

The Learning For All Model and Gifted Students

The Penn-Trafford curriculum is driven by the PA Standards. The Penn-Trafford School District uses a “Learning For All” approach to meet the individual needs of all students. This approach is implemented throughout the regular education, special education, and gifted education programs.

LFA utilizes the resources of data collection and a collaborative instructional team approach to meet individual student needs. Through this approach, data is used to determine specific student needs and strengths. The data is then used to make instructional and program decisions in order to provide a child with the appropriate resources that he or she may need to be successful.

Through LFA, schools do not design schedules and then “plug” students into the “school’s” schedule. Instead, principals (along with appropriate team members) examine data, look at student needs, and then develop student schedules around each student’s needs. This process supports an individualized approach to educating all of our students and it affords students with the opportunity to receive support through academic resources and staff resources who can then be utilized to support a child’s unique needs.

While ALL students in the Penn-Trafford School District are expected to be exposed to a challenging and rigorous curriculum, sometimes students need additional enrichment in a particular skill, concept, or subject area in an effort to meet their individual academic needs. **Enrichment** is the application of mastered skills and concepts to the higher levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy in an effort to provide a child with experiences that assist him with applying mastered skills and concepts to real life circumstances and/or creative or new situations.

Through the LFA program, teachers work as members of a team to support students and to support each other in their ability to meet student enrichment needs. When students qualify for the gifted program, under Chapter 16 regulations, individualized GIEPs (Gifted Individualized Educational Programs) are written to support the needs of these students.

SERVICES FOR SCHOOL AGE EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

The Penn-Trafford School District provides a free, appropriate public education to exceptional students according to state and federal mandates and local policy. To be eligible, the child must be of school-age, need specially designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for mentally gifted and/or one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities as set forth in the Pennsylvania State Standards: autism/pervasive developmental disorder, blindness/visual impairment, deafness, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multihandicap, neurological impairment, physical disability, serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, and speech/language impairment. Services designed to meet the needs of eligible students include the annual development of an individualized education program (IEP), biennial Education Reevaluation (ER),

supportive intervention in the regular class, supplemental intervention in the regular class or in a special education resource program, placement in a part-time or full-time special education class in a regular school or placement in a full-time special education class outside of the regular school, or the development of a GIEP. The extent of special education services and the location for the delivery of such services are determined by the parents and staff at the IEP/GIEP team meeting and is based on the student's identified needs and abilities, chronological age, and the intensity of the intervention. Parents are an integral part of the IEP/GIEP Team and are encouraged to be physically present at the IEP/GIEP meeting. The district will make every effort to ensure parent participation including notice in writing and documented phone calls. Prior to the initiation of services, parents are presented a "Notice of Recommended Educational Placement" (NOREP) with which they may agree or disagree. If parents disagree with the program being recommended, they have the right to request a pre-hearing conference, mediation, and/or a due process hearing.

Definition of Gifted Terms

Gifted: In Pennsylvania mentally gifted is defined as "...outstanding intellectual and creative ability the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the regular education program." (22Pa. Code 16.1)

Gifted Student: A gifted student is "exceptional under section 1371 of the School code (24 P. S. 13-1371) because the student meets the definition of "mentally gifted" in this section, and needs specially designed instruction beyond that required in Chapter 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment)."

GIEP Team Members: The GIEP team consists of a regular education teacher, gifted education teacher, principal, and any other appropriate support staff.

Gifted Identification / Screening Process

If a parent or teacher believes that a student would qualify for and benefit from the gifted program the screening process begins. A letter should be sent to the building principal or the district administrative office requesting that an evaluation occur.

Once the letter is received, the student will be evaluated by the district psychologist using a "Gifted Eligibility Matrix". The following items will be used to determine the student's eligibility to the program:

Level 1 Assessment Screening:

- Grade Point Average
- Reading and Math National Achievement Scores
- Group IQ Test (= to or + 130)
- Rate of Acquisition and Retention Assessments

Level 2 Assessment Screening:

- GES Scores (Intellectual, Creativity/Arts, Academic, Leadership)

- Parent Rating Scale

Level 3 Assessment

- Individual Cognitive/Intelligence Testing (130)

Gifted Student Program – GIEP Development

Once the psychologist has completed the formal assessment and indicates that a child is eligible for a GIEP, the GIEP team will meet to develop an individualized program for the child following the district's Learning For All Model and 22 PA. CODE CH 16 Special Education for Gifted Students regulations.

Enrichment, Compacting, Advancement and Acceleration Opportunities Available to Eligible Students

Enrichment Opportunities:

Preface:

The Penn-Trafford curriculum is driven by the PA Standards. While ALL students in the Penn-Trafford School District are expected to be exposed to a challenging and rigorous curriculum, sometimes students need additional enrichment in a particular skill, concept, or subject area in an effort to meet their individual academic needs. The District's "Learning for All" program is meant to meet the needs of ALL students.

Definition of Enrichment:

- **Enrichment** is the application of mastered skills and concepts to the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in an effort to provide a child with experiences that assist him with applying mastered skills and concepts to real life circumstances and/or creative or new situations.

Teacher Guidelines For Determination of Enrichment Needs:

To determine when a student is in need of **ENRICHMENT**, teachers will use the following guidelines:

- Pretest in Content Area Skill or Concept – Mastery of at least 94% of the skills and concepts being presented to the class at the beginning of a new chapter.
- Pattern of "Advanced" scores on PSSA assessment in the specific content area
- Pattern of 93rd percentile or higher on Tera Nova Test
- Teacher observation of need - based on class participation and past testing history
- Child displays behaviors that indicate a level of learning independence as observed by staff members who regularly work with the child - (These behaviors can be displayed through one or more of the following: initiates higher level questions, explores additional information about topics on his or her own, enjoys sharing knowledge with peers and class, analyzes taught skills and concepts and applies what he or she has learned to new situations)

Note: The **Pretest score** and the **Classroom Teacher's observation** of need will have the strongest weight on determining a student's need for enrichment.

Compacting Opportunities:

Preface:

The Penn-Trafford School District curriculum is driven by the PA standards. While ALL students in the Penn-Trafford School District are expected to be exposed to a challenging and rigorous curriculum, sometimes students need alternative strategies in a particular skill, concept, or subject area in an effort to meet their individual academic needs. The District's "Learning for All" program is meant to meet the needs of ALL students.

Definition of Compacting:

- **Compacting** the curriculum for a student requires that the teacher identify skills within the curriculum that can be accelerated or eliminated for that particular child, through the use of a preassessment tool. **Specifically, compacting provides for lateral enrichment, related to the PA state standards. Compacting provides the student with opportunities to immerse into that particular state standard at a higher level of depth, breath, and content than is typically afforded in the regular curriculum. Compacting is NOT completing the textbook at a faster pace.**

Guidelines for Determining Compacting needs:

- While all teachers have the ability to pretest students before introducing new skills and concepts as they relate to the state standards, those students who have demonstrated mastery of those skills and concepts through the use of a pretest (94%) can be afforded the opportunity to have their curriculum compacted so as to afford those students with additional time to partake in enrichment opportunities. (Note: If a teacher finds that a child is consistently being provided with compacting opportunities in order to meet their needs, consideration for subject acceleration should be recommended by the teacher.)

Compacting Implementation:

- Classroom teachers who are in need of resources in an effort to provide compacting opportunities for students should refer to the gifted education teacher for ideas and compacting recommendations.

Early Admissions Process

- All students are eligible for kindergarten if they reach the age of 5 on or before September 1st of the kindergarten school year they wish to enroll in at their school. Parents who wish for their child to be considered for early admissions, should call the administration building at 724-744-4496 to inquire about specific criteria and assessment procedures that must be met. Early admissions requests require that a student meet specific assessment criteria. This assessment criteria must be reviewed and approved by a Review Team and then officially approved

by the school board. Students do NOT need to be classified as gifted in order to be eligible.

Advanced Grade Level Process

- Parents who believe that their child has needs that can only be met through grade level advancement should contact the administration building at 724-744-4496 in order to inquire about specific criteria and assessment procedures that must be met in order to qualify their child for grade level advancement. This assessment criteria must be reviewed and approved by a Review Team and then officially approved by the school board. Students do NOT need to be classified as gifted in order to be eligible for advanced grade level placement.

Subject Acceleration Process

Students do NOT need to be classified as gifted in order to be eligible for subject acceleration. Subject acceleration is provided to students based on individual need. In an effort to ensure that student needs are met in this area, specific criteria is considered to determine if subject acceleration should be made available to an individual student in order to meet his or her needs. For information regarding Subject Acceleration criteria and the procedures to be followed for consideration, please contact your child's building principal.