



# Lake Oconee Academy

## *Gifted Education Manual* **2023-2024**

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# Forward & Gifted Definition

This resource manual is to serve as a guide for teachers, administrators, and families to understand gifted procedures at Lake Oconee Academy, in accordance with the State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38. All regulations and protocols described in this manual are consistent with that law. Under Georgia's adoption of the State Board of Education Rule 160-8-.38, Georgia law requires procedures and plans be specified for stakeholders of an educational institution.

The State of Georgia defines gifted education as “students who demonstrate a high degree of intellectual, creative, and/or artistic abilities, possess exceptional leadership skills, or excel in specific academic fields and who need special instruction and/or special ancillary services to achieve at levels commensurate with their abilities.”

(Code: IDDD Georgia Department of Education, Gifted Regulations 160-4-2-.38 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR GIFTED STUDENTS)

Lake Oconee Academy supports educational experiences that enable all students to learn. The academy believes that educational experiences should be personalized in ways to promote executive functioning, create perceptive thinking, support self-efficacy, and grow young learners to develop into contributing citizens.

This manual identifies the regulations and protocols that must guide and protect the practices of gifted education, while preserving the integrity of academics at Lake Oconee Academy. Teachers who serve gifted students must be familiar with the content of this manual and expected to fulfill their educational duties and responsibilities to meet the needs of gifted identified students in their classrooms.

# Gifted Eligibility Guidelines

## Policies governing eligibility under option A and B:

1. In compliance with Georgia Department of Education Rule 160-4-2-.38, evaluation data for students referred to the gifted program is gathered in four areas, **Mental Ability, Achievement, Creativity, and Motivation** for all referred students.
2. Eligibility may be determined either under Option A or B (State Rule 160-4-2-.38). Always qualify students under Option B if data supports both options.
3. Any test score to qualify a student should be current within two years.
4. Outside data should be considered when determining eligibility, but it does not supersede school-generated data.

## Georgia Department of Education Gifted Eligibility Chart

Category & Test	Option A	Option B
	Student must have a qualifying score in the Mental Ability and Achievement Category.	Student must qualify in three of the four categories.
<b>Mental Ability</b>  Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades K-2: 99% composite score on a nationally age normed mental ability test</li> <li>• Grades 3-12: ≥96th% composite score on a nationally age normed mental ability test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades K-12: ≥96th% composite OR appropriate component score on a nationally age normed mental ability tests</li> </ul>
<b>Achievement</b>  Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)  Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test (PSAT)  Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades K-12: ≥90th% Total Reading, Total Math, or Complete Battery on a nationally normed achievement test</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades K-12: ≥90th% Total Reading, Total Math, or Complete Battery on a nationally normed achievement test</li> <li>• Grades K-12: Superior product/performance with a score ≥90 on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators</li> </ul>
<b>Creativity</b>  Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT)  Profile of Creative Abilities (PCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation data required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades K-12: ≥90th% on composite score on a nationally normed creativity test</li> <li>• Grades K-12: Rating scales used to qualify student creativity must equate to the 90th%</li> <li>• Grades K-12: Superior product/performance with a score ≥90 on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel of three or more qualified evaluators</li> </ul>
<b>Motivation</b>  Grades K-8 Gifted Rating Scale (GRS) Motivation Subscale  Grades 6-12 Grade Point Average (GPA 3.5 or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation data required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grades 6-12: Two year average of a 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale in regular core subjects of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, science, and full year world languages.</li> <li>• Grades K-12: Rating scales used to qualify student motivation must equate to the 90th%</li> <li>• Grades K-12: Superior product/performance/structured observation with a score ≥90 on a scale of 1-100, as evaluated by a panel</li> </ul>

		of three or more qualified evaluators
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# Gifted Eligibility Team

Lake Oconee Academy follows state requirements for gifted eligibility. The gifted eligibility team consists of highly qualified teachers who will determine a student’s eligibility based on scoring in the Mental Abilities, Achievement, Creativity, and Motivation categories.

Included in our eligibility team are the following members:

Kalie McDaniel, Gifted Teacher & Coordinator - [kalie.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org](mailto:kalie.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org)

Katelyn Mellow, Lower School Director - [katelyn.mellow@lakeoconeeacademy.org](mailto:katelyn.mellow@lakeoconeeacademy.org)

Beverly Montgomery, Upper School Director - [beverly.montgomery@lakeoconeeacademy.org](mailto:beverly.montgomery@lakeoconeeacademy.org)

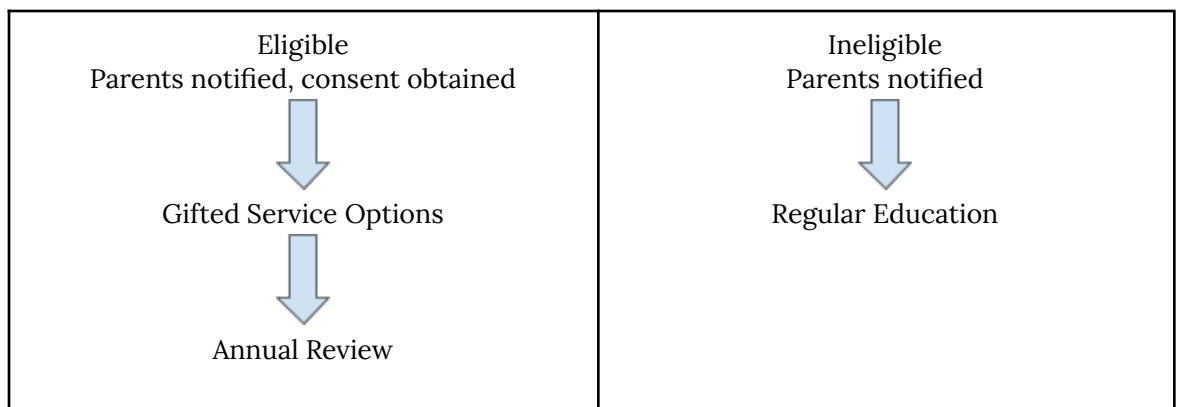
# Referral Process

<p><b>Step 1 Referral</b></p>	<p><b>Reported Referral</b> Referral made by a teacher, administrator, counselor, parents/guardians, peer, self, or others with knowledge of the students academic abilities.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p><b>Automatic Referral</b> Referral made by students who score at specified levels on nationally norm-referenced tests.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
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<p><b>Step 2 Student Search Eligibility Team</b></p>	<p><b>Student Search/Eligibility Team</b> A decision-making team reviews referrals and related evidence. The team then decides whether to continue with an evaluation.</p>		
	<p>No action at this time; student continues in regular education programs.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>Refer for evaluation for the Gifted Education Program; Obtain parental consent.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>Gather additional information; decision cannot be made at this time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>

<p><b>Step 3 Formal Evaluation if Needed</b></p>	<p>Not eligibility; parents notified.</p>	<p>Formal Evaluation: Administer Assessment Measures and compile results: Mental Ability, Achievement, Creativity, Motivation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>Repeat process.</p>
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<p><b>Step 4 Recommendations Eligibility Team</b></p>	<p>The Eligibility Team evaluates assessment data and makes recommendations for eligibility or ineligibility.</p>
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# Referral Process Explained

The referral process at Lake Oconee Academy supports three options for student referral into the gifted program. Option 1 follows reported referral. Once evidence is collected, the eligibility team will decide whether to continue with an evaluation. Option 2 supports an automatic referral process determined by student scores on nationally norm-referenced tests. Option 3 supports in-state reciprocity. A student with in-state gifted eligibility transferring from another state-funded school or district in the state of Georgia is eligible to receive gifted services at Lake Oconee Academy.

# Assessment

## School-Wide Assessment

Lake Oconee Academy systematically assesses students in the area of achievement through the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA/MAP) assessment. Scores from this assessment are used to screen students for further evaluation and consideration for gifted services.

## Gifted Program Assessment

The following assessments are state supported assessments used during the formal evaluation step of the gifted eligibility process. The gifted testing process will not begin until parents have reviewed, signed, and returned the testing consent form. A multitude of tests will be used to determine if a student at Lake Oconee Academy is eligible for the gifted program. Once testing is complete, a panel of three or more individuals will review testing data.

Mental Ability	Achievement	Creativity	Motivation
Options	Options	Options	Options
Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)	Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Profile of Creative Abilities (PCA)	Grades K-8 Gifted Rating Scale (GRS) Motivation Subscale
Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)	Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test (PSAT)  Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT)	Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT)	Grades 6-12 Grade Point Average (GPA 3.5 or higher)

## Out-of-System and Private Assessment

Outside data will be considered but does not automatically enroll a student into the gifted program. Outside data will be reviewed prior to establishing eligibility.

## Assessment Security and Confidentiality

The gifted coordinator is responsible for managing and controlling all assessments materials related to the eligibility process. Copyrighted assessment results cannot be communicated to anyone except a parent, legal guardian, or an educator whose professional role requires access to the information.

## Gifted Assessment Window

Depending upon the age and needs of the student, testing will require one to four days of one hour sessions. Once tests are administered, eligibility will be determined and parents will be notified within 30 days of testing completion.



# Curriculum Guidelines and Gifted Service Delivery Models

## Curriculum Guidelines

Lake Oconee Academy is committed to offering all students a highly rigorous curriculum that is developmentally appropriate to support academic growth. Curriculum is designed based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence. All teachers will incorporate components of personalized learning into daily activities. Through personalized learning, students will be provided with educational opportunities that value learner differences, promote student agency, provide for authentic learning experiences, and fully support individualized pathways.

To better meet the educational needs of gifted identified students, personalized learning will foster individualized pathways that challenge and enrich the educational experiences for each child. Teachers will also incorporate differentiated instruction to meet the needs of gifted learners. Differentiated instruction is based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms through content, process, product, and environment (Tomlinson, 2011).

## Expectations for differentiation of content, process, product, and environment

**Content:** Complex and challenging subject matter that:

- Requires intellectual struggle
- Includes primary documents
- Integrates research skills and methods
- Incorporates relevant and real-life experiences
- Integrates interdisciplinary connections

**Process:** Instructional strategies are designed to:

- Emphasize higher-ordering thinking problem-solving and communication skills
- Foster self-initiated and self-directed learning
- Promote creative application of ideas
- Model and encourage academic discussion

**Product:** Gifted student products should demonstrate a developmentally appropriate capacity for:

- Self-directed learning
- Meaningful collaboration
- Effective problem solving of challenging and complex issues
- Effective communication

- Social and emotional understanding of self relative to community, culture, and physical environment

**Environment:** Physical setting and work conditions to:

- Change the actual place where students work
- Allow flexible time
- Provide opportunities for independent study and in-depth research
- Provide opportunities for mentorship

## **Delivery Models**

### ***Elementary (K-4)***

The gifted program at the elementary school level follows a direct service model referred to as Resource. In this model, identified gifted students are taught academic content with a foundation in the Georgia curriculum standards, but teaching and learning focuses on interdisciplinary enrichment activities and not any one content area. The content and pacing are both differentiated to reflect that teaching is learning is above and beyond in a sense that it would not be appropriate for students who are not identified as gifted but are the same age or in the same grade level.

### ***Middle (5-8)***

The gifted program at the middle school level follows a direct service model referred to as Cluster Grouping. In this model, identified gifted students are placed as a group into heterogeneous classrooms. Curriculum differentiation for gifted students will be put in place and followed in the classroom. Gifted students will learn in ways that support advanced course content, alternate teaching strategies to meet gifted learners, advanced pacing, and advanced processing skills.

**Lake Oconee Academy  
Gifted Program**

**Permission to Test**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Your child has been referred for further assessment for gifted identification purposes. We test in the areas of mental abilities, motivation and creativity, following the achievement indicator with the NWEA/MAP Assessment. The results of these assessments help determine whether your child should be receiving specialized educational services under the gifted program. This identification process is in compliance with state guidelines.

Before beginning these assessment, our LOA school nurse, Ms. Jessica Tolbert will perform a basic hearing and vision screening on your child. Please see the attached form and sign and return this as soon as possible. The next step in the process is starting the gifted assessment process. Upon completion of testing, parents/guardians will be notified of the test results. Please keep in mind that the testing process could take multiple weeks.

Your permission is required to test your child for gifted identification. Please indicate your preference below and turn this form to your child's homeroom teacher or myself as soon as possible.

Sincerely,  
Kalie McDaniel  
Gifted Teacher & Coordinator, Lake Oconee Academy  
(706) 454-1562, ext. 7704  
kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for my student to be tested for the Gifted Program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not give permission for my student to be tested for the Gifted Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Authorization to Release Gifted Records**

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To (Person/Agency Releasing Records)

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Address

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City

State

Zip

You are hereby authorized to release confidential information on the following student:

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Former School: \_\_\_\_\_

Present School: \_\_\_\_\_

These records may be forwarded to:

Lake Oconee Academy

Kalie McDaniel, Gifted Teacher & Coordinator

1021 Titan Circle

Greensboro, Georgia 30642

Email records request to: [kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org](mailto:kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org)

Information to be releases:

Eligibility Report

Annual Review

Placement for Gifted Services

Reason for release: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to students: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please assist in the provision of adequate services for this child by handling this request as quickly as possible.



Eligibility Decision

- \_\_\_\_\_ Student is not eligible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student is eligible through 2 out of 4 criteria.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student is eligible through 3 out of 4 criteria.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student is eligible through reciprocity from another Georgia county.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Administrator \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, I agree for my child to be enrolled in the gifted program at Lake Oconee Academy. I understand that my child's placement will be reviewed annually. I have received a copy of the continuation plan. Services will begin once permission from the parent/guardian.

Parent/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Gaurdian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Please sign and return this Eligibility Report.*

*I have made an additional copy (enclosed) for you to keep in your records.*

If you have any questions, please contact Katelyn Mellow, LOA Lower School Director.

Sincerely,  
Kalie McDaniel  
Gifted Teacher & Coordinator, Lake Oconee Academy  
(706) 454-1562, ext. 7704  
kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org

**Lake Oconee Academy**  
**Gifted Program**

***Eligibility Letter***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for allowing your child to be tested for the gifted program at Lake Oconee Academy. As noted on the Gifted Services Eligibility Form, your child meets the eligibility requirements for the gifted program. If you would like your child to participate in the program, please sign the enclosed forms and return them within 3 business days.

Lake Oconee Academy is committed to offering all students a highly rigorous curriculum that is developmentally appropriate to support academic growth. Curriculum is designed based on the Georgia Standards of Excellence. All teachers will incorporate components of personalized learning into daily activities. Through personalized learning, students will be provided with educational opportunities that value learner differences, promote student agency, provide for authentic learning experiences, and fully support individualized pathways.

To better meet the educational needs of gifted identified students, personalized learning will foster individualized pathways that challenge and enrich the educational experiences for each child. Teachers will also incorporate differentiated instruction to meet the needs of gifted learners. Differentiated instruction is based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students in classrooms through content, process, product, and environment (Tomlinson, 2011).

Gifted curriculum for your child will begin once we receive signed forms granting permission to serve your child in the gifted program.

Thank you for your support. If you have any questions, please contact Kalie McDaniel, LOA Lower School Director.

Sincerely,

Kalie McDaniel

*Gifted Teacher & Coordinator*, Lake Oconee Academy

(706) 454-1562, ext. 7704

[kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org](mailto:kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org)

**Lake Oconee Academy  
Gifted Program**

***Ineligibility Letter***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your patience during this period of evaluation for the gifted program. It has been a pleasure to meet and work with your student.

Information about your student has been gathered and evaluated. Your child is not eligible for gifted services at this time. Your student's scores are listed on the attached eligibility report. Additional consideration will be provided through school-wide evaluations. In the future, your student will automatically be referred for testing if he or she achieves specified scores for gifted consideration.

Thank you for your support. If you have any questions, please contact Kalie McDaniel, LOA Gifted Coordinator.

Sincerely,

Kalie McDaniel

*Gifted Teacher & Coordinator, Lake Oconee Academy*

(706) 454-1562, ext. 7704

[kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org](mailto:kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org)



**Lake Oconee Academy  
Gifted Program**

**Notice of Probation Letter**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Your student, \_\_\_\_\_, is being placed on academic probation for gifted services for the following reasons:

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During the probation period, your child will continue to receive gifted services and his/her performance will be closely monitored. A meeting will be held between the regular classroom teacher, the grade level instructional coordinator, and the gifted coordinator to determine why the student is not performing as expected and a **Gifted Plan of Improvement** will be developed to include goals, strategies, and an evaluation criteria to be used by the teachers. Parental and student involvement is encouraged.

After a probationary period of nine school weeks, your student's academic performance will be evaluated to determine if he/she meets the following Gifted Program Continuation Policy:

- Grades K - Achieves Meets or Exceeds in classes where he/she is being served for gifted.
- Grades 1-8 - Achieves 85% class average or above in classes where he/she is being served for gifted.
- Grades 9-12 - Achieves a 90% class average or above in classes where he/she is being served.

If your student does not demonstrate satisfactory performance as outlined above, and gifted services no longer seem appropriate, a final review will be made by classroom teachers, the grade level appropriate instructional coordinator, and the gifted coordinator to determine if services will be discontinued.

You will be notified in writing of this decision and what he/she must do in order to resume receiving gifted services.

If you have any further questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Kalie McDaniel

*Gifted Teacher & Coordinator*, Lake Oconee Academy

(706) 454-1562, ext. 7704

[kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org](mailto:kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org)

**Lake Oconee Academy  
Gifted Program**

***Probation Successfully Completed Letter***

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Your student, \_\_\_\_\_, has met the terms of his/her Gifted Plan of Improvement and the criteria required to meet Lake Oconee Academy's Gifted Program Continuation Policy. Therefore, he/she is no longer on probation for gifted service. We hope that we continue to see improved work habits in your student.

Please remind your student of the importance of keeping up with assignments daily and reaching out to his/her teachers at the first sign of academic problems.

Thank you for your continued support. Working together, we can certainly expect to see continued success.

Sincerely,  
Kalie McDaniel  
*Gifted Teacher & Coordinator*, Lake Oconee Academy  
(706) 454-1562, ext. 7704  
kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org

**Lake Oconee Academy  
Gifted Program**

**Probation Not Successfully Completed/Discontinuation of Services Letter**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Your student, \_\_\_\_\_, has not met the terms of his/her Gifted Plan of Improvement and the criteria required to meet Lake Oconee Academy's Gifted Program Continuation Policy. Therefore, gifted services for your student will be discontinued effective: \_\_\_\_\_.

Reinstatement of gifted services will be provided if your students meets the Gifted Program Continuation Policy:

- K-12: Additional consideration will be provided through school-wide evaluations. Your student will automatically be referred for testing if he or she achieves specified scores for gifted consideration.

If you have any further questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,  
Kalie McDaniel  
Gifted Teacher & Coordinator, Lake Oconee Academy  
(706) 454-1562, ext. 7704  
kaile.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org

**Lake Oconee Academy**  
**Gifted Program**

***Continuation of Gifted Services***

According to Georgia Department of Education, Gifted Program Regulations, and Procedures, the performance of students receiving gifted education services will be evaluated annually. This will include evaluation of performance in the regular classroom as well as in the gifted education program.

- Parents of students whose performance is deemed satisfactory will be notified of the recommendation for continuation in the gifted program.
  
- Following each grading period, when a student's performance is deemed unsatisfactory in either the regular classroom or the gifted education classroom, the parent(s) will be notified. The gifted teacher, Lead Gifted Teacher, and parents will meet together to create a Plan of Improvement. The student will then be placed on probation for the following nine-week grading period. The student will continue to receive gifted education services during the probationary period and should work on their Plan. At the conclusion of the probationary period, the student's progress will be reviewed. If the student has been able to remediate the deficiency, and show satisfactory gains on their Plan of Improvement, then placement in the gifted program will continue

Once a student has been withdrawn from the gifted program or advanced content area, (s)he will be eligible to re-enter the program/advanced content class when the student meets the eligibility criteria in place at the time of the request. The assessment data present at the time of re-entry shall not be more than two years old.

**GUIDELINES:**

In order to participate in the Greene County School District's program for gifted students, a student must meet the following grade point average (GPA) requirements, which will be checked by the Lead Gifted Teacher as follows:

Satisfactory Performance- Elementary

Satisfactory performance in the regular and gifted classrooms shall be based on:

“E” (Excellent) or “S” (Satisfactory) in the academic classes.

Meets or Exceeds in gifted class with an average of at least 85 in all academic classes.

Satisfactory Performance- Middle School

Satisfactory performance in the gifted classrooms is defined as:

Meets or Exceeds in gifted class with an average of at least 85 in all academic classes.

3.0 GPA in the gifted class, or a “B” Average.

**Re-Entry**

Students who have exited from the program due to unsatisfactory performance on a Plan of Improvement may re-enter the gifted program when satisfactory performance has been demonstrated for one school year. Anyone eligible for making a referral may refer a student for re-entry. The Re-Entry Form will be used to apply for reinstatement of gifted education services. Once the Re-Entry Form is completed, the local school Eligibility Team will determine the process of re-entry. Depending on the length of time since the student exited the program, new assessment data may need to be obtained.

Students who exit the gifted program for reasons other than unsatisfactory performance may also re-enter the program. The Re-Entry Form should be used to indicate an interest in re-entering the program.

**Annual Review**

Each spring an Annual Review of Progress must be completed for each gifted student by the designated teacher of the Gifted in collaboration with the student's regular classroom teachers. The annual review form is shared with the parents or guardians each year. This form includes the type of gifted education services that will be provided during the next school year. The Annual Review form is housed in the student's gifted education file and a copy is sent to the student's parents or guardians each year.

Please sign the following to indicate that you read the Gifted Procedures on continued service and probation. Please email Kalie McDaniel at [kalie.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org](mailto:kalie.mcdaniel@lakeoconeeacademy.org) if you have any questions or concerns.

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Student Name

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Parent Signature

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Date