

Advance Program and Primary Talent Pool

Guidelines, Information,
and Procedures



Jefferson County Public Schools Advance Program

Academically gifted students present a challenge to their teachers and schools. Stimulating talented young people to stretch their abilities requires schools to be creative in providing a range of educational opportunities that promote excellence for each student.

The Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 is based on this same principle of offering every student an educational program that promotes academic and creative excellence. In keeping with KERA, administrative regulation 704 KAR 3:285 (the Gifted and Talented Regulation) was amended in 1994 to provide direction to school districts in meeting the needs of their gifted students.

In the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), the Advance Program has long met the needs of academically talented students. However, with the passage of KERA and the amendment of 704 KAR 3:285, our school district reexamined the Advance Program and the Jefferson County Board of Education (JCBE) accepted the revised Gifted and Talented Policies in September 1994. This JCBE policy was amended in January 2014. The result of the reexamination is an Advance Program that continues to stimulate students to do their personal best while operating within a more flexible structure.

A Gifted and Talented Student Services Plan, which is distributed each semester, serves as the communication vehicle between parents and school personnel.

Elementary School Advance Program

Primary Talent Pool

With the introduction of the Primary Program, KERA requires that kindergarten through grade three be flexible, allowing students to be grouped and regrouped as their learning needs require. The Primary Program's basic philosophy is that children are unique individuals differing from one another in their capabilities, interests, and rates of physical, mental, social, and emotional growth.

To be consistent with this philosophy, the district's Advance Program has been restructured to allow for the creation of less formal groupings of students who possess demonstrated or potential ability to perform at exceptionally high levels. Rather

than placing students in separate, self-contained, grade-level Advance Program classes, the schools now informally identify students for admission to a Primary Talent Pool.

Primary students are not identified for admission to the Talent Pool through the use of a formal test. Formal, normed measures may be used for diagnosing the level of instructional service needed by a student and for the evaluation of student progress. **However, data from formal, normed measures shall not be used for the purpose of eliminating eligibility of a student in the Primary Program.**

Informal Identification of Primary Students

In general, a student informally identified for participation in the Primary Talent Pool should demonstrate an ongoing ability to complete assignments one grade level above the student's present grade placement.

Specifically, Primary students are identified for participation in the Primary Talent Pool using a minimum of three of the following indicators (from *Gifted and Talented Regulations*, 704 KAR 3:285, Section 3.9):

- Collection of evidence (e.g., portfolios) demonstrating student performance
- Teacher/Behavior checklists
- Diagnostic data
- Continuous progress data
- Anecdotal records
- Available formal test data

- Parent recommendation/Inventory/Interview or questionnaire (See the *Gifted and Talented Education Technical Assistance Guide*.)
- Primary Review Committee recommendation (local school)
- Other valid and reliable documentation

In addition, the JCPS Talent Pool Committee suggests using the following measures:

- Academic progress
- Committee- or teacher-made reading and writing activities for second-year Primary (P2) students
- Kindergarten screening (interview questions, draw-a-picture, and writing sample only from the district's Advance Program screening manual)

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- Parent inventory
 - Performance events (mathematics)
 - Report cards
 - Teacher recommendations
 - Writing portfolio

If available, formal test results of record in the student's folder and private testing results submitted by parents may be used for Primary Talent Pool selection.

It is important to note that the informal identification processes should include measures designed to allow students to demonstrate their exceptional characteristics in the areas of general intellectual ability, creative thinking and productivity, leadership skills, specific academic aptitude, and visual and performing arts. **Students who possess disabilities, who are disadvantaged, or who are underachieving may be identified and may require services in any of the areas of giftedness.**

Local School Selection of Primary Talent Pool Students and Talent Pool Records

Students are selected for the Primary Talent Pool by local school personnel and/or a school Selection Committee, which may consist of school administration, teaching faculty, counselors, and community or parent members. **The Selection Committee shall follow the policies and procedures set by the school district and shall consider environmental, cultural, and disabling conditions. The Selection Committee should follow the principle: When in doubt, err on the side of inclusion.**

Students who have been identified for the Primary Talent Pool and whose parents relocate to another neighborhood within Jefferson County, or who relocate to Jefferson County from another Kentucky county, are eligible for placement in the Talent Pool in the student's new school. Students relocating to Jefferson County from out of state or transferring from a nonpublic school are eligible to be identified for the Talent Pool. School records for these students may be used as part of the informal identification process.

After a student has been selected by the school's Primary Talent Pool Selection Committee, the committee should send a letter

of notification to the child's parent. In addition, a list of the Primary Talent Pool students must be maintained by the sending school. This list should be maintained for the following reasons:

- The list will provide immediate verification by grade, name, and number of students in the Talent Pool.
- The list provides a means of monitoring the progress of students, especially those who were placed in the Primary Talent Pool as P2 students.
- Students may spend one week, three weeks, or six months in the Talent Pool for academic acceleration in an area of interest, need, or ability. It is not a self-contained classroom.
- **A copy of the school's final list should be sent to the Advance Programs Office to be entered into the district's student information file to identify the student as being in the Primary Talent Pool.** The list is placed in the school's file in the Advance Programs Office. **This list is a part of the end-of-the-year District Gifted and Talented State Report.**

Placement of Primary Talent Pool Students

Once identified, students may remain in their present school. Students will receive differentiated assignments that are developmentally appropriate.

Each school determines the manner in which it offers enriching educational experiences to Primary Talent Pool students. Options include the following:

- Academic competitions
- Acceleration by grade or content
- Artists-in-residence and use of community resources for help with performing arts
- Collaborative teaching and classroom enrichment
- Cluster grouping with differentiated curriculum
- Counseling services
- Distance learning (using technology to access classes provided at other locations)
- Independent study in areas of interest

- Mentorships, shadowing, apprenticeships, and other uses of community resources
- Special seminars and pull-out classes for enrichment and specialized studies

Parents and school staff should be aware that placement of a student in the Primary Talent Pool does not guarantee or provide automatic Advance Program placement for that student in grades four through twelve. Students in grade three (P4) are formally evaluated for entrance into the Advance Program at the Intermediate level (grades four and five). Primary Talent Pool students interested in participating in the Advance Program in grade four must proceed through the district's screening process, which includes formal testing (Cognitive Abilities Test [CogAT], Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children [WISC], etc.), teacher evaluation, and a transcript of academic performance.

Intermediate

Students in P4 are formally evaluated for entrance into the Advance Program at the Intermediate level. The screening process includes a formal test (CogAT, WISC, etc.), a teacher evaluation, and a transcript of academic performance.

Other documentation may be included if a parent needs to file an appeal because a student was not recommended for Advance Program placement. (The Exceptional Characteristics Screening Section should be completed by teachers in the local school. It must include documentation.)

If a student is not recommended for Advance Program screening by school personnel, parents may request screening. In addition, students who have participated successfully in comparable programs for the gifted and talented in other school districts are eligible for admission into the Advance Program. School records for these students will be evaluated by the district's Advance Programs Office before enrollment in the program.

The Intermediate Advance Program is offered at designated elementary schools, with each school determining the operation of its program. In some schools, students may spend the day in self-contained Advance Program classes, while in other schools, students may spend parts of the day grouped with students of various abilities and parts of the day in groupings with other Advance Program students. The curriculum focuses on instruction in the following academic areas, with consideration given to abilities, needs, and interests:

- Mathematics that emphasizes problem solving, conceptual development, and reasoning skills
- Language arts, including reading, composition, speaking, listening, and a literature program
- Science and social studies that emphasize individual projects and a hands-on approach
- Field trips, various academic competitions, special events, and activities sponsored by the school
- **Students are expected to maintain an overall B average in order to remain in the program.**

Middle School Advance Program

Students who are successful in the Intermediate Advance Program may continue in the program in middle school. Students also are formally evaluated for entrance into the Advance Program at the middle school level (grades six, seven, and eight). The screening process includes a formal test (CogAT, WISC, etc.), a teacher evaluation, and a transcript of academic performance. **Other documentation may be included if a parent needs to file an appeal because a student was not recommended for Advance Program placement.**

If a student is not recommended for Advance Program screening by school personnel, parents may request screening. Students who have participated successfully in comparable programs for the gifted and talented in other school districts are eligible for admission into the Advance Program. **School records for these students will be evaluated by the district's Advance Programs Office before enrollment in the program.**

The Middle School Advance Program is offered at all middle schools, with the exception of the traditional magnets. Each middle school determines the operation of its program. In some schools, students may attend self-contained Advance Program classes. In other schools, Advance Program students may attend classes with students of varying abilities and attend other classes with Advance Program students.

The curriculum includes language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language, music, art, physical education (PE), and other related arts areas. In mathematics, the program stresses logic and problem solving. Language arts areas introduced in the elementary years are expanded to include composition, with attention given to both creative and analytical writing. Students are encouraged to participate in academic competitions, special events, and cocurricular activities offered at the middle school. **Students are expected to maintain an overall B average in order to remain in the program.**

High School Advance Program

Students who successfully complete the Middle School Advance Program may continue in the program in high school. Students also are formally evaluated for entrance into the Advance Program at the high school level (**grade nine only**). The screening process includes a formal test (CogAT, WISC, etc.), a teacher evaluation, and a transcript of academic performance. **Other documentation may be included if a parent needs to file an appeal because a student was not recommended for Advance Program placement.**

Students who have participated successfully in comparable programs for the gifted and talented in other school districts are eligible to enter the Advance Program. **School records for these students will be evaluated by the district's Advance Programs Office before enrollment in the program.**

The High School Advance Program is offered at designated high schools. Each school determines the operation of its program. In general, high school Advance Program students complete a program of studies that meets the following minimum requirements.

Course	Carnegie Units
English	4
Science	3/4
Mathematics	3/4
Social Studies (U.S. History/World Civilization)	3
Foreign Language*	3/4
Humanities No. 48040091	1
Health/Physical Education	1
Electives	4
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***Students may take three years of one foreign language (e.g., Spanish) or two years of two different foreign languages.**

Students should check with their counselor to determine the number of Carnegie Units required for their graduation year. A minimum of 12 of these units must be earned in Advance Program classes in at least three of the following areas: English, science, mathematics, foreign language, and social studies.

All Advance Program students must take an advanced-level humanities course as prescribed by the district's Advance Program (course no. 48040091). This credit can also be met by successfully completing a series of art specialization courses that includes a 300-level art specialization course in one subject area.

High school students are expected to take a minimum of three Advance Program classes each semester and to maintain an overall B average (3.0) in order to remain in the program.

Advanced Placement classes are offered to students in all JCPS high schools. It is recommended that Advance Program students graduate with a minimum of two Advanced Placement classes.

Students also participate in the full range of sports, clubs, competitions, and other cocurricular high school activities.

Magnet Schools

All magnet schools offer the Advance Program **except traditional magnets**. Therefore, a parent may have to choose between a traditional magnet and the Advance Program school.

Location of Programs and Transportation

The Advance Program is offered in all schools except the traditional magnets. Transportation is provided for students who reside one or more miles from their assigned school.

For additional information about the Primary Talent Pool and the Intermediate, Middle School, and High School Advance Programs, contact the Advance Programs Office at **485-7424**.

Advanced Placement classes are available to all students in all JCPS district high schools.

JCPS Advance Program Facts and Procedures

Testing Request

- **Students are recommended for testing by teachers and by parent request.**
- Middle and high school students (grade nine only) may request testing.
- **Testing usually takes place in October/November for P4 through grade-nine students.**
- Testing requests should be made to the school counselor.
- Test results are delivered to the schools within ten weeks of testing.
- **Private school parents must call the Advance Program Office at 485-7424 in early October to sign up for a test date, time, and location.**

Multiple Testing Criteria/Recommendations

The JCPS Advance Program uses a point system with **multiple criteria for admission**:

CogAT, WISC-R (Revised), etc.	0–4 points
Grade Point Average (GPA)	0–3 points
Teacher Evaluation	0–3 points
Standardized Achievement Test	0–3 points
Exceptional Characteristics	0–2 points (documentation required)

With a CogAT score of 21, 7 selection points (the minimum) are required for placement. Students in P4 through grade nine are evaluated on the basis of five criteria: screening test score, academic performance or progress, teacher evaluation, exceptional characteristics, and other standardized test performance. Selection points are awarded to the student in each of the five categories. Students are required to earn at least one selection

point each on the screening test, academic performance or progress, and teacher evaluation. Students not meeting the selection-point requirements may appeal. **After placement in the Advance Program, students are expected to maintain a B average in order to remain in the program.** All students are informed of recommendations before the end of the school year.

Student Placement

When a student is recommended for Advance Program placement, the parent **must** sign a Parent Permission Form to place the student in the program. The Parent Permission Form allows the district to assign students to an Advance Program school, place a student's name on a school's Advance Program class list, and enter an Advance Program code for a student into the JCPS District computer system.

Parents may decline or defer placement in the Advance Program after recommendation. The formal test score can be used for three years.

If a parent chooses to defer placement, a new GPA and Teacher Evaluation Form must be completed.

Advance Program high school students must earn 12 credits in Advance Program classes—1 of which must be an advanced-level, U409, humanities class or a series of art specialization courses that includes a 300-level art specialization class in one subject area. Completing these Advance Program classes will enable the student to receive an Advance Program seal on the student's diploma and a letter verifying that the student completed the program. The letter will be sent with the transcript to colleges.

Probation

All students are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA to remain in the Advance Program. If a student's grades are lower than the minimum 3.0, he or she will be placed on probation. After this due-process probation period, a student can be removed from the Advance Program. When a student is removed from the Advance Program after probation, he or she cannot return to the Advance Program because he or she has graduated to middle or high school. He or she must remain in an Honors or Comprehensive Program for one full year. He or she can petition after the one-year period to return to the Advance Program by calling the Advance Programs Office.

The probationary period is one year for elementary school students. The probationary period for middle and high school

students consists of two probationary semesters, one in which the student is identified for probation and the following semester. The school determines if the student should continue on probation or be removed from the program according to JCBE procedures.

A list of students placed on probation and/or removed from the Advance Program must be sent to the Advance Programs Office on a yearly basis. This list is filed in each Advance Program school folder. The information is part of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Year-End Report.

Probation or continued probation cannot be appealed.

Advance Program Appeal Process

There is an **appeal** process if a student is not recommended for Advance Program placement. An Appeal Form may be sent home with a Not Recommended for Advance Program Letter from the local school or Advance Programs Office. Any student not scoring 1 point for the CogAT, GPA, or teacher evaluation must file an appeal:

- JCPS parents can contact the school counselor for an Appeal Form.
- Private school students must contact the Advance Programs Office at **485-7424** for an Appeal Form.
- The Appeal Committee is composed of community psychologists and educators.
- The Appeal Committee will review all information sent in by the parents/school, including the test scores, grades, and other documentation submitted for review.
- A letter will be sent to the parent(s) with notification of the Appeal Committee's decision. The process takes approximately six to ten weeks. There is an arranged meeting once or twice a week for three to four weeks to review student records.

- If an appeal is granted, students are given a **Trial Placement for one semester. The Trial Placement Form must be notarized.** It entitles students to all rights and privileges of the Advance Program as long as students maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher. **Retesting is not required.** After this probationary semester, a student can be removed from the program without additional probationary time.
- When a Trial Placement is granted through the Appeal Process, it must be accepted the year it is granted. If not, retesting is required for Advance Program placement in the next school year. Example: A student is tested in October of 2017 and granted a Trial Placement for the 2018-19 school year. If the student declines placement for the 2018-19 school year, he or she must retest in October 2018 and complete all screening procedures for recommendation for placement as an Advance Program student in the 2019-20 school year.

Advanced Placement Classes

- Advanced Placement classes are offered as a part of the JCPS Advance Program.
- Students can sign up for Advanced Placement testing with the school counselor after completion of an Advanced Placement class.
- **Advanced Placement classes are taught on a college level.** Students earning a test score of 3, 4, or 5 (5 is the highest score) on the Advanced Placement test given in the spring of each school year may receive college credit for a freshman class in a college where Advanced Placement classes are recognized.

Student Removal From the Advance Program

- **Parent(s) requesting voluntary removal of a student from the Advance Program** must send a letter to the school counselor and/or the Advance Programs Office, indicating the reason for removal from the program. If the letter is sent to the school, it is the responsibility of the counselor to fax or forward a copy of the letter to the Advance Programs Office.
- **Counselors may complete the Advance Program Student Movement Form** in the *Counselor's Manual* to remove a student from the Advance Program. This form must be sent to the Advance Programs Office.
- Student movement from elementary to middle and from middle to high school does not reinstate a student who has been removed from the Advance Program through the probation process or by parent request.

Advance Program Center Schools

All curriculum questions/concerns should be discussed with the teacher(s), counselor(s), and principal in the assigned Advance Program school.

Students recommended for Advance Program placement are assigned to schools based on home address, elementary cluster assignment, and student assignment guidelines. These schools may or may not be magnet program schools. **Please call 485-3050 for demographic information about school assignments.**

Additional Information

For additional information about the Primary Talent Pool and Intermediate, Middle, and High School Advance Programs, contact the Advance Programs Office at **485-7424**.

