



Gifted & Advanced Learning 101 Woodhome EMS



What Does It Mean to Be Gifted?



Gifted students may be defined as: those who have ability that exceeds grade-or age level expectations by two years or more.

Baltimore City's vision is to provide all gifted students, including twice exceptional populations, with advanced content, curricula, and activities not ordinarily found in the classroom in order to fully develop their potential.

- * That is why differentiation in the heterogeneous classroom is essential.

Learning & Behavioral Characteristics of Gifted Students



Gifted students might:

- Learn at a much earlier age than their age peers and make much more rapid progress in certain areas of learning
- Have advanced vocabularies and verbal abilities for their age level
- Have outstanding memories, possess lots of information, and be able to process it in sophisticated ways.
- Perceive subtle cause-and-effect relationships, and see patterns, relationships, and connections that others do not see
- See better ways for doing things and suggest them to others, not always in positive or appreciated ways



Characteristics continued...

- Make intuitive leaps toward understanding without being able to, or caring to, explain how they got there
- Be very intense and extremely emotional and excitable
- Have difficulty making transitions and be reluctant to move from one subject to another
- Prefer to work alone
- Have a sophisticated sense of humor that can be inappropriate at times



Characteristics continued...



- Become frustrated with the pace of the class and what they perceive as stagnant or mundane process
- Resist taking directions or orders
- Be bossy with peers and teachers
- Monopolize class discussions
- Resist doing schoolwork or homework, or work in a sloppy, careless manner
- Ask embarrassing questions and demand good reasons for why things are done a certain way
- React in a super-sensitive way to any form of criticism or cry easily



Myths Versus Truths



- Myth: Gifted children will do fine on their own
- Truth: Gifted children cannot teach themselves

Think about Michael Phelps. No one ever said to him “you will be a naturally great swimmer; you can do it on your own.” No, people provided him with coaches, extra time in the pool and high-tech swimwear; all in order to make him the great Olympic Athlete we know him to be today. It’s the same with gifted learners; they will not be fine on their own.



Myths/Truths continued...



- Myth: All children are gifted
- Truth: All children have strengths and positive attributes but are not all gifted in the academic sense of the word. Gifted identification does not mean good or better. Gifted is a term that allows students to be identified for services that meet their unique needs, similar to students with disabilities.



Myths/Truths continued...



- Myth: Gifted education programs are elitist
- Truth: Gifted education programs help all high ability students. When people think about gifted education programs, they typically think about suburban, upper-middle class school systems. The truth is gifted learners are found in all cultures, ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic groups. This is especially true in Baltimore City. It is important that we have the right identification tools to find these students.



Myths/Truths continued...



- Myth: Gifted students are happy, popular, and well adjusted
- Truth: School can be a negative experience for some gifted students. This is not the case for all gifted students but some gifted students are labeled as the nerd or the know-it-all or they might have unique interests that their fellow classmates cannot relate to which often leaves them isolated and alone.



Myths/Truths continued...



- Myth: A child receiving special education services cannot also be gifted
- Truth: Having strengths in one area does not preclude the need for support in another. A student with a learning disability who is also identified as a gifted learner is known as a twice exceptional student. Many times these students go undetected in the classroom because the disability and the gifted ability offset each other.



Maryland Mandates for Gifted Students



- A process must be in place for identifying gifted students
- Identification is left up to the District
- In Baltimore City, gifted learner services are determined by the school, but the District provides supports, curriculum materials and professional development.



Mandates continued...



- Even though different districts and states have different measures by which they identify gifted students, there are some common elements across the country:
 - 1) Above average cognitive ability, usually 90% or higher
 - 2) A potential for high academic achievement
 - 3) Creativity



Baltimore City GAL Identification Process



- There are currently eleven program schools in the Baltimore City GAL cohort
- Program schools test all kindergarten students and students in grades K-5 that are new to the District
- Those students take the Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Assessment (NNAT2)
- Any student who scores in the 75th percentile or higher takes assessment #2- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
- Students scoring in the 80-89th percentile are identified as advanced learners
- Students scoring in the 90-99th percentile are identified as gifted learners and will receive Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)



Gifted Learner Services at Woodhome EMS



- Gifted learner services are provided within the heterogeneous classroom through like-ability small groups
- Students identified as gifted learners receive Individual Learning Plans that provides accommodations needed for academic, social and emotional success
- At Woodhome, teachers are continually attending profession developments to enrich implementation of the gifted and talented curriculum



GAL at Woodhome EMS continued...

- If a student is not formally identified by Baltimore City, that does not mean they will never have the opportunity to receive GAL services
- Woodhome EMS uses many other data points as well as teacher recommendations when determining what a student may need
- Ability groups are fluid and flexible



GAL Education Techniques Benefit ALL Students



By:

- Using authentic resources
- Focusing on problem solving and inquiry
- Enabling interaction of content components
- Encouraging student choice
- Linking content to student interest



The Schoolwide Enrichment Model



- Woodhome offers several afterschool enrichment programs to students of all grade levels
 - VEX IQ robotics
 - LEGO robotics
 - NAL
 - Debate
 - Green Team
 - Student Government



The Schoolwide Enrichment Model



- Woodhome offers Honors classes for grades 7 and 8 using Springboard curriculum
 - ELA
 - Math
 - National History Day



Contact Information



- Shontel Douglas, Woodhome EMS Principal
sdouglas01@bcps.k12.md.us
- Koren Lawson, GAL Contact, Woodhome EMS
ksstukes@bcps.k12.md.us
- Dennis Jutras, GAL Coordinator, Baltimore City Public Schools
djutras@bcps.k12.md.us
- Rae Lymer, GAL Specialist, Baltimore City public Schools
rslymer@bcps.k12.md.us