

2015-16 PCS Gifted Education Reference Guide Determining Eligibility for Gifted Services

Current state rule, Rule 6A-6.03019, *Special Instructional programs for Students Who Are Gifted*, states that a gifted student is “one who has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance.”

Eligibility criteria:

- 1) Need for a special program
- 2) A majority of characteristics of gifted students according to a standard scale or checklist, and
- 3) Superior intellectual development as measured by an intelligence quotient of two (2) standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence.

The following documents are used during the school process for determining eligibility for gifted. To access current forms go to: **Focus > STAFF PROGRAMS > PCS Forms.**

Gifted Nomination by Parent/Guardian (PCS 2-3121)

Gifted Nomination Alert Form (PCS 2-3120)

Gifted Screening Parent Notification (PCS 2-3122)

Gifted Screening Results Parent Notification (PCS 2-3123)

Gifted Referral Packet (PCS 2-3117)

ESE Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation (PCS 2-105)

Gifted Consideration Parent/Guardian Questionnaire (PCS 2-3126)

Gifted Characteristics Checklist (PCS 2-2593 for K-2 students or (PCS 2-2592 for grades 3+)

ESE Parent Copies of Evaluation Reports (PCS 2-2786)

Procedural Safeguards for Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted (on gifted website)

Gifted Checklist for Eligibility Determination (PCS 2-3118)

Step 1 – Nomination

- A nomination may be made by a parent/guardian, classroom teacher or other school personnel.
- **Parent Nomination:** The ***Gifted Nomination by Parent/Guardian (PCS 2-3121)*** is completed by the parent and submitted to the classroom teacher. This form is used to initiate a request for: 1) screening; 2) re-evaluation in the case of a student who was previously determined not eligible for gifted services; 3) review of gifted eligibility from another Florida district, previous Pinellas County enrollment, or from another state; and, 4) consideration of private intellectual evaluation results.
- **Teacher/School Personnel Nomination:** The ***Gifted Nomination Alert Form (PCS 2-3120)*** is completed by the teacher and submitted to the Tier 3 coordinator. The form serves as notice of the nomination and provides background information on the student. The teacher completes:
I. Student Information and II. Prior Gifted Referral Data. If applicable, the ***Gifted Nomination by Parent/Guardian (PCS 2-3121)*** form is attached.

- The Tier 3 coordinator reviews ***Gifted Nomination Alert Form (PCS 2-3120)*** and determines the next steps by completing **III. Action To Be Taken Following Alert**. The next step options include:
 - 1) the student will be screened;
 - 2) a referral will be initiated based on private evaluation results;
 - 3) the student will be enrolled in gifted classes based on prior gifted placement in Pinellas County;
 - 4) the student will be enrolled in gifted classes based on an Educational Plan (EP) from another Florida district;
 - 5) out of state gifted transfer student information should be reviewed by school personnel or forwarded to the district gifted specialist as per the ***Out of State Gifted Student Process***; or,
 - 6) other action is needed.
- **NOTE: If the student is an ESE student with a current IEP, the Tier 3 coordinator must contact the student's case manager before proceeding to the next step.**

Step 2 – Screening

- The purpose of screening is to provide data to determine if a student will be referred for an individual evaluation. Screening options include:
 - 1) the administration of a screening instrument , the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, 2nd Edition (K-BIT 2) or the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test – Second Edition (NNAT 2); or
 - 2) documentation of gifted eligibility in another state with approval of district gifted specialist.
- **Administration of a screening instrument:**
The ***Gifted Screening Parent Notification (PCS 2-3122)*** is completed by the Tier 3 coordinator and sent to the parent. This form is for notification purposes and does not require a parent signature. If the parent objects to the screening, the form instructs the parent to notify the Tier 3 coordinator in writing. If there is no objection, the Tier 3 coordinator contacts the gifted teacher or other designated personnel who will make arrangements to screen the student.

The ***Gifted Screening Results Parent Notification (PCS 2-3123)*** is completed by the gifted education teacher following the screening and returned to the Tier 3 coordinator.

- 1) **For students who score below the 90th percentile:** No further evaluation is recommended. The Tier 3 coordinator sends the ***Gifted Screening Results Parent Notification (PCS 2-3123)*** to the parent. The student's screening information should be filed in his/her school cum folder for future reference.
- 2) **For students who score at or above the 90th percentile:** Further evaluation is recommended. The ***Gifted Screening Results Parent Notification (PCS 2-3123)*** is sent to the parent with the ***Gifted Referral Packet*** documents in **Step 3 – Referral**.

- **For out of state transfer students who were identified as gifted in another state:**
An out of state student's gifted documentation may be used in lieu of the K-BIT 2 or NNAT 2. **All documents should be forwarded to Jenny Klimis, ESE Specialist/Gifted by pony to the Gifted Office, Administration Building or via email to klimisja@pcsb.org . A letter of recommendation for next steps will be returned to the Tier 3 Coordinator and CED/TSA via email following the review. Students cannot attend gifted classes until eligibility is determined.**

Step 3 – Referral

- The referral is the official request for an individual evaluation. A referral is made for the following reasons:
 - 1) the student scored at or above the 90th percentile on the K-BIT 2 or NNAT 2;
 - 2) the student was privately tested and it is necessary to complete the remaining evaluation components; or,
 - 3) the student is an out of state gifted student whose eligibility criteria did not include an individually administered test of intelligence.
- **The *Gifted Referral Packet (PCS 2-3117)* form notifies the parent that an evaluation is being requested and explains the process for determining eligibility. The Tier 3 coordinator sends the parent the *Gifted Referral Packet (PCS 2-3117)* with the following required documents:**
 - 1) The ***ESE Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation (PCS 2-105)*** which is required for a student who is being tested by a school psychologist. Do not include this form if the student has been privately tested.
 - 2) The ***Gifted Consideration Parent/Guardian Questionnaire (PCS 2-3126)*** which provides documentation of need for special program;
 - 3) The ***Procedural Safeguards for Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted;***
 - 4) ***Gifted Characteristics Checklist (PCS 2-2593 for K-2 students or PCS 2-2592 for grades 3+)*** Include this form only if the parent nominated the student.
- Once the parent returns the signed ***ESE Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation (PCS 2-105)***, the Tier 3 coordinator completes an electronic ***Request for Service*** form to alert the psychology department that an intellectual evaluation is required. The ***Request for Service*** should include the screening data (date & score of K-BIT 2 or NNAT2) and the signed consent. If the student is in ESOL or bilingual, this information should also be noted.

Step 4 – Evaluation

- The evaluation is conducted to gather the information required to the state criteria. The three components of the evaluation are: 1) the individually administered test of intelligence; 2) the gifted characteristics checklist; and 3) the documentation of need for a special program.
- **The intelligence test:** A school psychologist will administer the intelligence test. The most commonly administered tests are the Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scale (RIAS) or the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children – Fifth Edition (WISC-V).

The time frame for testing is **90 school days** from the date the Tier 3 coordinator receives the signed ***ESE Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation (PCS 2-105)*** from the parent.

The school psychologist will send two copies of the testing results to the Tier 3 coordinator. To notify the parent of the results, the Tier 3 coordinator mails the ***ESE Parent Copies of Evaluation Reports (PCS 2-2786)*** and the test report to the parent.

Numeric Criteria required for eligibility: Two standard deviations above the mean is a score of 130. A score within the Standard Error of Measure (score of 127,128 or 129) may be considered if the student has a minimum of three letters from school personnel documenting gifted characteristics exhibited in the educational setting.

Private Evaluation at Parental Expense: A student may be tested by a private licensed psychologist at parental expense. The private evaluation results may be considered for gifted eligibility as per the ***Procedural Safeguards for Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted, (5) Evaluations obtained at private expense.*** The parent must submit an original copy of the private psychologist's report to the Tier 3 coordinator. Credential verification needs to be conducted by the CED/TSA if the private psychologist did not include in the report. Credentialing information can be found on the Florida Department of Education website: http://app4.fldoe.org/edcert/Certification_Status.aspx

- The ***ESE Gifted Characteristics Checklist (PCS 2-2593 or PCS 2-2592)*** is to be completed by the person (parent, teacher or other school personnel who originally nominated the student for gifted consideration he rating scale of characteristics. This form serves two purposes:
 - 1) the top portion is the characteristics rating scale; and
 - 2) the bottom portion provides documentation of need for special programming.

NOTE: If the NNAT2 is administered to all students on a grade level, the school/district is making the nomination. The parent and teacher should each complete a characteristics checklist and the scores should be averaged.

Step 5 – Preparation for Eligibility Determination Meeting

- The ***Gifted Checklist for Eligibility Determination (PCS 2-3118)*** serves as a guide for preparing a student's folder for the eligibility determination meeting. The Tier 3 coordinator collects the required documentation, completes the Gifted Checklist and submits the student's folder to the Compliance Education Diagnostician (CED) or Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA) for review. The CED/TSA submits the folder to the district eligibility determination team.

Step 6 – Eligibility Determination Meeting

- Eligibility determination is made by a district team of three professionals: a CED/TSA, a school psychologist, and a district gifted teacher. Meetings are generally held twice a month for each area staffing office. The team discusses each student's evaluation documents and determines eligibility based on state criteria for gifted, **Rule 6A-6.03019, FAC.**
- The team notifies each parent by mail of the meeting results using the ***Gifted Eligibility Determination Notice (PCS 2-3119)*** attached to the staffing documents.
- At the end of each area meeting day, the team sends an email to all Tier 3 coordinators and gifted education teachers. The email includes a summary of the meeting results; directions for the initial EP meeting for students who were found eligible for gifted services; and directions for the distribution of required documents.

- Student folders are returned by pony to the Tier 3 coordinator.
- For students who are not eligible for gifted, it is recommended that the Tier 3 coordinator file the eligibility documents in the student's cumulative folder.
- For eligible students, the Tier 3 coordinator forwards the student's file to the gifted education teacher.
- The gifted education teacher is responsible for scheduling the initial **Educational Plan (EP)** meeting within 20 days of the eligibility meeting. The purpose of the meeting is:
 - 1) to develop and review the initial EP; and
 - 2) to obtain signed parental consent for gifted placement on **Prior Written Notice (PCS 2-107-P)**.
- Following the EP meeting, the gifted education teacher is responsible for:
 - 1) making and distributing required copies of the **EP** and **Prior Written Notice (PCS 2-107-P)** for the parent, staffing folder, and Central Files; and,
 - 2) completing and submitting the **ESE Focus/SIS Information (PCS 2-2208)** to the DMT and CED/TSA.

Frequently Asked Questions about Gifted Eligibility 2015-16

- Q. A student transferred from another Pinellas school and the parent claims the child is gifted but there is no red staffing file at the school. Should I take the parent's word and enroll the child in gifted classes?**
- A.** No, do not enroll any student in gifted until eligibility can be verified. If the student was found eligible in Pinellas County you should be able to verify the eligibility through SIS/Focus. The gifted education teacher can also search for an EP on PEER. If you are unable to verify eligibility through Focus or PEER, contact Central Files to request a copy of the eligibility documents and most current EP.
- Q. What should I do when an out of state gifted student transfers to my school? Can the student start gifted classes right away?**
- A.** No, the out of state students cannot begin attending gifted classes until his/her gifted records are reviewed. All documents should be forwarded by pony to Jenny Klimis, ESE Specialist/Gifted, Gifted Office, Administration Building or via email to klimisja@pcsb.org . A letter of recommendation for next steps will be returned to the Tier 3 Coordinator and CED via email.
- Q. A parent has expressed concern that their child did not qualify for gifted services. The parent has requested that the child be given another opportunity to be tested by a school psychologist. What is the process for requesting another evaluation?**
- A.** The process for requests for retesting for gifted eligibility was revised June 2014. You can request a copy of the process from office of psychological services or gifted office. In summary, the Tier 3 coordinator should schedule a conference to discuss the request. Participants should include: the Tier 3 coordinator, person with concerns (parent or teacher), school based psychologist, and classroom teacher. The discussion must be documented on a conference form.

If the decision is made to request a second evaluation, the process for an initial gifted referral should be followed. The decision should be documented on the Request for Service.

If an evaluation was completed and the student found ineligible 3 or more years before the current request, a second evaluation may be requested. In this case, the request is handled the same as a request for screening.

Q. A parent asked me for a list of recommended private psychologists. Where can I get the list?

A. On the advice of the school board attorney, the gifted office does not provide a list of private psychologists. The parent will need to contact a certified or licensed Florida psychologist to do the evaluation. You may suggest that the parent use Google for a list or check the phone book.

Q. How often can a student be screened with a K-BIT 2?

A. A student cannot be screened more than once in a 12 month period. This does not mean a student should be screened each year.

Q. What can I do to reduce the number of paper copies needed during the referral process?

A. The process documents are all available in electronic form. To reduce the number of copies, consider emailing the documents to the parent.

Q. A parent gave the classroom teacher a copy of private testing and said the psychologist stated that the child was eligible for gifted. Can the student start class?

A. A psychologist does not determine eligibility. The student will need to go through the referral process and be determined eligible before he/she can start class.

Q. Who is responsible for administering the K-BIT 2 for middle school students?

A. All gifted teachers should be able to administer the K-BIT 2. In most schools, however, the Advanced Academics (gifted elective) teacher usually administers it.

Q. A parent keeps asking why the testing process takes so long. The Request for Service was sent to Central Files in January and the parent expects the testing to be completed before the end of February. What can I tell the parent?

A. The psychology department works very hard to complete gifted evaluations within 90 school days from the date the Tier 3 coordinator receives the signed ***ESE Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation (PCS 2-105)*** from the parent. For a consent signed in January, the 90 school day mark would be near August. You could contact the psychology team leader for your school to check on the child's status.

Q. A student scored 128 on a RIAS. I have tried to get letters of support from the teachers but they won't write them. What should I do?

A. Teachers can't be forced to write letters of support. Send a notice to all of the student's teachers explaining that the student needs letters of support to be considered for gifted. Set a deadline. If the teacher does not support placement, suggest that he/she writes something similar to "the student's need are being met in the general education classroom". This is not an endorsement, nor is it derogatory. It does, however, show evidence that you contacted the student's teachers to request letters of support. Please include a note in the student's referral file that effort was made to get letters of support, including names and dates. If you are not

able to get three letters of support, the student will be found not eligible. However, the testing results are good for three years and the case could be reopened within that time frame.

