

## E.4 Gifted

### Definition

A student is considered gifted when they possess demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of exceptionally high capability with respect to intellect, creativity, or the skills associated with specific disciplines. Students who are gifted often demonstrate outstanding abilities in more than one area. They may demonstrate extraordinary intensity of focus in their particular areas of talent or interest. However, they may also have accompanying disabilities and should not be expected to have strengths in all areas of intellectual functioning.

### Identification and Assessment

Early identification of students who are gifted is an important element in planning and delivering appropriate educational programs for these students. Some gifted students whose abilities are not identified and addressed early may exhibit secondary emotional and behavioural difficulties. District screening and identification procedures should be in place to ensure consistency of access to programs designed to support gifted students. Every effort should be made to ensure that screening and identification procedures are unbiased with respect to language, culture, gender, physical ability, learning or other disability.

No single criterion should be established for access to or exclusion from services for students who are gifted. Rather, identification and assessment should be carried out using multiple criteria and information from a variety of sources, all of which are valid components for identification. These should include several of the following:

- teacher observations including anecdotal records, checklists, and inventories;
- records of student achievement including assignments, portfolios, grades and outstanding talents, interests and accomplishments;
- nominations by educators, parents, peers and/or self;
- interview of parents and students; and
- formal assessments to Level C of cognitive ability, achievement, aptitude and creativity. A student who is talented in areas other than academics should also have an assessment of intellectual abilities, as it is important information for educational planning.

### Planning and Implementation

Districts should provide differentiated services to meet the diverse needs of the exceptionally capable learner. Since students who are gifted form a heterogeneous population, their individual needs, experiences, aptitudes and interests vary.

Programs for students who are gifted often require a blend of opportunities available both in the school and in the community. The more extraordinary the abilities of the student, the more necessary it becomes to expand the options beyond the regular classroom. Differentiated curriculum opportunities need to be designed and programming needs to be varied and flexible (classroom-based, school-based, district-based). Since no single program modification model can provide strategies that will apply to content, process, product, pacing, and learning environment, teachers of gifted students will need to draw from one or more models in order to provide an appropriate educational program that meets the individual needs of the student. This should be reflected in the student's IEP.