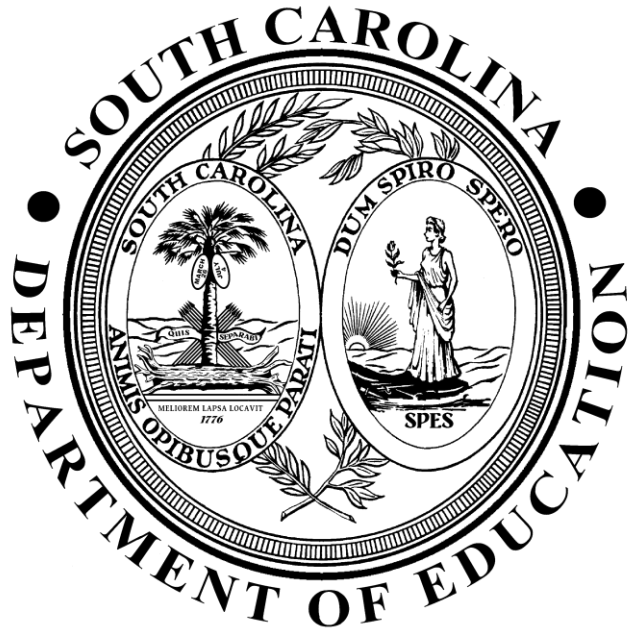


STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Gifted and Talented Insights for the 2025 South
Carolina College- and Career-Ready
Mathematics Standards

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Considerations for Providing Gifted and Talented Services

Regulation 43-220 defines students who should receive gifted and talented services as: “those who are identified in grades one through twelve as demonstrating high performance ability or potential in academic and/or artistic areas and therefore require educational programming beyond that normally provided by the general school programming in order to achieve their potential.”

South Carolina’s definition of gifted and talented services is consistent with the language included in the foreword to *National Excellence: A Case for Developing America’s Talent* (Ross, 1993), which itself is based on the definition in the federal Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1988:

Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.

These children and youth exhibit high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools.

Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

“To put this definition into practice,” *National Excellence* continues, “schools must develop a system to identify gifted and talented students” – a system that operates in the following manner:

- Seeks variety – looks throughout a range of disciplines for students with diverse talents;
- Uses many assessment measures – uses a variety of appraisals so that schools can find students in different talent areas and at different ages;
- Is free of bias – provides students of all backgrounds with equal access to appropriate opportunities;
- Is fluid – uses assessment procedures that can accommodate students who develop at different rates and whose interests may change as they mature;
- Identifies potential – discovers talents that are not readily apparent in students, as well as those that are obvious; and
- Assesses motivation – considers the drive and passion that play a key role in accomplishment (Ross, 1993, p. 26).

In addition to the services provided through gifted and talented program models, districts should attend to instructional provisions for gifted and talented services in the general education classroom. Depending on the nature of the gifted and talented program being implemented, identified students may spend the majority of their school time in a regular heterogeneous classroom. These students are gifted and talented one hundred percent of the time, not just the percentage of time spent in a pull-out program or special class.

When considering the needs of gifted and talented learners in the general education classroom, teachers need to consider the diversity of the learners they serve. Equal opportunity for all students in the classroom does not and should not mean identical content and activities. To accommodate the needs of gifted and talented students in the general education classroom, standards and instruction must be flexible in aspects such as pace, depth, complexity, and novelty. This is accomplished by considering the varied readiness levels, interests, passions, and learning styles of the students, and using effective differentiation practices to meet the individual needs of students. All students – even those who demonstrate mastery of the standards – are expected to learn and grow.

Guiding Principles

What, then, can teachers do to provide gifted and talented services in the general education classroom? Presented in the following sections are recommended instructional provisions regarding content, process, product, and the learning environment.

Content - Knowledge, Understandings, and Skills Students Should Learn:

- Develop lessons and activities that align with content standards and include tasks that support mastery, depth, and acceleration of those standards (Cotabish, Dailey, & Jackson, 2017; Kettler, 2018; Rimm, Siegle, & Davis, 2018; Stambaugh & VanTassel-Baska, 2017).
- Use pre-assessment techniques to establish what students already know as well as what they do not know (Inman & Roberts, 2018; Tomlinson, 2014; VanTassel-Baska, 2014).
- Increase the pace of gifted and talented services through acceleration or compacting of the standards in terms of skills and/or knowledge areas. Do not re-teach the mastered content standards (Assouline & Lupkowski-Shoplik, 2018; Riley, 2009; Robinson, Shore, & Enersen, 2007).
- Adjust the complexity for gifted and talented learners by providing more complex/abstract materials for gifted and talented learners (Tomlinson, 2014).
- Select research-based resources.
- Use effective grouping practices during instruction (Gentry, 2014; Gentry, & Tay, 2017).
- Use ongoing formative assessments to pace instruction based on the learning rates (Tomlinson, 2014).
- Provide mentors who demonstrate unusual interest in specific content areas (Robinson, Shore, & Enersen, 2007).
- Allow students time to reflect and construct meaning.

Process - How Students Come to Understand or Make Sense of the Content

- Teach strategies that students need to process content and to create products.
- Provide tiered activities where students learn information, strategies, and skills, but proceed at different levels of support, challenge, and complexity (Rimm, Siegle, & Davis, 2018; Tomlinson, 2014).
- Give students choices throughout the instructional process—in topics, ways of learning, modes of expression, and working conditions.

- Use a variety of modes to present or introduce information.
- Give students open-ended tasks to encourage exploration, collaboration, and discourse.
- Use flexibility in assigning groups and tasks.
- Allow students to work independently some of the time and collaboratively in groups at other times. (The majority of a student’s time in groupwork should be spent with intellectual peers.)
- Structure a metacognitive approach for accomplishing academic tasks.
- Make sure that all students are actively participating in the learning process. It is essential that gifted and talented students be engaged in their learning.

Product - How Students Demonstrate What They Have Come to Know, Understand, and Are Able to Do

- Encourage student choice and originality in the creation of products. Allow students to use a variety of media and techniques to produce their creations.
- Provide examples of exemplary products at varied levels of complexity.
- Encourage students to create products that demonstrate more complex and in-depth mastery of content—e.g., independent study projects, special reports, research summaries, simulations, presentations, demonstrations.
- Require self-evaluation of all products as part of the metacognitive process.

Learning Environment - The Physical and Emotional Context in Which Learning Occurs

- Be responsive to the interests and cognitive needs of the learner.
- Be respectful and supportive of the cultural and language diversity of gifted and talented learners from varying backgrounds.
- Provide opportunities to encourage personal responsibility and initiative.
- Develop positive leadership roles and opportunities to affect positive change as leaders in a community setting.
- Create a safe, risk-free learning environment to facilitate student selection of appropriately challenging tasks.
- Encourage and model acceptance of the unique abilities and needs of each student in the classroom.
- Provide opportunities for students to share in the decision-making process about routines and individual responsibilities in the classroom.
- Expect and encourage students to work to their highest potential.
- Balance teacher-talk with student-talk.
- Create an inviting environment for advanced learning with a wide variety of available resources.

According to Section 59-29-170 of the Code of Laws of SC, gifted and talented services “must be provided to students at the elementary and secondary levels during the regular school year or during summer school to develop their unique talents”. According to Regulation 43-220, gifted and talented services shall develop and maximize the potential of students’ gifts and talents through the following instructional components:

- a) content, process, and product standards that exceed the state-adopted standards for all students and that provide challenges at appropriate levels for strengths of individual students;
- b) goals and indicators that require students to demonstrate depth and complexity of knowledge, creative and critical thinking, and problem-solving skills;
- c) instructional strategies that promote inquiry and accommodate the unique needs of gifted and talented learners;
- d) a confluent approach that incorporates acceleration and enrichment;
- e) opportunities for the critical consumption, use, and creation of information using available technologies; and
- f) evaluation of student performance and programming effectiveness.

Powerful curricular experiences for high ability learners must align to and expand the South Carolina curriculum standards in all program models, including pull-out and special classes while simultaneously working to achieve the attributes of the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate (SCDE, 2018). In addition, gifted and talented services that support all students in discovering and developing their gifts and talents is provided through talent development, a multipronged approach “that encourages the search for strengths, abilities, and potential in all students” (Swanson and Van Sickle, 2021). Talent Develop provided gifted and talented services “as a diverse continuum of services, including early enrichment for all students, so talent and abilities can emerge and be noticed” (Northwestern University Center for Talent Development, 2015 as cited in Swanson and Van Sickle, 2021).

Whether services are provided through traditional gifted and talented programs or through a talent development model, gifted and talented services for all students should support the following objectives to achieve student learning outcomes.

Support mastery, depth, and acceleration of content standards at a pace, complexity, and abstractness appropriate for students with gifts and talents. Using theory and research-based models, culturally responsive curriculum will meet the diverse needs of identified students including twice-exceptional, highly gifted, and English language learners (NAGC 3.3.1, NAGC 3.1.3). Standards will be differentiated based on a balanced assessment system that ensures student growth and progress (NAGC 3.1, NAGC 3.1.4). Educators use research-based instruction that is differentiated through pace, complexity, abstraction, and depth using acceleration and enrichment.

Students with gifts and talents will demonstrate growth commensurate with aptitude during the school year (NAGC 3.1).

Educators will differentiate standards, instruction, and assessment so that students with gifts and talents will articulate the underlying structure of the discipline(s), explaining the interconnectedness of knowledge within and across the disciplines.

Students with gifts and talents will:

- a) demonstrate comprehension of a discipline as a system of knowledge.

- b) analyze the content of a discipline in terms of major concepts, themes, and issues of that discipline.
- c) analyze a concept, theme, problem, or issue within and across disciplines by using the different perspectives of those disciplines.
- d) analyze the ethical dimensions of ideas, issues, problems, and themes.
- e) explain the dynamic nature of knowledge and the interaction between culture and knowledge.

Educators will ensure that students with gifts and talents acquire the skills necessary to become independent investigators (NAGC 3.4) by providing opportunities for students to explore and evaluate existing research as well as identify new areas of interest.

Students with gifts and talents will:

- a) explore, develop, or research areas of interest and/or talent (NAGC 3.3.3).
- b) utilize current research processes and procedures appropriate to the domain of learning.

Educators will incorporate research-based models of critical and creative thinking, problem solving, decision making and metacognition so that students develop a repertoire of strategies to apply within and across various content areas.

Students with gifts and talents will:

- a) demonstrate effective use of strategies and skills associated with critical and creative thinking models (Profile of SC Graduate, 2018; NAGC 3.4.1 and 3.4.2).
- b) demonstrate effective use of reasoning, problem solving and decision-making strategies (Profile of the SC Graduate, 2018; NAGC 3.4.3).
- c) utilize metacognitive strategies to analyze and monitor assumptions or errors in thinking (Profile of the SC Graduate, 2018; NAGC 3.2.2; Stambaugh & VanTassel-Baska, 2017).
- d) evaluate the quality and appropriateness of arguments, lines of reasoning, and solutions in terms of both ethical and intellectual standards.

Educators will provide learning experiences for students with gifts and talents to develop the ability to effectively communicate abstract and complex ideas, relationships, and issues through various forms of media and technologies (NAGC 4.5).

Students with gifts and talents will:

- a) communicate and demonstrate transformation of learning through the creation of products and presentations appropriate for both content and audience.
- b) analyze and evaluate the quality, effectiveness, and substantive content of products and presentations.

When curriculum standards that are “appropriately aligned and adapted” become the springboard for gifted and talented services, “students are more likely to show positive growth” (Stambaugh and VanTassel-Baska, 2017 as cited in VanTassel-Baska and Little, 2017).

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