- Develop plans for the student to access accelerated and enriched instruction to address the strengths as well as interventions to address the weaknesses.
- Listen for this statement from teachers, “I would put him/her in ___ BUT ___.” (For example, “I would put him in the Advanced English class, but his writing is weak.”) Presence of a basic skill deficit, challenging behaviors, or a suspected disability should not exclude students from otherwise appropriately challenging instructional opportunities.

Educational Management Team and Twice Exceptional Students

The EMT is a more intensive level of problem solving, involving additional staff (e.g., school psychologist and pupil personnel worker). It is used when interventions provided for a student were not successful in CPS. The purpose of the

EMT is to identify and provide additional and more intensive interventions and/or accommodations. The EMT may also recommend a screening for consideration of special education services.

Following are some important considerations at this stage:

- Review/consider all available sources of relevant data regarding the student’s strengths and needs (cognitive data from the Inview, academic data, nonacademic data). For twice exceptional students, there are often highs and lows within each data set.
- Focused interventions should consider the strengths while addressing areas of need. An individual student may need accelerated and enriched instruction as well as interventions for deficits in reading skills, writing skills, social emotional skills, and/or organization. Schools can contact DSES and AEI for support as needed to determine, implement, and/or evaluate appropriate interventions.
- Keep in mind that gifted students with disabilities typically will make some progress with appropriate interventions. It is critical that appropriate goals and expected rates of progress be established in light of the student’s known strengths and apparent potential.
- If a student responds to intensive interventions, but needs these supports or services in order to continue to make progress or to access the general education curriculum, a referral to the Section 504 or IEP team to consider eligibility may be appropriate.
- If social emotional learning is an area of concern, this area should be monitored and appropriate interventions or supports provided. There are times when academic progress is being made, but social emotional needs require additional or continued interventions in order for the student to access the curriculum.

Section 504 Evaluation and Twice Exceptional Students

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended with the *Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA)* of 2008, effective January 1, 2009, is a federal law that protects the civil rights of persons with disabilities at school and throughout life. The Act prohibits any organization that receives federal funds from discriminating against otherwise qualified individuals because of a disability. This section provides a summary of information and is not intended to be all-inclusive. It is included because some twice exceptional students may be well served with a 504 plan. For more information, please see the MCPS

Section 504 Interventions Plans web page and resources
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/student_services/mentalhealth/default.aspx?id=333019.

- In order to be found eligible under Section 504, there must be evidence that—
 1. the student has a physical or mental impairment;
 2. the physical or mental impairment affects a major life activity; and
 3. the physical or mental impairment substantially limits a major life activity—the substantial limitation is determined by comparing the student’s performance on the major life activity with that of an average nondisabled student of the same age or grade level in the general population.
- Physical or mental impairment includes many physiological disorders or conditions, ADHD, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.
- Major life activities include caring for self, performing manual tasks, walking, standing, lifting, bending, seeing, hearing, speaking, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, learning, working, eating, sleeping, breathing, and operating major bodily functions.

Note: The impact on the major life activity is what is compared with the average student, NOT the impact on the student’s grades, standardized state and/or local assessments, or achievement. For example, a student’s ADHD may substantially limit his or her ability to concentrate, even though grades are A’s and B’s and the student scores proficient on national, state, or local assessments.

- As stated in the *MCPS Handbook for Implementing Section 504*, “ADAAA revisions require that the consideration of a substantial limitation be ‘broadly interpreted.’” The basic definition of disability has not changed. However, the intent of eligibility has been clarified such that “an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity” should be broadly interpreted. A student must still have an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. The impairment, however, does not have to prevent or severely restrict the student from performing the major life activity. This broader definition means that our interpretation is not as narrow as prior to the revisions.”
- Students with Gifts and Talents and 504s:
“Because a student is highly able and enrolled in Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate-level classes does not automatically preclude Section 504 eligibility. Highly able students may have physical or mental impairments that substantially limit a major life activity other than learning. Any accommodations provided to such a student should “level the playing field,” not provide the means by which the student becomes eligible for Advanced Placement or Honors courses. A highly able student should not be automatically denied accommodations under Section 504. This student might

be eligible if the student’s disability prohibits him/her from accessing appropriate-level courses (MCPS 504 Handbook, 2011, p. 4)

- A student who qualifies for an accommodation would typically require it regardless of being enrolled in an on-level or above-level course. For example, if a student with ADHD qualified for preferential seating, due to a substantial limitation in ability to concentrate, the student would need this accommodation, regardless of the level of the course. He or she does not need to withdraw from an advanced course in order to receive accommodations or to become 504-eligible.
- A student with an existing 504 plan does not need to forego accommodations in order to enroll in an above-level course or gifted program.

Special Education Screening and Twice Exceptional Students:

While special education processes are not different for students who are or may be gifted, IEP teams must be aware that students may be twice exceptional and the teams should know the characteristics of this population of students. This knowledge will assist teams in making appropriate decisions and recommendations for gifted students who are under-achieving or underperforming.

It is important to note that federal and state regulations acknowledge that students may be GT/LD or twice exceptional and are permissive regarding evaluation and identification. The Maryland State Department of Education (which provides guidance to local districts in developing processes to identify SLDs) states the following:

The decision-making team may need to be sensitive to reviewing universal screening results to determine possible services needed for twice exceptional students, i.e. gifted students and learning disabilities. Some students may or may not meet proficiency levels on the screening instruments, but results cue a significant variance between their ability and their performance, flagging a potential gifted student whose achievement is being limited by a suspected learning disability. In those cases, the decision-making team may want to consider intervention at the appropriate tier and/or referral for an evaluation to determine the student’s eligibility for special education.

(Taken from p. 9, *A Tiered Instructional Approach to Support Achievement for all Students: Maryland’s Response to Intervention Framework*. Available online at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/D182E222-D84B-43D8-BB81-6F4C4F7E05F6/17125/Tiered_Instructional_ApproachRtI_June2008.pdf)

Thus, if the IEP team suspects a student may be twice exceptional, based on available data, the team will recommend an evaluation to collect information that will confirm or rule out the presence of an educational disability.

If the team agrees to move forward to IEP evaluation, the team will need to carefully identify data to be collected prior to the IEP evaluation meeting. The following data sources should be considered (but teams are not limited to these):

- **Cognitive and Achievement Data:** An individually administered cognitive assessment (e.g., Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)) and achievement assessment (e.g., Woodcock Johnson (WJ)) is currently required in MCPS if the team suspects the student may have a specific learning disability. This data may not always be required for other disability categories.
 - Cognitive and achievement data is helpful when considering the appropriateness of a GT/LD services placement, even if the student is not coded SLD.
 - **Writing Samples:** Many twice exceptional students are most significantly impacted in the area of writing.
 - It is recommended that IEP teams collect multiple independent writing samples that can be analyzed for strengths and weaknesses.
 - Collecting independent or “cold” writing samples (as opposed to dictated, typed, or highly scaffolded writing samples) is necessary to determine if the student has a substantive impairment in writing.
 - This is important because a twice exceptional student may perform well on the most commonly administered norm-referenced achievement tests (e.g., the Woodcock Johnson) because these assessments do not necessarily demand the type or level of writing skill that is required of a student by the MCPS curriculum.
 - **Informal Reading Inventory and Oral Reading Fluency:** Some twice exceptional students have a reading disability that can be masked by their strengths in vocabulary and comprehension. In addition, weaknesses in decoding and fluency can negatively impact comprehension.
 - It is recommended that the IEP team complete a running record (collecting accuracy, oral reading fluency, and comprehension data) using at least one selection of grade-level text. This is important because norm-referenced, individual assessments do not necessarily demand the type or level of reading skill that is required of a student by the MCPS curriculum.
- It is also recommended that the team assess the student using nonsense words or lists of words in isolation (as opposed to connected text) in order to limit the student’s ability to use context and background knowledge to support their decoding efforts.
 - **Behavioral Data:** If organization, attention, or social emotional behaviors are areas of concern, data should be collected via teacher logs, structured observations, or data collection charts.
 - **Interviews:** Informal interviews with the student, which may be done at the time of the psychological or educational assessment, can be used to determine the student’s perspective. Questions could include the following:
 - What do you choose to do in your free time? What are your interests outside of school? What are your hobbies?
 - What do you like about school? What are your favorite subjects? Teachers? Activities?
 - What do you dislike about school?
 - What is easy about school?
 - What is difficult about school?
 - If you could change one thing about school, what would you change?
 - What are you really, really good at?
(Shevitz et al., 2011)
 - In some cases, parents will provide the team with an evaluation done privately at their expense. MCPS Form 336-68: *Team Consideration of External Report*, is used to document consideration by the IEP team. Any evaluation provided by the parent that meets the public agency’s criteria must be considered by an IEP team in making any decision regarding the provision of a free appropriate public education to the student and be placed in the student’s confidential file.
 - The team may need to supplement the evaluation with informal assessments, intervention data, or other missing data pieces in order to determine whether or not the student has an educational disability.
 - If the IEP team does not recommend an IEP evaluation, the team may wish to refer the student to the CPS team or EMT to determine and document appropriate interventions in light of the known strengths and weaknesses.

Special Education Evaluation and Twice Exceptional Students

While special education processes are not different for students who are or may be gifted, IEP teams must be aware that students may be twice exceptional and be knowledgeable of the characteristics of this population of students. Students in MCPS are identified as eligible for special education through procedures that are in compliance with IDEA by using multiple criteria. An overview (not intended to be comprehensive) of evaluation IEP processes is presented here with some considerations specific to twice exceptional students.

The gifted student must meet the basic criteria for eligibility, but at the same time, the multidisciplinary team must consider many factors and measures of a student's performance to assess the impact of the disability.

Currently, when a student is evaluated for a suspected disability, information becomes available about the student's strengths and challenges through formal and informal assessments. The IEP team must determine the following:

1. Is there a presence of an educational disability as defined by the IDEA?
2. Is there an adverse educational impact as a result of the disability?
3. Does the student need special education services in order to access the appropriate general education curriculum?

If the student meets the criteria for one or more of the IDEA disability categories but does not require special education services, the student may be referred to a school-based team for a Section 504 evaluation.

- It is helpful for teams to remember that an adverse impact may not look the same for all students with educational disabilities. We cannot hold a cognitively gifted student to the same standards for adverse impact as we would for a cognitively impaired student. The gifted student must meet the basic criteria for eligibility, but at the same time, the multidisciplinary team must consider many factors and measures of a student's performance to assess the impact of the disability.

- It is critical to select informal measures to carefully assess the suspected areas of underachievement. Many tests will obscure the weaknesses or the strengths of a twice exceptional student. For example, the MAP-R assesses silent reading comprehension, but a student with decoding weaknesses could either do very well using background knowledge and context or do poorly because the comprehension is impacted by the deficits in basic reading skills. Informal assessment data, observations of the student during assessments, and interpretation of the data are often as important as the scores themselves.
- A twice exceptional student may not be "failing" (e.g., two years below grade level or outside the average range), but may fail to thrive by not making expected progress, by having to work harder than nondisabled students to achieve benchmarks, or by lacking access to appropriately challenging instruction. Research shows that, without services or supports, the gap between their ability and performance generally widens over time and may impact the self-concept of the individual.
- At times, teams may identify adverse educational impact as a result of the disability, but not see a need for special education services. In these cases, the student may be referred to the EMT for consideration of Section 504 eligibility.
- At times, teams may feel that specialized instruction is necessary, but need support to determine appropriate services for the twice exceptional student. In these cases, school teams should contact staff in the Division of Special Education Services and/or the Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI) to request support.
- For students who are otherwise qualified, "Conditioning participation in accelerated classes or programs...on the forfeiture of necessary special education or related aids and services amount to a denial of FAPE* under both Part B of the IDEA and Section 504." (Dear Colleague Letter from the Office for Civil Rights, Dec. 26, 2007), available online at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-20071226.html>
- Essentially, this means that a student does not need to "give up" all or part of his or her IEP or Section 504 plan in order to participate in higher-level classes, nor does the student need to leave these settings in order to be found eligible for an IEP or 504.

*Free Appropriate Public Education

Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Identification and Giftedness:

- Federal and state regulations are permissive regarding identification of GT/SLD students. MSDE provides guidance on identifying SLD using a pattern of strengths and weaknesses for GT/SLD students:

The child exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, state-approved grade-level standards, or intellectual development that is determined by the IEP team to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability, using appropriate assessments, consistent with 34 CFR §300.309(a)(2)(ii). **It is important to consider the specific needs related to students who are both gifted and talented and learning disabled when making determinations.**

(Taken from p. 31, A Tiered Instructional Approach to Support Achievement for all Students: Maryland's Response to Intervention Framework. Available online at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/D182E222-D84B-43D8-BB81-6F4C4F7E05F6/17125/Tiered_Instructional_ApproachRtI_June2008.pdf)

- In MCPS, consistent with federal and state regulations, teams must document that three criteria are met before a student can be determined to have an SLD:

Criteria 1: UNDERACHIEVEMENT—“The student is not achieving adequately for the student’s age or meeting state core learning goals when provided with appropriate instruction.” (Multidisciplinary Evaluation Report for Students Suspected of Having a Specific Learning Disability (Form 336-41C)

- » Underachievement must be documented in one or more of the eight areas: basic reading skills, reading fluency, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, mathematics problem solving, written expression, oral expression, and listening comprehension.
- » Students with high ability may perform at or near grade level on assessments, but a careful review of all data shows that the student is not achieving adequately based on age or grade level in one or more of the areas of concern (often basic reading skills, reading fluency, and/or written expression). For example, broad scores on an individual, norm-referenced assessment such as the WJ-III or WJ-IV may be an average of high and low subtest scores within an academic area on a standardized assessment, thus cluster scores may provide more information regarding the student’s strengths and weaknesses within an overall area such as reading, writing, or math.

- » It is important when evaluating a twice exceptional student to administer measures of the specific area where underachievement is suspected
 - For example, if basic reading skills and/or reading fluency are a suspected area of underachievement, it is recommended that the IEP team complete a running record (collecting accuracy, oral reading fluency, and comprehension data) using at least one selection of grade-level text. A twice exceptional student may demonstrate below-grade-level accuracy or oral reading fluency (words per minute) on a grade-level text, despite performance in the proficient range on MAP-R or state assessments.
 - If writing is a suspected area of underachievement, it is recommended that IEP teams collect multiple independent writing samples that can be analyzed for strengths and weaknesses. Collecting independent or “cold” writing samples (as opposed to dictated, typed, or highly scaffolded writing samples) is necessary to determine if the student has a substantive impairment in writing.
 - It is not uncommon for writing to be the only significant area of underachievement for GT/SLD students.

Criteria 2: PATTERN OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES. “There is a significant and meaningful difference (pattern of strengths and weaknesses) relative to the identification of SLD, between: Achievement and expectations based on age, and/or state core learning goals, and/or Intellectual development.” (Form 336-41C)

- » For GT/SLD students, the differences between intellectual development, as measured by standardized tests of intelligence, and achievement are often significant and meaningful. For many GT/SLD students, there are also significant and meaningful differences between achievement scores (e.g., high math scores with lower reading fluency and writing, or high math reasoning with lower math calculation) or in relation to the curriculum (meeting math and reading benchmarks but below grade level in writing).
- » Students with high ability may perform at or near grade level on assessments, but a careful review of all data shows a pattern of strengths and weaknesses between achievement in the areas of concern (often basic reading skills, reading fluency, and/or written expression) and expectations relative to the student’s age, state core learning goals, and/or intellectual development.

Criteria 3: EXCLUSIONARY FACTORS—“The learning difficulties are not primarily due to any of the exclusionary factors.” (Form 336-41C) Possible exclusionary factors are lack of instruction in mathematics, reading, or writing; a visual, hearing, or motor disability; intellectual disability; emotional disability; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; and/or limited English proficiency.

- Information relevant to identifying gifted and talented students with specific learning disabilities can be found in the MCPS document, *Specific Learning Disabilities—Frequently Asked Questions*, April 8, 2011. A few of the questions and responses are provided below.
 - » How will gifted and talented students be addressed? “The eligibility criteria for gifted and talented students are the same as for other students. Although a gifted and talented student may meet core learning goals, there must be underachievement in one of the specific areas required for identification of an SLD. Teams are strongly encouraged to analyze data carefully (beyond global measures such as Maryland School Assessment (MSA) or Measures of Academic Performance in Reading (MAP-R)) to see if there is a written language, fluency, or other concern that is below grade level.”
 - » If there is a significant difference between intellectual development and academic class performance, and scores on the WJ-3 are average, does the student still qualify? “The scores on standardized educational assessments will provide information on how the student achieves compared with others of the same age. It is possible for a student to perform similar to others of the same age, but when compared with his or her

intellectual development, have a significant pattern of strengths and weaknesses that is indicative of an SLD.”

Note: A student must still meet criteria 1, underachievement, in one or more of the academic areas identified on the SLD form.

- » Some teachers give students A's and B's with comments stating the student is below grade level. How does this affect the process? “While grades are one factor to be considered, they are not the best consistent source of information, due to the variability in practices. Some students are provided with accommodations or other instructional practices that affect their grades.”

Other Considerations Relevant to Special Education Evaluation and Twice Exceptional Students:

- High-ability students often display evidence of a significant and meaningful discrepancy between their cognitive ability and one or more areas of achievement. Although a discrepancy between ability and achievement should not be the only measure of a learning disability for high-ability students, it should be carefully considered as one indication that a disability exists (Brody & Mills, 1997).
- In response to a letter from an unknown source, the United States Department of Education (January 13, 2010) stated the position that students with high cognition and disabilities are protected under IDEA. Available online at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-1/redacted011310eval1q2010.pdf>. See letter on next page.



January 13, 2010

Dear XXXXX,

In your letter dated October 8, 2009, you specifically referenced students with high cognition and disabilities such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Asperger's Syndrome, and specific learning disabilities related to reading, writing, and mathematics who struggle to timely complete grade-level work and have difficulties with organizational skills, homework completion, affective areas, social skills, classroom behavior, reading and math fluency, writing and math operations.

The IDEA is silent regarding "twice exceptional" or "gifted" students. It remains the Department's position that students who have high cognition, have disabilities and require special education and related services are protected under the IDEA and its implementing regulations. Under 34 CFR §300.8, a child must meet a two-prong test to be considered an eligible child with a disability: (1) have one of the specified impairments (disabilities); and (2) because of the impairment, need special education and related services.

For example, a child with high cognition and ADHD could be considered to have an 'other health impairment,' and could need special education and related services to address the lack of organizational skills, homework completion and classroom behavior, if appropriate.

Likewise, a child with Asperger's Syndrome could be considered under the disability category of autism and the individualized evaluation would address the special education and related services needs in the affective areas, social skills and classroom behavior, as appropriate.

With regard to students with specific learning disabilities (SLD), the Analysis of Comments and Changes in the regulations implementing Part B of the IDEA (71 Fed. Reg. 46540, at 46647 and 46652, August 14, 2006) contemplates that there will be some students with high cognition who need special education and related services:

Discrepancy models are not essential for identifying children with SLD who are gifted. However, the regulations clearly allow discrepancies in achievement domains, typical of children with SLD who are gifted, to be used to identify children with SLD...:

No assessment, in isolation, is sufficient to indicate that a child has an SLD. Including reading fluency in the list of areas to be considered when determining whether a child has an SLD makes it more likely that a child who is gifted and has an SLD would be identified.

Moreover, it has been the Department's long-standing position that, in general, it would be appropriate for the evaluation team to consider information about outside or extra learning support provided to the child to determine whether the child's current academic achievement reflects the service augmentation and not what the child's achievement would be without such help.

Based on this analysis, we believe that the IDEA and its regulations do provide protections for students with high cognition and disabilities who require special education and related services to address their individual needs.

Sincerely,

/s/

Alexa Posny
Acting Director
Office of Special Education

Instruction

RESEARCH AND A REVIEW of successful programs indicate that a critical component of the education of students who are twice exceptional is providing access to accelerated and enriched instructional (AEI) opportunities, while focusing on the student's strengths, gifts, and interests.

It is important that instruction emphasize advanced content, problem solving, reasoning and critical thinking, as well as extension and enrichment of the general education curriculum. Classroom organization that is flexible, yet structured, with opportunities for collaborative goal setting, significant peer interactions, and cooperative learning is generally a good match for these students. Students who are twice exceptional receive accelerated and enriched instruction (AEI) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) possible. In order for students to benefit from AEI opportunities in a typical classroom setting, educators use appropriate strategies. Implementing these strategies involves close collaboration between special educators, general educators, administrators, parents, and other staff members. By receiving AEI instruction, students who are twice exceptional have the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

Goals

MCPS has the following goals for twice exceptional students, regardless of setting or service model:

- To ensure that differentiated educational programs and/or services are provided systematically for gifted and talented students in all grades (K–12), including gifted students with learning disabilities or other special needs.
- To provide instructional programs for students who are twice exceptional that focus on developing their

strengths, interests, and superior intellectual abilities, while accommodating their learning weaknesses.

- To provide accelerated and enriched instruction, including appropriate strategy and skill instruction, instructional adaptations, and accommodations, while implementing students' IEPs.
- To extend each child's intellectual boundaries and help all students achieve at their highest potential.
- To provide for all students who have the capability, motivation, or potential to accept the challenge of Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and advanced-level courses with the opportunity to do so.
- To know and understand the social emotional profile of each student in order to provide strategies that alleviate frustration and enhance motivation and interest in school learning.

Best Practices

FOR STRENGTH-BASED INSTRUCTION

In order to achieve these goals, it is essential that teams focus on the following strength-based components for twice exceptional students:

- Acceleration and enrichment
- Specialized instruction and/or interventions
- Appropriately selected accommodations
- Comprehensive case management and social emotional support

Strength-based Accelerated and Enriched Instruction

Essential components of strength-based instruction for twice exceptional students should include instructional activities that focus primarily on students' individual strengths, gifts, and interests. Strength areas will vary from student to student.

Common Strengths	Strength-based Instructional Approach
Verbal skills/ vocabulary	Emphasize discussion, questioning, and oral presentations
Visual-spatial skills	Provide multisensory instruction; utilize visuals, hands-on experiences, and visual imagery
Problem solving and reasoning	Provide tasks that are open ended or questions that have many possible answers
Acquisition of concepts	Accelerate and enrich instruction while providing supports; compact instruction; emphasize concepts over details/facts; teach through discovery
Making connections	Teach thematically and connect the disciplines; provide context and connect new information to prior knowledge; use guided discovery, especially when introducing new topics
Critical thinking	Provide rigorous content and tasks that require higher-level thinking (analysis, evaluation, synthesis); teach students how to think
Curiosity	Provide enrichment, allow inquiry/research projects, encourage student questions, incorporate novelty
Specific talents, abilities, and interests	Provide project- and passion-based learning that allows demonstration of mastery based on student's strengths, talents, or interests; provide choice
Creativity	Integrate visual and performing arts, provide opportunities for creative writing, support generation of original and varied ideas
Technology savvy	Make assistive and instructional technologies available (see pages 31-32)

Strategies That Work

The following charts summarize strategies that work well for twice exceptional students.

CLIMATE	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of student’s unique strengths and needs • Promoting self-advocacy skills • Comfortable yet challenging classroom where there is a stimulating environment—posters, collections, products • Highly visible student/teacher class standards and expectations for performance • Student freedom of movement within classroom • Interactive participation • Flexibility • High standards • Cooperative groups • Individualized programming • Active listening instruction • Conflict resolution instruction • Multimedia resources • Technological tools—word processors, calculators, spell checkers, interactive web-based learning, Promethean Board/Active Votes • Respect • Encouragement • Connecting to students through strengths/interests • Focusing on strengths, analyzing successes, and applying to areas of weakness • Establishing belief-in-self system • Teaching self-efficacy • Teaching self-advocacy • Offering choices and alternatives • Extracurricular enrichment activities • Teaching students to channel frustrations • Easing and removing barriers • Using nonverbal strategies to support students • Movement breaks—learning through movement • Opportunities to be the expert or teach others through strengths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine and remedial drill and practice, with focus on students’ disabilities • Lowering standards • Confrontational communication • Inflexible expectations that diminish student individuality • Disrespect • Sarcasm • Limiting options and choices • Using negative consequences only • Using one instructional method • Denying access to positive learning experiences

Strategies That Work

GT INSTRUCTION	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying, knowing, and practicing models for gifted education—multiple intelligences, creative problem solving, Bloom’s Taxonomy, etc. • Activities that focus on student gifts and interests • Open-ended outlets for the demonstration of knowledge • Differentiated instruction (e.g., curriculum compacting, acceleration, enrichment) • Tasks that fit student’s learning style • Multisensory instruction • Guided discovery (KWL), especially when introducing new topics • Support and clarification for embedded directions, both oral and written • Offering students choices • Alternative product options • Collaboratively designed rubrics • Hands-on experiences • Real-life tasks • Integration of visual and performing arts • Inquiry-based learning • Universal design for learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remedial instruction • Rigid task guidelines • Belief that GT/LD students can organize their thinking without accommodations or instruction • Perceiving lack of production as a sign of motivational weakness or lower intelligence • Rote memorization • Forced oral reading • Text-based instruction • Teacher-directed activities only
THINKING	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching thinking strategies • Teaching, modeling, and practicing thinking strategies (e.g., Six Hats) • Teachers working with students to formulate questions, think through logic problems, use the Socratic method, require active participation in the learning process, apply abstract concepts to everyday occurrences, use think-alouds to model the thinking process, develop a thinking language, and search for their own solutions • Using metacognitive skills • Transferring/applying thinking strategies that work in areas of strength to areas of need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming students know thinking strategies • Assuming students can apply thinking strategies without ongoing practice

Strategies That Work

WRITING	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing writing process through ongoing discussion and practice • Focus on content rather than mechanics and quality rather than quantity • Elicit the desire to write from the students by frequently allowing them to write in area of interest or expertise, to write persuasively, or to write creatively • Explicit instruction using the Six Traits of Writing • Allow creativity, self-expression, and choice of topic/format • Assistive technology—portable word processors (e.g., Alphasmarts, Fusions, Fortes, Netbooks), computers, electronic spellers, organizational software (e.g., Inspiration/Kidspiration), word-predictive software (e.g., Word Q), voice-recognition software (e.g., Dragon NaturallySpeaking), text-to-speech software (e.g., Kurzweil), note-taking pens (e.g., LiveScribe) • Teach students to use (and ultimately generate their own) graphic organizers, based on required organizational structure of the assignment • Mind-mapping strategies • Extended time for completion of work • Clearly written expectations for writing tasks • Writing prompts • Rubrics—to teach students how to improve writing • Proofreading for one type of error at a time • Highlighters to indicate corrections • Publication of writing for an audience • Guided writing groups • Shared writing • Strength-based pre-writing (e.g., verbal conferences, storyboarding, graphic organizers) • Develop content and ideas prior to introducing the writing assignment—use learning experiences such as guided imagery, dramatization, videos, discussions, field trips, and read-alouds • Allow student to scribe a word bank of ideas specific to the writing assignment (use stickies or create a word bank) • Provide a copy of teacher’s notes or of another student’s notes in advance (e.g., copy of Flip Chart or PowerPoint slides) for the student to follow along. Have the student annotate the teacher notes, take “skinny” notes (key words or pictures only), or create a “mind-map” in order to maintain engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on handwriting instead of content • Quantity versus quality • Using red pens to denote errors

Strategies That Work

ORGANIZATION	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the use of electronic organizers and personal devices (e.g., smart phones, tablets); allow students to voice record or photograph assignments using personal devices • Consistently use online gradebooks or teacher websites to make assignments, study guides, and important course dates available to students • E-mail assignments and handouts between school and home • Unit study guides, advance organizers, concept maps • Assignment books and calendars for recording assignments • Graphic organizers—outlines, webs, diagrams, storyboards, flow charts, etc. that organize material in a logical and meaningful way • Teachers working with students to establish specific due dates for short assignments and time frames for long-term assignments • Breaking up tasks into workable and obtainable steps • Providing check points for long-term assignments and monitoring progress frequently • Providing time to organize materials and assignments • Providing a specific location for students to place completed work • Providing an uncluttered work area (may necessitate a second work space for some students) • Labeling and storing classroom materials in designated locations • Providing a space for students to place papers that they do not currently need to have in their binder or desk. Many students do not wish to throw these materials away but will file “cold” papers in a designated space for safe-keeping • Monitoring students’ accuracy in recording assignments and/or providing printed copy • Color-coded organizational materials (e.g., stickies, highlighters, folders) • Checklists for multi-step routines and assignments • Use of timers, which teach students to predict and monitor time needed to complete tasks • Dialogue with the student to develop a system for organizing school materials that works for him/her, offer options • Clear expectations and flexible structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming students have the needed organizational skills • Attributing poor organizational skills to lack of motivation, bad attitude, or laziness • Assigning long-term or complicated assignments without supports for organization • Expecting students to use organizational supports without providing instruction in the use of those supports

Strategies That Work

READING	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on comprehension, listening, and gaining information • Using literature for stimulating reading interest • Integrating content-rich, engaging nonfiction material • High-interest personal reading material, which may be above grade level • Programs that build critical thinking and comprehension skills (e.g., William and Mary, Junior Great Books, and Touchstones Discussion Project) • Emphasis on higher-level questions about text that will develop and nurture critical and creative thinking • Development of expository reading • Structured oral discussion of text (e.g., Shared Inquiry, Socratic discussions, think-pair-share, literature circles) • Explicit instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, decoding, and reading fluency using structured, systematic, research-based, multisensory, rule-based reading programs • Accommodations, including recorded books, text-to-speech software (e.g., Kurzweil, Natural Reader, Word Q), and other audio materials (e.g., CDs, audio files) • Online repositories for downloading digital text (e.g., Bookshare) • Allowing students to demonstrate reading comprehension through their strengths • Arts integration (drama, visual arts, poetry) • Reader's Theater/dramatic interpretation of text • Helping to develop interest and curiosity by activating prior knowledge before reading and beginning with an experience or project • Use graphic organizers to help students record, locate, and/or organize information from text • Select high-interest, appropriate-level reading material and multilevel texts about the same topic • Provide visuals (outlines, advanced organizers, graphic organizers, charts, photographs, diagrams, and maps) to aid in understanding written information • Cue students to important words and concepts verbally and through highlighting • Teach students to use context to discover the meaning of new vocabulary. Conduct in-depth word study for words with multiple or complex meanings. Don't "cover" or require students to write or memorize definitions of lots of new or unknown words • Give students the opportunity to read silently before reading aloud. Allow students to choose whether or not to read aloud • Pair students who have strong decoding skills with those with weak decoding skills • Provide alternatives to written responses • Read text aloud • Allow additional time for reading • Teach students to outline, underline, or highlight important points in reading. • Encourage students to take notes or to mark text (annotate) while reading. • Teach students to support decoding efforts using background knowledge and contextual clues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on word attack errors that do not affect comprehension • Reading worksheets • Round robin reading • Using only below-grade-level basal readers • Focusing on factual/recall questions about text • Using written responses to assess reading comprehension

Strategies That Work

MEMORY	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple modalities, including art and simulations, when presenting directions, explanations, and instructional content • Multiple Intelligences approach • Providing students with the information that highlights key facts • Having students sequence activities after a lesson or event • Having students teach information to other students • Having students audio record directions or information • Providing students with environmental cues and prompts—posted rules, steps for performing tasks, etc. • Allowing students to use resources in the environment to recall information—notes, textbooks, pictures, etc. • Relating information presented to a student’s previous experiences • Having students outline, highlight, underline, and summarize information that should be remembered • Telling students what to listen for when they are being given directions or receiving information • Associative cues or mnemonic devices • Teaching visual imagery • Use instructional technology (e.g., YouTube, UnitedStreaming, videos) to provide multimedia presentations • Having students record directions or information (video or audio) to be played back as needed • Having students use software programs to organize key points • Creating resources or study tools (e.g., glossary, flash cards) of key vocabulary (with images) for students • Allowing students to use devices or computers to access information that may not need to be memorized • Note-taking pens (e.g., Livescribe) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using only one modality, such as a lecture, to teach a lesson • Expecting students to recall factual information without supports • Expecting students to use mnemonics, visual imagery, technology, or other supports without teaching them how to use these tools

Strategies That Work

MATHEMATICS	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-assessment of students' mastery of mathematical categories and concepts (e.g., decimal fractions, whole numbers, statistics and probability) • Focusing on developing conceptual skills and problem-solving strategies • A multidisciplinary approach with project-based learning (assignments requiring math application vs. worksheets) • Interactive approach • Hands-on programs (e.g., Hands-on Equations) • Manipulatives • Untimed tests if indicated • Reduction in number of problems upon mastery (most-challenging ones first) • Direct instruction for the use of calculators • Computer-based learning (e.g., FASTT Math, Khan Academy) • Real-world connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthy assignments • Repetitive assignments • Copying from the textbook, overheads, or blackboard • Focusing on computation alone
SCIENCE	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands-on, interactive experiences • Activities that incorporate problem solving and real-life investigations with a purpose and an end product • Thematic approach that allows students to direct their search for knowledge and answers • Simulations • Integration of visual and performing arts • Focus on science process objectives • Graphic organizers to support note-taking • Multimedia/instructional technology/videos • Project-based learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction led by textbook reading • Focusing on facts rather than understanding concepts

Strategies That Work

SOCIAL STUDIES	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holding students accountable for learning the historical, economic, political, geographic, and cultural content standards • Constructing understandings through systems of processing information, critical thinking, and problem solving • Thematic units • Simulations • Hands-on activities and projects • Using various forms of media • Integration of visual and performing arts • Extension/enrichment activities • Sensory connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction led by textbook reading • Focusing on facts rather than understanding concepts
HANDWRITING	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on form • Mechanical pencils and grips • Appropriate handwriting program • Assistive technology (e.g., word processor, electronic spelling devices) • Copy of teacher’s notes or of another student’s notes • Slant boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthy handwriting tasks that result in fatigue • Expectations that disregard students’ physical weaknesses or limitations



Strategies That Work

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student/teacher collaboration on the evaluation/assessment methods and tools • Evaluations based on instruction and reflecting the key concepts and basic understandings that are the focus of the curriculum • Providing objectives, study guides, vocabulary, memory strategies, acceptable responses, support and clarification for embedded questions • Differentiation providing a multiple intelligence approach (artistic, spatial, and performing) • Graphic organizers in lieu of paragraph responses • Providing alternative ways for student to demonstrate learning • Use of assistive technology (e.g., voice-recognition software, organizational software, electronic spellers, word-prediction software, tape-recorded responses) • Proofreading checklist • Scoring rubrics, models, and anchor papers for students • Providing portfolio assessments of products and performances as well as written products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthy essays, to detriment of content knowledge • Penalties for spelling and mechanics in content areas • Matching tasks • Focus on recall of facts rather than application • Overly restrictive time limits
SOCIAL EMOTIONAL	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement • Connecting to students through strengths/interests • Focusing on strengths, analyzing successes, and applying strengths to areas of weakness with the student • Teaching social skills, problem-solving cycle, and conflict resolution skills • Teaching students coping strategies and how to channel frustrations • Teaching self-awareness and self-advocacy • Teach plan, do and check results for self-analysis • Offering choices and alternative ideas and options • Extracurricular enrichment activities • Using nonverbal strategies to support students • Using discipline as a “teachable moment” • Open lines of communication • Encouraging risk-taking • Taking advantage of opportunities to practice skills to build confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarcasm that is personalizing • Limiting options and choices • Stressing the importance of the weakness and what students cannot do • Using negative consequences only • Using one instructional method for an extended period • Denying access to positive learning experiences • Using discipline as punishment only • Lack of communication • Lowering standards

Strategies That Work

RESOURCE CLASS	
What Works	Less-Effective Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource program/instruction based primarily on goals and objectives in the current IEP • Differentiating curriculum for each student based on student's strengths and needs (gather information from the IEP, work samples, and teacher feedback to design the instructional program for each student) • Integrating instruction of skills and strategies into each student's current academic coursework in order to support the generalizing of skills across settings. Flexibility of daily instruction; prioritize to meet the current needs of the student • Including the student in goal setting, planning, and problem solving • Explicitly teaching academic skills (writing process, strategies for decoding or reading comprehension) and technology needed to be successful in other classes • Teaching, discussing, role-playing, and practicing self-awareness and self-advocacy • Developing a long-term independent or group project that the students can get excited about that will also help them meet their IEP goals and objectives as well as content expectations for the class • Teaching thinking strategies through modeling, practicing, and applying • Providing time during resource class for students to check with academic teachers; organize binder and materials; prepare for or finish tests; study; break down and begin long-term projects with special educator supervision, instruction, and guidance • Utilizing the resource teacher as the case manager • Scheduling for small resource classes that include a cohort group of twice exceptional students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basing the resource program solely on a prescribed curriculum • Teaching skills lessons in a vacuum (a worksheet on time management with no individualization or application to the student's academic world) • Having a one-size-fits-all approach to resource program/instruction • Following an independent "study hall" model • Helping the students accomplish work with no overarching goal or objective in mind (getting homework or tests finished vs. learning organization strategies) • Sticking to rigid lesson plans • Giving students "busy work" if they don't bring their own materials • Expecting students to acquire study skills, organizational skills, memory strategies, and self-advocacy without explicit instruction, practice, feedback, and opportunities to generalize

Guiding Questions for Instructional Planning

WHEN DIFFERENTIATING UNITS/LESSONS FOR TWICE EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

What are the overarching concepts or essential questions/understandings that give this unit real purpose?

Why are we doing this?

Content Differentiation	Process Differentiation	Product Differentiation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are advanced standards and objectives for this topic/skill? • Are the materials and content adequately challenging? • Provocative • Ambiguous • Complex • Emotionally engaging • How can I connect to or pique my students' interests? • Could we go faster, further, deeper? • Are higher-level questions incorporated into the lesson? • Have I incorporated content choices for my students into the lesson? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the learning tasks complex enough? • How will my students best learn the content? Are multiple learning styles addressed? • Will my students enjoy the learning process? • What accommodations or technology are likely to be needed? • Would project-based learning work? • Would an inquiry project get us where we need to go? • Have I incorporated process choices for my students into the lesson? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can my students show what they have learned in alternative ways? • Do the product choices allow for creativity and multiple learning styles? • What accommodations or technology are needed? • How will we display our work? • What measurement topics require the collection of data? • Have I incorporated product choices for my students into the lesson?



Instructional Materials

While there are limitless possible materials that could be used to implement AEI and services for twice exceptional students, a few resources commonly used and available in MCPS are listed here.

Reading/Language Arts

Research-based reading interventions for decoding and fluency should be used for students who are struggling readers. On the enrichment end of the continuum, students access above-level, complex text to support development of reading comprehension and analysis of higher-level literature.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

- Interact Simulations
- William and Mary Units
- *Differentiating Instruction with Menus*
- Junior Great Books
- Jacobs Ladder
- Navigator Units
- Wordly Wise
- Magazines: *KidsDiscover*, *Zoobooks*, *National Geographic*, *TFK*, *Scholastic*
- Explode the Code
- MegaWords
- Touchstones Discussion Project
- Words Their Way
- Research-based reading interventions focused on decoding/encoding and fluency (e.g., Early Intervention in Reading, Phonics for Reading, Read Naturally, Reading Assistant, Fast Track Reading, REWARDS, Read 180)

Note: Please consult the Department of Special Education Services when considering an intervention for students with disabilities.

Writing

Students frequently use assistive technology software to produce written work. Topics that inspire and challenge students to be critical and creative are most appropriate. Students' interests and choices are critical components to motivating them to want to communicate through writing. Publishing and sharing work are important components of a writing program, although not every piece must be taken to completion through all steps of the writing process. Students are taught the writing process as well as the different traits of

writing using modeling, guided practice, rubrics, and evaluation of writing pieces that are exemplars as well as those that do not meet the standard. Handwriting and keyboarding instruction and practice may be incorporated, as appropriate, to help students become proficient. Keyboarding is often emphasized over handwriting.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

- Handwriting Without Tears
- Type to Learn or Dance Mat Typing
- Great Source Write Traits Classroom Kits

Math

Math is often an area of significant strength for twice exceptional students, and appropriate acceleration is critical. Students should not be held back by their inability to master basic math facts or memorize formulas and vocabulary. An additional accommodation can be made for students to explain their thinking orally, in lieu of writing their response. Areas of weakness still must be addressed and developed. Instruction should be hands-on and multisensory. Calculators and other compensatory aids, such as multiplication charts and formula/vocabulary notebooks, should be used regularly. Many twice exceptional students can excel in advanced mainstream math classes with the support of their accommodations.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

- Enrichment/acceleration for each week can be found beneath the sample learning tasks (nRich) on MyMCPS
- Hands-on Equations
- Nimble with Numbers
- Challenging Word Problems
- Groundworks
- Super Source
- Khan Academy
- Hippocampus
- FASTT Math
- *Differentiating Instruction with Menus*

Critical-Thinking Skills

Many twice exceptional students enjoy problem-solving opportunities, and various resources can be used to help them improve their inferential and evaluative thinking. Students can be taught not only how to approach a problem in various content areas (strategies), but how to think

about approaching a problem (metacognition) by modeling, think-alouds, and development of common vocabulary related to thinking strategies. Higher-level questioning and student-driven inquiry projects should be used.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

- Paul's Reasoning Wheel
- Six Hats
- Touchstones Discussion Project
- Stories with Holes
- Destination Imagination
- Bloom-based question starters

Science/Social Studies

MCPS units can be extended and enriched by using thematic units, online resources and websites, class and individual projects, hands-on experiences, field trips, and visual/performing arts connections.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

- Jason Project
- Interact Simulations
- William and Mary Units
- *Differentiating Instruction with Menus*

Instructional and Assistive Technology

When planning for students who are, or may be, twice exceptional, CPS, EMT, and/or IEP teams may want to consider the following menu of strategies to determine which interventions may provide greater access to appropriately challenging instruction. Visit the MCPS High Incidence Accessible Technology (HIAT) website for more detailed information, quick guides, video tutorials, and to access support with technology implementation: www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/hiat-tech/

Overcoming Obstacles Related to Writing

- Voice-recognition software (e.g., Dragon Naturally Speaking, Speak Q) and/or apps (e.g., VoiceNote II, Dictanote, Talk Typer)
- Writing organizational software (e.g., Kurzweil, Kidspiration, or Inspiration) and/or apps (e.g., MindMeister, MindMup)
- Electronic spellers and dictionaries (e.g., Franklin Spellers)
- Computer word processor with spelling and grammar check (e.g., Microsoft Word)

- Portable keyboards (e.g., Alphasmarts, Fusions, Fortes), tablets, or laptops (e.g., Chromebooks)
- Word-prediction software (e.g., Word Q)
- Programs (or apps/extensions) that allow writing to be read aloud (e.g., Word Q, Kurzweil, Read and Write Toolbar for Google)
- Audio-recording software (e.g., Audacity, Insert audio in PowerPoint, Sound recorder in Windows) and apps (MicNote)
- Note-taking pens (e.g., LiveScribe) and apps

Overcoming Obstacles Related to Organization

- Use electronic organizers or allow students to use their own personal devices (e.g., smart phones, tablets)
- Consistently use online gradebooks or teacher websites to make assignments, study guides, and important course dates available to students
- Allow students to voice-record or photograph assignments and/or notes using personal devices
- E-mail assignments and handouts between school and home

Overcoming Obstacles Related to Reading

- Text-to-speech programs (e.g., Kurzweil, Natural Reader, Word Q) or apps/extensions (e.g., Read and Write Toolbar for Google) that will read digital text aloud to students
- Online repositories for downloading digital text (e.g., Bookshare)
- Electronic spellers that speak words aloud (e.g., Franklin Speller)
- Audio books (e.g., CDs, audio files)
- Access the online resources with embedded text to speech (e.g., Britannica, CultureGrams) in the Get help/Resources section of the MCPS website at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/students/homework.aspx>

Overcoming Obstacles Related to Memory

- Use instructional technology (e.g., YouTube, UnitedStreaming, videos) to provide multimedia presentations
- Record directions or information (video or audio) to be played back as needed
- Have students use software programs to organize key points
- Create flash cards of key vocabulary (with images) for students using PowerPoint or other software
- Allow students to use devices or computers to access information that may not need to be memorized
- Note-taking smart pens (e.g., Livescribe)

Technology Selection Tool “If...Then”

If you have a student who	Then consider a trial with
Has strong listening comprehension but poor decoding skills	Text-to-Speech (read aloud) software (e.g., Kurzweil, Word Q, Natural Reader) or extension (e.g., Read and Write Toolbar for Google)
Has strong vocabulary and good ideas but has poor spelling skills	Word prediction (e.g., Word Q)
Has lots of ideas but whose writing lacks organization and is minimally developed	Pre-writing software (e.g., Inspiration) or apps (e.g., MindMeister, MindMup)
Has great ideas and a strong content vocabulary but poor memory and spelling	Pre-Writing Software (e.g., Clicker 6 word banks)
Has strong verbal skills and can dictate an organized response but struggles with written expression, even with use of a word processor	Voice-recognition software (e.g., Dragon, Speak Q) or apps (e.g., VoiceNote II, Dictanote, Talk Typer), or Audio recordings (e.g., Audacity, “insert audio” in PowerPoint)
Has strong math reasoning and problem-solving skills but lacks automaticity or recall of math facts	Calculator



MCPS Services for Twice Exceptional Students

Most twice exceptional students have access to accelerated and enriched instruction in their local school, while receiving appropriate adaptations, accommodations, and special instruction. Specialized instruction in the local school may be provided through a resource room/class and/or inclusion services. Regardless of the service delivery model used, their programming should consist of all four components of the following strength-based “best practices.”

Regardless of the service delivery model used, their programming should consist of all four components of the following strength-based “best practices.”

Best Practices

FOR STRENGTH-BASED INSTRUCTION

- Acceleration and enrichment
- Specialized instruction and/or interventions
- Appropriately selected accommodations
- Comprehensive case management and social emotional support

1. Accelerated and enriched instruction (AEI)
 - For an elementary student, AEI often consists of access to higher-level text, full implementation of William and Mary (W&M), Junior Great Books lesson sequences, accelerated math instruction, enrichment in any subject, or magnet programs.
 - For a middle school student, AEI might consist of participation in advanced courses or magnet programs.
 - For a high school student, AEI might consist of participation in Honors, AP, or IB courses or magnet programs.
2. Specialized instruction and/or interventions
 - For an elementary student, this specialized instruction might consist of a second guided reading group, a reading/writing/math intervention program, additional writing instruction, social emotional skills instruction, and/or organizational coaching.
 - For a middle or high school student, direct specialized instruction might take place within the resource classroom and should include self-advocacy training (see Resource “What Works”).
3. Appropriately selected accommodations
4. Comprehensive case management and social emotional support

Local School Supports

What supports can local schools offer twice exceptional students?

Some ideas to consider when developing local school special education services for twice exceptional students are listed

below. Schools may find that services for identified twice exceptional students are appropriate for other students as well, as many students benefit from access to a universally designed, rigorous curriculum with flexible supports.

- Designated case managers
- Cohort scheduling through the identification of designated general education classes in the master schedule
- Supported (co-teacher or paraeducator) advanced instruction (e.g., W&M reading group, advanced/Honors classes)
- Twice exceptional multi-grade pull-out groups (elementary) or advanced resource class (secondary)
- Itinerant support (means to receive support throughout the day, as needed)
- Counseling supports/groups for gifted students with disabilities
- Access to technology throughout the school day

What resources can schools access to support twice exceptional students in their building?

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Professional learning in MCPS is available to staff countywide through professional learning sessions (search “twice exceptional” on Professional Development Online (PDO) for current options). Typically, sessions focus on characteristics, identification, and best practices in programming and instruction for twice exceptional students.
- School-based professional development, tailored for the participants, is available by request through the Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI).
- A 3-credit Continuing Professional Development (CPD) course, titled “Smart Kids with Learning Difficulties” is available.
- Online professional learning (e.g., webinars, interactive presentations) has become another venue for reaching a broad audience of educators and building capacity within all of our schools. Current available sessions can be found on the GT/LD website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/gtld/.

The *Request for Twice Exceptional Student Support* form (see addendum) may be used to access the below supports. The form is also available on the MCPS GT/LD website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/gtld/.

WINGS MENTOR PROGRAM:

- This individualized eight-week enrichment program can be considered for identified twice exceptional students receiving services *within their local school*.
- The program was developed to provide additional enrichment with support to GT/LD students who may benefit from additional support beyond their local school offerings.
- Students realize their creative and intellectual potential when paired with mentors who nurture them by increasing their knowledge and skills in an area of interest.
- The mentors are carefully screened and selected based on their knowledge in a specific field and their ability to share their skills with young people.
- Mentors communicate with classroom teachers so that the successful strategies can be transferred and applied to the classroom setting.

CONSULTATION:

- Staff members in DSES and AEI are available to consult with school staff about programming effectively for individual students or to support development of programming for twice exceptional students schoolwide.
- See the *Protocol for Requests for Twice Exceptional Student Support* (located in the addendum) for guidance about the consultation process.
- Support for selection and implementation of appropriate assistive technology is available through the High Incidence Accessible Technology (HIAT) office.

Special Education Services

MCPS IS ONE OF THE VERY FEW school districts in the nation that offer comprehensive services for students who are twice exceptional at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. While a majority of students who are twice exceptional are served in their home schools with varying degrees of supports, discrete services settings are available to provide students with instruction in strategies and skills that are impacted by their disabilities as well as the appropriate instructional adaptations and accommodations needed to access gifted instruction.

School-based Services

What school-based services might be appropriate for twice exceptional students?

For a comprehensive list and descriptions of all MCPS school-based special education services, visit the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/special-education/programs-services/age-elementary-to-secondary.aspx. Common services accessed by twice exceptional students are noted below. Contact your cluster special education supervisor or instructional specialist for more information.

Resource

Resource services are available in all MCPS schools and provide students with disabilities with the support they need to be academically successful in the general education environment.

Elementary Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD) serves students who previously received considerable amounts of special education in the general education

environment but require additional services in order to demonstrate progress toward Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives. Select elementary schools provide this service.

Secondary Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD) services are available in all secondary schools in MCPS. These services are provided in a continuum of settings that may include components of self-contained classes, co-taught general education classes, and other opportunities for participation with nondisabled peers.

Elementary Aspergers Services classes are based in comprehensive elementary school buildings. Students served by this model have a diagnosis of Aspergers Disorder. The students function in the average to high average range of intellectual ability and receive instruction on the general education curriculum, with enrichment as appropriate. Students have documented social and behavioral needs that have significantly interfered with their ability to participate in other educational environments, despite a variety of special and individualized supports. Initially, students receive their academic and social skill instruction within the Aspergers classroom, with the goal of eventually including the student for the academic classes in the general education classroom. Autism staff, in collaboration with the transdisciplinary team and a school-based counselor, integrate teaching social skills and generalization opportunities throughout the instructional day. Social-skills groups, class units, and direct individualized teaching are used to provide students with strategies for acceptable behavior. Individual and classroom motivation systems reinforce appropriate social behavior across the school day.

Secondary Aspergers Classes are based in comprehensive middle and high school buildings. Students served by this model have a diagnosis of Aspergers Disorder. The students function in the average to high average range of intellectual ability and receive instruction on the general education curriculum, with enrichment as appropriate. Students have documented social and behavioral needs that

have significantly interfered with their ability to participate in other educational environments, despite a variety of special and individualized supports. Students are included for all academic classes in the general education, with supports for their social, behavioral, and organizational needs. In addition to their academic classes, students participate in a pupil-enrichment class daily that focuses on the direct teaching of social skills.

Behavioral and Emotional Support Services are provided to students who demonstrate significant social, emotional, learning, and/or behavioral difficulties that adversely impact their success in school. Students are served in a continuum of settings that may include self-contained classes and opportunities for participation in general education classes with nondisabled peers, as appropriate.

Bridge Services are provided to students who demonstrate significant social, emotional, learning, and/or behavioral challenges that make it difficult to succeed in a large school environment. Many students require social and emotional supports in order to access their academic program. Comprehensive behavior management is used that includes proactive teaching and rehearsal of social skills, as well as the use of structured and consistent reinforcement systems.

DISCRETE GT/LD SERVICES

Gifted and Talented/Learning Disabled (GT/LD) services are provided to students who demonstrate superior cognitive ability in at least one area and typically have production problems, particularly in the area of written expression.

- GT/LD services provide students with specialized instruction, adaptations, and accommodations that facilitate appropriate access to accelerated and enriched instruction in the least restrictive environment.
- GT/LD settings provide rigorous instruction in and through the students' areas of strength, with appropriate adaptations and accommodations as well as instruction in the skills and strategies that are affected by their disability.
- Students receive their specialized instruction and support in self-contained and/or supported general education classes, typically for the core academic portions of their school day.
- An IEP meeting takes place at least once a year (or as needed) to consider whether the discrete GT/LD service model continues to be appropriate for the individual student.

Designated case managers... work with students to help them to understand their unique strengths and needs and to increasingly be able to advocate for the accommodations that will allow them access to accelerated and enriched instruction.

Elementary. Currently, Lucy V. Barnsley Elementary School serves as the location for special GT/LD classrooms.

The focus of the elementary program is to provide students with accelerated and enriched instruction across content areas, using their areas of strength, while simultaneously working to improve areas that are affected by their disabilities. Students become familiar with the accommodations that can obviate their disabilities. A multisensory approach allows students to use and recognize their strengths.

Services for individual students can vary and are determined by the student's IEP team.

Students typically spend a majority of their academic day in these special classrooms, where they are taught and supported by special education teacher(s) and paraeducator(s).

Typically, students participate with their nondisabled peers in physical education, music, art, lunch, recess, and other nonacademic school activities. As students demonstrate readiness, they access general education classes with appropriate supports and accommodations.

Secondary. Three middle schools (currently, Col. E. Brooke Lee, North Bethesda, and Roberto Clemente) and three high schools (currently, Northwood, Walter Johnson, and Watkins Mill) serve as locations for GT/LD service models for students who need special education support for a majority of their academic day.

While services for individual students can vary and are determined by the student's IEP team, a typical schedule often includes advanced general education courses in English, math, science, and social studies, with special education support provided by a co-teacher or paraeducator. Students are often scheduled into these designated general education classes as a cohort. Over time, the inclusion support may be faded as the student develops self-advocacy

and compensatory skills and as their academic achievement levels increase, as determined by the IEP team.

Many students also receive services through a GT/LD resource class that provides instruction and support in organization, use of technology, and self-advocacy. Reading intervention classes are offered as needed, based on the student's IEP.

Designated case managers communicate extensively with teachers, other school staff members, and parents. They work with students to help them understand their unique strengths and needs and to increasingly be able to advocate for the accommodations that will allow them access to accelerated and enriched instruction. Assistive technology is available throughout the day for students who require this support.

Discrete GT/LD Services: Frequently Asked Questions

What are the current locations for GT/LD services?

Discrete GT/LD services are located in the following schools. Assignments to middle and high school locations are based on the student's home address:

- Elementary School: Lucy V. Barnsley
- Middle School: Colonel E. Brooke Lee, North Bethesda, and Roberto Clemente
- High School: Northwood, Walter Johnson, and Watkins Mill

Which students are good candidates for the GT/LD service models?

THE GT/LD SERVICE MODELS SUPPORT STUDENTS WHO—

- have an educational disability that impacts the area(s) of reading, writing, and/or mathematics. Often, students also are impacted in the areas of organization/ executive functioning, self-esteem, and/or attention;
- have a pattern of strengths and weaknesses strongly consistent with that of a GT/SLD learner (see addendum);
- are intellectually gifted and demonstrate superior cognitive reasoning ability (e.g., standard score of 120 or above on the WISC- Full Scale IQ, General Ability Index, Verbal Comprehension Index, or Perceptual Reasoning Index); and

- need an educational setting that incorporates best practices for teaching GT/LD students, including access to accelerated and enriched curriculum, increased specialized instruction and support, and intervention for the learning difficulties.

Note: While services can vary and are determined by the student's IEP team, intensive behavioral or emotional supports, interventions, and services are not part of the design of the GT/LD service model.

If individual, norm-referenced cognitive or achievement assessment data is not available (e.g., in the case of students who are not SLD) for students being considered for GT/LD services, the team is strongly encouraged to convene a reevaluation planning meeting to consider whether there is adequate data to determine appropriateness of the placement. Individual cognitive data will help the IEP team to determine if the student has the intelligence to benefit from GT/LD services.

What is the process for referring a student to a GT/LD service model?

- Consult with your cluster special education supervisor or instructional specialist when considering placements outside of the local school setting. The "Protocol for Requests for Twice Exceptional Student Support" (located in the addendum) provides guidance about the placement process.
- This consultation may help to identify resources to support the student in the least restrictive environment.
- A school-based IEP team meeting will be held, as needed. The cluster special education supervisor or instructional specialist and program specialists need to be involved in this process. All available information, including information from the parents, will be reviewed in order to make a final determination regarding appropriate special education services and to determine the appropriate placement for the student.

Conclusion

THE GOAL OF EDUCATION is to provide opportunities for students to build knowledge, skills, and habits to become successful, contributing members of a global society. Gifted students with special needs are included in this promise. In fact, according to Thomas West in his book, *In the Mind's Eye*, it is these very students who have made and will make some of the most extraordinary contributions to our world. Today's twice exceptional students will be some of tomorrow's civil engineers, artists, authors, and environmentalists. Their potential is very real, but yet these students may be at risk for school failure. With appropriate supports and services, they can thrive in our schools and can astound us with their zest for learning, their creativity, and their passion. When we help them to find their path, we pave the way for a better future for us all.



Addendum

Discussion Guide for Observed Nontraditional Behaviors of Students with Gifts and Talents

The chart below (included in the elementary SIPPI manual) lists research-based observable behaviors that are traditionally not considered for identification of students with gifts and talents. These traits may be observed in gifted students from culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Traditional Characteristics of Giftedness • Observed Nontraditional Behavior (Manifestation of Giftedness/Potential)	Students Who Come to Mind
Inquisitive—Searches for significance and meaning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick to note lack of relevance in assignments, rules, etc. • May question, resist authority • Asks more provocative questions about the cause of things • Asks challenging questions that could be perceived as critical or judgmental 	
Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influences and persuades others, positively or negatively • Organizes a group in work or play to carry out a plan of action 	
Advanced, large vocabulary; verbal proficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can use words to manipulate or present double messages. • Sometimes uses words and language considered inappropriate in school settings • Talkative 	
Creative, inventive, divergent thinkers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislikes structure, routine • Dares to be different; risk taker, enjoys challenges • Questions, explores, and/or experiments verbally or nonverbally • Sees things that others do not, resourceful, sees many alternatives • Displays sophisticated humor such as puns/double meanings 	

Traditional Characteristics of Giftedness • Observed Nontraditional Behavior (Manifestation of Giftedness/Potential)	Students Who Come to Mind
Diverse Interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to take risks • May not show strengths in one area • Attention easily diverted • Intense curiosity about many things • May interrupt to pursue own interests 	
High Energy/Verve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustrated and bored by inactivity • Highly engaged during active learning and experiential learning • Physical energy 	
Heightened Sensitivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensive or stubborn • Powerful emotions • Self-centered/narrow-minded • Confronts rather than accepts inequities 	
When Specifically Discussing Current or Exited ESOL Students:	Students Who Come to Mind
Linguistically learns quickly/easily (ESOL) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to communicate in English most of the time • Demonstrates the ability to make connections with his or her prior learning • Does not rely on student translator to communicate • Creatively uses language and nonverbal aids to express ideas and make connections to conceptual knowledge • Shows the ability to transition among languages 	
Problem Solving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can solve problems in situations that are not English-dependent. (tangrams, numbers/math, classification, etc) 	

Adapted from the research of Aguirre/Hernandez 1999, Brulles/Winebrenner 2008, J. Renzulli, Reis, Siegel 2003, Donna Ford, *Handbook of Gifted Education* 2003.

Consideration of Individual Cognitive Data in the SIPPI, Rescreening, and New-Student Screening Processes

Superior range cognitive ability is one indicator considered by the SIPPI committee for the purposes of making instructional recommendations and GT identification. The school psychologist plays a critical role in ensuring that this data is appropriately considered by the committee.

1	The psychologist administers (as part of a special education or Section 504 evaluation), or considers, a cognitive assessment. Interpretation of the data concludes that the student should be considered for GT identification and for accelerated and enriched instruction.
2	The psychologist includes a written recommendation for scores to be considered by SIPPI committee (on the consideration Form 336-68 or in the psychological report).
3	The recommendation is discussed at a meeting (e.g., conference, EMT, IEP) and shared with parents.
4	The psychologist informs the school GT liaison and principal via e-mail that this student’s individual cognitive data should be considered by the SIPPI committee.
5	The GT liaison or school’s designee invites the school psychologist to attend the school SIPPI committee meeting to assist with interpretation of the data and ensures that the data is available for consideration.
6	The SIPPI committee strongly considers the individual cognitive data as they make instructional recommendations and GT identification decisions.

Protocol for Requests for Twice Exceptional Student Support

Step 1	School-based staff member contacts the special education supervisor/instructional specialist to alert him or her of the need for consultation and support related to a student who may be experiencing difficulty in his or her current program and placement.
Step 2	The special education supervisor or instructional specialist provides initial support to the team as appropriate.
Step 3	If twice exceptional consult services are necessary, the special education supervisor will review and sign the <i>Request for Twice Exceptional Support</i> form (see pp. 43-44), supporting the request for these services.
Step 4	Consult services may begin with telephone consultation initially. Site visits by the twice exceptional specialist will be conducted as warranted.
Step 5	The twice exceptional specialist will consult with school-based staff, as appropriate, to review data, discuss strategies, and make recommendations to improve the student's performance in the current program and placement. Recommended strategies and interventions must be implemented with fidelity and progress must be monitored.
Step 6	If the student fails to make progress, an IEP meeting will be held to include appropriate participation from central office to recommend appropriate supports and services. This meeting will be held once there is evidence that all strategies and interventions attempted have not been successful, based on fidelity of implementation and progress-monitoring data.

If discrete services (e.g., Aspergers, GT/LD, Bridge) outside the local school are determined by the IEP team (see Step 6) to be the least restrictive environment for the student, these steps should be followed:

Step 7	Upon completion of the IEP meeting, the student's files shall be organized in chronological order. All assessments must be current and organized accordingly and forwarded to the receiving school.
Step 8	The referring school is responsible for submitting a transportation request if needed.
Step 9	The special education supervisor, program supervisor, or instructional specialist shall immediately notify the principal and/or special education coordinator of the receiving school of the incoming student.
Step 10	An intake meeting is strongly encouraged and shall consist of the principal/designee (as deemed appropriate), parent, and special education teacher/RTSE. This meeting should take place prior to the student's enrollment in the receiving school.

Request for Twice Exceptional Student Support

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ ID #: _____

Classroom Teacher(s): _____ Grade: _____

Contact Person/Title: _____

School/Contact Phone Number: _____

Parent(s) Name/Phone number/E-mail: _____

Is/are the parent(s) aware of this request? YES NO

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Student identified GT (Grade 3 or higher)? YES NO

If yes OR no, attach a copy of the GT report from the cumulative folder or record Raven/Inview data here.

Does the student have an IEP or 504?

What is/are the student's documented disability(ies)?

Are psychological and educational evaluation reports attached on O/SS? YES NO

If no, send a copy of the psychological and/or educational assessments along with the consult request. If the student has not been assessed, please explain.

1. Reason for support request:

- Consultation to remove barriers to the student's access to accelerated and/or enriched instruction in his/her current setting
- For consideration of a Wings mentor
- For consideration of a GT/LD services placement (students with IEPs only)

2. Other/further explanation regarding the purpose of the consultation (required—identify your school's needs as specifically as possible):

3. Briefly list the student's strengths and weaknesses:

	Strengths	Needs
Academic		
Social emotional behavior		
Other		

4. What strategies/interventions have been tried and to what result?

Strategies/Interventions	Results

5. Is the child receiving components of accelerated and enriched instruction (e.g., advanced/Honors/AP courses, William and Mary, Junior Great Books, accelerated math, enrichment projects)?

YES, describe or NO, why not?

6. Does the student have any unique or significant talents, personal attributes, or areas of interest?

Principal's Signature: _____ Date: _____

If the student has an IEP, e-mail or pony to your special education supervisor (Room 230, CESC) for review and appropriate action.
If the student does not have an IEP, e-mail or pony to twice exceptional specialist (Room 177, CESC).

GT/SLD Pattern of Strengths and Weaknesses

PURPOSE: This tool was developed to support schools as they discuss concerns related to bright students. It is designed to assist teams to determine whether or not a student may be suspected GT with a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). It may help teams to discuss whether a referral for GT/LD services may be appropriate.

Student's Name: _____ ID Number: _____ Grade: _____

School: _____ School Contact Person: _____

DIRECTIONS: As a team, identify strengths and needs.

- 1) First, check for strengths. Place a *check mark* in any box in the strengths column where the area is a significant strength compared with the student's grade-level peers.
- 2) Second, check for needs. Place a *check mark* in any box in the needs column where the student's performance is significantly below expectancy given the student's strengths or if the student performs below grade level in that area.

If there are many areas checked on both sides of the chart, the child may have a pattern of strengths and weaknesses consistent with that of identified GT/SLD students.

COGNITIVE		
Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal reasoning <input type="checkbox"/> Visual spatial reasoning <input type="checkbox"/> Problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> Background knowledge and vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Making connections between events, ideas, and situations <input type="checkbox"/> Concept attainment and retention <input type="checkbox"/> Long-term, abstract memory <input type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity and imagination, generation of new or original ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Curiosity, questioning	<input type="checkbox"/> Processing speed <input type="checkbox"/> Memory (rote or short-term) <input type="checkbox"/> Executive functioning/mental organization <input type="checkbox"/> Working memory <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory processing <input type="checkbox"/> Visual-spatial perception <input type="checkbox"/> Sequential processing <input type="checkbox"/> Visual-motor integration <input type="checkbox"/> Distractible or hyperactive	
Verbal reasoning is a common characteristic of a GT/SLD student. Generally, GT/SLD students are driven to learn about key areas of interest. While they may have difficulty organizing their thinking, they tend to be able to make good connections and have strong problem-solving capabilities. If weaknesses in rote memory and organization are compensated for, these strengths generally flourish.		

WRITTEN EXPRESSION		
Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Creative ideas, originality <input type="checkbox"/> May have a strong voice <input type="checkbox"/> Word choice, vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Grasp of concepts, ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Background knowledge, information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Translating ideas on to paper <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty “getting started” <input type="checkbox"/> Organization/sequencing of ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Elaboration, providing adequate support/detail (minimal output) <input type="checkbox"/> Conventions/mechanics <input type="checkbox"/> Spelling <input type="checkbox"/> Poor handwriting <input type="checkbox"/> Slow writing speed/fluency <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal production 	
<p>Many times, strengths noted above are only evident verbally through their oral expression (until they learn compensatory strategies) as, most often, their weaknesses impact their ability to get their thoughts out on paper. When the students read back or discuss their writing, they may verbally elaborate and add unlimited description and detail. Some students have great difficulty with the mechanics of writing but can put their thoughts on paper. Others have more difficulty figuring out how to filter through all their ideas and narrowing their focus. Others have difficulty generating/organizing ideas and getting started. Some students have all of these challenges.</p>		

READING		
Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Listening comprehension (deeper meaning, making connections, inferential thinking, insights) <input type="checkbox"/> Using high-level vocabulary and sharing vast background knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Applying shared inquiry (high-level discussion and questioning) <input type="checkbox"/> Grasping themes and getting the main idea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Phonemic awareness and decoding (phonics) <input type="checkbox"/> Oral reading fluency (pace and smoothness) <input type="checkbox"/> Memory, recalling accurate/adequate details <input type="checkbox"/> Written responses 	
<p>Most GT/SLD students have excellent reading-comprehension skills. However, if reading is impacted, the most common areas of need are in decoding and fluency. Students with limited decoding skills often have short-term memory and sequencing difficulties. These weaknesses can impact a student’s comprehension of independently read text. If the written component is removed from the comprehension task, often the GT/SLD responses are advanced for his/her age.</p>		

MATH		
Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Strong grasp of concepts <input type="checkbox"/> Reasoning, problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> Thinking logically and symbolically at high levels <input type="checkbox"/> Coming up with new or alternative solutions to problems <input type="checkbox"/> Relating math concepts to novel situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Computation (particularly long division, multi-digit multiplication, working with fractions) <input type="checkbox"/> Retaining and recalling math facts automatically and quickly <input type="checkbox"/> Processing information sequentially (following algorithms, showing your work, explaining how you got your answer) 	
<p>Many GT/SLD students are strong mathematical thinkers and grasp taught concepts quickly. Typical areas of weakness include calculations, basic facts, and showing work. In contrast, the GT/SLD student may be very strong in verbal skills, but have a clear weakness for number sense and visual spatial skills. This student finds math challenging, while having a stronger set of reading skills.</p>		

EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE		
Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Creative and unique ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Verbally fluent <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary <input type="checkbox"/> Articulate, “adult-like” discussions	<input type="checkbox"/> Word retrieval <input type="checkbox"/> Organization and sequencing of ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Staying on topic <input type="checkbox"/> Pragmatic language	
<p>Most GT/SLD students have excellent expressive language skills and are described as highly verbal and articulate. Some students may have difficulties with word retrieval and will talk around an idea. Some students may know what they want to say but start and stop or sequence their ideas inappropriately.</p>		

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE		
Strengths	Needs	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning through listening <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding spoken language	<input type="checkbox"/> Following directions <input type="checkbox"/> Identifying salient points	
<p>Most GT/SLD students have strong receptive language ability and learn well by listening to the teachers and others. However, they often have difficulty following directions that are presented orally or identifying what is important. Attention difficulties may impact a student’s listening comprehension, despite strong receptive language ability.</p>		

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL	
CHARACTERISTICS	Comments/Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Low self-esteem related to school competence <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious about school performance <input type="checkbox"/> Task avoidant (limited to areas of difficulty)	
<p>While social emotional difficulty is not a primary characteristic of a learning disability, many GT/SLD students (whose strengths and needs are not recognized or addressed) may struggle with poor self-esteem, anxiety about school-related tasks, and frustration. They may avoid tasks that they are incapable of doing well (reading, writing) but remain engaged during instruction that is strength-based (discussion, hands-on). Pervasive behavioral or emotional issues are not typical for GT/SLD students, and will often dissipate when/if the disability and the gifts are recognized and addressed.</p>	

Findings:

- The child has a pattern of strengths and weaknesses that is strongly consistent with that of a GT/SLD student.
- The child has a pattern of strengths and weaknesses that is somewhat consistent with that of a GT/SLD student.
- The child has a pattern of strengths and weaknesses that is not consistent with that of a GT/SLD student.

Resources

Where can I find MCPS resources regarding twice exceptional students and services?

Most resources are available on the MCPS AEI website:

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/gtld/

- The *Twice Exceptional Students* documents (guidebook and parent guide)
- A one-hour webcast titled “Recognizing GT/LD Students”
- Information about the Wings Mentor Program for GT/LD students
- Information about consultation to support twice exceptional students in your building
- Information about GT/LD services
- Characteristics checklists to assist in recognition of these unique students
- Information for parents

What are some other helpful web resources?

- Bookshare. <https://www.bookshare.org/>
- Center for Talented Youth, Johns Hopkins University. www.jhu.edu/~gifted
- Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction, MCPS. www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/
- Gifted and Talented Association of Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc. www.gtamc.org/
- GTLD Network: Advocacy, Education, and Resources for Bright Struggling Students. www.gtldnet.org/
- Hoagies’ Gifted Education. www.hoagiesgifted.org
- Learning Ally. www.learningally.org/
- The Maryland Coalition for Gifted and Talented Education. www.mcgate.org/MCGATE/Welcome.html
- Montgomery County Public Libraries: Services for People with Disabilities. montgomerycountymd.libguides.com/disabilityservices
- National Association for Gifted Children. www.nagc.org
- Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities. www.smartkidswithld.org

- *Twice Exceptional Newsletter*. www.2enewsletter.com/
- Uniquely Gifted. www.uniquelygifted.org

What are some helpful text resources?

- *101 School Success Tools for Smart Kids with Learning Difficulties*. (Shevitz et al., 2011)
- *Creating Effective Programs for Gifted Students with Learning Disabilities*. (Rowe et al., 2013)
- *Different Minds: Gifted Children with AD/HD, Aspergers Syndrome, and Other Learning Deficits*. (Lovecky, 2004)
- *Distinguishing Characteristics of Gifted Students with Disabilities*. (Friedrichs, 2001)
- *How the Gifted Brain Learns*. (Sousa, 2009)
- *It’s So Much Work to Be Your Friend: Helping the Child with Learning Disabilities Find Social Success*. (Lavoie, 2006)
- *Late, Lost, and Unprepared: A Parents’ Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning* (Cooper-Kahn & Dietzel, 2008)
- *RTI for the Gifted Student*. (Boswell and Carlile, 2010)
- *Smart but Scattered*. (Dawson and Guare, 2009)
- *Smart but Scattered Teens*. (Dawson and Guare, 2013)
- *To Be Gifted and Learning Disabled: Strategies for Helping Bright Students with LD, ADHD, and More*. (Baum and Owen, 2004)
- *Twice-Exceptional Gifted Children: Understanding, Teaching, and Counseling Gifted Students*. (Trail, 2011)
- *Uniquely Gifted: Identifying and Meeting the Needs of the Twice-Exceptional Student*. (Edited by Kay, 2000)
- *Unstuck and on Target!: An Executive Function Curriculum to Improve Flexibility for Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders, Research Edition*. (Cannon, 2011)
- *Upside-Down Brilliance: The Visual-Spatial Learner*. (Silverman, 2002)

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