

## Ohio's Criteria for Gifted Identification

---

The Ohio Revised Code (ORC 3324.01-.03) defines a gifted student as one who "performs or shows potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of similar age, experience, or environment." Students may be identified as gifted in the areas of superior cognitive ability, specific academic ability (math, science, reading, social studies), creative thinking ability, or visual and performing arts.

### How are students identified?

---

Highland Local Schools uses a variety of assessment methods to identify potentially gifted students, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation process. These methods include the following ODE-W approved assessments:

- Individually administered assessments
- Whole-grade national standardized testing
- Auditions and performances
- Displays of work, exhibitions, or performances
- Mastery or competency checklists

Each year, district personnel have two opportunities to refer students for gifted evaluation. In accordance with Ohio's Gifted Operating Standards (ORC 3324), whole-grade screenings for superior cognitive ability and creative thinking are conducted annually for all students in grades 2 and 6.

## What gifted services are provided by Highland Local Schools?

---

At Highland Local Schools, gifted services are provided within the classroom by highly qualified educators who differentiate and personalize instruction to meet each student's strengths, needs, and interests. Students also have access to enrichment opportunities and competitions—such as spelling bees, academic challenges, and fine arts programs—that foster talent exploration and growth in a supportive, dynamic environment.

Gifted services include cluster grouping of three or more gifted students and both whole-grade or subject-specific acceleration. All gifted services align with the Ohio Department of Education—Workforce Gifted Operating Standards (ORC 3324) and Ohio's Learning Standards.

At the middle and high school levels, course placements are guided by assessment data to ensure students are placed in classes that provide appropriate challenge and support.

### Gifted Identification Appeals Process

---

Parents or guardians may appeal decisions regarding gifted identification by submitting a written letter to the Superintendent and Gifted Coordinator outlining their concerns.

---

# Highland Local Schools Gifted & Talented Services

## Gifted & Talented Parent Guide

This guide provides an understanding of the Gifted & Talented identification process and the services provided by the Highland Local School District.

---



## How are students assessed for gifted identification?

Highland Local Schools collects assessment data for all students referred for gifted and talented evaluation using a variety of Ohio Department of Education & Workforce (ODE-W) approved measures, ensuring equitable access for all students. Fine arts screening may include auditions or portfolio reviews. Based on results, further evaluations may use state-approved assessments, performances, or exhibitions of student work. For detailed protocols or copies of approved instruments and scoring guides, please contact the Gifted Coordinator.

## Parent notification of gifted referral for testing & results.

Before any formal, non-whole-grade gifted testing, the Gifted Coordinator will send a Permission-to-Test form to the parent or guardian. Once returned, testing will be scheduled, and results will be shared with parents or guardians within 30 days.



## What if we just transferred from another district?

Students transferring into Highland Local Schools will be screened for gifted identification. Parents/guardians should submit requests for further screening/assessment within 90 days of enrollment to the building principal or gifted coordinator. Previously identified students from Ohio schools may have scores from the past 24 months accepted if the assessment is ODE-W approved and was administered by trained personnel. Out-of-state assessments are not accepted; these students must be referred to the principal or Gifted Coordinator for gifted assessment.

## Gifted Written Education Plans (WEP)

For each student identified as gifted, a Written Education Plan (WEP) is developed by teachers and the Gifted Coordinator. WEP goals are tailored to the student's area of identification and outline the services provided, student goals, evaluation methods, responsible staff, policies for missed work, and the review schedule. After parent/guardian review, the plan is placed in the student's permanent record, shared with parents/guardians, and distributed to all staff involved. Similarly, a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) is created for students approved for subject or whole-grade acceleration.

## Once identified, will my student always receive gifted services?

Once a student is identified as gifted or approved for acceleration, they remain on that pathway unless it is determined to no longer benefit them. Parents may withdraw or decline gifted services at any time by submitting written notice to the principal and Gifted Coordinator. Re-entry may be requested in writing by the parent/guardian or student. If a student initiates withdrawal, parents/guardians will be notified, and the request will be reviewed by a committee for a final decision.

## How do I accelerate my student?

In some cases, students may benefit from whole-grade or subject-specific acceleration to better meet their academic needs. The process typically begins with a teacher or parent referral. After the referral is received, permission for evaluation is sent and must be signed and returned before proceeding. An evaluation meeting is then scheduled to discuss the potential acceleration and determine any additional assessments needed. If acceleration is recommended, a Written Acceleration Plan (WAP) will be created to outline the individualized plan. In Ohio, acceleration policies also include early entrance to kindergarten requests.