

## 2010 NAGC Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards

### Glossary of Terms

**Ability.** Capacity to develop competence in an area of human endeavor; also referred to as 'potential'. Abilities can be developed through appropriate formal and informal education experiences and typically are assessed by measures such as intelligence tests, though environmental factors such as schooling, self-concept, and trust can lead to inaccurate results.

**Achievement.** Accomplishment or performance demonstrating learned knowledge and skills. Achievement typically is assessed using standardized achievement tests, curriculum based assessments, portfolios and products.

**Aptitude.** Ability to learn material at advanced rates and levels of understanding in a specific area (e.g., humanities, mathematics, science). Measured by tests of knowledge, speed and accuracy in reasoning, and information retrieval in the content area (Reis & Housand, 2008).

**Assessment.** Process of gathering data or using instruments for this purpose, typically to determine an individual's status with respect to a characteristic or behavior. Strictly speaking, assessment refers to the data that are collected or the collection process, while evaluation refers to making a judgment of some kind based on the assessment data.

**Awareness of needs.** Recognition of an individual's abilities, including strengths, gifts, and areas for continued development.

**Career pathways.** Vocational and educational experiences that allow learners with gifts and talents to consider, identify, and prepare for career options based upon talents and interests; may include mentorships, apprenticeships, or career explorations.

**Cognitive and affective growth.** Cognitive growth refers to the development of concepts and thinking skills, while affective growth relates to the development of social-emotional needs.

**Collaboration.** Stakeholders purposefully working together and sharing responsibility for achieving a common goal; reaching out to engage others in responding to needs (e.g., educators responsible for G/T and bilingual education together planning instruction for English language learners with gifts and talents).

**Communications competence.** Skills and dispositions to effectively express ideas, thoughts, and needs and to understand those of others through one or more medium and one or more language (Smutny, 2008).

**Comprehensiveness.** Thoroughness and completeness of programming and services for students with gifts and talents.

**Coordinated services.** Instruction and resources within and outside of programming specifically for students with gifts and talents (e.g., general, special, bilingual, or arts education) that are intentionally connected and articulated with each other to effectively support learners with gifts and talents.

**Creative thinking.** Thinking in divergent ways; includes a variety of open-ended thinking processes (e.g., generating novel ideas, elaborating on or modifying a concept, thinking analogically or flexibly) (Reis & Housand, 2008).

**Critical Thinking.** Evaluative thinking process that requires judgment made through critical examination; components of critical thinking may include discerning purpose, evaluating argument, weighing evidence,

appraising data and sources for accuracy or bias, using data to support inferences, examining multiple perspectives, and determining implications and consequences.

**Cultural competence.** Skills and dispositions for establishing and maintaining positive relationships and working effectively with individuals and communities from diverse backgrounds. Includes an open mind, willingness to accept alternative perspectives, critical self-examination, and acquisition and use of information (Shaunessy & Matthews, 2009).

**Culturally relevant.** Describes elements (e.g., curriculum, materials) within culturally responsive classrooms that are rigorous and multicultural, engage culturally different students and have meaning for them, and enable them to connect new learning with their interests (Ford, 2010).

**Curriculum planning.** The process of identifying learning goals, objectives, instructional strategies, activities, materials and resources, and scope and sequence of instruction based on assessment of learning, content area(s), and type of gifted programming and services offered.

**Differentiated assessment.** The practice of varying assessment in such a way that it reflects differentiation in the curriculum and/or the instruction. Differentiated assessment implies that as students experience differences in their learning, they should experience differences in their assessment. For example, students with gifts and talents may require off level/above grade-level tests to accurately assess their level of ability or achievement.

**Differentiated curriculum.** Adaptation of content, process, and concepts to meet a higher level of expectation appropriate for advanced learners. Curriculum can be differentiated through acceleration, complexity, depth, challenge, and creativity (VanTassel-Baska & Wood, 2008).

**Differentiated instruction.** Multiple ways to structure a lesson so that each student is challenged at an appropriate level. Differentiated instruction may include such features as learner centeredness; planned assignments and lessons based on pre-assessment; and flexible grouping, materials, resources, and pacing (Tomlinson & Hockett, 2008).

**Diversity.** Differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area (Matthews & Shaunessy, 2008; NCATE, 2010).

**Ethics.** Legal, moral, and professional codes that define values and guide decision-making and actions; that which is good and right for the fair and just treatment of others in educational settings.

**Evaluation of programming.** Evaluation of programming systematically examines outcomes related to goals and determines the degree to which programming goals have been met. It can also refer to review of the appropriateness of services for meeting the needs of an individual, usually by using data gathered during the assessment process.

**Identification.** A needs assessment whose primary purpose is the placement of students into educational programs designed to develop their intellectual, emotional and social potential (Richert, 2003). The identification process moves from screening to placement (Matthews & Shaunessy, 2010) and involves use of multiple measures to assess high-level ability, aptitude, achievement, or other constructs of interest in one or more areas of learning (Johnsen, 2008).

**Individual learning options.** Specific and unique academic plans developed for a student to include a range of possibilities such as grade acceleration, advanced study of a particular academic area, off-campus instruction, or resource programs. Individualized learning options may be called IEPs in some states; they generally include goals, outcomes, and assessments for each student with gifts and talents and are reviewed and revised annually.

**Instructional strategies.** Teaching and learning methods that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of students with gifts and talents. Appropriate instructional strategies would include those engaging students in inquiry, creative and critical thinking, and metacognition.

**Instrument.** Any formal or informal measure of ability, aptitude, performance, or behavior that is used in the assessment process. All tests are instruments, but not all instruments are tests.

**Leadership.** Ability to influence others (Reis & Housand, 2008) in a discipline (e.g., intellectual or creative leadership) or in the community (e.g., to address societal needs and problems). An agreed-upon framework for understanding leadership giftedness has not yet developed (Matthews, 2004).

**Learning progress and outcomes.** An evaluation of a student's development and related behaviors (e.g., achievement; personal or social growth) or tangible documentation illustrating this development.

**Lifelong learners.** Individuals who continuously across the lifespan seek to expand their experiences, knowledge, skills, and perspectives beyond the formal education years.

**Non-biased/equitable.** Non-biased assessment shows minimal to negligible group differences ascribable to factors other than those that are being measured. Equitable assessments are those that are invariant to extraneous factors such as race or socioeconomic status; at present, available measures may approach this ideal but none have achieved it.

**Off-level/above-grade level.** Tests normed for students at a higher grade level than the students who are being tested. Widely used in talent search testing (Matthews, 2008) to provide an accurate picture of the relative ability level of students whose abilities exceed those that can be measured using on-grade level instruments. Individually administered assessments such as IQ tests often can also provide this information.

**Personal competence.** Knowledge (e.g., of self), skills (e.g., decision making, self regulation, time management), and dispositions (e.g., motivation) to reach one's personal goals (Moon, 2008).

**Policies and procedures.** Written rules, regulations, processes, and practices that allow all learners, including those with gifts and talents, to be treated equitably and fairly; Policies and procedures translate state laws and regulations into operational guidelines, protocols, and expectations of programming and services at the local level.

**Problem solving.** A sequence of cognitive operations directed at solving a problem situation, which can vary in terms of how readily the problem, method, and solution are defined (Schiever & Maker, 2003). Creative problem solving and problem-based learning are two examples of models used widely in programs for students with gifts and talents.

**Programs/programming.** Formally structured, regularly scheduled, ongoing services provided to students with gifts and talents in school or community settings (e.g., museum, laboratory, or university). Programming includes goals, student outcomes, strategies to accomplish them, and procedures for assessing and evaluating these over time. The Committee prefers the term "programming" because it indicates the ongoing nature of these services, while "program" could refer to a one-time event.

**Qualitative instruments.** Measures that use primarily words rather than numbers to describe or investigate student, teacher, parent, or other stakeholders' reactions to or perceptions of strengths or weaknesses of gifted programming and related phenomena. Interviews and portfolios (Johnsen, 2008) are two commonly used types of qualitative instruments.

**Quantitative instruments.** Measures that use numerical data (Johnsen, 2008) to describe performance in relation to others (e.g., norm referenced intelligence tests) or in relation to a standard of performance (e.g., criterion referenced achievement tests).

**Resources.** Assets used to support effective teaching and learning of students with gifts and talents. Resources may include instructional personnel such as teachers, mentors, and community members as well as physical resources such as curriculum materials of any media, and facilities within or outside school buildings. Resources also include administrative assets, such as fiscal and capital expenditures.

**Self-Understanding.** A process of recognizing one's strengths, limits, challenges, opportunities, and the related cognitive and affective needs that accompany them.

**Services/servicing.** Educational and related interventions that are provided to students in or outside of the regular school setting. A given service may be one-time-only, annual, or ongoing, and may be provided even in the absence of formal gifted programming. Examples may include counseling, tutoring, and mentoring.

**Social competence.** The ability to interact effectively with others. Component skills include creating and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships, communicating, listening, and feeling empathy. Related dispositions include appreciation of human diversity, commitment to social justice, and holding high ethical standards (Moon, 2008).

**Socio-emotional development.** Those factors from a psychological perspective that assert an affective influence on an individual's self-image, behavior, and motivation; issues such as but not limited to peer relationships, emotional adjustment, stress management, perfectionism, and sensitivity (Moon, 2003).

**Special Educator.** In a handful of states, gifted education is included within special education (NAGC, 2009) and teachers of students with gifts and talents in these states are special educators. Elsewhere, state law does not consider gifted education to be a part of special education and teachers of students with gifts and talents are not considered special education staff.

**Students with gifts and talents.** This phrasing is currently preferred over "gifted and talented students" because it emphasizes the person rather than the exceptionality and is consistent with usage in the field of special education. It includes those students whose abilities are latent as well as students whose abilities already are manifest. Individuals with gifts and talents also includes 'gifted and talented students,' 'high-ability students,' 'academically advanced students,' 'gifted students with potential,' and so on.

**Talent development.** A process involving deliberate, planned effort to provide an enriched and responsive learning environment at home, school, and in other settings to enable budding talents and abilities the opportunity to develop to maximum levels (Clark, 2007).

**Technical adequacy.** This term refers to the psychometric properties of an assessment instrument. Instruments with technical adequacy demonstrate validity for the identified purpose, reliability in providing consistent results, and minimal bias, and have been normed on a population matching the census data (Johnsen, 2008).

**Twice exceptional.** A learner who evidences high performance or potential in a gift, talent, or ability area combined with one or more disabilities that may affect achievement (e.g., learning disability, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, Asperger's syndrome, or a physical or sensory disability).

**Underachieving.** This term refers to students who demonstrate a discrepancy between ability and performance (Reis & Housand, 2008). Underachieving students exhibit a severe discrepancy between expected achievement as measured by standardized assessments and actual achievement as measured by class grades or teacher evaluations (McCoach & Siegle, 2003). The discrepancy must persist over time and must not be the direct result of a diagnosed learning disability.

**Variety of programming.** This term refers to the instructional and support options available to learners with gifts and talents, which should include a varied menu or continuum of services matching their needs. Group as well as individual options, offered both in and outside of schools, may include but should not be limited to early entrance, grade acceleration, appropriate grouping, acceleration, enrichment, dual enrollment, online courses, curriculum compacting, apprenticeships, independent study, special classes, special schools, summer programs, and guidance and counseling services.

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