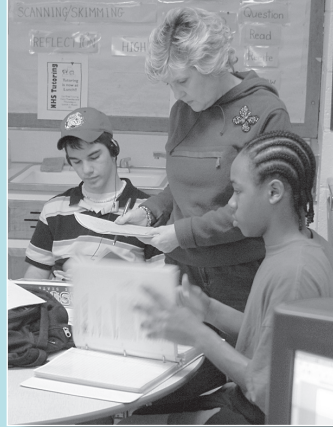


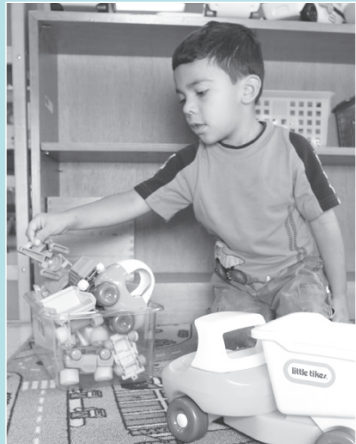
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Twice Exceptional Students

A Parent Guide



Does your gifted child face learning challenges?



ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

How many of these characteristics fit your child?

- Strong thinking skills, large vocabulary, and extensive background knowledge, but struggles with basic writing skills.
- Creative and sensitive, but struggles with following basic directions.
- Strong memory for details of historical events, but struggles with remembering new spelling rules or multiplication facts.
- Loves to be read to and has a depth of verbal understanding, but struggles with reading.

If you answered *Yes* to most of these, you may be interested in learning more about gifted and learning disabled (GT/LD) children. This information is designed to help parents—

- understand the characteristics of a GT/LD child;
- identify best practices related to helping these children; and
- know what programs, services, and resources are available for them in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

Characteristics of a GT/LD child

- Outstanding intellectual, academic, and/or artistic talents.
- Disability in reading, mathematics, and spoken or written language that leads to significantly low achievement, below his/her intellectual level.

Masking: Challenges to identifying a GT/LD child

The challenge of identifying a disability in a very bright child is referred to as *masking*. In all cases of masking, children may not receive the services they need to extend their strengths and support their special needs. Masking may appear as follows:

1. A significantly gifted child with a learning disability may appear to some

- as gifted but lazy and unmotivated.
2. A significantly disabled GT/LD child may appear to some as learning disabled and/or not very smart.
3. A GT/LD child with significant strengths and needs may appear to some as average.

How to recognize and identify a GT/LD child as gifted

- Many GT/LD children are recognized as gifted by their parents or teachers, who see their talents.
- Some are recognized as gifted when their strengths are revealed through assessments given to identify their learning disability.
- Some are recognized as gifted as a result of global screening for all Grade 2 students. However, the disability may have a negative impact on the child's performance.

How to recognize and identify a GT/LD child as learning disabled

Many GT/LD children are identified as learning disabled through special education procedures. A child may show problems in writing, organizing, reading, and remembering facts in class. (See www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/parents/programs/specialed/—or contact your school for an explanation of special educa-

Special Programs and Services in MCPS

GT/LD Programs

Special GT/LD programs serve those gifted students with significant academic deficits who are unable to access rigorous instruction in their home schools. A student may be referred for an alternative placement by his/her school IEP team. The IEP team includes input from parents and staff in making a final determination for appropriate special education services.

Application and Choice Programs

- **Elementary School:** Centers for the Highly Gifted
- **Middle School:** Magnet programs, Consortia schools
- **High School:** Magnet programs, International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, Signature programs, academies, Consortia schools.

See www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/parents/programs/specialprograms/ for more information on all available programs.

Services for Staff and Students in Neighborhood Schools

- **Consultation:** The instructional specialist for GT/LD programs in the Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI) provides consultation to schools regarding programming options for individual students. A request for consultation may be made through the special education supervisor of the school cluster.
- **Professional Development:** The GT/LD instructional specialist in AEI provides customized training and information to schools and parent groups, upon request.
- **Wings:** This mentor program matches an adult with a GT/LD student. The mentor supports the student with his/her disability while the student works on an enrichment project.

tion procedures, if you think you have a GT/LD child.)

How MCPS addresses learning challenges for GT/LD students

MCPS provides the following critical services for GT/LD children:

- Accelerated and enriched instruction in the student's area of strength (See www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/parents/programs/specialprograms/ for more

information on special programs and accelerated and enriched instruction in all schools.)

- Opportunities for instruction in skills and strategies in the academic areas in which a child has a disability
- Customized instructional aids and accommodations for each child.
- Comprehensive monitoring of student by case manager to coordinate all aspects of a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Resources

- GT/LD Information (MCPS Web site)
Twice Exceptional Students: Supporting the Achievement of Gifted Students with Special Needs (MCPS publication)
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/mcpsprograms/gtld/index.shtm
- Special Education Information (MCPS Web site)
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/parents/programs/specialed
- Application and Choice Programs Information (MCPS Web site)
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/parents/programs/specialprograms/
- Wings Mentor Program Information (MCPS Web site)
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/enriched/mcpsprograms/wings/index.shtm

Parents are encouraged to contact school-based staff to answer initial questions.

Contact the MCPS, GT/LD Instructional Specialist
Accelerated and Enriched Instruction
301-309-6272
Marisa_R_Stemple@mcpsmd.org

This document is available in an alternate format, upon request, under the Americans with Disabilities Act, by contacting the Public Information Office, at 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 112, Rockville, MD 20850, or by phone at 301-279-3391 or via the Maryland Relay at 1-800-735-2258.

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