International Gifted Consortium—IGC
Research Center for Highly—Profoundly Gifted

Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards 2026

Research-based framework for the Education, Development, Well-Being, and Equitable Access for Highly–Profoundly Gifted Children, Adolescents, and Students

PURPOSE

Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards (2026) provides a research-based platform for the equitable inclusion and implementation of programming gold standards to meet the distinctly different educational and developmental needs of highly–profoundly gifted school-aged children and adolescents. Minimum standards are also included to recognize that no matter how limited school district resources are for special programs, teachers, program administrators, counselors, psychologists, and parents have everyday opportunities to collaboratively provide a minimum-level of support for highly–profoundly gifted students. The minimum standards provide a starting place for access to opportunity, growth, and well-being for highly–profoundly gifted students and can be implemented without additional funding. We must all commit to developmentally appropriate, accessible programming for all students inclusive of highly–profoundly gifted children and adolescents.

DEVELOPMENT

Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards (2026) was developed by The International Gifted Consortium (IGC), Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted in collaboration with the dedicated advocacy efforts of BRIGHTLinks and Partners Advocating for Gifted Education (PAGE) of Wake County, N.C., to fulfill a void in accessible, developmentally appropriate programming standards for the education and well-being of all highly–profoundly gifted students. Based on the research, specific to this **special population,** Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards (2026) will be expanded upon and updated biennially.

REVIEW

Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards 2026
Review

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CITATION

International Gifted Consortium (IGC), Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted. (2026). *Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards.* GiftedConsortium.org

At A Glance

Research-Based Framework

The Markers Indicative of Highly–Profoundly Gifted Individuals

qualitatively profound giftedness

The IGC, Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted qualitatively defined profound giftedness:

> Significantly advanced cognitive abilities and development, experienced through heightened sensitivity, intensity, and awareness identifiable through social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and/or altruistic behaviors, developmental milestones, and life experiences across the lifespan. This intuitive, and often **asynchronous**, human development is at high risk of misunderstanding, misidentification, and misdiagnosis (the 3Ms), and requires support and scaffolding from like-minded peers, mentors, and practitioners to meet the profoundly gifted individual's exceptionally unique educational and developmental needs, and to provide fitting opportunities for positive growth and well-being (Wood & Laycraft, 2020, p. 146).

asynchronous: uneven or scattered

quantitatively profound giftedness

Quantitatively, based on Gross & Wood (2017), The IGC, Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted defined profound giftedness:

> Three or more standard deviations above the norm or an IQ score of 145-160* or greater with extended norms on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fifth Edition (WISC-V). (The IGC, Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted, n.d.; De Wit & Wood, 2025).
>
> *Note: 160 is the maximum score obtainable on the WISC-V without extended norms.

highly–profoundly gifted

In The IGC, Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted mixed-methods study, **highly–profoundly gifted**, referred to WISC-V scores of 140-160* or greater with extended norms (Wood et al., 2024).

The term highly–profoundly gifted, was adopted to inclusively recognized both the quantitative and qualitative traits including similar developmental profiles and educational needs especially the need to interact with like-minded peers, mentors, and practitioners (Levels of Giftedness, GiftedConsortium.org; DeWit & Wood, 2025).

Levels of Giftedness (2025)

Term	Standard Deviations	IQ Score	Percentile
Norm	less than 1 standard deviation above norm	100-114	50 – 83.9
Above Norm	1 to under 2 standard deviations above the norm	115 - 129	84 – 97.9
Gifted	2 standard deviations above the norm	130 - 139	98 – 99.5
Highly—Profoundly Gifted	almost 3 to 4 standard deviations above the norm	140 - 160	99.6 - 99.99
Profoundly Gifted (Davidson Institute)	3 to 4 deviations above the norm	145 - 160*	99.9 - 99.99

*Greater than 160 with use of extended norms (not typically assessed)

States and Educational Policy Supporting Highly–Profoundly Gifted

special population: population that are often misunderstood or missed by traditional systems

For universal access to a developmentally appropriate education, all school districts are encouraged to recognize the developmental differences and educational needs of all **special populations** including highly–profoundly gifted learners.

Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) Chapter 388C, 2005: https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/nrs-388.html

Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) Chapter 388C, 2005, Public School for Profoundly Gifted Students —Benchmark—

NRS, Chapter 388C established a tuition-free, public school for **profoundly gifted** students in a university setting named The Davidson Academy located at The University of Nevada, Reno.

North Carolina State Board of Education Policy ACIG 000 - July, 2024: https://www.dpi.nc.gov/nc-aig-program-standards-2024/download?

North Carolina State Board of Education Policy ACIG 000 - July 2024, Highly Gifted

Gifted learners from under-represented populations are often overlooked in gifted programming; therefore, they require purposeful and intentional support to ensure that their potential is cultivated, recognized, and served. Gifted learners who are often left underserved include students who are culturally/ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged, multilingual learners, **highly gifted,** and twice-exceptional. When an appropriate differentiated education is not provided, gifted learners do not thrive in school, their potential is diminished, and they may even suffer from cognitive and affective harm; therefore, gifted learners must have their needs addressed in order to become capable, valuable, effective, and successful contributors to our global society.

North Carolina State Law (NCGS 115c-288(a): https://www.ncleg.net/enactedlegislation/statutes/html/bysection/chapter_115c/gs_115c-288.html

North Carolina State Law (NCGS 115c-288(a) - Powers and Duties of Principal, Appropriate Grade

(a) To Grade and Classify Pupils. - The principal shall have authority to grade and classify pupils, except as provided in G.S. 115C-83.7(a). In determining the appropriate grade for a pupil who is already attending a public school, the principal shall consider the pupil's classroom work and grades, the pupil's scores on standardized tests, and the best educational interests of the pupil. The principal shall not make the decision solely on the basis of standardized test scores.

Texas State Plan 3.3, 4.9: https://tea.texas.gov/special-populations-and-support/gifted-and-talented-education/gt-state-plan-2026-english.pdf

Texas State Plan 3.3, 4.9. - Acceleration, Highly Gifted

3.3. Acceleration is a recommended service option for gifted students. *Especially* **highly gifted** students can exhibit extremes in asynchronous development. Single-subject acceleration helps districts address the "appropriately challenging" requirement (State Plan 3.3,4.9, and State Plan Glossary).

4.9. Educators adapt and/or modify the core or standard curriculum to meet the needs of gifted/talented students and those who have exceptionalities such as twice-exceptional, **highly gifted**, and emergent bilingual.

California Education Code § 52202(b): https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/gt/

California Education Code § 52202(b) - Highly Gifted

§ 52202(b) "Highly gifted pupil" means a gifted and talented pupil who has achieved a measured intelligence quotient of 150 or more points on an assessment of intelligence administered by qualified personnel or has demonstrated extraordinary aptitude and achievement in language arts, mathematics, science, or other academic subjects, as evaluated and confirmed by both the pupil's teacher and principal. Highly gifted pupils shall generally constitute not more than 1 percent of the pupil population.

Colorado Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA): https://ed.cde.state.co.us/gt/earlyaccess

Colorado Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA), Highly Advanced Learners, "Highly Gifted" (Denver public schools)

12.08(2)(d)(i)(A) Aptitude supporting early access (to kindergarten or first grade) is indicated by a **highly advanced** level of performance compared to age-peers on cognitive abilities rating scales or 97th percentile and above on standardized cognitive ability tests.

Florida 6A-4.01791(d) Specialized Requirement for the Gifted Education Endorsement: https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/certificate-subjects/

Florida 6A-4.01791(d) Specialized Requirement for the Gifted Endorsement

(d) Educating special populations of gifted students such as minorities, underachievers, handicapped, economically disadvantaged, and **highly gifted** to include student characteristics and programmatic adaptations;

New Mexico Administrative Code 6.31.3 - July 2023: https://www.srca.nm.gov/nmac/nmregister/xxxiv/6.31.3.html

New Mexico Administrative Code 6.31.3.6; 6.31.3.12 - July 31, 2023, Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP)

6.31.3.6. This rule is promulgated to assist New Mexico public agencies in appropriately identifying and providing educational service for gifted students. The purposes of this rule are to ensure all gifted students have gifted education and related service to meet their individual needs; ensure that the rights of gifted students and their parents are protected; assist public agencies to provide for the education of all gifted students; and evaluate and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate those students.

6.31.3.12 **Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP)**. To ensure the individual needs of each gifted student are met, the GIEP team shall create and update annually a GIEP document. A GIEP shall include but not be limited to the following information:

(1) student demographic information;
(2) area(s) of original qualification;
(3) qualification data used to determine gifted eligibility;
(4) educational needs for growth in area(s) of strength;
(5) educational needs for growth in other area(s);
(6) short term goals to address areas of need;
(7) long term goals to address areas of need;
(8) teacher and parent input;
(9) student input;
(10) planned course of study;
(11) accommodations and modifications;
(12) schedule of services;
(13) transition information; and
(14) prior written notice of actions proposed and either accepted or rejected by the LEA with rationale for acceptance or rejection.

Pennsylvania 16.31: https://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov/Display/pacode?file=/secure/pacode/data/022/chapter16/s16.31.html&d=reduce

Pennsylvania Code 16.31. Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP)

A Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP) is a written program describing the education to be provided to a gifted student. The initial GIEP must be based on and be responsive to the results of the evaluation and be developed and implemented in accordance with this chapter.

Minnesota law MNGS 120B.20 Parental Curriculum Review https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/120b.20

Minnesota law MNGS 120B.20 Parental Curriculum Review

Each school district shall have a procedure for a parent, guardian, or an adult student, 18 years of age or older, to review the content of the instructional materials to be provided to a minor child or to an adult student and, if the parent, guardian, or adult student objects to the content, to make reasonable arrangements with school personnel for alternative instruction. Alternative instruction may be provided by the parent, guardian, or adult student if the alternative instruction, if any, offered by the school board does not meet the concerns of the parent, guardian, or adult student. The school board is not required to pay for the costs of alternative instruction provided by a parent, guardian, or adult student. School personnel may not impose an academic or other penalty upon a student merely for arranging alternative instruction under this section…

Research-Based Rationale

self-contained gifted program - programs designed specifically for the unique educational and developmental needs of highly and/or profoundly gifted school-aged children and adolescents; to provide fitting social-environmental influences, the development of autonomous forces, developmental overexcitabilities, and special abilities and talents.

heterogeneous: traditional; aged-based

homogeneous ability grouping: instructional strategy that intentionally places students with similar abilities, academic readiness, or educational needs together.

Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP): specific intervention to support the individual developmental and educational needs of pre-k-12 students, identified as gifted or highly–profoundly, that are not appropriately supported by traditional methods (See Educational Policy Supporting Highly–Profoundly Gifted).

hybrid homeschooling: an innovative model where students split their time between formal, physical classrooms and independent, home-based learning. This time split is determined by what is best for the needs of the student, the school, and the resources available.

curriculum swapping: replacing standard, district-issued material with specialized outside curricula while remaining enrolled in the school. (See Policy Supporting Highly–Profoundly Gifted).

dual enrollment: an academic arrangement that allows high school or advanced middle school students to enroll in college courses, earning simultaneous credit toward both their high school diploma and a college degree.

- **Highly–Profoundly gifted students have educational and developmental needs that are distinctly different** (Gross & Smith, 2021; Webb et al., 2016; Wood et al., 2024). These distinctly different needs require programs and social-environmental influences that are designed to fulfill these unique needs (Shaughnessy & Senior, 2022). **Self-contained programs**, school-within-a-school models, and magnet schools for the highly and profoundly gifted tend to provide the greatest opportunity for these unique needs to be met –given the programs are designed in alignment with the current research-based understandings specific to the education and development of highly–profoundly gifted K-12 students.

- **The earlier the intervention, the better the social-emotional outcomes** (Kaya, 2020; Neihart et al., 2021), and identification and access to appropriate support by kindergarten (Bijl et al., 2025; Johnsen & VanTassel-Baska, 2022; Mossberg et al., 2024).

- **Acceleration can be an effective tool when paired with strong social-emotional support, true peers, mentoring, and an environment that matches the child's whole development.** Acceleration is efficient, easy to implement, cost-effective, and appropriate when considered as part of the child's holistic development (Bernstein et al., 2021; Gross & Smith, 2021; Guilbault, 2023; Lupkowski-Shoplik et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2022).

- **Differentiation alone is often insufficient in a heterogeneous classroom due to lack of teacher training and effective implementation** (Guilbault, 2023; VanTassel-Baska et al., 2021).

- **Self-contained programs for highly–profoundly gifted students benefit social-emotional and cognitive development, and allow for homogeneous ability grouping** (Gross & Smith, 2021; Wu et al., 2022). Ability grouping allows students to learn in a zone of proximal development and promotes healthy social-emotional development, including positive self-concept and improved self-esteem (Plucker et al., 2021).

- **Access to like-minded peers, mentors-teachers, and practitioners provides opportunities to connect, to feel understood, to have reciprocal interactions, and to be able to see themselves in others; thereby creating a sense of camaraderie and belonging** (Cross et al., 2024; Gross & Smith, 2021; DeWit & Wood, 2025).

- **Underachievement and poor social-emotional development including anxiety, depression, and identity issues can be attributed to the failure to meet the cognitive and social-emotional development of children who are gifted** (Delisle, 2021; Neihart et al., 2021; Siegle et al., 2020).

- **Appropriate programming according to the student's Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP) should be met during the regular school hours** (Foley-Nicpon & Teriba, 2022**).**

- **Creative programming such as hybrid homeschooling, curriculum swapping, and dual enrollment, offer appropriate opportunities for students' needs to be met.** Schools are encouraged to embrace opportunities to partner with parents (or mentors) to meet students' unique needs (Matthews et al., 2024).

- **An individually administered, widely accepted cognitive ability test, currently the WISC-V, is part of the gold standard for gifted and highly–profoundly gifted identification** (Silverman & Gilman, 2020).

Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards (2026)

STANDARD I: IDENTIFICATION

When Do We Assess & Identify Highly–Profoundly Gifted?
Gold standard:

1. Prior to entering: Kindergarten
   - re-assess in 2nd grade, 5th grade, 8th grade as part of the gifted identification process for all students.
2. New students entering school
   - if records indicate no testing in the past 2-3 years. New students identified as gifted through previous records require no further testing.
3. Rolling basis as needed
   - For example, gifted assessment may be needed to help determine a student's unidentified need, behavior, or development in question.

Minimum standard:

- Student self-nomination, parent/caregiver nomination, teacher nomination.

How Do We Identify Highly–Profoundly Gifted?
Gold standard:

1) Overexcitabilities Questionnaire Two, Adapted (The IGC, Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted, 2024) completed by parent or guardian as a screener in the gifted identification process.

- arranged by the gifted coordinator as part of the existing gifted identification process (no additional cost incurred).
- A parent or guardian voluntarily completes the 50-item Likert-scale questionnaire choosing 1–5 based on their child's observed behaviors. The questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.
- A teacher may choose to complete on behalf of the parent/guardian.
- OEQ II, Adapted Questionnaire scored by trained individual such as psychology intern supervised by school, district, or state psychologist at no additional cost.

2) WISC-V administered to those students who score high on three or more overexcitabilities on the OEQ II, Adapted.

- high = 3.5 or greater (used to find prevalence of overexcitabilities in study of highly gifted middle school aged students (Gallagher, 2022) and study of highly–profoundly gifted children and adolescents (Wood et al., 2024).
- Administered and scored by psychologist/supervised post-doctorate professional trained in highly–profoundly gifted.

- If additional information is needed, the credentialed psychologists or supervised postdoctoral professional is encouraged to conduct a semi-structured interview with the parent/caretaker and/or to observe the child's social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and altruistic behaviors respective to Dabrowski's overexcitabilities and developmental potential (De Wit & Wood, 2025).

- Five forms of overexcitabilities (OE)
  1. Emotional OE
  2. Intellectual OE
  3. Imaginational OE
  4. Psychomotor OE
  5. Sensual OE

- Developmental potential:
  1. Family history
  2. Social-environmental influences
  3. Autonomous forces (self-direction, self-education)
  4. Overexcitabilities
  5. Special abilities and talents

- The parent/caregiver may provide Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI), WISC-V, or other widely accepted cognitive ability test results from a credentialed, licensed clinical psychologist or supervised postdoctoral professional for highly–profoundly gifted identification and programming.

Minimum standard:

1) OEQ II, Adapted completed by parent and scored by a psychologist or postdoctoral professional trained in highly–profoundly gifted (Contact Co-PI: Vanessa R. Wood, Psy.D. vanessawood@giftedconsortium.org**).**

2) Review student portfolio; involve and observe the child; document and consider developmental history, developmental milestones, and developmental potential (Dabrowski, 1972, 1996).

- Consider Davidson Young Scholars eligibility requirements (n.d.).

STANDARD II: ACCESS TO DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE EDUCATION & WELL-BEING

Once Identified, How Do We Support the Holistic Development and Education of Highly–Profoundly Gifted?

Social, Emotional, Physical, Cognitive, Altruistic-Empathy Development Gold standard:

- Full-time program designed for highly–profoundly gifted students often referred to as a **self-contained gifted program.**
- program led by full-time teacher-mentor(s) with gifted certification or masters in gifted education including training specific to the distinct traits, behaviors, and development of highly–profoundly gifted individuals from credentialed professionals from organizations such as The IGC, Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted, the Davidson Institute, BRIGHTLinks.
- Graduate programs in gifted education include: Johns Hopkins University, William & Mary, Purdue University, University of South Florida, Northeastern Illinois University, Western Kentucky University, Belin-Blank at University of Iowa.
- Self-contained programs do not require additional funding, additional space, or additional teachers. For example, a self-contained program can be started by designating the number of classrooms needed for the number of highly–profoundly gifted students identified within the school or school district.
- A self-contained program for highly–profoundly gifted students is often (1) multi-aged, multi-grade classroom with (1) teacher-mentor and allows for like-minded peers, reciprocal interactions, and social-emotional development.
- Multiple school districts could collaborate and pool resources to offer the number of programs required by the total number of identified highly–profoundly gifted students within the district or state. This partnership provides the opportunity for camaraderie and a sense of belonging among the students and can be implemented through strategic reorganization without necessarily requiring additional program funding.

Minimum standard:

- **Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP**) with dedicated gifted student advocate. Gifted student advocate is responsible for implementing the gold standard outside of a self-contained program considering the student's needs, the options available, and any follow-up or adaptations needed. *note: resources for assistance with the development of gifted individual education programs (GIEPs) include The IGC, Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted and the Davidson Institute.
- For **twice-exceptional (2e)** students, the gifted student advocate collaborates with the family and school team in the development of the child's 504 Plan (the accommodations put into place to support the student's learning disabilities) while also supporting the child's GIEP. Elmbridge University is a great resource for twice-exceptional students.
- **Hybrid homeschooling, curriculum swapping, dual enrollment,** and other creative options are recommended for consideration in the development of GIEPs to retain highly–profoundly gifted students and to partner with families, to ensure the student's individual needs are met.

twice exceptional (2E): individuals who are gifted and also identified with a disorder (such as autism, ADHD, or other learning, hearing, visual, or physical impairment). For example an individual could be highly–profoundly gifted and have dyslexia.

Social Development
Gold standard:

- **Self-contained program** for highly–profoundly gifted students. The earlier the intervention, the better especially for social development. Self-contained programs for highly gifted students begin as early as pre-school.
- Provides opportunities to interact and learn with like-minded peers who demonstrate greater-than-typical intellectual, emotional, and imaginational sensitivity, intensity, and awareness, as well as tendencies toward higher autonomous forces, including self-initiation and self-education in areas of passion and interest.
- Offers the experience to interact with and "be" among others with similar developmental and educational needs. This experience has been found to provide the most authentic opportunities for developmentally appropriate social interactions, including the **"mirror effect,"** a human reciprocal need for validation, connection, and self-efficacy (DeWit & Wood, 2025).

mirror effect - seeing a reflection of yourself in others.

- Promotes healthy social development including positive self-concept and self-esteem. Provides opportunities to connect with others and to feel a sense of belonging (Neihart et al., 2021).
- Provides like-minded peers and teachers-mentors to be able to learn coping mechanisms such as: interpersonal skills, study skills, organization, time management, reciprocal conversations, emotional safety, trust, and regulation; to work effectively with themself and with others.
- Allows students to feel emotional and physically safe; to feel comfortable enough to be able to initiate or engage in play/interaction, to join an activity, to collaborate and to see other perspectives.
- Embraces developmental tendency towards more abstract fantasy play (imaginational overexcitability) and out-of-the-box thinking or big picture concepts and associations.
- Nurtures preference for authenticity, closeness, and trust in friendships; supports tendency for moral, judicial, or existential sensitivity and awareness (Guilbault et al., 2024; Wood et al., 2024).
- Openness to opportunities to incorporate ethics, values, culture in a safe environment that builds trust and develops bonds and an ecosystem that promotes community-based programs and service to others.

Minimum standard:

- **Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP)** with dedicated gifted student advocate. Gifted student advocate is responsible for implementing the gold standard outside of a self-contained program considering the student's needs, the options available, and any follow-up or adaptations needed.

Emotional Development
Gold standard:

- **Self-contained program** for highly–profoundly gifted students (particularly important during early development, i.e. elementary school). Provides the greatest opportunity to be around peers with similar developmental profiles, passions, and engagement styles.

- An environment where greater-than-typical emotional sensitivity, emotional intensity, and emotional awareness such as behaviors of greater-than-typical compassion and empathy may be expressed and reciprocated. Research demonstrated that multiple high overexcitability profiles are prevalent among highly–profoundly gifted (Gallagher, 2022; Guilbault et al., 2024; Wood et al., 2024).

- Teacher-mentors who have appropriate credentials and training in highly–profoundly gifted traits, behaviors, and development allowing for an emotionally safe, trusting, inclusive environment that encourages dialogue, rapport-building, and constructive debate and acceptance of other people, perspectives, and cultures.

- Teachers-mentors have experience in recognizing and supporting multiple, high overexcitability profiles prevalent in highly–profoundly gifted students.

- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and intervention for highly–profoundly gifted students facilitated by teacher-mentors who have training in asynchronous development and Dabrowski's human development theory, specific to overexcitabilities, levels of development, and developmental potential.

Minimum standard

- **Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP)** with dedicated gifted student advocate. Gifted student advocate is responsible for implementing the gold standard outside of a self-contained program considering the student's needs, the options available, and any follow-up or adaptations needed.

Physical Development
Gold standard:

- **Self-contained program** for highly–profoundly gifted students.

- Teachers trained in highly–profoundly gifted development including the prevalence of high psychomotor overexcitability combined with high emotional, intellectual, and imaginational overexcitabilities in highly–profoundly gifted children and adolescents (Gallagher, 2022; Guilbault et al., 2024; Wood et al., 2024).

- Incorporate continued training, research, and techniques including mindfulness, specific to the developmental importance of the mind-body connection, especially observable and documented in the highly–profoundly gifted population.

- Physical activity incorporated in the curriculum.

- Opportunities for movement and expression in nature and authentic learning environments.

- Access to support from occupational and other therapists as necessary for any physical developmental issues due to the prevalence of asynchronous development found in highly–profoundly gifted children (i.e. handwriting).

Minimum standard

- **Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP)** with dedicated gifted student advocate. Gifted student advocate is responsible for implementing the gold standard outside of a self-contained program considering the student's needs, the options available, and any follow-up or adaptations needed.

Cognitive Development
Gold standard

- **Self-contained program** for highly–profoundly gifted students. Provides the greatest opportunity to learn and develop with peers closest to their intellectual ability and development.
- If a **self-contained program** for highly–profoundly gifted students is not available, priority placement should be given for highly–profoundly gifted students into the gifted magnet or other alternative self-contained gifted programs such as, CHOICES LAUSD Unified, Criteria for Gifted/Highly Gifted Magnet Programs for Gifted Learners).
- Consider multiple forms of acceleration to implement the best fit for the individual needs of the student and the resources available.
- **Single-subject acceleration (SSA),** acceleration provided to the student in one subject area, can address the "appropriately challenging" requirement as recommended by Texas State Plan 3.3, 4.9 (See Educational Policy for Highly–Profoundly Gifted).
- **Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM),** awarding the student credit for a particular class, by showing proficiency in the course content, without requiring the student to enroll in the course such as, NC State Board of Education Policy CCRE-001.
- **Multi-Subject Acceleration (MSA),** acceleration provided to the student in one or more levels across two or more subjects.
- **Whole Grade Acceleration (WGA),** a thoughtful decision to have a student skip one or more grade levels, with demonstrated mastery of grade content, for the holistic benefit of the student. Including early entrance to kindergarten/first grade.
- **Radical Acceleration,** a thoughtful decision to have a student skip or progress through three or more years of subject levels or grades due to demonstrated mastery and holistic benefit of the student.
- Appropriate individual assessment for acceleration is recommended according to the gold standard, currently, the Iowa Acceleration Scale (Assouline et al., 2015).
- **Scaffolding**, supervision, and re-assessment should be considered and incorporated into the acceleration plans based on the student's individual needs.
- Consider options outside of traditional, systematic procedures (age, grade) while also maintaining appropriate educational safeguards to acceleration including careful developmental considerations, especially social-emotional development, and the implementation of scaffolding measures to support the advanced and often asynchronous development and holistic well-being of the child/adolescent.
- Allow flexibility for highly–profoundly gifted high school students who demonstrate an interest in AP courses without taking traditional honors courses as a prerequisite.
- If the state's community colleges and university system allows for placement through testing (i.e. SAT, ACT, AP), similar protocol could be implemented for acceleration placement for K-12 students. Community college, university, and/or **dual enrollment** classes could also be considered for placement purposes.

scaffolding: support put into place to nurture advanced development while also nurturing the natural asynchronous development that is often a result. For example: supervision of an elementary or middle school-aged student in a college lecture hall; role playing mature social situations or appropriate protocol in new situations/environments; exploring organizational skills/ time management that fit the student's unique learning needs, modalities, and environment.

Minimum standard:

- For districts without gifted magnet or school within a school (SWAS) programs, gifted student advocates are encouraged to group identified highly–profoundly gifted students together in the same schools or classrooms to maximize opportunities for ability grouping and to facilitate connections with true peers.
- **Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP)** with dedicated gifted student advocate. Gifted student advocate is responsible for implementing the gold standard outside of a self-contained program considering the student's needs, the options available, and any follow-up or adaptations needed.
- While gifted students can benefit from acceleration through honors, AP, and IB courses, dual enrollment and CDMs tend to be the more appropriate fit for the needs of highly–profoundly gifted learners.
- Consider **curriculum compacting** and curriculum designed for gifted students such as AoPS, CTY, Lukeion, Royal Fireworks, or other outside providers.
- Provide access to higher-level classes online (through local virtual public schools, Arizona State University, edX), thereby reducing geographical barriers.

curriculum compacting: moving rapidly through a curriculum that has already been mastered. Minnesota State law, MNGS 120B-20, allows parents to swap out any subject's curriculum and provide their own curriculum and teacher (See Educational Policy Supporting Highly–Profoundly Gifted).

Altruistic-Empathy Development
Gold standard:

- **Self-contained program** for highly–profoundly gifted. Provides the greatest opportunity for like-minded peers. Highly–Profoundly gifted students have a tendency for multiple high overexcitability profiles including heightened compassion, empathy, and existential awareness (Guilbault et al., 2024; Wood et al., 2024).
- Provides the most developmentally appropriate, emotionally and physically safe environment for the developing highly–profoundly gifted child/adolescent to express tendency for heightened levels of compassion, empathy, and existential awareness and to continue to develop and be supported in these areas.
- Thoughtful inclusion into the curriculum including philosophical discussions, social interactions, and empathy development.
- Opportunities for demonstration (such as community service or advocacy project) of higher-level, multi-faceted intellectual, emotional, and imaginational/creative experiences, feelings, and motivation for big picture execution or change.
- Curriculum that intentionally engages positive values, character, and self-acceptance.

Minimum standard

- **Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP)** with dedicated gifted student advocate. Gifted student advocate is responsible for implementing the gold standard outside of a self-contained program considering the student's needs, the options available, and any follow-up or adaptations needed.
- Like-minded mentors and practitioners essential including credentials and training in highly–profoundly gifted development.

STANDARD III: TEACHER-MENTOR TRAINING

Teacher-Mentor Training Gold Standard:

Teachers serving highly–profoundly gifted students are trained in the developmental and educational needs of highly–profoundly gifted students.

- Ideally with gifted certification and/or master's degree in gifted education from an accredited program. When available certification and/or training specific to highly–profoundly gifted students.
- Encouraged to attend annual professional development focused specifically on the needs of highly–profoundly gifted students.

Minimum standard:

- Professional development courses including: Dabrowski's overexcitabilities, asynchronous development, radical acceleration, advocacy and mentorship for highly–profoundly gifted students.
- Encouraged to subscribe to resources for highly–profoundly gifted students including The IGC, Research Center for Highly–Profoundly Gifted, Davidson Institute, BRIGHTLinks, Hoagies Gifted, PG Retreat, NAGC PG SIG, Belin-Blank Acceleration Institute, Vanderbilt Mentor Immersion, and more.

STANDARD IV: ADMINISTRATOR | PRINCIPAL TRAINING

Administrator | Principal Training Gold Standard:

Administrators and principals receive ongoing training specific to the identification of highly–profoundly gifted students including: Gifted education policies and the most up-to-date **Highly–Profoundly Gifted Gold Programming Standards** to ensure identification, acceleration, and support options are applied equitably across schools and across school districts.

Administrators and Principals

- Collaborate with the district's gifted coordinators to know who the identified highly–profoundly gifted students are in their district.
- Provide transparency, communication, and consistency on gifted services at every level of school, to all involved with services, including parents– allowing access to services for students who need gifted education services.
- Ensure ALL staff: all teachers (not just teachers in specialized gifted programs), administrators, guidance counselors, psychologists, and IEP/504 teams receive training in the individual needs of highly–profoundly gifted students.
- Require annual professional development on topics including: the developmental and educational needs of highly–profoundly gifted students, 2e students, overexcitabilities, asynchronous development.
- Partner with the local and State School Boards, Departments of Public Instruction, and AIG leadership to:
- Grant principals the authority to place students in a grade or any subject beyond regular acceleration policies and procedures as needed and appropriate (See Educational Policy Supporting Highly–Profoundly Gifted).
- Re-write district school codes for high school classes completed by students in elementary or middle school.
- Promote partnerships with federal schools, virtual schools, and state schools of Science and Math to increase access for highly–profoundly gifted elementary or middle students.

Minimum standard:

- All gifted education staff trained in the developmental and educational needs of highly–profoundly gifted students.
- Access webinars, conferences, and professional development courses and Continuing Education Credits (CECs) in-person or online.
- Contact The IGC, Research Center for Highly–Profoundly Gifted, Davidson Institute, BRIGHTLinks for training or referral.
- District gifted coordinators work closely with administrators and teachers on services for identified highly–profoundly gifted students.
- Implement the **Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards (2026)** to the best of ability.

STANDARD V: PARENT TRAINING

Parent Training Gold Standard:

Parent Training via Districts:

- Districts provide organized support groups for parents/families of highly–profoundly gifted students.
- Organize connections with local or virtually accessible support providers (psychologists, counselors, therapists, occupational/recreational therapists, social skills group facilitators, testing, etc) experienced in the identification of highly–profoundly gifted and programs/services offering educational and developmental support.

State gifted organizations:

- State gifted organizations offer conference sessions centered around highly–profoundly gifted students at every conference as an accessible resource for parents and gifted students, and for the training of educators and administrators.
- Partner with organizations that serve the needs of highly–profoundly gifted students to facilitate parent nights and other programs locally.

Minimum standard:

- Districts share resources with parents for appropriate support including: organizations, summer camps, academic and artistic programs, books, research, articles.
- Like-minded peer groups: PG Retreat, Vanderbilt Mentor Immersion, and programs such as MathILY, MathPath, Epsilon Camp, Concordia Language Villages, HIP-SAT, and others.
- Organizations serving highly–profoundly gifted: The IGC, Research Center Highly–Profoundly Gifted, Davidson Young Scholars, NAGC PG SIG, BRIGHTLinks, PAGE, and/or other local organizations.
- Curriculum resources such as: Stanford Online High School, Art of Problem Solving, Royal Fireworks Press, Athena's Advanced Academy, the Lukeion Project, Well-Trained Mind Academy, and other locally accessible virtual or in-person dual enrollment programs.
- Encouraged to subscribe to resources for highly–profoundly gifted students including The IGC, Research Center for Highly–Profoundly Gifted, Davidson Institute, BRIGHTLinks, Hoagies Gifted, PG Retreat, NAGC PG SIG, Belin-Blank Acceleration Institute, Vanderbilt Mentor Immersion, and more.

STANDARD VI: PROGRAM ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Program Assessment & Accountability Gold Standard:

- Gifted Coordinators assess current program(s) and document any missing needs that should be incorporated, based on the known needs of the highly–profoundly gifted students currently in the program.
- Gather feedback from students, teachers, and parents on existing programs and restructure prioritizing the most critical input/needs including annual surveys.
- Plan and implement strategies to address needed changes and concerns revealed in feedback and surveys.
- Include a parent of the district's local gifted support organization (board member) or representative parent from the existing program in formal discussions and any restructuring.
- Collaboratively prioritize and incorporate missing needs and feedback reviewed from all stakeholders involved with the assessment and evaluation process.
- It is recommended that The State Departments of Public Education/ Instruction encourage the local districts to implement the minimum standards of **Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards (2026)** to the best of their ability with strategic planning to work towards the Gold Standards over time.
- Produce and distribute **Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards (2026)** Annual Progress Report including: how training was applied; what improvements were made; what comes next.

Minimum standard:

- Implement the **Highly–Profoundly Gifted Programming Gold Standards (2026)** to the best of ability.

STANDARD VII: Highly–Profoundly GIFTED STUDENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

Highly–Profoundly Gifted Students have the right to:

1. Learn at the pace and depth commensurate with their ability, without being held back by age-based placement or linear-sequential protocol.

2. Access appropriately challenging educational programs during regular school hours, including acceleration and enrichment with intellectual peers for the advanced opportunities, social-emotional development, and peer support they need to thrive.

3. Be mentored by educators who understand the greater-than-typical developmental profiles and asynchronous development unique to highly–profoundly gifted learners.

4. Have their social-emotional well-being recognized as the top priority including support for heightened sensitivity, intensity, awareness that can contribute to perfectionism, anxiety, and the complex emotional make-up commonly found in highly–profoundly gifted individuals.

5. Be grouped with like-minded peers, not isolated, to be able to learn and share with others, and to experience belonging, camaraderie, and healthy identity formation.

6. Receive comprehensive, holistic assessment and identification by credentialed professionals without bias or subjectivity, using research-based understandings and tools that capture highly–profoundly gifted traits and development across diverse backgrounds and complex profiles.

7. The creation of gifted individual educational programs (GIEPs) that are implemented effectively, with transparency, consistency, and follow-through to provide access to developmental and educational growth and well-being for the student.

8. Learn something new every day and honor their natural love of learning and innate sense of direction and motivation.

9. Follow their intuitive senses; to be allowed to learn in accelerated, nonlinear, or uneven ways that reflect their developmental trajectory.

10. Have their early advocacy needs met by their parents as partners in their education, holistic development, and well-being; to have role models for self-advocacy.

11. Access alternative educational pathways, including hybrid homeschooling, curriculum swapping, early college, online advanced classes, and dual enrollment as appropriate for their individual development.

12. Meaningful transparency and accountability from all stakeholders including annual progress reports, program enhancements, ongoing training, and supportive measures to reach individual and program goals.

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