

## DO YOU KNOW A CHILD WHO DEMONSTRATES THESE CHARACTERISTICS?



- Has advanced oral and/or written language skills; expressive language?
- Makes unique connections; understands systems; see the "big picture"?
- Ask many questions; seek in-depth information?
- Is resourceful at finding unique solutions?
- Exhibits keen powers of observation; is highly sensitive and insightful?
- Has broad, intense, varied and sustained interests, sometimes simultaneously; transfers learning to new situations?
- Exhibits an early moral concern; is empathetic?
- Is nonconforming; risk-taking; independent?
- Makes non-traditional responses and/or products?

**Then you may know a child who is Talented & Gifted!**

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE IDENTIFIED AS TAG?

**Purpose:** TAG serves students who, when compared with others of their age/grade level, require learning experiences beyond the standard curriculum. TAG programs seek to provide an educational experience at the student's rate and level of learning.

**Referral:** Students may be referred for TAG identification and testing by a teacher, parent, or they may refer themselves. In addition, they may be automatically identified through standardized state test scores.

**Identification:** Oregon students qualify for TAG when they are in the top 3% on any nationally normed test of achievement or aptitude and there is additional evidence suggesting high ability. A committee in each building identifies students for TAG. Parents have a right to appeal this decision.

**Programs and Services:** The curriculum and instruction provided to identified TAG students must address their accelerated rate of learning and their advanced level of learning as determined by assessments.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TRAITS OF A GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILD?

A gifted student often, but not always:

- Has **advanced** math skills and/or oral and/or written language skills; uses expressive language
- **Learns** a second language quickly
- Makes unique **connections**; understands systems; sees the "big picture"
- Asks many questions; seeks **in-depth** information
- Is **nonconforming**; risk-taking; independent
- Has broad, **varied** and often intense and sustained interests, which are, at times, simultaneous
- Is **resourceful** at finding solutions
- Exhibits keen powers of **observation**
- Is highly **sensitive** and insightful
- Exhibits a moral **concern** early on; is empathetic
- Makes **nontraditional** responses and/or products
- May reach, or have reached from infancy, normal developmental **milestones** earlier than other students

Research has found that **parents are usually good at identifying giftedness** in their children.

## WHY IS TAG EDUCATION IMPORTANT?

Children are not all the same: every child has unique needs and strengths. Gifted students are **special-needs** students but they have the same right to learn as all other students. Inappropriate classroom instruction **harms** them in many ways. Failure to provide appropriate instruction causes these students to **lose interest** in school or in learning, unnecessarily reduces their achievement, often leads students to become depressed or frustrated, and undermines their trust in adults. Access to appropriate curriculum and instruction is a **right**, not a reward. When students are taught at an appropriate level, they become engaged in learning

## WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF BEING IDENTIFIED BY AN OREGON SCHOOL AS TALENTED AND GIFTED?

Identifying a student as gifted alerts the school to the need to make appropriate changes to meet the student's **accelerated rate and advanced level of learning**. This allows for the development of their academic and personal potential. Research has found that TAG students make greater gains in achievement when instruction is adapted to their needs. On the other hand, when the needs of gifted students are overlooked, they often become disengaged from school.

## HOW DOES OREGON DEFINE TAG STUDENTS?

Talented and gifted education in Oregon is a needs-based program. Not every student requires accelerated learning and more depth and complexity in instruction. TAG is designed to meet the intellectual and academic needs of a specific population of high ability learners.

In 1987, the Oregon Talented and Gifted Education Act was passed, **requiring** Oregon public school districts to identify and to serve students who demonstrate evidence of high intellectual ability or academic talent. This Act defines TAG students as follows: "Talented and gifted children" means those children who require special educational programs or services, or both, beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society and who demonstrate outstanding ability or potential in one or more of the following areas:

- General **intellectual** ability as commonly measured by measures of intelligence and aptitude.
- Unusual **academic** ability in one or more academic areas.
- **Creative** ability in using original or nontraditional methods in thinking and producing.
- **Leadership** ability in motivating the performance of others either in educational or non-educational settings.
- Ability in the **visual** or **performing arts**, such as dance, music or art.

## HOW DOES A STUDENT "APPLY" FOR TAG IDENTIFICATION?

There are many ways a student may be identified as needing assessment to determine if they are Talented and Gifted. Teachers and parents may refer students or students they may refer themselves. In addition, they may be identified through standardized state test scores. Parents must consent to any student testing that is administered in addition to the state tests.

## WHAT GRADE DO STUDENTS HAVE TO BE IN TO BE TAG IDENTIFIED?

TAG in Oregon is a **K-12** program. Students may be identified at any grade level.

## WHAT TESTS DO STUDENTS TAKE?

According to state law, students qualify for TAG by demonstrating either exceptional aptitude or exceptional achievement in math or reading as measured on a **nationally standardized test**. In addition, there **must be at least one additional source of information about the student**.

Nationally standardized tests of aptitude include, but are not limited to the:

- Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test (NNAT or Naglieri)
- Raven's Progressive Matrices (RPM)
- Cognitive Achievement Test (CogAT)
- Stanford-Binet aptitude test
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)
- Nationally normed achievement tests include the:
  - Aprenda 3 (in Spanish)
  - Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
  - Supera (in Spanish)
  - Terra Nova
- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT)
- Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Test

Some tests may be administered to groups while others are given to individual students. Districts choose the tests that are given but they must offer both achievement and aptitude testing. The scores from the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) may also be used.

#### **WHO DETERMINES IF A STUDENT IS TAG?**

State law requires that a **team of educators** at the building level review all information to determine if a student qualifies for TAG. This team, working with the student's parents, teacher, TAG coordinator, and principal, makes the final determination based on test scores, work samples, behavioral traits, and other factors.

#### **HOW LONG DOES THE QUALIFICATION PROCESS TAKE?**

Testing and data collection can take **4-6 weeks**. The Oregon Department of Education considers "best practices" to be no more than 30 working days or six weeks. Some districts have established procedures and timelines for identification to accommodate the number of students referred for assessment

#### **MUST SCHOOLS PROVIDE A WRITTEN PLAN FOR TAG STUDENTS?**

State law does **not** require a written individual student plan, but some districts do provide them. Whether or not written plans are required, OATAG recommends parent-teacher consultations whenever needed. Parents should also document any unusual learning activities that their child engages in, so they have this information for other teachers down the road.