

GT Center School FAQs

- What are the federal or state guidelines for GT Centers?
 - There are no federal or state guidelines for GT Centers. Most districts in Colorado do not have GT Center programs, and many states in the US have no guidelines for gifted education whatsoever. (Unlike special education, gifted education is not federally mandated.) In Jeffco we have developed [GT Center expectations](#) to try to inform our gifted community of what to expect in GT Centers. We are also *informed* by the [Pre-K - 12 Gifted Programming Standards](#) that were published by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). While these are suggested guidelines, and not federally mandated, they do provide us with some good information on the 'ideal' for gifted education.
- How are GT Centers funded?
 - All Jeffco GT Center Schools are funded via **Student-Based Budgeting (SBB)**, which is true for all Jeffco Schools. Each school receives a regular allocation based on the total number of students enrolled in the school. All GT Center teachers are covered by the school's SBB amount. GT Centers do not receive additional funds for GT students, other than a small allocation to cover resources, professional development and student activities around \$1000 per school. The school also houses a **GT Resource Teacher (GT RT)** to serve that school (although the GT RT also serves about 10 other district schools) as well as the services of a **GT Counselor**, who is able to serve each Center school 1 day a week. The GT Resource Teacher, GT Counselor and the resources/activities/professional development allocation are all funded by the district GT Department.
- What are the requirements for GT Center Teachers?
 - GT Center Teachers are expected to either have or be in the process of obtaining a state [GT Endorsement](#). The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) recently changed the [requirements](#) for teachers to receive the GT Endorsement. They now require extensive coursework in addition to passing a competency exam. While it is great that newly endorsed teachers will be receiving in-depth theoretical and practical instruction on gifted education, it will now take significantly longer (at least 2 years) for teachers who do not currently have the GT Endorsement to obtain it. As there are not currently a large number of teachers in the hiring pool who already have the GT endorsement, our hiring guidelines now ask that teachers are willing to obtain the endorsement within 2 years of hire at a Jeffco GT Center school, as well as to participate in ongoing professional development provided by the district GT department. While there are no Colorado or federal guidelines around GT Centers, we feel that Jeffco GT Center Teachers should have sufficient training in gifted education.
 - Many GT Center teachers are also members of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in the broader school community, usually teaming with other teachers in the same grade or content area. This allows for sharing of best practices and use of common assessments.
- What can we expect from GT Center programming?

- GT Center schools adhere to the [GT Center expectations](#) in programming for gifted learners. All GT Centers are expected to adhere to these best practices, although each school retains its individual identity and may offer additional enrichments and programming appropriate to its students' needs. GT Center classrooms are designed to understand and meet the diverse academic and social-emotional needs of their students. While GT Center students generally have instruction in core content areas with intellectual peers, there are often opportunities for them to interact with students outside of the GT Center and take advantage of the experiences offered for the entire school.
- Do all students receive the same programming in GT Centers?
 - Programming at GT Centers is generally accelerated at our elementary and middle school Centers, which can mean that students go at a faster pace or have greater depth and complexity of curriculum and instruction than their grade-level peers. In some cases, such as mathematics, the students may be accelerated by one or more grade levels, based upon a body of evidence. We are responsive to available data, performance, placement exams, etc. to determine the appropriate level of instruction for GT Center students. In turn, we provide flexible programming and strength-based learning according to student need. Our high school GT Centers have a somewhat different model, as depth and acceleration can be met by course offerings like AP, IB and Honors classes. GT Center programming at the high school focuses more on social-emotional support, enrichment, development of academic skills and empowering the student as a learner, following the [Autonomous Learner Model \(ALM\)](#).
- What kind of students are served by GT Centers?
 - Jeffco GT Centers are designed to meet the needs of academically gifted students who qualify in two or more strength areas, as determined by a body of evidence consistently above the 95th percentile. Center programming may not be suitable for all students on Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs).
- How are students placed in GT Centers?
 - Students must follow our [GT Application process](#) to gain access to our GT Centers. This process may include cognitive testing at one of our GT Center testing days, offered twice a year, if recent cognitive testing data is not available. A team of experts in the field reviews a full body of evidence, including cognitive, achievement, behavioral and/or performance data. Once students are placed in our GT Centers, they generally roll up to the next grade level, and don't need additional testing in order to advance from one grade level or from one GT Center school to the next level (such as from an elementary GT Center to a middle school GT Center in the same feeder pattern.) Students who wish to transfer from one GT Center to another will have to complete a transfer process.

If you have further questions, please contact your school's GT Resource Teacher