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DPS: 2016-57
Date: October 14, 2016

Technical Assistance Paper Secondary Students Who Are Gifted

Summary:

This technical assistance paper updates language about secondary gifted services to match the Florida statutory requirement that eligible students are served with gifted support from kindergarten through Grade 12.

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Status:

- New technical assistance paper
- Revises and replaces existing TAP: 312273

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A. Service Options

A-1. Are services required at the secondary level for students who meet eligibility criteria for gifted services?

Yes. Sections 1001.42(4)(l) and 1003.57, Florida Statutes (F.S.), require that school districts provide an appropriate program of special instruction, facilities and services for exceptional students. Additionally, Rule 6A-6.0331, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), requires that students who are eligible receive gifted services from kindergarten through Grade 12.

A-2. If the regular education course offerings are meeting the needs of all secondary students who are gifted, must the district still offer or make available secondary gifted services?

Yes. Gifted services that meet the individual needs of the student as determined by the educational plan (EP) team must be available at the secondary level. While some gifted students may have their academic needs met through the general curriculum (e.g., honors, advanced placement [AP], international baccalaureate [IB] and dual enrollment), gifted services must be available for all students eligible for these services. Districts must consider the needs of the individual student first and then consider the options for meeting those needs.

A-3. What are the options for meeting the academic needs of gifted students at the secondary level?

Students who are gifted may be provided exceptional student education services through a variety of options, including modifications of content, processes or products through a differentiated curriculum, curriculum compacting or acceleration through Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning plans (per s. 1002.3105, F.S.), or enrichment. These services may occur in a general education or gifted class. Gifted students may also require services in the areas of social skills development, underachievement, perfectionism and counseling.

In addition to receiving gifted services, students who are gifted may apply to participate in other challenging academic options such as dual enrollment (s. 1007.271, F.S), career and technical programs (see <http://www.fl DOE.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-tech-edu/>) or early graduation options (s. 1003.4281, F.S.).

A-4. Is consultation an appropriate service for secondary students who are gifted?

Yes. Consultation should include regular face-to-face meetings between general education teachers and a gifted teacher to plan, implement and monitor instructional alternatives designed to ensure that the student who is gifted is making successful academic progress. All teachers providing support to students via consultation with the student's general education teachers should maintain a record of the teachers, courses and students to whom they are providing services to meet the goals that are written in the students' education plans per Rule 6A-6.030191(4), F.A.C. Teachers providing services to students who are gifted should have the gifted endorsement.

Rule 6A-1.0503, F.A.C., sets forth requirements for qualified instructional personnel, and Rule 6A-4.01791, F.A.C., sets forth the requirements for obtaining a gifted endorsement.

A-5. Is it appropriate to offer only one service delivery model (such as consultation) at the secondary level?

As with any student who is gifted at any level, EP teams for secondary students who are gifted should have the flexibility to identify appropriate services from more than one delivery model in order to meet the needs set forth in the student's EP. The student's present level of performance and needs are set forth in a student's education plan per Rule 6A-6.030191(4), F.A.C.

A-6. What gifted courses are available for secondary students who are gifted?

Courses and course descriptions are listed at <http://www.cpalms.org/Public/search/Course>. Courses for gifted students are listed under the "Exceptional Student Education" link on that page. It is also appropriate to restructure basic content-area courses as gifted program offerings that meet the needs of gifted students who require services beyond the general curriculum. School districts are not required to offer gifted **courses**, per se; however, districts must provide gifted **services** appropriate to the student's needs. Also, a course does not have to be restricted to only gifted students in order to be considered to be meeting the needs of the gifted students who are enrolled.

A-7. Can a district offer AP courses, IB or other similar courses to a class of gifted students as a gifted course offering?

Yes. But if a student is receiving gifted support services from any teacher, including AP, IB and teachers of other similar courses, that teacher must be endorsed or in the process of being endorsed (Rule 6A-1.0503, F.A.C., sets forth requirements for qualified instructional personnel, and Rule 6A-4.01791, F.A.C., sets forth the requirements for obtaining a gifted endorsement). Students who are not identified as gifted may participate in the courses as well. The teachers of the courses should maintain documentation regarding the services they provide if they are responsible for the implementation of the student's EP, so as to be able to show progress toward meeting the goals that rule 6A-6.030191(4), F.A.C., requires.

A-8. Can secondary students who are gifted participate in the Florida Virtual School (FLVS)?

Yes. FLVS provides instruction to students in secondary-level courses that may not be available in their home school and to students who prefer to take selected courses online, rather than at their local school. Students may register for a single course or for a full program of study. Courses can be adapted to meet individual student's needs. These adaptations may include adding depth, breadth, complexity or abstractness to the course curriculum or adjusting the pace with which the material is presented. The FLVS teacher can work directly with the student to create the needed adaptations. If this is part of a student's gifted services, the FLVS program must provide gifted support services for full-time FLVS gifted students or work with a gifted-endorsed teacher from the student's home school or district if the student is taking FLVS courses less than full time. FLVS may rely on the expertise of school counselors in helping to determine if the student's enrollment in the online course is academically appropriate for the

student.

Additional information about FLVS is available at www.flvs.net, by e-mail at info@flvs.net or by phone at 407-513-3587.

A-9. If secondary students who are gifted have their needs met through other program options, must these students be dismissed from the gifted program?

No. If the EP team determines that a student no longer requires academic services beyond the general curriculum at one point in time, the district must still provide the student with any other needed gifted services at any time they are deemed necessary in the future. Florida Statutes require that each district school board shall provide for an appropriate program of special instruction, facilities and services for exceptional students (s. 1003.57(1)(b), F.S.). However, if the parent or guardian chooses to withdraw the student from gifted services, the district may request this change in writing.

A-10. How should the district address the needs of a student who may require a particular gifted intervention one semester but not another?

It may be determined through the development of the EP that a student's needs for a specific period of time (e.g., one semester) are met through different interventions. The EP may provide flexibility for the student to receive different types of gifted support services, but the school must update the EP if services change beyond the options listed in the student's EP. The FTE submitted must be accurate for the survey period.

A-11. What is the procedure for readmission to gifted services once a gifted student has been dismissed from the program?

Rule 6A-6.030191, F.A.C., does not require students who have already been identified as gifted to be re-assessed for gifted eligibility. Instead, eligibility for services is determined by a staffing committee, and the updated EP must reflect the projected date for the beginning of services and the anticipated frequency, location and duration of those services (rule 6A-6.030191(4)(e), F.A.C.).

A-12. Does a timeline or deadline exist for a student to be readmitted to special programs for students who are gifted?

No. There are no deadlines or timelines regarding readmission.

B. Teacher Credentials

B-1. Must gifted services be provided by a teacher with the gifted endorsement?

Yes. Rule 6A-1.0503, F.A.C., sets forth requirements for qualified instructional personnel. No waivers are available for instructors of gifted education. Districts may decide to have gifted education provided through direct or indirect services. Direct services include face-to-face interactions and instruction by the gifted-endorsed teacher to the student. Indirect services include consultation whereby the gifted-endorsed teacher works with the general education

teacher to provide appropriate services.

B-2. What options are available for teachers to obtain appropriate credentials?

Several options are available for teachers to access gifted endorsement courses:

- Local Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources Systems Centers (for contact information for local centers, go to <http://www.fdlrs.org/> or call the Florida Department of Education [FDOE] at 850-245-0478);
- Local school districts (contact your district gifted coordinator for information about district-sponsored endorsement courses);
- Gifted endorsement courses on campus and online offered by many of Florida's colleges and universities (for course information, check university websites or contact your local college or university); and
- Gifted courses online offered by many universities throughout the country.

Teachers of students who are gifted are also required to have certification appropriate to the subject and content of the courses they are teaching in order to be a qualified instructor (rule 6A-1.0503, F.A.C.). Several options are available for teachers to establish "in-field" status. Steps to obtaining teacher certification in Florida can be found at <http://www.fl DOE.org/teaching/certification/steps-to-certification/index.stml>.

Finally, FDOE, Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA), offers financial assistance to professionals who choose to work in critical shortage areas.

Information about these programs, including program descriptions, qualifications and award amounts, is available from OSFA at <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/> or by phone at 1-888-827-2004.

For additional information about secondary gifted programs, please contact the FDOE gifted education office at 850-245-5094.