



Queen Creek Unified School District

Gifted and Talented Parent Handbook

Additional information can be obtained from your elementary, middle, or high school's Gifted and Talented Specialist

Visit our district website at www.qcusd.org

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Introduction

This handbook is provided for parents as a resource guide for ELP education in the Queen Creek Unified Schools District. It provides an overview of our program including goals and objectives, procedures for placement, and an outline of our curriculum. There are also suggested resources for students and parents.

District Mission

As an innovative, national leader in education, Queen Creek Unified School District inspires and empowers each student to achieve excellence in all pursuits, embrace social and individual responsibility and lead with integrity. This is achieved through a challenging and comprehensive curriculum provided by distinguished professional in partnership with our families and community.

ELP Mission

Within a climate of high expectations for all, we will ensure gifted student growth and achievement through systems of academic and affective support and through programming and advocacy. Whether it is in the area of a specific academic talent, cognitive ability, or leadership, the Queen Creek District is committed to providing time and resources to ensure that students maximize their potential.

What does “gifted” mean?

The state of Arizona provides the following definition of gifted students:

“Gifted pupil” means a child who is of lawful school age, who due to superior intellect or advanced learning ability, or both, is not afforded an opportunity for otherwise attainable progress and development in regular classroom instruction and who needs appropriate gifted education services to achieve at levels commensurate with his intellect and ability.” (A.R.S. 15-779).

Gifted and talented students are capable of high performance or exceptional outcomes by any combination of the following abilities:

- General cognitive ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership and interpersonal abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, spatial or musical abilities

Gifted children span all cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Additionally these students may exhibit both gifts and disabilities.

Goals and Objectives

Although each gifted student is unique, gifted students do have some characteristics in common. They usually are swift and efficient learners, may make intuitive leaps, quickly sense patterns in information, ask themselves questions about perceived patterns in order to understand them, analyze relationships, and form connections among stored concepts and related bits of new information to modify their existing knowledge base. In their area of interest, they are able to construct clear mental maps that organize concepts efficiently; they are able to think flexibly about new possibilities, and they thrive on questions and problems that have a wide range of possible answers instead of those that have one correct answer.

We believe that gifted and talented students need support and encouragement from family, school, and the community to achieve full development of their potential. Programming ultimately seeks development of the whole child so that gifted students become successful adults demonstrating self-esteem, self-efficacy and creative productivity.

Therefore, it is our intention that gifted and talented students will:

- Perform at advanced and distinguished levels in their strength area
- Acquire autonomous learning skills in order to become independent, lifelong learners
- Develop creative problem solving and questioning
- Presentation skills that can be applied to solving authentic problems in any field.

More information is on the following link: [NAGC Pre-K to Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards](#)

Program Overview

K-5 students identified as gifted are serviced at their sites. For students that are identified in K-1, Gifted Teachers are provided with professional development in gifted education, and facilitate with the planning and implementation of curriculum and instruction through regularly scheduled Gifted Teacher Professional Learning Committee meetings. Additionally, Gifted Teachers work with mainstream classroom teachers to help differentiate curriculum for gifted learners.

Program features:

- Emphasis on 21st Century Skills: Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking
- Curriculum compacting
- Integrated technology
- Core content
- Enrichment
- Project Based Learning
- Logic puzzles and Riddles

Curriculum Outline

21st Century Skills

- Critical thinking
- Collaboration
- Creativity
- Communication

Gifted and Talented Modules		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presents a challenge, offers an opportunity, or represents a troubling concern. ● Creative problem solving means devising ways to answer, to meet, or to satisfy a situation by changing self or situation. ● Divergent Thinking: Generating lots of options ● Convergent Thinking: Evaluating options, making decisions 		
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Science Technology</u> <u>Engineering Math</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chemical Engineering ● Aerospace Engineering ● Green Engineering ● Mechanical Engineering 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Public Speaking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speech Composition ● Speech and Debate ● Mock Trials 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>College and Career Readiness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● College Pathway ● Career Pathway ● Small Business Simulation
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Four Components of Creative Thinking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fluency ● Flexibility ● Originality ● Elaboration 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Project Based Learning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Interest Independent Study ● Genius Hour ● Passion Project ● Orbital Study ● Honor Math Projects 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Field Trips (3rd-5th)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● University Tours ● Career Exploration ● Geological Landmarks ● Oceanography

Subject to change: grade clustering, school calendar, standardized testing

Common Characteristics of Gifted Children

Because gifted children are so diverse, not all exhibit all characteristics all of the time. However, there are common characteristics that many gifted individuals share:

- Unusual alertness, even in infancy
- Rapid learner; puts thoughts together quickly
- Excellent memory
- Unusually large vocabulary and complex sentence structure for age
- Advanced comprehension of word nuances, metaphors and abstract ideas
- Enjoys solving problems, especially with numbers and puzzles
- Often self-taught reading and writing skills as preschooler
- Deep, intense feelings and reactions
- Highly sensitive
- Thinking is abstract, complex, logical, and insightful
- Idealism and sense of justice at early age
- Concern with social and political issues and injustices
- Longer attention span and intense concentration
- Preoccupied with own thoughts—daydreamer
- Learn basic skills quickly and with little practice
- Asks probing questions
- Wide range of interests (or extreme focus in one area)
- Highly developed curiosity
- Interest in experimenting and doing things differently
- Puts idea or things together that are not typical
- Keen and/or unusual sense of humor
- Desire to organize people/things through games or complex schemas
- Vivid imaginations (and imaginary playmates when in preschool)

More information is on the following link:

[Click here to visit National Association for Gifted Children website](#)

Social and Emotional Needs

In addition to a student's scholastic growth, it is important to recognize the need for social and emotional development. The success of an individual is not guaranteed because of gifted abilities. Social and emotional intelligence facets of an individual impact ones personality, ambition, and social interaction. These are keystone components of an individual's success.

All children need to be loved, nurtured, kept safe, given attention and affection and taught how to interact with other people. Gifted and talented children are no exception. As parents, it is our privilege and responsibility to do our best to provide these things for our children. It is particularly important to remember to always see your child as a child first and gifted and talented second.

High cognitive levels do not translate to high levels of emotional cognitive intelligence. Social and emotional intelligence is a general concept that is difficult to articulate in terms of attributes and potential measurement. Since a great deal of information is widely available online about the social and emotional needs and development of gifted children and adolescents, you are directed to some of the sites here and in the Supporting Your Child section of this Handbook.

[Click here to visit Prufrock's website for books and resources](#)

[Click here to visit the Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted website for resources](#)

[Click here to visit Hoagies Gifted Education page](#)

Identification

The Queen Creek District identification process is aligned with state guidelines for identifying students eligible for gifted education and advanced learning services. These guidelines support the approach of looking at a variety of information for each student based on a “Body of Evidence.” This evidence will determine if a student needs programming beyond that offered in the regular classroom or curriculum. Gifted students usually fall within the top 3-7% of the general student population in terms of potential abilities.

Who is tested?

While students can be identified as early as kindergarten, it is highly recommended that initial testing for gifted is done in second grade. Primary students often find the assessment daunting as they are not acclimated to standardized testing. Also, please keep in mind, primary grades are when core foundational and social skills are developed. These skills ensure a student’s future academic success. Second through fifth grade students can be tested during one of the three testing windows.

Testing Information

The Queen Creek Unified District utilizes the CogAT 7 Online Assessment to identify gifted students. Students can be tested once per calendar year. Referrals can be made by either the student’s teacher or parent. This assessment evaluates a student’s verbal, quantitative, and spatial non-verbal problem solving skills. Students that have IEPs or 504 will be given their testing accommodations.

The CogAT is not like other standardized tests (the AZMerit for example) in that it does not measure achievement or acquired knowledge. What it does measure is a student’s ability to reason with words, numbers, and visual data, i.e., cognitive ability. All children develop useful cognitive skills, but some children develop these at significantly accelerated rates. By identifying these students, it is the belief of the Queen Creek Unified School District that we will be able to more effectively meet their academic needs by offering enhanced learning experiences.

The scores listed above are grade/age **percentile** scores. This is not the same as percentage scores. For example, a score of 68 % means that the student performed better than 68 out of 100 students for his or her grade level in the nation. This is the **percentile** score. It does not mean that the student answered 68% of the questions correctly, which would be the percentage score. **Currently, the Enhanced Learning Program in Queen Creek is offered to students scoring in the 97th percentile and above in any one of the three areas.** These scores simply give us more information about how your student learns, which will help us in our efforts to design and implement useful instruction. It is also important to note that while levels of cognitive

development may be a factor in predicting academic success, it is certainly not the only factor. Your child's ultimate success as a student will be the result of many influences and many learning experiences.

Testing Dates

Testing Window 1: Fall

Testing Window 2: Winter

Testing Window 3: Spring

K – 5 Parent Request Gifted Testing

Queen Creek Unified School District

K – 5 Parent Request Gifted Testing Referral

Name: _____ D.O.B. _____ Grade: _____ Teacher: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Compared to other children your child's age, to what degree do these descriptors fit your child?

Characteristic	Always	Often	Uncertain	Rarely	Never
Has extensive vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talked early	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learned to read before formal schooling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a long attention span	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learns rapidly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has an exceptional memory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reasons well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is extremely curious- always asks why?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thinks of unconventional solutions to problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses building material in unique and functional ways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognizes and describes patterns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Understand the magnitude of numbers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manipulates numbers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Perfectionist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reacts intensively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is extremely emotional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morally sensitive –insists on fairness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Previous CoGat/Olsat Testing: Yes No Date Tested: _____ Grade: _____

Scores: Verbal _____ Quantitative _____ Nonverbal _____

Qualifies for testing Does not qualify for testing

Administrator's Signature _____ Date _____

By signing below you are giving Queen Creek Unified Schools permission to assess your child using the Cogat 7 online assessment.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this form to your child's teacher by _____ for the next testing window.

The Differences between Types of Learners

Students have a wide variety of strengths and skills. This comparison demonstrated the differences between high achieving and gifted learners. Additionally, it compares how creativity influences a student's learning. These columns are not mutually exclusive. Students will typically identify with multiple traits throughout the table. When deciding whether or not to have your student assessed for the gifted program, examine the table to see if your child can relate to many of the "gifted learned" attributes.

A High Achieving...	A Gifted Learner...	A Creative Thinker...
Remembers the answer.	Poses unforeseen questions.	Sees exceptions.
Is attentive.	Is curious.	Wonders.
Generates advanced ideas.	Generates complex, abstract ideas.	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed.
Works hard to achieve.	Knows without working hard.	Plays with ideas and concepts.
Answer the questions in detail.	Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives.	Injects new possibilities.
Performs at the top of the group.	Performs beyond their peers	Is in own group
Needs 6 to 8 repetitions to master.	Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master.	Questions the need for mastery.
Comprehends at a high level.	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas.	Overflows with ideas--many of which will never be developed.
Grasps the meaning.	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments.	Initiates more projects that will ever be completed.
Absorbs information.	Manipulates information.	Improvises.
Memorizes well.	Guesses and infers well.	Creates and brainstorms well.
Understands new concepts	Relates new concepts to other learning	Want to add unrelated ideas to concepts

Is pleased with own learning.	Is self-critical.	Is never finished with possibilities.
Gets A's.	May not be motivated by grades.	May not be motivated by grades.
Is accurate and complete.	Finds original and complex ways to answer.	Is original and continually developing.

Source

Adapted from: Kingore, B. (Spring, 2004) High Achiever, Gifted Learner, Creative Learner. Understanding Our Gifted.

Supporting your Gifted Child

Reading List: Here is a list of books for conversation starters with your child. We do not promote, endorse, or preview all books. We are providing these only as a starting point for helping select books for your gifted reader.

Genre	Book Title	Author
Realistic Fiction	The Secret Garden	F.H. Burnett
Realistic Fiction	View from Saturday g	E.L. Konigsburg
Realistic Fiction	The Great Brain	JD Fitzgerald
Fantasy	The Borrowers	Mary Morton
Fantasy	The Time Warp Trio Series	John Scieszka
Fantasy	The Lightning Thief	Rick Riordan
Science Fiction	A Wrinkle in Time	M. L'Engle
Adventure	Pippi Longstocking	Astrin Lundgren
Adventure	My Side of the Mountain	J. C. George
Historical Fiction	Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry	M. Taylor
Fantasy	Eragon series	Christopher Paolini
Science Fiction	Ender's Game and series	Orson Scott Card

More information is on the following link:

[American Library Association – Best Books for Young Adults](#)

[Children's Literature Classics](#)

[GT-World Reading Lists](#)

[Hoagies' Gifted: Reading List](#)

[Newbery Medal Winners, 1922 – Present](#)

Gifted Games:

Board Games	Online Apps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IQ-Blox ● Ozobot ● The Reel Script ● Rush Hour Shift ● Crowded Waters ● The Reel Script ● SmartMax Tripod ● Stinky Pig ● Worry Eaters ● Yowza! ● Kanoodle Extreme ● SET Game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creative Genius on the Go ● Chicktionary Lite ● Code Academy: Hour of Code ● Khan Academy ● Pixelogic Daily

Parent Resources:

- Books:
 - [Coping for Capable Kids.](#) Cohen, L.M., Frydenburg, E. Prufrock Press (1996)
 - [Enhancing Creativity of Gifted Children.](#) Khatena, J. Hampton Press, Inc. (2000)
 - [Fighting Invisible Tigers: A Stress Management Guide For Teens.](#) Hipp, E. Free Spirit Publishing (1995)
 - [Gifted Children: Myths and Realities.](#) Winner, E. Harper Collins (1997)
 - [Gifted Kids Speak Out: Hundreds Of Kids Ages 6-13 Talk About School, Friends, Their Families, And The Future.](#) Delisle, J. Free Spirit Publishing (1987)
 - [The Gifted Kids Survival Guide: A Teen Handbook.](#) Delisle, J., Galbraith, J. & Espeland, P. Free Spirit Publishing (1996)
 - [The Gifted Kids' Survival Guide for Ages 10 & Under.](#) Galbraith, J. Free Spirit Publishing (1998)
 - [Helping Gifted Children Soar: A Practical Guide for Parents and Teachers.](#) Strip, C.A., Hirsch, G. Great Potential Press (2000)
 - [On the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Children.](#) Cross, T. Prufrock Press (2000)
 - [Perfectionism: What's Bad About Being Too Good?](#) Adderholdt-Elliott, M and Goldberg J. Free Spirit Publishing Inc. (1999)
 - [Raising Champions: A Parent's Guide for Nurturing Their Gifted Children.](#)

- Sayler, M. *Texas Association for the Gifted* (1997)
- [Smart Boys: Talent, Manhood, and the Search for Meaning.](#) Kerr, B. A. & Cohn, S. Great Potential Press (2002)
 - [Smart Girls: A New Psychology of Girls, Women and Giftedness.](#) Kerr, B. A. Great Potential Press (1997)
 - [The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children: What Do We Know?](#) Neihart, M., Reis, S. M., Robinson, N. M., & Moon, S. M. (Eds.) Prufrock Press (2002)
 - [The Survival Guide for Parents of Gifted Kids: How to Understand, Live With, and Stick Up for Your Gifted Child.](#) Walker, S. Free Spirit Publishing Inc. (2002)
 - [They Say My Kid's Gifted: Now What?](#) Olenchak, F. R. National Association for Gifted Children (1996)
 - [When Gifted Kids Don't Have All the Answers.](#) DeLisle, J. and Galbraith, J. Free Spirit Publishing (2002)
 - [You Know Your Child is Gifted When....](#) Galbraith, J. Free Spirit Publishing (2000)

Websites

- National Not sure about which to choose, and the order
 - [AEGUS - Association for the Education of Gifted Underachieving Students](#)
 - [Davidson Institute for the Profoundly Gifted](#)
 - [Families of the Talented and Gifted](#)
 - [Gifted Development Center](#)
 - [GT World: A Meeting Place for Families of the Gifted and Talented](#)
 - [Hoagies' Gifted Education Page](#)
 - [Hollingsworth Center for Highly Gifted Children](#)
 - [Mensa International](#)
 - [National Association for Gifted Children](#)
 - [National Foundation for Gifted and Creative Children](#)
 - [National Research Center on Gifted and Talented](#)
 - [SENG - Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted](#)
 - [Support Site for Gifted and Talented Youth in Arizona](#)
 - [World Council for Gifted and Talented Children](#)
- Regional and State did I get them all?
 - [Arizona Department of Education-Gifted Education](#)
 - [Arizona Association for the Gifted and Talented](#)
 -
 - [California Association for the Gifted](#)

- [New Mexico association for the gifted](#)
- [Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented](#)
- [Utah Association for Gifted Children](#)
- [Oklahoma Association for the Gifted, Creative, & Talented](#)
- [Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented](#)