



AFC'S GUIDE TO

# Gifted & Talented Programs for Students with Disabilities

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Advocates for Children of New York  
Protecting every child's right to learn

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>WHAT ARE THE GIFTED &amp; TALENTED PROGRAMS? .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE G&amp;T ADMISSIONS PROCESS? ...</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>WHAT IF YOUR CHILD NEEDS IEP/ SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES WHILE IN A G&amp;T PROGRAM? .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>APPLICATION STEPS FOR CHILDREN ENTERING KINDERGARTEN THE FOLLOWING FALL.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>APPLICATION STEPS FOR CHILDREN ENTERING 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> GRADES THE FOLLOWING FALL .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?.....</b>	<b>10</b>

This guide does not constitute legal advice. This guide attempts to summarize existing policies or laws without stating the opinion of AFC. If you have a legal problem, please contact an attorney or advocate.

## **WHAT ARE THE GIFTED & TALENTED PROGRAMS?**

Gifted & Talented (G&T) programs are designed for children who are ready to benefit from a more challenging academic program than some of their other peers in New York City Department of Education (DOE) schools. Students entering Kindergarten through 4th grade are eligible for G&T admissions, and all students who demonstrate readiness for accelerated learning through course grade requirements or teacher nominations can apply to G&T programs. Not all schools offer G&T programs, and those that do can be different from one another.

## **WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE G&T ADMISSIONS PROCESS?**

All NYC students, including students with disabilities, entering Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grades the following fall can participate in the G&T admissions process. Eligibility requirements and application procedures vary based on age and school type.



# WHAT IF YOUR CHILD NEEDS IEP/ SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES WHILE IN A G&T PROGRAM?

A child cannot be excluded from a G&T program on the basis of disability, and your child does not have to go to General Education just to receive IEP services!

If you have concerns about the way your child's G&T program is providing IEP services, you should contact the Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support at 212-374-6085 or [specialeducationreform@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:specialeducationreform@schools.nyc.gov). You can also contact the Advocates for Children Helpline at (866) 427-6033.

If your child is attending a G&T program and you suspect that they have a disability and may need special education services, you can ask that the school evaluate your child for special education services. Look at [AFC's Guide to Special Education](#) and to [Special-Ed Evaluations](#) to learn more. If the evaluation shows that your child has a disability and needs special education services to make progress, the school must prepare an IEP that identifies the special education services your child needs, and the **school must provide those services in the G&T program as long as that remains appropriate**. The school cannot exclude your child from the G&T program simply because your child is suspected of having a disability, is classified or diagnosed with a disability, or needs special education services to progress in a G&T class. You can also request that the school prepare a 504 Plan for your child to provide any accommodations instead of an IEP. Learn more about in AFC's [Section 504 Guide](#).

## **Transportation:**

If specialized transportation is recommended on your child's IEP, they will receive specialized transportation services to the G&T program. These buses are staffed by a school bus driver and attendant, and your child will be picked up at the

closest, safest stop to your residence instead of a centralized stop. Learn more about [how to request specialized transportation services](#).

All other students receive transportation on the same basis as their general education peers.



## APPLICATION STEPS FOR CHILDREN ENTERING KINDERGARTEN THE FOLLOWING FALL

### STEP I: Determine Whether Your Child is Eligible for G&T Programs

**If your child is entering Kindergarten in the upcoming fall and currently attends pre-K at DOE/district schools, Pre-K Centers, NYC Early Education Centers (NYCEECs) or charter schools:** Your child's eligibility for Kindergarten G&T programs will be determined by their current pre-K teachers.

**If your child is entering Kindergarten the following fall and currently attends a private or parochial school, or does not yet attend school:** Eligibility determinations will be based on interviews with your child and nominations made by your child's teachers.

**NOTE:** If your child has been receiving special education services in pre-school or pre-K, the DOE will hold an IEP meeting in the spring to develop an IEP for your child's Kindergarten year. At the meeting, the DOE should develop the IEP for your child's Kindergarten year with your input. For more information, please see AFC's [Transition to Kindergarten guide](#).

## STEP 2: Research and Rank G&T Programs

First, research G&T programs to identify schools you believe would be a good fit for your child. You can use the school search tool on MySchools to explore your options. Look at pages 19-20 of the [NYCPS Admissions Guide](#) for more information. You will need to submit to the DOE the list of schools with G&T programs that you would like your child to attend. Make sure to list the schools in your actual order of preference.

### TIP:

If you really want your child to attend a G&T program, we recommend that you list every school for which your child qualifies. If you do not, the chances are higher that your child may not receive a seat in a G&T class.

## STEP 3: Submit your child's Kindergarten application

To apply, you must take the following steps:

1. Apply online through [MySchools](#) by creating a new account. Visit the [NYCPS admissions](#) guide to learn how to set up an account. The application is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Bengali, Russian, Arabic, Urdu, Haitian Creole, Korean, or French. You can also apply by phone at 718-935-2009, or by visiting a [Family Welcome Center](#).
2. List your ranking of G&T programs on your child's kindergarten application
3. **If your child attends a DOE/district school, Pre-K Center, NYC Early Education Center (NYCEEC) or charter school, they will be evaluated by their current Pre-K teachers.**
4. **If your child attends a private or parochial school or is not yet in school, the DOE Division of Early Childhood Education will contact you to set up interviews with your child once the application closes. Early childhood education experts use these interviews to determine whether your child is eligible for G&T programs.**

## STEP 4: Await the decision while your child’s readiness is determined

When determining readiness for G&T programs, teachers will consider the following to guide how they answer the questions on the Teacher/Program Nomination form. See the Teacher/Program Nomination form on the DOE’s website [here](#) under “G&T Admissions for Children Entering Kindergarten.”



### REMEMBER:

The DOE cannot exclude students from G&T programs based on race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship/immigration status, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, or weight.

- Your child’s learning experience throughout the entire school year;
- Each individual child holistically;
- Each child from a strengths-based perspective;
- Observed behaviors that may occur more than once (consider a wide range of observations and not a minimum/maximum number);
- The range of ways children express what they know and are capable of;
- The end-of-year expectations as listed in [The New York State Prekindergarten Learning standards](#);
- To evaluate your child’s readiness for accelerated learning, teachers answer the following questions on the [Teacher/Program Nomination Form](#) based on assessment data from the last school year. Your child does not need to meet each category to be deemed eligible.

## STEP 5. Receive an Offer and Decide

Once you submit an application for your child, they will be considered for an offer to a seat in a G&T class if they are eligible. Offer decisions are made based on your application choices and seat availability, and admissions priorities. All G&T

programs prioritize siblings of current G&T students, and some prioritize applicants who live or attend school in a specific district.

All applicants to Kindergarten will receive a Kindergarten offer in the spring prior to your child's Kindergarten school year. The offer will include any seats that the child has been offered in a G&T or general education class. If your child has an IEP or 504 Plan, you should contact the school where your child has been offered a placement. Make sure the school is able to provide the services that the IEP or 504 Plan requires your child to receive.

## **WHAT IF THE G&T PROGRAM CANNOT PROVIDE THE SERVICES YOUR CHILD NEEDS?**

Reach out to the special education office for help implementing your child's IEP. See the [DOE's special education page](#) for more information and who to contact for more support.

You can accept the offer through [MySchools](#) if you applied online, by contacting the offered school, by phone at 718-935-2009, or by emailing [ESenrollment@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:ESenrollment@schools.nyc.gov). Then, contact the school for instructions on how and when to register your child.

If you accept a G&T placement at a school that is not the general education school where your child has been placed, we recommend that you notify that general education school so that the seat can be made available to other students.





# APPLICATION STEPS FOR CHILDREN ENTERING 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> GRADES THE FOLLOWING FALL

## **STEP 1: Determine Whether Your Child is Eligible for G&T**

**If your child is entering 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th grade the following fall and attends a DOE public school, they are eligible if they:**

- Score at least a 3 or 4 for Math, Reading and Writing on their report card, AND;
- Never had a 1 in any marking period for Math, Reading, and Writing, AND;
- Received a letter in the mail inviting them to apply
- Please note: Current students in district G&T programs can only apply to Citywide G&T programs, not other district programs.

**If your child is entering 1st, 2nd, 3rd , or 4th grade the following fall and attends a charter, private or parochial school, they will only be considered if you:**

1. Apply to G&T programs between in the spring following the [timeline located on the DOE Gifted and Talented webpage](#) through the online G&T application via [MySchools](#) or a [Family Welcome Center](#). See page 17 of the [NYCPS admissions guide](#) to learn how to set up a MySchools account.
2. Submit your child's grades to a Family Welcome Center by the deadline posted on the [DOE Gifted and Talented webpage](#).

3. The DOE will convert the grades your child received from their charter, private, or parochial school to a 4-point scale to determine their eligibility. You can find a conversion table on the [DOE's Gifted and Talented webpage](#).

*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\* Homeschool grades cannot be submitted to determine eligibility. Contact a [Family Welcome Center](#) for more information.*

## **STEP 2: Research and Rank G&T Programs**

First, research G&T programs to identify schools you believe would be a good fit for your child. You can use the school search tool on MySchools to explore your options. Look at pages 19-20 of the [NYCPS Admissions Guide](#) for more information. You will need to submit to the DOE the list of schools with G&T programs that you would like your child to attend. Make sure to list the schools in your actual order of preference.

## **STEP 3: Submit a G&T Application**

Eligible families with children entering grades 1 through 4 in the upcoming fall can apply to G&T

Apply in the spring by submitting a G&T application online with [MySchools](#) or through a [Family Welcome Center](#).

## **STEP 4: Await the Decision**

Offer decisions are made based on your application choices and seat availability, and admissions priorities. All G&T programs prioritize siblings of current G&T students, and some prioritize applicants who live or attend school in a specific district. **Applicants should receive a results letter in June. It may include a G&T offer or waitlist information.**

If your child has an IEP or 504 Plan, you should contact the school where your child has been offered a placement. Make sure the school is able to provide the services that the IEP or 504 Plan requires your child to receive.

You can accept the offer through [MySchools](#) if you applied online, by contacting the offered school, by phone at 718-935-2009, or by emailing [ESenrollment@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:ESenrollment@schools.nyc.gov). Then, contact the school for instructions on how and when to register your child.

If you accept a G&T placement at a school that is not the general education school where your child has been placed, we recommend that you notify that general education school so that the seat can be made available to other students.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

There are plenty of places to learn more about G&T programs and about special education!

We urge you to attend one of the DOE's Community Information Sessions, usually held in mid-October, to get more information on G&T programs. For dates and locations, or to learn more about G&T admissions from the DOE, call 718-935-2009 or visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/GT>.

For more information on IEPs and 504 Plans, check out [AFC's many guides and resources](#), including [Transition to Kindergarten: A Guide for Students with Disabilities](#); [AFC's Guide to Special Education](#); [AFC's Guide to Section 504](#); and more!

You can also call our Helpline at (866) 427-6033 to speak with us and ask more questions about the G&T process and/or special education services.



## Our Mission

Advocates for Children of New York (AFC)'s mission is to ensure a high- quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. AFC achieves this through four integrated strategies:

- Free advice and legal representation for families of students;
- Free trainings and workshops for parents, communities, and educators and other professionals, to equip them to advocate on behalf of students;
- Policy advocacy to effect change in the education system and improve education outcomes; and
- Impact litigation to protect the right to quality education and to compel needed education reform.

### **Still have more questions? Please call the Jill Chaifetz Education Helpline:**

Monday through Thursday

10 am to 4 pm

866-427-6033 (toll free)

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