

# **Hanover Township Public Schools**

## **Gifted and Talented Program Overview**

### **Introduction**

The Hanover Township Public Schools will recognize and challenge the unique special needs, talents, and abilities of all students, encourage students to be active learners, and address the needs of learners with exceptional abilities. Therefore, the Hanover Township Public Schools has established a gifted and talented program that assists the classroom teachers' efforts to:

- A. Provide gifted students with the opportunity to interact and collaborate with peers of like ability
- B. Provide differentiated learning experiences appropriate for students' level of ability
- C. Provide gifted students with opportunities to explore concepts, ideas, and topics that extend beyond the traditional grade level curricula
- D. Provide challenging and stimulating projects that encourage the growth of creative, critical thinking, and problem solving abilities

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Hanover Township Public Schools is to provide a solid foundation for future success. Children will be challenged to think critically, assume responsibility, contribute to their community, and care about others as well as themselves. All pupils' unique abilities will be developed within a nurturing environment so that they achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at all grade levels through the offering of excellent and innovative academic, athletic, and artistic experiences

- A. It is the responsibility of the school district to ensure the ongoing identification of gifted and talented children and to provide the educational services to meet their unique learning needs.
- B. It is the responsibility of the entire staff to meet the needs of gifted students by identifying their gifts and talents and developing those areas. These students demand learning experiences that are different from those outlined in the general education curriculum.
- C. Curricular modifications as described in the program design will occur primarily in the general education classroom or through accelerated coursework to provide continuous levels of challenge for all students.

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### Gifted and Talented Requirements

- The program is taught in the content area in which the student is gifted.
- Identification begins in Kindergarten.
- The program is evaluated annually.
- Curriculum may be modified.
- There is no NJ law or regulation that prescribes the substantive content of a gifted and talented program.
- There is an identification process for all pupils, grades K-12, which includes the use of the multiple measures.

### Infusion into the Curriculum

The gifted and talented program is more than the gifted and talented teacher's direct service to a small group of students.

In Hanover Township, we meet the needs of the identified gifted students, in grades K-8, through experiences that are taking place in the regular classroom, not just in the accelerated programs. Through differentiated learning strategies and instructional materials such as specific critical and creative thinking activities, advanced level texts, digital applications, open ended research that allows students to select subjects of personal interests, presentation style and format, games that reflect the subject area of study, inventions, innovations, song, dance, and plays, we provide educational challenges to these identified students.

### Adapting the Curriculum for Exceptionally Able Students

Teachers in Hanover Township receive guidance and information at faculty meetings and/or grade level meetings by the administrative team as well as the coordinated services department, in ways to differentiate the curriculum, using the instructional adaptations for exceptionally gifted students found in the curriculum frameworks. Adaptations in the regular classroom instruction for identified students refer to appropriate adjustments to curriculum content, teaching strategies, expectations of student mastery, and scope and sequence. Through infusion and differentiation, we provide students with different tasks and activities than their age peers, which lead to in-depth learning for them. Students who demonstrate they already know some content, or who can learn required content in much less time than their age peers, are candidates for differentiation.

There are four elements of differentiation. **Content** is differentiated through the use of more advanced texts and resource materials, learning contracts, accelerated pacing, learning centers, and working with mentors. **Process** is differentiated through flexible grouping, using a learning,

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and sophisticated research. Flexible time limits are essential. We differentiate the **Product** by presenting exciting and unusual resources. **Learning environment** is differentiated by changing the place where students work, altering teacher's expectations, allowing flexible time limits, providing for in-depth research, allowing students to work with mentors.

The following are some examples of "appropriate curricular and instructional modifications for gifted students" that currently take place

**Kindergarten to grade 5 -** leveled reading books, learning centers, projects, creative dramatics, science experiments, engineering design, reading activity cards, cartoon writing, debate, class newspaper, Science Fair participation, peer tutoring, advanced program solving, intervention research

**Grade 6, 7, 8 Language Arts -** presentations on topics/people of interest, future studies, Power Point presentations, debate, Stock Market Game, persuasive infomercials, biographies, public speaking

**Grade 6, 7, 8 Science -** Internet research on topics of interest, Science trivia and games, advanced lab activities, in-depth analysis, experiments, models/robotics

**Grades 6, 7, 8 Social Studies -** current events activities, citizenship viewpoints, Web quests, exhibits, presentation options

**Foreign Languages -** independent research project, skits, plays, songs

**Instrumental/vocal music -** differentiated lesson groups, specialized ensembles, musicals

### **Identification Process:**

The identification process identifies gifted students, in each curriculum area, in grades k-8, through multiple criteria, including:

- ❖ Aptitude discovered through testing, formative and summative assessments, teacher observation, student interest and motivation, and state or national standardized assessments
- ❖ Teacher recommendation
- ❖ Self, peer, and or parent nomination

This process reasonably identifies 3% to 5% of the school population. Each school convenes a committee (principal, subject area teacher of nominated student, teacher representative) that gathers information on the identified student and designs an appropriate plan.

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### **Formal and Informal Identification**

Measurable and observable characteristics are used to assess eligibility. Supplemental supportive data include anecdotal records, report cards, additional teacher recommendations, and testing results.

Students with exceptional abilities are recognized in all subject areas in an informal manner and are involved in differentiated enrichment activities. Compliance involves formal recognition and possible extensions of these activities.

Identified students in grades K-3 receive enrichment instruction through the Related Arts programs with a large emphasis on our STEM and coding activities. In addition:

- Kindergarten: Because of the young nature of students, the classroom teacher will provide differentiated instruction within the classroom for *core activities*.
- First Grade: The classroom teachers will provide differentiated instruction for *core subject areas*.
- Second and Third Grade: Classroom teachers and special teachers will provide differentiated instruction *for the core subjects as appropriate based on classroom achievement* and other benchmarking and relevant assessment results. The curriculum for K-3 will be an enrichment of the existing curriculum.

Identified students in grades 4-8 receive enrichment instruction through the PACT (Program for Academically Challenged Thinking) and Accelerated Math Program:

- Grades Four through Eight: PACT and Accelerated Math are pull-out program for students who have demonstrated evidence of high ability, achievement, motivation, creativity and critical thinking. Students are screened in the spring of grade 3.

### **PACT (Program for Academically Challenging Thinking)**

The PACT program delivers a gifted and talented program for identified pupils in grades four through eight. The goal of the program is to encourage and support critical and creative thinking skills in the language arts. The pupils are in a pull out program for a period once a week. Request for considerations may be made by the parent, teacher, or principal. This request is made to the PACT teacher who, along with the coordinator and committee, will determine eligibility. Measurable and observable characteristics are used to assess eligibility. Supplemental supportive data include anecdotal records, report cards, additional teacher recommendations, and testing results.

In order to identify pupils for consideration in this program, a matrix of criteria is used. Included in the matrix are grades, InView assessment scores, the Torrance Test of Creativity, and teacher recommendation. At the elementary and middle school levels, the total number of points possible is thirty-two. Students scoring within the range of 26 - 32 will be considered eligible for placement review. The Coordinated Services team, consisting of the district supervisor and teachers, will make final placement decisions.

## **Hanover Township Public Schools Gifted and Talented Program Overview**

### **Program Goals**

1. The overall program goals represent those behaviors and feelings that should be achieved.
2. To make learning more realistic and relevant in terms of today's world for the gifted student.
3. To creatively develop academic skills that meet the intellectual, emotional and social needs of the gifted student.
4. To provide broad based thematic units of study, which extend the classroom curricula, thereby exposing the gifted students to facts and activities beyond grade level material.
5. To develop the gifted student in planning and developing his/her own learning experience.
6. To develop and refine thinking skills.
7. To develop a higher level of understanding and effective use of research skills for the gifted student.
8. To develop more positive self-esteem and social interaction between gifted students, adults and other students.
9. To develop social consciousness, tolerance and empathy.
10. To develop a sense of responsibility for setting realistic goals and the achievement of those goals.
11. To enhance enjoyment and appreciation of learning.

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### **Basic Program Objective**

1. The gifted student will demonstrate increased awareness of a wide range of and appreciation for, the various subject areas.
2. The gifted student will further develop the motivation, interest and enjoyment of the various subject areas.
3. The gifted student will increase in his/her ability to summarize by distinguishing the significant from the insignificant, distinguishing the relevant from the irrelevant, drawing conclusions or making estimates or predications from information.
4. Each gifted student will further develop the skills of reading in order to enjoy the benefits of reading.
5. Each gifted student will increase his/her ability to solve problems through analytic reasoning.
6. Each gifted student will display a greater understanding that science is an expanding field dependent upon creative and innovative ideas.
7. Each gifted student will display a greater understanding of important concepts, such as sociology, economics, anthropology, geography, history and political science.
8. Each gifted student will demonstrate increased awareness of his/her abilities appropriate to his /her age, level, interests, and /or needs as evidenced by demonstrating unique contributions, proving an overt and/or covert influence and assuming some position of responsibility within or outside the classroom.
9. Each gifted student will demonstrate increased awareness of his/own creative abilities appropriate to his /her age, level, interests and/or needs as evidenced by demonstrating unique contributions.
10. Each gifted student, in his/her own individual way, will be able to generate new ideas or concepts for familiar things and situations as well as to generate completely original ideas or concepts.
11. Each gifted student will further develop the skills of social interaction through group activities which require cooperation among group members.

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### **Current Practices for Gifted and Talented Students**

Criteria and Guidelines for PACT (Program for Academically Challenging Thinking) and Accelerated Math for Students in Grades Four through Eight.

The PACT program delivers a gifted and talented program for identified pupils in grades four through eight. The goal of the program is to encourage and support critical and creative thinking skills in the language arts. The pupils are in a pull out program for a period once a week. Students in grades six through eight are serviced in a semester replacement program, taught by the PACT teacher that meets daily.

### **Program and Criteria**

The infusion of the program into grades K-8, differentiating instruction in all subject areas, by identifying gifted and talented students and providing appropriate curriculum opportunities.

The current pull-out accelerated programs for identified students (PACT and Accelerated Math) in grades 4-8 is currently in place.

### **Elementary Matrix**

#### **Grading Information**

Students will be assigned point values based on their ELA average (reading and writing grades) for marking periods One – Three.

#### **Values:**

B-: 80 – 82 average = 1 point

B: 83 – 87 average = 2 points

B+: 88 – 89 average = 3 points

A-: 90 – 92 average = 4 points

A: 93 – 97 average = 5 points

A+: 98 – 100 average = 6 points

#### **InView Testing**

120 – 124 = 4 points

125 – 129 = 5 points

Score of 130+ = 6 points

#### **The Torrance Test of Creativity**

41 – 50 = 5 points

51 – 60 = 6 points

61 – 70 = 7 points

71 – 80 = 8 points

81 – 90 = 9 points

91 – 100 = 10 points

## **Hanover Township Public Schools Gifted and Talented Program Overview**

### NJSLA – English Language Arts

Level 5 Score Exceeds Expectations = 3 points

### Teacher Recommendation Scale\*

70 – 84 = 5 points

85 – 94 = 6 points

95 – 100 = 7 points

### **Middle School Matrix**

#### Grading Information

Students will be assigned point values based on their average ELA, Science, and Social Studies letters grades.

A-: 92 – 90 average = 1 point

A: 97 – 93 average = 1.5 points

A+: 98 – 100 average = 2 points

#### InView Testing

120 – 124 = 4 points

125 – 129 = 5 points

Score of 130+ = 6 points

### NJSLA – English Language Arts

Level 5 Score Exceeds Expectations = 3 points

### The Torrance Test of Creativity

41 – 50 = 5 points

51 – 60 = 6 points

61 – 70 = 7 points

71 – 80 = 8 points

81 – 90 = 9 points

91 – 100 = 10 points

### Teacher Recommendation Scale\*

70 – 84 = 5 points

85 – 94 = 6 points

95 – 100 = 7 points

\*The PACT Teacher Recommendation Scale requires teachers to assess the student's ability to:

- demonstrate inquisitiveness and a desire and passion for learning. This learner is adventurous with his/her thinking and willing to take risks.
- demonstrate strong verbal and written communication skills
- work well independently and require little direction from teachers.

The Coordinated Services Committee will determine selection of students for the PACT program.



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### **Accelerated Math Grades Four through Eight**

The Accelerated Math program, conducted during the regularly scheduled math periods, is for pupils in grades four and five. The goal of the program is to meet the needs of mathematically advanced students. Requests for consideration may be made by the parent, teacher, or principal. This request is made to the Accelerated Math teacher who, along with the coordinator and committee, will determine eligibility. Measurable and observable characteristics are used to assess eligibility. Supplemental supportive data include anecdotal records, report cards, additional teacher recommendations, and other testing results.

In order to identify pupils for consideration in this program, a matrix of criteria is used. Included in the matrix are InView assessment scores, the Accelerated Math Placement Test, and teacher recommendation. The total number of points possible is twenty-two; the minimum number of points needed for acceptance is sixteen and participation will be decided by the Coordinated Services Team. Only students with an “A” average in math, combining marks from marking periods one through three, will be considered for teacher recommendation for Accelerated Math.

### **Elementary Matrix**

#### **Math Placement Test**

80 – 82 = 1 point  
83 – 87 = 2 points  
88 – 89 = 3 points  
90 – 92 = 4 points  
93 – 97 = 5 points  
98 – 100 = 6 points

#### **InView Testing**

120 – 124 = 4 points  
125 – 129 = 5 points  
Score of 130+ = 6 points

#### **NJSLA - Mathematics**

Level 5 Score Exceeds Expectations = 3 points

#### **Teacher Recommendation Scale\***

70 – 84 = 5 points  
85 – 94 = 6 points  
95 – 100 = 7 points

\*The Accelerated Math Teacher Recommendation Scale requires teachers to assess the student’s ability to:

- demonstrate above-average mastery of grade-level math concepts and basic facts
- pick up new concepts on the first try and problem-solve in advanced ways
- plan and work well independently with minimal teacher instruction.

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### **Screening by the School District**

Screening for candidates is done by the committee once all testing information is gathered. The committee consists of the program supervisor and district PACT and Accelerated Math teachers (Coordinated Services).

In the spring, classroom teachers in grades three, four, and five are given the teacher recommendation forms and are asked to rate perspective candidates. InView scores are also reviewed by The Coordinated Services Team. Letters are sent to the parents of students who initially qualify, notifying them of their child's eligibility to sit for the Torrance Test of Creativity (for PACT) and/or the Accelerated Math Placement Test (for Accelerated Math). Results of these tests are then reviewed by The Coordinated Services Team and letters are sent to parents of all candidates who sat for either test to notify them of the results and of their child's eligibility to enter the program or not.

### **Appeals**

Appeals are handled on a case-by-case basis and can be submitted by a parent or teacher. Members of the committee are consulted and all criteria are reviewed and assessed for possible probationary inclusion. The probationary period is for ten weeks or one marking period and the pupil must maintain a B average in math and/or perform to the program standards in PACT. Parents are sent a letter describing parameters for acceptance and are asked to sign and return.

### **Program Expectations**

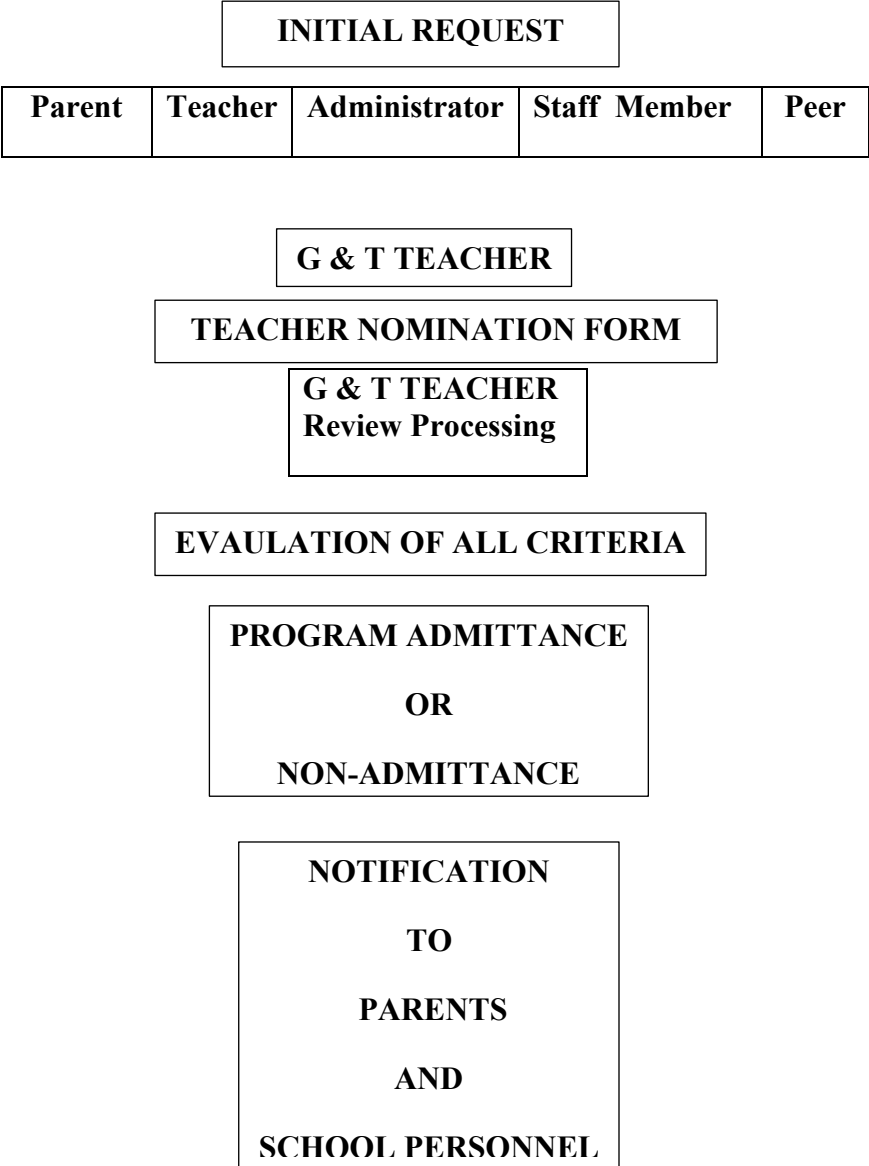
For PACT – Parents are contacted by the teacher with regards to a pupil who does not perform up to program expectations and are asked to attend a conference to determine if this assignment is the correct placement for success. If a change in placement is determined to be in the child's best interest, the pupil would exit back into the regular classroom program.

For Accelerated Math – Parents are contacted by the teacher in regards to a pupil who does not maintain a B average and are asked to attend a conference to determine if this assignment is the correct placement for success. If a change in placement is determined to be in the child's best interest, the pupil would be moved to another group.

Pupils are monitored on an on-going basis throughout the program so that the determination to modify placement is based on sound educational information and standards.

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Gifted and Talented Program Overview**

**IDENTIFICATION FLOW CHART:**





# Hanover Township Public Schools

61 Highland Avenue  
Whippany, New Jersey 07981  
973-515-2400

<https://www.hanovertwpschools.com>

## Gifted and Talented Complaint Form

### 18A:35-38 – Complaint for Non- Compliance

*An individual who believes that a school district has not complied with the provisions of this act (18A:35 – Article 5 – Gifted and Talented Education Programs) may file a complaint with the Board of Education. The right to file a complaint shall be set forth in the Board’s policy and regulation on Gifted and Talented Education (Policy 2464 and Regulation 2464 – Gifted and Talented Pupils). The policy shall be linked to the homepage of the Board’s Internet website. The Board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the district’s action in the matter.*

Submit to:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Aaron Wasserman  
Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Hanover Township Public Schools  
61 Highland Ave  
Whippany, NJ 07981  
[aaron.wasserman@hanovertwpschools.org](mailto:aaron.wasserman@hanovertwpschools.org)

Name of Person Filing Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student affected \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the nature of the violation(s) of New Jersey Statute 18A:35 – Gifted and Talented Education Programs that you believe occurred.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate any district personnel you have already spoken with to resolve this complaint:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name	Signature

I certify that the information provided in this complaint is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.