Primary Talent Pool

Frequently Asked Questions

A Publication of the State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education

What is the Primary Talent Pool (PTP)?

The Primary Talent Pool is a group of student who possess demonstrated or potential ability to perform at exceptionally high levels in the primary years (P!-P$; Kindergarten through Third Grade). These students may be referred to as high-potential learners. The purpose of selecting students to participate in a Primary Talent Pool is to provide early enrichment for those students whose talents must be nurtured in order for those talents to fully develop. These students are not automatically identified as gifted once they reach the fourth grade. They must be formally identified by meeting certain criteria.

What is a high–potential learner?

Students who learn and comprehend at a faster pace and more complex level than their age peers are considered high-potential learners. These students often acquire skills earlier and progress at an accelerated rate.

How are student selected for the Primary Talent Pool?

A minimum of three informal assessment measures are used to provide evidence that student should participate tint he Primary Talent Pool. Evidence can be gathered from teacher, parent and community member observations of student behaviors and work samples. A school committee reviews the evidence to determine if a primary student I a high-potential learner and should be included in the Primary Talent Pool. The committee should consider environmental, cultural and disabling conditions. Students can be placed in the talent pool at any time during their primary years. It is recommended that school committees follow the principle: When in doubt, err on the side of inclusion.

What is meant by informal assessment measures?

Informal assessment measures rely on observations and professional judgment rather than being standardized or norm referenced with numbers and scores. Examples of informal assessment measures used to determine high potential in primary student include primary portfolios, behavior checklists, anecdotal records, parent interviews and questionnaires, teacher assessments. Work samples, products and performances.

Can any formal testing be done with PTP students?

Formal, normed measures may be used for diagnosing the level of instructional service needed by a student and for evaluation of student progress. Data from formal, normed measures shall not be used for the purpose of eliminating eligibility for services to a child in the primary program but may be used to discover and include eligible students overlooked by informal assessments.

Describe the membership of a school committee that would make decisions about the Primary Talent Pool.

Membership of the school committee could consist of an administrator, gifted education personnel, primary teachers, guidance counselor, special area teachers (art, music, dance, drama, and physical education), parents and community members.

What percentage of students in primary should be included in the Primary Talent Pool?

According to 704 KAR 3:285, "high-potential learner" are students who typically represent the top quartile (25%) of the entire student population in terms of the degree of demonstrated gifted characteristics and behaviors.

Why should 25% of primary students be involved in the PTP?

It is important to cast a wide a net to find high potential learners. The PTP could include the top 5% in each of five areas (general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, leadership, creativity and visual and performing arts) for a total 25% of the entire primary school population.

How are students served in the PTP?

Students in the PTP should receive differentiated services that are matched to their needs, interests and abilities. Some PTP students may need to be cluster-grouped for reading and/or math and served by a regular classroom teacher who compacts the curriculum. Acceleration by subject or grade is appropriate for some advanced PTP students. These students may need to receive services in a classroom at a higher grade level for a specific subject or subjects. PTP students selected in the area of general intellectual ability might be in cluster groups in math and/or reading and also meet with the Gifted/Talented specialist once a week may not be an appropriate service delivery option for a student requiring services in math. Math is a daily subject, and services in leadership development may meet with the guidance counselor and be mentored by an older student identified in leadership. A student placed in the PTP for visual art may be served by an art teacher who may cluster-group the visual art students and serve them in a pull-out program which meets on hour each month. There should be multiple service delivery options at each grade level. One size or one service does not fit all.

Do Primary Talent Pool students have a Gifted Student Service Plan (GSSP)?

GSSP's are not required for PTP students, but the teacher(s) providing services to PTP students should have a record of differentiated and enrichment services provided for each student.

Is it necessary to nominate students for the Primary Talent Pool in the five areas, or is being in the PTP all the PTP all inclusive of the areas?

PTP students should be nominated in the specific areas where they show strengths. Once a student is selected for the PTP, he/she should be served in the area(s) of specific strength.

Do Primary Talent Pool students automatically qualify as gifted students once they exit the primary grades and move into 4th grade?

No. PTP students must be formally identified in one or more areas of giftedness at the 4th grade level. Each school district will have a screening and identification process that shall include a combination of formal measures, informal measures and objective-based eligibility criteria. This process can include standardized testing, evidence collection in form of work samples, portfolios, performances, and recommendations, and other eligibility criteria. Determination of appropriateness of level and type of services provided to a student shall be subject to continuous assessment.

Here is a list of characteristics common in primary high potential learners:

- Express curiosity about many things
- Ask thoughtful questions
- Have extensive vocabularies and complex sentence structure
- Are able to express themselves well
- Solve problems in unique ways
- Have good memories
- Exhibit unusual talent in art, music, or creative dramatics
- Exhibit especially original imaginations
- Use previously learned things in new contexts
- Are unusually able to order things in logical sequence
- Discuss and elaborate on ideas
- Are fast learners
- Desire to work independently and take initiative
- Exhibit wit and humor
- Have sustained attention spans and are willing to persist on challenging tasks
- Are very observant
- Show talent in making up stories and telling them
- Are interested in reading

Resources

704 KAR 3:285

Programs for the Gifted and Talented