



Horry County Schools

Office of Gifted and Talented Programs  
1605 Horry Street  
Conway, SC 29527  
(843) 488-6740

August 24, 2009

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

With the start of the 2009-2010 school year, we begin the screening and identification process for the academically gifted and talented program. This process continues until final grades are issued on June 4, 2010. In order to be identified as academically gifted and talented in South Carolina, students must have a composite aptitude score at or above the 96<sup>th</sup> national age percentile or meet two out of three dimensions of eligibility: aptitude, achievement, or performance. This is a three-step process:

Step One: All students in grades 2 and 5 as well as all referred students in grades 3-4 and 6-11 will be given the CogAT®, an aptitude test, in November 2009. **Any parent, student, teacher, or administrator may refer a student for testing by contacting the guidance department at the student's school or by contacting the Office of Gifted and Talented Programs prior to September 28, 2009.** If the student has a composite aptitude score at or above the 96<sup>th</sup> national age percentile, then he/she automatically qualifies for the program. If the student scores at or above the 93<sup>rd</sup> national age percentile on the verbal, nonverbal, quantitative or total portion of the aptitude test, then we will screen for high achievement.

Step Two: For the achievement dimension, all students in grades 2 and up who take MAP will have their fall 2009 scores screened for academically gifted and talented qualification. For the 2009-2010 school year, spring 2009 MAP scores will also be screened for the achievement dimension. Students who have MAP scores on either the reading or the math tests at or above the 94<sup>th</sup> national percentile meet the achievement dimension of eligibility. Criteria for PASS scores to be used for the achievement dimension will be released by the South Carolina State Department of Education later in the 2009-2010 school year.

Step Three: If the student meets the eligibility criteria for either the aptitude or achievement dimension but not both, we will screen for the academic performance dimension. The STAR Performance Task Assessment will be administered to qualifying students in grades 2-5 February 15-March 4, 2010. A student may only take the primary or the intermediate version of the STAR Performance Task Assessment once, and results will be released by the end of May 2010. End-of-year grades in the core academic areas (English, math, science, social studies, and foreign language) will be used as the performance dimension measure for students in grades 6 through 11. A grade point average of 3.75 on a 4.0 scale in the core academic areas is needed to meet the performance dimension eligibility criteria. Students who become eligible for the academically gifted and talented program through the performance dimension will begin gifted services in the fall of 2010.

The referral, screening, and identification process is a lengthy one. **If your child meets the identification criteria for the academically gifted and talented program, then you will receive written notification from the Office of Gifted and Talented Programs.** If you have questions regarding the screening and identification process, please feel free to contact the school or this office.

Sincerely,

Beverly Pilkey  
Director, Gifted and Talented Programs

Horry County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, immigrant status, English-speaking status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal or S.C. law in its programs or activities. For questions regarding the nondiscrimination policies call 843-488-6700, or write Horry County Schools, 1605 Horry Street, Conway, SC 29527.