

# **Overview of Gifted and Talented Services: A Handbook for Parents**



**NAPERVILLE COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 203  
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## District Mission

The Mission of Naperville Community Unit School District 203 Is To Produce Students Who Are:

### Self-Directed Learners:

- Initiates, prioritizes, and evaluates achievable goals
- Seeks continuous learning opportunities
- Manages multiple tasks and life demands
- Takes responsibility for all choices
- Demonstrates positive choices for physical, social, spiritual, and emotional health
- Maintains a positive outlook

Skills: Independence, Accountability, Organization, Wellness

### Collaborative Workers:

- Works within diverse groups to achieve a common goal
- Monitors and manages own role and behavior as a group member
- Offers and accepts constructive criticism
- Demonstrates consideration and respect for self and others

Skills: Teamwork

### Complex Thinkers:

- Selects, applies, and reflects upon the processes to solve problems
- Accesses, evaluates, integrates, and cites information from primary and secondary resources
- Receives and expresses knowledge through spoken, written, visual, and tactile language
- Perceives, creates, and respects aesthetic meaning of behavioral, natural, and artistic expression

Skills: Research, Communication, Aesthetic Appreciation, Critical Thinking

### Quality Producers:

- Creates products to achieve an authentic purpose
- Constructs products appropriate for audience and context
- Designs and develops products/presentations that reflect integrity, confidence, objectivity, and craftsmanship
- Uses relevant computer technology wisely, ethically, and efficiently

Skills: Presentation, Technology

### Community Contributors:

- Explores individual and societal connections which impact communities of all sizes
- Develops respect for self and empathy for those of diverse abilities, cultures, and beliefs
- Plans and takes action for creating community in a variety of settings
- Exercises the rights and responsibilities of citizenship

Skills: Global Awareness, Acceptance of Self and Others

## Academically Talented Belief Statements

- We believe that a student's talents and gifts manifest themselves in multiple ways across all cultural and economic strata and at different times during a student's academic journey.
- We believe that all students should be educated and nurtured in a climate where their talents and potential are valued and fostered.
- We believe that all students should be supported and challenged by a program of study with rigorous and relevant curriculum so that students can achieve at levels commensurate with their intellect and ability and reach their full potential.
- We believe that all students who exhibit exceptional intellect or who perform, or have demonstrated the potential to perform, at superior levels when compared to others of their age, experience, and/or environment in academic disciplines should have advanced learning opportunities available to them.

## Programs and Services

### *Elementary Level*

**Honors Mathematics** is for gifted and talented students who demonstrate mathematical understanding, problem solving, and reasoning skills. This program begins second trimester of grade three and continues through grade eight. Honors Mathematics is offered at all fourteen elementary buildings and all five junior high schools.

Honors Mathematics students are able to demonstrate that they grasp concepts quickly, see patterns, and make connections across disciplines and among operations. Students progress through the critical objectives, aligned with the Common Core State Standards, at an accelerated rate. An overview of the Honors Math curriculum is available at the district website.

The elementary Honors Mathematics program segues into the Honors Mathematics Program at the five junior high schools. The K-8 aligned critical objectives allow students to complete Algebra I during their eighth grade year and Geometry during their first year of high school.

**Project IDEA** (Increase and Develop Excellence in Academics), also known as PI, is for gifted and talented students in grades four through eight. The program is offered at all fourteen elementary buildings and at all five junior high schools.

With Project IDEA at the elementary level, students participate in a literacy class, which meets five days per week during the student's regularly scheduled literacy block. The program seeks to develop, through integration of curriculum, the higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as well as creative and critical thinking skills. Approximately 40% of the instructional time is spent on traditional gifted activities involving creative and critical problem solving, and approximately 60% of the instructional time is spent on the literacy strands of reading, writing, speaking, and listening aligned with District 203's curriculum available from your student's classroom teacher.

The Project IDEA curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners by changing the process, content, product, and/or the learning environment in which students are engaged.

**Project IDEA+**, also known as PI+, is a magnet program designed for top performing students who have been previously identified for Project IDEA and Honors Mathematics. The Project IDEA+ magnet program for students in grades four and five is housed at Meadow Glens Elementary School. The program for students in grades six through eight is housed at Kennedy Junior High School.

Students in PI+ participate in enriched and accelerated self-contained classes in a humanities strand, which includes the literacy strands integrated with District 203 social science content. The mathematics and science strand includes high school algebra at the seventh-grade level, honors geometry at the eighth-grade level, and freshman level conceptual physics.

### *Junior High/Middle Level*

**Honors Mathematics** is for gifted and talented students who demonstrate mathematical understanding, problem solving, and reasoning skills. This program begins second trimester of grade three and continues through grade eight. Honors Mathematics is offered at all fourteen elementary buildings and all five junior high schools.

Honors Mathematics students are able to demonstrate that they grasp concepts quickly, see patterns, and make connections across disciplines and among operations. Students' thinking in mathematics is flexible. The critical objectives, aligned with the Common Core State Standards, allow students in the program to complete Algebra I during their eighth grade year and Geometry during their first year of high school. An overview of the Honors Math curriculum is available at the district website.

**Project IDEA** (Increase and Develop Excellence in Academics), also known as PI, is for gifted and talented students in grades four through eight. The program is offered at all fourteen elementary buildings and at all five junior high schools.

The program seeks to develop, through integration of curriculum, the higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as well as creative and critical thinking skills. Approximately 40% of the instructional time is spent on traditional gifted activities involving creative and critical problem solving, and approximately 60% of the instructional time is spent on the literacy strands of reading, writing, and speaking and listening aligned with District 203's curriculum available from your student's classroom teacher.

The sixth, seventh and eighth grade Project IDEA curriculum is an integrated Language Arts block focusing on reading, writing, and speaking and listening.

The Project IDEA curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners by changing the process, content, product, or the learning environment in which students are engaged.

**Project IDEA+**, also known as PI+, is a magnet program designed for top performing students who have been previously identified for Project IDEA and Honors Mathematics. The program for students in grades six through eight is housed at Kennedy Junior High School.

Students participate in enriched and accelerated self-contained classes in a humanities strand, which includes the literacy strands integrated with District 203 social science content. The mathematics and science strand includes high school algebra at the seventh-grade level, honors geometry at the eighth-grade level, and freshman level conceptual physics.

### *High School Level*

At the high school level, students will choose the appropriate level of coursework, which will include honors level classes as well as advanced placement (A.P.) level classes.

*Progression of Studies/Coursework*

	<b>Regular Program</b>	<b>Project IDEA (Literacy)</b>	<b>Honors Mathematics</b>	<b>Project IDEA+ (Integrated Program)</b>
<b>Grade K-2</b>	In-Class Learning and Enrichment	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Grade 3</b>	In-Class Learning and Enrichment	N/A	Begins second trimester with pull-out instruction during normally scheduled math block	N/A
<b>Grade 4</b>	In-Class Learning and Enrichment	Pull-out instruction during normally scheduled literacy block	Pull-out instruction during normally scheduled math block	Self-Contained, all-day instruction (at Meadow Glens Elementary School)
<b>Grade 5</b>	In-Class Learning and Enrichment	Pull-out instruction during normally scheduled literacy block	Pull-out instruction during normally scheduled math block	Self-Contained, all-day instruction (at Meadow Glens Elementary School)
<b>Grade 6</b>	In-Class Learning and Enrichment	Instruction during normally scheduled language arts class	Instruction during normally scheduled math class	Instruction during normally scheduled classes (at Kennedy Junior High School)
<b>Grade 7</b>	In-Class Learning and Enrichment	Instruction during normally scheduled language arts class	Instruction during normally scheduled math class	Instruction during normally scheduled classes with Algebra 1 for math (at Kennedy Junior High School)
<b>Grade 8</b>	In-Class Learning and Enrichment	Instruction during normally scheduled language arts class	Algebra 1	Instruction during normally scheduled classes with Honors Geometry for math (at Kennedy Junior High School)
<b>Grade 9</b>	English 1	Honors English 1		Honors English 1
	Algebra 1		Honors Geometry	Honors Algebra 2
<b>Grade 10</b>	English 2 <i>or</i> English 2: Journalism	Honors English 2 <i>or</i> Honors English 2: Journalism		Honors English 2 <i>or</i> Honors English 2: Journalism
	Geometry		Honors Algebra 2	Honors Precalculus
<b>Grade 11</b>	English 3	A.P. Language and Composition <i>or</i> Honors English 3		A.P. Language and Composition <i>or</i> Honors English 3
	Algebra 2		Honors Precalculus and/or A.P. Statistics	A.P. Calculus BC and/or A.P. Statistics
<b>Grade 12</b>	Essay Writing, Writing Styles and Forms, Traditions in Communication, Literary Themes, <i>or</i> World Literature	Honors Essay Writing, English Literature, Western Humanities, A.P. Literature <i>or</i> Composition		Honors Essay Writing, English Literature, Western Humanities, A.P. Literature <i>or</i> Composition;
	Business Precalculus, Pre-Calculus, and/or A.P. Statistics		A.P. Calculus BC and/or A.P. Statistics	Multivariable Calculus and/or A.P. Statistics

## Identification and Placement

Naperville Community Unit School District 203 ensures that all students are given an opportunity to be screened for placement into programs for the gifted and talented. Identification and placement is determined by both formal assessment as well as teacher rating scales.

<b>Identification: Performance Series</b>	<p>Performance Series Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer adaptive content test in reading and mathematics</li> <li>• Universal assessment in grades 2-8</li> <li>• First step in the identification process in the spring of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades</li> <li>• Students whose achievement is the 90<sup>th</sup> national percentile rank* (NPR) advance to take the CogAT</li> <li>• Students who do not qualify for CogAT testing may file an appeal for CogAT testing</li> </ul>
<b>Identification: CogAT</b>	<p>Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability testing in the areas of Quantitative, Verbal, and Nonverbal</li> <li>• Universal assessment in fall of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and the spring of 4<sup>th</sup> grade</li> <li>• First step in the identification process in the fall of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and the spring of 4<sup>th</sup> grade</li> <li>• Second step in the identification process in the spring of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades</li> <li>• Students whose achievement is the 90<sup>th</sup> age percentile rank* (APR) advance for further testing</li> <li>• Students who do not qualify for further testing may file an appeal for further testing</li> </ul>
<b>Identification: Further Testing</b>	<p>Further Testing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IOWA content test in mathematics and/or vocabulary and reading</li> <li>• Placement Test             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Honors Math placement tests for elementary grades – District developed problem solving assessments</li> <li>○ Honors Math placement test for junior high grades – Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT) assesses the student’s ability in the areas of pre-algebraic number skills and concepts, interpreting mathematical information, representing relationships, and using symbols</li> <li>○ Project IDEA placement tests – District developed reading comprehension and writing assessments</li> <li>○ Project IDEA Plus placement test – Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Renzulli Scales is a set of inventories completed by the teacher to describe the student on specific gifted characteristics</li> </ul>
<b>Placement: Matrices</b>	<p>Matrices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student scores will be placed on a matrix to determine if placement in gifted and talented services is appropriate</li> <li>• See district website for matrices</li> <li>• Students who do not qualify on the matrix for placement may file an appeal for placement</li> </ul>

## Assessments

### *Description of Screenings/Tests*

The **Performance Series (PS)** assessment is computer-adaptive, measures the student’s ability level in reading and mathematics, and can support teachers in monitoring academic growth over time.

The **Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)** provides a description of the student’s own cognitive resources for learning through measuring verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal abilities. It provides a picture of the student’s strengths and weaknesses.

The **Iowa Assessments (IOWA)** test the student’s ability in the areas of vocabulary, reading, and math. The results show how the student performs against a national sample and against other students in the same grade.

The **Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT)** assesses the student’s ability in the areas of pre-algebraic number skills and concepts, interpreting mathematical information, representing relationships, and using symbols.

### *Renzulli Scales*

Naperville Community Unit School District 203 (District 203) uses the Renzulli Scales to gain teacher input to assist in the identification and placement of children who are gifted and talented learners.

A team of researchers led by Joseph S. Renzulli created the Renzulli Scales. According to their research, gifted children tend to demonstrate observable behaviors, such as generalizing from complex information, using advanced vocabulary, and grasping underlying principles.

This chart notates the Renzulli Scales referenced for each program.

<b>Honors Math</b>	<b>Project IDEA</b>	<b>Project IDEA +</b>
Learning Characteristics	Learning Characteristics	Learning Characteristics
Motivation Characteristics	Motivation Characteristics	Motivation Characteristics
Mathematics Characteristics	Communication Characteristics	Communication Characteristics
		Planning Characteristics
		Creativity Characteristics

## Resources

**IAGC – Illinois Association for Gifted Children** <http://www.iagcgifted.org/>

The Illinois Association for Gifted Children is an organization of parents, educators, and others committed to the education and development of children with diverse gifts and talents. We educate, support, and influence those who touch the lives of children and focus our energies to meet the needs of children with gifts and talents in Illinois.

**NAGC – National Association for Gifted Children** <http://www.nagc.org/>

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) is an organization of parents, teachers, educators, other professionals, and community leaders who unite to address the unique needs of children and youth with demonstrated gifts and talents as well as those children who may be able to develop their talent potential with appropriate educational experiences.

**STAGE 203 – Supporters of Gifted and Talented Education** <http://stage203.org/>

Supporters of Talented and Gifted Education (STAGE) is a volunteer community that advocates for educational excellence and opportunity for talented and gifted children in Naperville Community Unit School District 203.

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