

GIFTED EDUCATION in the NEW HOPE-SOLEBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Philosophy

The gifted program is designed to address individual academic needs according to identified abilities, interests, and academic standards. It consists of challenging, diverse, and complex experiences. The program provides an atmosphere that allows for personal growth, enhancement of individual creativity, expanding levels of academic attainments, practicing a variety of problem-solving strategies, and development of leadership skills. The curricula provides students with opportunities for in-depth explorations of self-selected topics, interdisciplinary study, and accelerated content.

Our Program

In the New Hope – Solebury School District, services are provided in many forms, from direct instruction to monitoring and consultation. Students may be referred as possible candidates by school personnel or parents. At this time, there is a two-tiered evaluation process. The candidate is given an intelligence screening usually by the school counselor in the form of the K-BIT Kauffman Brief Intelligence Test. The results of this screening are reviewed along with parent and teacher input. Depending on the scores from these instruments, a recommendation for a more comprehensive evaluation may follow. This evaluation consists of an individual intellectual assessment and individual achievement tests administered by the school psychologist.

Students are identified according to the Pennsylvania state standards as "mentally gifted" through the use of multiple criteria. A score two standard deviations above the mean score or above, approximately 130 on an individual intellectual assessment and other educational criteria indicating gifted ability are components of state and local districts' processes for identification. Other criteria may include scores from standardized tests, input from classroom teachers, specialists, and other school staff, and information reported by parents. This information is compiled into a Gifted Written Report (GWR) and reviewed by school personnel and parents.

If the determination is made that the student is mentally gifted and in need of specially designed instruction, the Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP) Team meets to discuss program implications. This team consists of school personnel, parents, and may include the student. At this meeting, a Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP) is developed collectively by team members, based upon the strengths and needs of the student. Goals and objectives are articulated in this plan, along with specially designed instruction that will help to ensure that the gifted student's individual needs are being met.

The philosophy of the overall Gifted Support Program reflects the district's belief that the school, home, and community are responsible for our students' education and enrichment. There is ongoing collaboration between the gifted support teacher and general education teachers to ensure continuity in differentiating instruction for the students in the general education environment. In addition, there are opportunities for communication between parents and the gifted support teacher at report card conference times and annual GIEP review meetings.