Frequently Asked Questions

1.) What if my child misses qualifying for gifted services by one point on the ability test?

Because state criteria consider the Standard Error of Measurement, there is typically a 3-5-point —benefit of the doubt— window below the qualifying score. To be excluded from service your child’s score would actually have to be below that extra window; the criteria have already allowed for close scores to qualify. (For further details on this, please see the section on Standard Error of Measurement.) Eligibility for service is determined by a student’s best scores over a 24-month period, which allows a child numerous opportunities to be tested and achieve qualifying scores. Please see the answer to the next question for additional information about re-testing and about learning opportunities in the regular classroom.

2.) My child does not meet the criteria for receiving gifted services, yet s/he is bored in the regular classroom. Is there a way that s/he can participate in the gifted classes? When should we consider outside testing for our child?

While we realize that relying on test scores to qualify students for gifted services is not a perfect system, it remains the best system for that purpose. It is always regrettable when the eligibility criteria eliminate a student who seems a good candidate for those services. Additional testing opportunities occur each school year, and these offer additional chances for a student’s abilities to be recognized.

Occasionally, though, there is a student who does not perform well on group tests, and yet everyone seems to know that this child is gifted. In such cases, some families have considered the option of outside one-on-one testing by a psychologist. There are a number of issues to consider when pursuing this option. One is cost; individual testing can run hundreds of dollars. Another issue is the emotional impact on the child; it is crucial that the youngster not be made to feel as if s/he has failed the standardized tests or that the individual testing is a do or die situation. Families considering the possibility of outside testing are welcome to discuss it with school counselors and should clarify ahead of time which tests are state-approved for the purpose of gifted identification.