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The purpose of this presentation is to introduce you to the process used to identify students who are eligible for gifted services in Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS). After viewing this presentation, if you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact your school's gifted education resource teacher.

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In PWCS, "gifted students" are defined as those students who demonstrate high levels of accomplishment or show exceptional academic potential beyond their age peers of similar experience or environment in one or more areas:

General Intellectual Aptitude (Kindergarten through Grade 12)

Language (Kindergarten through Grade 12)

Mathematics (Kindergarten through Grade 12)

History and Social Science (Grades 6 through 12)

Science (Grades 6 through 12)

These students possess aptitudes and potential for accomplishment that are so outstanding that they require special programs to meet their educational needs.

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The goal of the PWCS Gifted Education program is to develop students' advanced skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and conceptual thinking to encourage and enable students to become self-directed learners.

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How are gifted services provided?

In elementary school, students leave their classrooms to work with the gifted education resource teacher in the resource room. This is known as pull-out services.

In grades six through eight, students receive gifted services during the Encore rotation or in a pull-out resource model.

In grades nine and ten, students again leave their classrooms for pull-out seminar services. Students in grades eleven and twelve have credit-bearing course options or may continue to participate in resource seminars.

The amount of service time varies depending on the grade level of the student.

Gifted education resource teachers also work with classroom teachers to support appropriate classroom instruction for identified students.

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Students may be referred for gifted evaluation by a school professional, a parent or guardian, a community member, or a peer. Students may also refer themselves. Some students may be referred for evaluation based on scores from aptitude testing or other data reviews. Students in grade kindergarten through grade twelve may be referred for gifted evaluation at any time in the school year. Referral forms are available at each school and on the gifted program page of the PWCS website.

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When a student is referred for the gifted evaluation process, a form is sent to the parents or guardians of the student to request permission to evaluate the student.

This form must be signed by a parent or guardian before any testing or evaluation can begin.

Parents or guardians will also receive a Parent or Guardian Report. We ask parents to complete this report to provide important information about their child's strengths. A digital version of this form is available from your school's gifted resource teacher if you prefer to type your responses. The report is available in English, Arabic, Farsi/Dari, Korean, Pashto, Spanish, Urdu, Chinese, and Vietnamese. It can also be completed orally through an interview with the Parent Liaison or interpreter through your child's school.

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The first page of the parent report asks you to mark the rating that best describes how often your child demonstrates certain characteristics. The ratings include not observed, sometimes, frequently, or always. After you rate a characteristic, you are then asked to provide examples of **how** your child demonstrates the characteristic. If you marked "not observed," no examples are necessary. This does not reflect poorly on your child. Not every characteristic of giftedness is seen in all children.

The first characteristic says, "My child is curious; has a questioning attitude; is a keen observer." Think about how often your child demonstrates this characteristic, either in school or at home. Check the box that applies and then try to provide written examples. Be specific if possible. Your examples can be from things you see at home – they do not have to be from the classroom setting.

For example, if parents of a first-grade child mark that their child frequently displays these characteristics, they might give the following examples: asks about construction sites, construction vehicles, and how buildings are made; connects real construction sites and vehicles to those in books and TV shows; notices differences between types of construction vehicles

Another characteristic on the parent report says, "My child has a vivid imagination." After marking the rating that applies, again try to think about specific examples that you see at home. Imagination can be demonstrated in many ways. For example, a fourth-grade child might write plays and stories in a journal, create elaborate illustrations; use Minecraft coding to create detailed "worlds"; or create new lyrics or music for songs.

For the characteristic, "My child has a subtle or sophisticated sense of humor," the parents of a middle school student might write that their child understands sarcasm when others use it; can

banter back and forth with both children and adults; makes up jokes involving word play or puns; or can find irony in situations

As a final example, one prompt says, "My child is sensitive to human issues; is concerned with fairness and justice." For a Kindergarten child, parents might write that their child wanted to send money or extra food to help people impacted by a recent hurricane; the child becomes sad when viewing commercials about dogs who need sponsors; or when playing in the neighborhood, their child is concerned with everyone receiving a turn or with everyone playing fairly.

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On the back of the parent report are other general questions for you to consider about your child.

How does your child spend time outside of school? What are his/her interests?

For this question, consider things like extracurricular activities, hobbies, what your child would choose to do with free time after school, collections, or games

Describe what you consider to be your child's greatest strength in learning and his/her greatest challenge in learning.

Strengths and weaknesses could be a particular subject area or a behavior or skill related to learning.

List examples of books (fiction and non-fiction) your child has read independently that were not required assignments.

List specific titles of these books. Try to make connections as to why books were chosen (for example from something they learned in school, a movie or TV show, or a life experience). Is your child an avid reader or a reluctant reader?

How has your child used mathematical concepts and ideas outside of school?

Think about more than doing calculations like adding and subtracting. Think about games your child plays, cooking, family situations, playtime, and so on. Consider identifying patterns, measurements, fractions, and logic.

Another question asks you to describe any special circumstances affecting your child that you would like the committee to consider (i.e., medical, or health-related issues, frequent moves, language barriers, special needs).

The middle school and high school parent reports include additional questions about student interests in history and social science and science.

When you have completed the Parent Report, please return the report and the signed permission form to the gifted education resource teacher at your child's school.

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When permission is received, the collection of evidence begins. According to Virginia Regulations, school divisions have 90 instructional days to collect and evaluate the data and make a decision regarding identification.

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PWCS uses a multi-criteria approach in the identification process. This means that no single data point, like a test score, for example, can automatically identify a student and no single data point can keep a student from being identified for the gifted education program.

The evidence collected in PWCS includes aptitude testing scores from the Kaufmann Brief Intelligence Test (known as the KBIT), the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (known as the NNAT), and/or the Cognitive Abilities Test (known as the CogAT). The student's academic record, which includes data like grades, levels, and SOL scores is also included. Classroom teachers and resource

teachers who work with the student submit written reports. Information from the student's parents or guardians, samples of the student's work, descriptions of self-initiated projects, and student questionnaires are also collected.

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When the collection of evidence is complete, a gifted identification and placement committee meets at your child's school. This committee includes an administrator, a school counselor, classroom teachers, and the gifted resource teacher. This committee also includes ESOL and Special Education resource teachers. The committee reviews and evaluates the evidence and makes decisions about gifted eligibility and placement for services. Then, the decisions are reviewed and verified by a division-level committee. After a decision is verified, written notification of the decision will be mailed home.

Please note that any part of the file can be reviewed by the parent after the identification process. If you are interested in doing this, contact the gifted education resource teacher at your child's school. If parents disagree with the committee's decision, they may file an appeal within 10 instructional days.

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There are several possible outcomes to the gifted identification process.

Your child could be found eligible for gifted education services in general intellectual aptitude or one or more specific academic aptitudes. The area of identification would be specified in the letter you will receive. Areas of identification include General Intellectual Aptitude, Language (K-12), Math (K-12), Social Studies (Grades 6-12), or Science (Grades 6-12). The area of identification might also be a

combination of subject areas. Your child would then be offered educational options to support strengths. You will receive a Permission for Services Form, and when that is signed and returned to the school, gifted services can begin.

Another possible outcome is that your child's case requires monitoring. This means that the committee would like additional information before a decision is made. The gifted resource teacher will collect the information the committee requests, then the case will be returned to the committee for a decision.

Finally, your child could be found not eligible for gifted services. This means that evidence did not currently demonstrate a need for gifted services. Parents can file an appeal of this decision within 10 days of receiving written notification. Contact the gifted education resource teacher to initiate this appeal.

For students in kindergarten through second grade, it could be determined that although your child is not currently eligible for gifted education services, he or she demonstrates some significant strengths and is recommended for the Early Talent Development Program (ETD). This is not the same as gifted services. Classroom teachers and gifted resource teachers collaborate to provide enrichment and extension activities to foster student strengths. They develop a portfolio of student work. This portfolio is used to document how the student's thinking matures and grows over time. Then, the portfolio and other data are presented to the identification and placement committee before the end of third grade for evaluation.

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This concludes the Gifted Identification Parent Information Presentation. If you have questions about the process, or if you would like to refer your child for evaluation, please contact the gifted education resource teacher at your child's school. The name of each gifted resource teacher is available on the gifted education page of the PWCS website at PWCS.edu under Academics, then Gifted program. Referral forms can be located on this web page, along with additional information about the gifted education program and identification procedures.

Thank you for your time.