

Jeffco Gifted & Talented Parent Guide

What does it mean to be Gifted & Talented?

The Colorado Department of Education definition:

"Gifted and talented children" means those persons between the ages of five and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services.

Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice-exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic and ethnic, cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these **areas of giftedness**:

- General or specific intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities

Jeffco Gifted and Talented

The Jeffco Gifted and Talented Department helps actualize possibilities and support GT teachers and families. Each school has a GT building liaison (a school staff member who acts as the liaison with the GT Department) and a GT Resource Teacher (a district GT employee who oversees multiple schools). Please see below for the programming options available for gifted students in Jeffco.

Identification: Gifted identification is done through a process of collecting a body of evidence. Evidence may include cognitive assessment data, achievement assessment data, norm-referenced observation scales, portfolios, performance evaluations, etc. Identification is a process that follows the four possible pathways outlined by the Colorado Department of Education. It does **NOT** consist of a single test score. A student can be recommended for identification by a parent, teacher, principal, district support staff, or self-nominate. Please contact your school or the GT Resource Teacher for your school to get started.

Testing: Cognitive data is an important piece for the identification process. All students are tested with the CoGAT for the purposes of screening for gifted and talented across the district in second grade each year. Additionally, the CogAT is given on a Saturday in October and in

March for the purpose of applying for GT Center placement and for obtaining data to support and Advanced Learning Plan. Parents can sign up for testing at the GT Public web site:

http://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/programs/gifted_talented/index.html

Parents may also seek out and submit data from private testing. Acceptable assessments include the DAS, WISC, WPPSI, NNAT, Ravens, Woodcock Johnson, and the ITBS. If you have questions about outside data or are in need of a professional reference, please contact the GT Department.

Advanced Learning Plan: Once a body of evidence is established that identifies a student as gifted, an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) will be created. This is an electronic document that documents a gifted student's areas of strength and is used to guide teachers each year as they program and set goals for their students. ALP goals are set, progressed monitored and completed each year. Please see your child's teacher for more information on their goals.

Programming Options for Gifted Elementary & Middle School Students

There are several options for programming for gifted students in Jeffco. Approximately 80% of identified gifted students remain in their neighborhood schools. Approximately 20% of gifted students attend a GT Center school:

Neighborhood School	GT Center School
<p>Advanced Learning Plan All identified gifted students receive an Advanced Learning Plan or ALP (see above). Teachers use the ALP as a guide for enrichment, setting goals, and helping gifted students grow in their strength areas. Individual schools may also have special programs and strategies for GT enrichment.</p>	<p>GT Centers consist of a school-within-a-school model in which gifted students are clustered together. Instruction involves acceleration, enrichment, and attention to affective (social-emotional) needs. Instruction is based on various formal and informal data to assure that the needs of the students are met. Teachers are certified in Gifted and Talented and receive continuous support and training in gifted education.</p>
<p>Acceleration Acceleration is the advancement of students that places them ahead of the regular school curriculum. There are many forms of acceleration, the most common of which include single subject acceleration and grade skipping. Contact your school or GT Resource teacher to learn more.</p>	<p>There is an application process that occurs twice a year (fall and spring) for admittance to GT Center for the coming school year. Students will not be admitted to GT Center without application.</p> <p>If a student is in a GT Center for elementary school, he or she will automatically be accepted for GT Center placement in middle school.</p>

Programming Options for 4 and 5 Year Olds

Early Access
Early Access allows for high gifted children to enter Kindergarten and First Grade a year early if they are academically gifted and socially and emotionally mature. Highly gifted is defined as scoring in the top 2% (at the 98 th percentile) or higher on a cognitive assessment.

Programming Options for High School

Wheat Ridge High School Wheat Ridge HS hosts Jeffco's high school GT Center program. Academic rigor combined with individualized programming and mentoring in fields of interest will provide learners with differentiated opportunities to develop their potential and become self-directed, responsible citizens, leading productive, fulfilling lives. GT programming will effectively employ research-based strategies, designed to increase student achievement and nurture autonomous learners.	Neighborhood High Schools Each high school in Jeffco offers unique programs and opportunities for advanced learners. Please contact or visit your neighborhood high school for further information.
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Twice Exceptional Students

Twice exceptional students are defined as students identified as gifted and talented and also identified with a disability according to federal/state eligibility criteria. Jeffco recognizes the unique needs of this population. Providing early interventions is essential, but often the learning difficulties go undetected because the giftedness masks the disability and vice versa. Recognizing these students' talents, identifying their learning difficulties, and providing services and strength based programming will enable twice-exceptional students to find success in the classroom and in out.

Parent Support

As stated above, each school has a GT Building Liaison and GT Resource Teacher available for support. The Jefferson County Association for Gifted Children (**JAGC**) is a non-profit group providing leadership and support to families and educators of gifted young people in Jefferson County as well (<http://www.jeffcogifted.org/>)

Summer Enrichment Opportunities

<p>SPARKS SPARKS is a two-week summer camp for students ages 4-14 years of age. It offers a wide variety of fun, hands-on, intellectually stimulating classes.</p>	<p>Hawaii The Hawaii Adventure Education Program will focus on three broad areas which contribute to meeting Jeffco Public Schools curricula standards; Science, Geography and History. The Hawaii program is designed for students entering 6th grade.</p>
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