

THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE



OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

REVIEW OF

FLORIDA'S K-12 GIFTED PROGRAM
PART II

September 16, 1996

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- Whether a program is operating within current revenue resources;
- What goals, objectives, and performance measures are used to monitor and report program accomplishments;
- What structures and designs of programs are used to accomplish their goals and objectives; and
- What alternative methods are available for providing program services or products.

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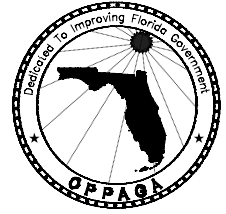
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John W. Turcotte
Director

The Florida Legislature

OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY



September 16, 1996

The President of the Senate,
the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee,
the Senate Ways and Means Committee,
the House Appropriations Committee,
the House Education Committee, and
the Senate Education Justice Committee

This Information Brief is the second of two briefs that address issues related to Florida's K-12 Gifted Program. The House Education Committee, through the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee, requested OPPAGA to answer specific questions about Florida's K-12 Gifted Program. The results of the review are presented to you in this report.

We wish to express our appreciation to the staff of the Department of Education for their assistance.

Respectfully yours,

John W. Turcotte
Director

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OPPAGA INFORMATION BRIEF

FLORIDA'S K-12 GIFTED PROGRAM

Part II

Abstract

Our review of Florida's K-12 Gifted Program found that:

- School districts are implementing a variety of more culturally sensitive strategies to increase under-represented students' participation in gifted programs. (Report Pages 5-11.)
- The rule governing the eligibility criteria for the gifted program permits wide latitude in its application by school districts. (Report Pages 15-17.)
- School districts use several different delivery models for school-based and center-based gifted programs. Depending on the prevalency of gifted students across schools within a district, some models may be more cost-effective than others. (Report Pages 19-25.)
- Although district staff interpret the needs of gifted students in many ways, they perceive alternative courses are designed to meet high-performing gifted students' intellectual and academic needs. However, alternative courses may not address students' emotional, social, and creative needs. Alternative courses also do not meet the needs of underachieving gifted students. (Report Pages 30-33.)
- Gifted high school students are choosing not to participate in the gifted program and 18 districts do not offer high school students a gifted program. (Report Pages 33-35.)
- Parents believe an independent evaluation increases their child's probability of placement in the gifted program and provides a fast, accurate, and confidential evaluation.

INTRODUCTION Purpose, Background, and Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this brief is to provide the Legislature with information about the gifted program in Florida's public schools. The Chairperson of the House of Representatives Committee on Education requested, through the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee, that OPPAGA address specific issues. This is the second of two briefs that address the Committee's specific information request on the gifted program. We addressed the following questions and issues in this brief:

Under-Represented Students

- (1) The State Board of Education adopted a rule known as Plan B that encouraged districts to increase under-represented students' participation in the gifted program. This requires identification and evaluation procedures that are more culturally sensitive. We examined the following:
 - Whether such strategies are being used; and
 - Which types of evaluation instruments are being used by the districts.

Program Membership

- (2) What policies and practices account for the fluctuation in program membership from kindergarten through grade 12?
- (3) Are these policies and practices consistent with the safeguards afforded to disadvantaged students?
- (4) Can any conclusions be made regarding the effect of delaying the identification and placement of students in the gifted program?

Service Delivery Models

- (5) What is the cost of the gifted program as a function of the delivery model? Are there cost differences in a school-based versus center-based program?
- (6) Do students who attend a school-based or center-based gifted program, or both, report advantages/disadvantages?

Alternatives to Gifted Programs

- (7) How do Advanced Placement or Honors courses compare to gifted courses in the same subject area? What are the similarities and differences in terms of funds generated, class size, instructional staff, instructional materials, instructional strategies, rigor of course content, and students' profiles?
- (8) Are alternative course offerings, e.g., Advanced Placement, Honors, Dual Enrollment courses, meeting gifted students' needs?
- (9) Are gifted students in grades 9-12 choosing not to participate in the gifted program, or is their lack of membership the result of a lack of program offerings at the secondary level?

Identification of Gifted Students

- (10) Which districts allow the standard error of measurement (SE_m) to be used as a factor in computing IQ scores for determining eligibility for the gifted program? ¹
- (11) If SE_m were not used, how many students would not have been eligible for the gifted program during the last three years?
- (12) Which districts have a system for using the results of psychological evaluations that are obtained by parents through independent evaluators?
 - What are districts' policies and practices regarding the use of outside test results in determining eligibility for the gifted program?
 - What are the reasons parents seek independent evaluations?
 - How frequently do parents seek independent evaluations?

¹ The standard error of measurement (SE_m) is a property of mathematical statistics used to compensate for a test's inability to accurately reflect a student's true score. It is a range of scores that fall on each side of a student's actual score.

Background

Chapter 228, F.S., requires the state's public school system to provide all children with 13 consecutive years of instruction beginning with kindergarten. The law defines an exceptional student as any child or youth who has been determined eligible for a special program in accordance with State Board of Education Rules. Florida includes gifted students in its Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Program.

Education for learners who are gifted has been included within exceptional student education by the Florida Legislature since 1968. Rule 6A-6.03019, F.A.C., defines a gifted student as one who has superior intellectual development and is capable of high performance. Students are eligible for the gifted program if the student meets one of the following criteria:

1. The student demonstrates need for a special program, has a majority of characteristics of gifted students according to a standard scale or checklist, has superior intellectual development as measured by an intelligence quotient of two standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence; or
2. The student is a member of an under-represented group and meets the criteria specified in an approved school district plan for increasing the participation of under-represented groups in programs for gifted students.²

Florida statutes provide that each public school district must identify eligible students; determine the educational needs of those students; and provide an appropriate program of special instruction, facilities, and services for exceptional students, including the gifted. In fiscal year 1994-95, the state allocated \$144 million to serve 28,000 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) students in the gifted program. The gifted program is a part-time program. The actual number of students served in 1994-95 was 78,000.

² Florida rule defines under-represented groups in programs for gifted as groups whose racial/ethnic backgrounds are other than white non-hispanic, or who are limited English proficient, or who are from a low socio-economic status family.

Methodology

To answer the questions posed regarding Florida's K-12 Gifted Program, we reviewed State Board of Education Rules to determine the criteria used to identify gifted students and reviewed Department of Education gifted program documents. We interviewed various school district staff, including gifted program coordinators, exceptional education coordinators, and other program coordinators. Department of Education staff interviewed included gifted program staff, the Exceptional Student Education Director, and financial officers. We interviewed district gifted program coordinators and Department of Education staff to determine the cost associated with the different types of gifted program models, compare gifted courses with alternative courses (Honors, Advanced Placement, etc.), and identify districts that offer a high school gifted program. We also interviewed school district staff exclusive of exceptional education to obtain their opinion on whether gifted high school students choose to participate in alternative programs instead of gifted programs and whether alternative programs could meet these students' needs. We also reviewed the Department of Education's FTE student counts by grade level for fiscal years 1994-95 through 1995-96 to determine the number of gifted FTEs by grade level for each district.

We conducted a literature review to identify the effect of delaying student placement, identify referral and testing strategies specific to gifted under-represented students, and ascertain whether alternative programs could meet gifted students' needs. We also interviewed representatives of the National Association for Gifted Children, including the director of the National Research Center for Talented Children at the University of Connecticut, and other experts in the field from the University of South Florida.

We surveyed the 67 school districts to determine Plan B implementation, identify districts that use the standard error of measurement in computing eligibility scores, identify reasons parents seek independent evaluations of their children, identify reasons high school students do not participate in gifted programs, and identify the alternative courses offered and whether these courses meet gifted students' needs.

Answers to Questions about Florida's Gifted Program

Under-Represented Students

Question 1

The State Board of Education adopted a rule known as Plan B that encouraged districts to increase under-represented students' participation in the gifted program. This requires identification and evaluation procedures that are more culturally sensitive. As such, we examined the following:

- Whether such strategies are being used.
- Which types of evaluation instruments are being used by the districts.

School districts with Plan Bs are implementing a variety of strategies to increase under-represented students' participation in gifted programs. Evaluation instruments used by the districts to increase representation include gifted-characteristics checklists, intelligence tests, academic performance measures, and teacher/parent nomination forms.

In 1991, the State Board of Education adopted a rule known as Plan B that encouraged school districts to develop innovative strategies to increase under-represented students' participation in gifted programs.³ If a school district chooses to implement this rule, it must develop a plan and submit it to the Department for approval. The Department is authorized through 1997 to approve plans that include components specified in the rule. Exhibit 1 lists the 49 school districts that have Department of Education approved Plan Bs and the 18 districts without approved Plan Bs. These school districts report they are implementing strategies and using evaluation instruments to increase the participation of under-represented students in gifted programs. Districts are implementing their strategies on a pilot basis in some or all of their schools.

³ Under-represented students are defined in Rule 6A-6.03019, F.A.C., known as Plan B, as students whose racial/ethnic backgrounds are other than white non-hispanic, who are limited English proficient, or who are from a low socio-economic status family.

Exhibit 1
There Were 49 School Districts Implementing an
Approved Plan B During the 1994-95 School Year

Districts With Approved Plan Bs			Districts Without Approved Plan Bs
Alachua	Hernando	Pasco	Bay
Baker	Highlands	Pinellas	Bradford
Brevard	Hillsborough	Polk	Calhoun
Broward	Indian River	Putnam	Citrus
Charlotte	Jefferson	St. Johns	DeSoto
Clay	Lafayette	St. Lucie	Dixie
Collier	Lake	Santa Rosa	Hamilton
Columbia	Lee	Sarasota	Hardee
Dade	Leon	Seminole	Holmes
Duval	Madison	Sumter	Jackson
Escambia	Manatee	Volusia	Levy
Flagler	Marion	Wakulla	Liberty
Franklin	Martin	Walton	Nassau
Gadsden	Monroe		Okaloosa
Gilchrist	Okeechobee		Suwannee
Glades	Orange		Taylor
Gulf	Osceola		Union
Hendry	Palm Beach		Washington
TOTAL: 49 School districts			TOTAL: 18 School districts

Source: Department of Education and school districts.

In 1997 the Department plans to assess the 1991 gifted rule to determine how the rule should be revised. However, the Department has not analyzed districts' Plan B evaluation results that compare student data from gifted programs before and after plan implementation. To assess how the rule should be revised, the Department needs to determine the outcome of districts' Plan B implementation since 1991. Lack of information regarding Plan B implementation results may hinder the Department's efforts to better address gifted students' needs.

Screening Strategies Used to Identify Potentially Gifted Under-Represented Students

School districts implementing Plan Bs are using a variety of strategies to ensure that under-represented students are screened for gifted programs. The purpose of screening is to identify a pool of potentially gifted students who should be referred for evaluation. Exhibit 2 is a summary of screening strategies we identified based on 24 school districts' Plan Bs.

Exhibit 2 Districts Have Developed a Variety of Screening Strategies Schools Can Use to Identify Potentially Gifted Under-Represented Students

Matrix Scoring	A variety of indicators such as test data, academic performance, and teacher/parent nominations are considered.
Gifted Assessment Teams	A team consisting of school staff coordinates the school's efforts to screen potentially gifted students.
Tests/Referrals/Honor Roll	A combination of indicators including students scoring above the 60th percentile on standardized test, teacher referrals, and students achieving A/B honor roll are used to screen students.
Training	Schools may offer teacher inservice training and parent/community awareness sessions that help teachers/parents to identify potentially gifted students.
Grade Point Average	All students from under-represented groups who have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above are referred for screening.
Achievement/IQ Tests	The district sends elementary schools the names of all under-represented students who score 7-9 on districtwide achievement battery tests and/or 120 on IQ tests.

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability review of districts' Plan Bs.

Most districts use more than one screening strategy to identify potentially gifted under-represented students. Districts most often combine matrix scoring and gifted assessment teams. Matrix scoring awards students points based on a combination of evaluation indicators such as test data, academic performance, gifted-characteristics checklists, and teacher/parent nomination forms. Students who receive a specified number of points are eligible for individual psychological assessment or are eligible for gifted programs. Gifted

assessment teams, or child study teams, are composed of school staff who coordinate a school's efforts to increase referrals of under-represented students.

Evaluation Instruments For Under-Represented Students

After districts identify under-represented students who are potentially gifted, the students are evaluated to determine their eligibility for gifted programs. Districts use a variety of evaluation instruments including gifted-characteristics checklists, intelligence tests, academic performance measures, and teacher/parent nomination forms. Exhibit 3 is a summary of evaluation instruments we identified based on 24 school districts' Plan Bs.

Exhibit 3
Districts Use a Variety of Evaluation Instruments to Increase
Under-Represented Students' Participation in Gifted Programs

School District	Referral Instruments				Intelligence Tests				
	Gifted Checklist	Environmental Indicators	Academic Achievement (Grades)	Nomination (Teacher, Parent, Student)	K-ABC	K-BIT	SBI	WISC-III	Creativity Tests
Alachua	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Brevard	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Broward	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Collier	X		X	X			X	X	
Dade	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Duval	X		X	X			X	X	
Escambia	X		X	X					X
Flagler	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Franklin	X	X		X	X		X	X	X
Glades	X		X	X		X		X	
Gulf	X	X	X	X			X	X	
Hillsborough	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Lee	X		X	X	X		X	X	
Leon	X		X	X			X	X	X
Madison	X		X		X		X	X	
Monroe	X						X	X	
Okeechobee	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Osceola	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Santa Rosa	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Sarasota	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Sumter	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Volusia	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Wakulla	X		X	X			X	X	
Walton	X		X	X			X	X	

K-ABC = Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children
K-BIT = Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test
SBI = Stanford Binet Intelligence Test
WISC-III = Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children-III

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability review of districts' Plan Bs and information provided by school districts.

School staff or members of a school's gifted assessment team may use district developed gifted-characteristics checklists to identify gifted students. Gifted-characteristics checklists may include characteristics or behaviors that are more culturally sensitive, such as leadership, motivation, and creativity.

Districts use intelligence tests as an evaluation instrument in their Plan Bs. To address a possible presence of cultural bias, districts lower cut-off scores or use partial scores as criteria in their Plan Bs. For example, a school may not count the verbal score on an intelligence test from a student who is limited in English proficiency. Two districts specifically state in their Plan Bs that the individual intellectual assessment may be used to include a student in the gifted program but will not be used to exclude a student from the gifted program. The literature identifies intelligence tests that do not penalize minority students. For example, the literature identifies the Stanford Binet Intelligence Test and the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children-III as tests that are useful in assessing the intellectual, creative, and academic characteristics of Hispanic and African-American students. These tests appear in most of the Plan Bs we reviewed.

Measures of academic achievement are used by districts in their Plan Bs to evaluate minority students for the gifted program. Academic performance includes grades, work samples, and student portfolios.

Lastly, nomination forms are instruments used to allow teachers, parents, and community members to nominate a student for a gifted program. Students can also nominate themselves. Nomination forms can provide additional information about gifted students that may not be captured in checklists, standardized tests, or academic performance. For example, parents and community members can identify characteristics that they observe.

Strategies to Assist Under-Represented Students in Gifted Programs

The 24 districts' Plan Bs we analyzed also contained culturally sensitive strategies to assist under-represented students once they are in gifted programs. The purpose of these strategies is to help the teachers and the students assure their continued participation and success in gifted programs. See Exhibit 4 for examples of these strategies.

Exhibit 4
Districts' Plan B Strategies That Assist
Under-Represented Students in Gifted Programs

Strategies for Ensuring Students' Success	Strategies for Instruction	Strategies for Instructional Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increased support services to students ▶ Survey students regarding their attitudes and concerns about gifted program ▶ On-going curriculum planning and development, multi-cultural exploration activities, and activities to improve self-image. ▶ Provide opportunities for students to identify their own talents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Focus on the development of abilities valued by the students and their culture ▶ Use mentors and role models from various cultures ▶ Incorporate the learning styles of under-represented students into their educational goals ▶ Multi-cultural curriculum will focus on individualized learning styles and an appreciation of a child's cultural background 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Staff development on the characteristics and educational needs of under-represented students ▶ Staff development on how teachers can measure traits such as leadership, creativity, and motivation ▶ Training for teachers to implement Plan B ▶ Provide materials to teachers on learning styles and preferences ▶ Training on subject area integration and differentiation ▶ Material from the Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System will be available

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability review of districts' Plan Bs.

Program Membership

Question 2

What policies and practices account for the fluctuation in program membership from kindergarten through grade 12?

Gifted program membership fluctuates across grade levels primarily due to the individual actions or practices of teachers, parents, and students in identifying and placing students in the gifted program. However, one district has made a policy decision not to provide gifted program services in grades K-2, and 18 districts have made a policy decision not to provide gifted program services in grades 9-12.

School districts generally have fewer gifted FTEs in grades K-2 and 9-12 than they have in grades 3-8. In fiscal year 1995-96, the percent of total state gifted FTEs in grades K-2 and 9-12 combined was 22%, compared to 78% in grades 3-8. Across all grade levels, the highest number of gifted FTEs occurs in grades 5 and 6. Furthermore, enrollment for the program by grade level does not reflect the enrollment for basic K-12 programs.

According to Department data, all school districts, to some extent, delay the identification and placement of gifted students until grade 3. In fiscal year 1995-96, school districts had a range of 0% to 22% of their total gifted FTEs in grades K-2 and a range of 15% to 85% gifted FTEs in grades 3-5. Nine school districts did not have any gifted FTEs in grades K-2: Bay, Franklin, Glades, Hamilton, Holmes, Lafayette, Liberty, Okaloosa, and Washington. Of these nine districts, Okaloosa is the only district that has established a specific policy for delaying the identification and placement of gifted students until grade 3.

In districts that do not have a policy to delay identifying and placing gifted students, delays were primarily due to the actions or practices of individual teachers, students, and parents. These actions and practices include the following:

-
- **Teacher familiarity with student capability and performance.** Teachers may be reluctant to refer students for placement into the gifted program until they have a chance to become familiar with the students' capabilities. Teachers believe that by delaying referral, they can more accurately refer students for placement into the gifted program. By waiting until the end of grade 2, teachers have more data (i.e., academic performance, standardized test scores, information about behavior) to work with in identifying gifted students.
 - **Teacher training.** Teachers may not always have the training necessary to identify very young gifted children. According to experts in the field of gifted education, in primary grade levels it is difficult (unless properly trained) to distinguish between a child that is truly gifted and one that appears gifted due to their experiences and background prior to entering school.
 - **Evaluation criteria.** According to the literature, even if a student is referred for placement into the gifted program in grades K-2, an intelligence test may not be the most appropriate mechanism for identifying gifted children at these age (grade) levels. District staff reported that some students may not be mature enough to take the placement (IQ) tests in kindergarten and first grade. As a result, some truly gifted students may be referred for placement in grades K-2 but not placed because they do not score high enough on the intelligence test. Some district staff believe that the child's self image will be negatively impacted if a child is tested for the gifted program too early and does not pass the test.
 - **Priority of student needs.** Some elementary school teachers and administrators believe that students in kindergarten through grade 2 have growth and socialization needs that must be met first. These teachers believe that children must be able to acclimate themselves to the overall structure of a school environment prior to being placed in a gifted program.
 - **Parent awareness.** Parent awareness of the gifted program is a factor that contributes to delaying placement of gifted students. According to district staff, parents are a source of referring students into the gifted program, but some parents may not be aware that there is a gifted program available. District staff also indicated that historically the gifted program did not begin until grade 3 in many districts. As a result, some parents still believe that the gifted program does not begin

until grade 3. In Palm Beach County, the district with the highest percent of gifted students in grades K-2, a number of parents seek independent evaluations to determine whether their children are gifted prior to the children entering kindergarten so they can be placed in the gifted program upon entering school. One reason that this could be occurring is that the gifted program at the elementary level in Palm Beach County is provided at schools that serve only gifted students, which may contribute to overall parent awareness of the program.

An additional factor that contributes to placement delay in grades K-2 is the administrative backlog in testing and evaluation. District staff indicated that school districts have a limited number of school psychologists available for evaluating students for ESE programs. As a result, school psychologists may have a testing or evaluation backlog for identifying and placing gifted students. According to district staff, this may be exacerbated by the fact that identifying students for placement in the gifted program may not be seen as being as critical as identifying students for placement in some of the other exceptional student education programs, such as hearing impaired and specific learning disability.

In addition to having a small percentage of their total gifted FTEs in grades K-2, school districts also have fewer gifted FTEs at the high school level (grades 9-12) than they have at the middle school level (grades 6-8). In fiscal year 1995-96, school districts (statewide) had 11% of their total gifted FTEs in grades 9-12 compared to 40% in grades 6-8. There are 24 districts operating K-8 gifted programs that are not operating grades 9-12 gifted programs.⁴ We interviewed DOE program administrators and district staff to identify why gifted FTEs are lower in grades 9-12. Based on district staff's responses the primary reason high school gifted FTEs are lower is that high school gifted students choose to participate in other programs rather than the gifted program. These programs include Advanced Placement, Honors, Dual Enrollment, Magnet Programs, and the International Baccalaureate. Eighteen school districts have made a district policy decision not to provide a gifted program at the

⁴ Holmes County School District was excluded from our analysis because it did not have any gifted FTEs in fiscal year 1995-96 for grades K-12.

high school level. These districts reported that they do not provide a gifted program at the high school level because:

- The district offered a gifted program at the high school level at one time, but students elected not to participate in the program; and
- The district perceives that the needs of high school gifted students can be met through other programs such as Honors and Advanced Placement.

Question 3

Are these policies and practices consistent with the safeguards afforded to disadvantaged students? ⁵

School districts that do not provide gifted programs in grades K-2 and grades 9-12 are not technically violating any statute or rule governing exceptional student education. The rule governing eligibility criteria for the gifted program permits wide latitude in its application by school districts.

State Board of Education procedural safeguards for exceptional education programs are designed to protect the interests of parents and students in the process for identifying, evaluating, and placing students in exceptional education programs. Procedural safeguards include requirements for school districts to provide prior written notice to parents before adding a child to or removing a child from an exceptional education program. Another example of a procedural safeguard is a parent's right to an impartial due process hearing if they disagree with a school district's decision regarding the identification or evaluation of their child for, or placement of their child in, an exceptional education program.

Policies and practices in school districts that do not provide gifted programs for students in grades K-2 or grades 9-12 raise a concern that procedural safeguards for these students are not being met. We analyzed the laws and rules governing exceptional education

⁵ We consulted with legislative staff to obtain further clarification of this question. Legislative staff indicated that they wanted to know if districts that did not have a gifted program in grades K-2 or grades 9-12 were in compliance with the laws and rules governing exceptional student education.

programs to determine the area of law or rule that, as interpreted by the districts, allows them to not provide a gifted program at certain grade levels. Furthermore, we interviewed DOE program administrators and district staff to obtain their perception about whether these districts were violating state laws and rules established for exceptional education programs and gifted students in particular. The state laws and rules applicable to this issue are shown in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 5
The State Rule Governing the Eligibility Criteria for the Gifted Program
Permits Wide Latitude in Its Application by School Districts, Which Contributes
to the Fluctuations of Gifted Program Membership Across Grade Levels

- **Section 230.23, Florida Statutes. Powers and duties of the school board.** The school board, acting as a board, shall exercise and perform all duties listed below:
 - (4) ESTABLISHMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND OPERATION OF SCHOOLS.— Adopt and provide for the execution of plans for the establishment, organization, and operation of schools of the district, as follows:
 - (m) *Exceptional students*.— Provide for an appropriate program of special instruction, facilities, and services for exceptional students as prescribed by the state board as acceptable.

- **Rule 6A-6.0301, Florida Administrative Code. Eligible Exceptional Students.** An exceptional student shall mean any child or youth enrolled in or eligible for enrollment in the public schools of a district who requires special instruction or related services to take full advantage of or respond to educational programs and opportunities because of a physical, mental, emotional, social or learning exceptionality as defined in Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.03025, Florida Administrative Code.

- **Rule 6A-6.03019, Florida Administrative Code. Special Instructional Programs for Students Who Are Gifted.**
 - (2) Criteria for Eligibility. A student is eligible for special instructional programs for the gifted if the student meets the criteria under (2)(a) or (b) of this rule.
 - (a) The student demonstrates:
 1. Need for a special program.
 2. A majority of characteristics of gifted students according to a standard scale or checklist, and
 3. Superior intellectual development as measured by an intelligence quotient of two standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered standardized test of intelligence.
 - (b) The student is a member of an under-represented group and meets the criteria specified in an approved school district plan for increasing the participation of under-represented groups in programs for gifted students.

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Based on our review of the law and rules, we concluded that the phrase "need for a special program" included in the eligibility criteria for the gifted program is an area of rule open for varying district interpretations. Program administrators in DOE reported that school districts that are not providing gifted program services to students in grades K-2 or

grades 9-12 are doing so under the presumption that gifted students do not have a "need" for special services at these grade levels. For example, district staff reported that some teachers may believe that students in grades K-2 have other socialization (school acclimation) needs that must be met first and therefore do not have a need for a gifted program at that time. At the high school level, some districts assert that there are other programs that meet gifted students' needs.

According to DOE program administrators, school districts that do not provide program services in grades K-2 or grades 9-12 based on a determination that the services are not needed at these grade levels are not technically in violation of any rule or law. DOE program administrators also reported that the area of rule (gifted eligibility criteria) that may be causing these practices is vague and open to district interpretation. Finally, state rule stipulates that parents have a right to due process hearing if they disagree with a school district's decision regarding the identification, evaluation, and placement of their child for exceptional education program. DOE program administrators and district administrators stated that there have not yet been any legal challenges by parents regarding a school district's decision not to provide gifted program services in grades K-2 or grades 9-12.

Question 4

Can any conclusions be made regarding the effect of delaying the identification and placement of students in the gifted program?

If gifted students do not receive educational services appropriate to their level of development, they could become bored and develop behavioral and discipline problems, develop bad learning habits, and experience overall delays in their development. The delaying practices of school districts could cause these problems if the needs of "non-placed" gifted students are not being met.

In our previous report on the gifted program (No. 95-45), we reported that Department of Education data showed that, to some extent, all school districts delay the identification and placement of gifted students until grade 3. We also reported the reasons school district administrators gave for delaying placement of gifted students and the potential

effects of delaying placement. According to the responses received from district administrators, some teachers may intentionally delay the referral of gifted students until grade 3, and there may be some positive effects of doing so. This report provides additional information on why gifted placement is delayed and the effects of delaying.

To obtain more information about the issue of delaying gifted placement, we interviewed district administrators and various state and national experts. We concluded the following:

- It is important to identify gifted students as early as possible so that they may be provided educational services appropriate for their level of development. If gifted students do not receive a level of instruction appropriate to their development, they could become bored and develop behavioral and discipline problems, develop bad learning habits, and experience overall delays in their cognitive development. The delaying practices of school districts could cause these problems if the needs of "non-identified and non-placed" gifted students are not being met.
- As discussed in our first report on the gifted program, some teachers are intentionally delaying the referral of gifted students until grade 3. In addition, testing and evaluation backlogs for exceptional education programs in some districts may be contributing to delays. We identified two other reasons in this review. First, teachers may not have the training and knowledge necessary to identify very young gifted children. Thus, delaying referral of gifted students may not always be intentional. Secondly, according to the literature, even if a student is referred for placement into the gifted program in grades K-2, an intelligence test may not be the most appropriate mechanism for identifying gifted children at these age (grade) levels. As a result, some truly gifted students may be referred for placement in grades K-2, but not placed because they do not score high enough on the intelligence test.
- We also noted in our first report that district staff reported that teachers may be more able to accurately refer students for placement into the gifted program by waiting until the end of grade 2. By then, teachers have more data (i.e., academic performance, standardized test scores, behavioral information) to work with in identifying gifted children. However, according to the literature, a gifted child is as gifted in kindergarten as they are in grades 3 and 4. Thus, if properly trained in identifying gifted children, teachers should be able to

accurately refer students for placement into the gifted program in grades K-2 as well as grades 3-5.

Service Delivery Models

Question 5

What is the cost of the gifted program as a function of the delivery model? Are there cost differences in a school-based versus center-based program?

School districts use several different delivery models for school-based and center-based gifted programs. Depending on the prevalence of gifted students across schools within a district, some models may be more cost effective than others. In general, school-based models involve higher costs for equipment, materials, and supplies, whereas center-based models involve higher transportation costs.

School-Based and Center-Based Gifted Program Models

School districts provide their gifted programs through a variety of school-based and center-based models, with each model affecting the cost of providing services in a slightly different manner. In school-based models, gifted students are provided program services at the school they are assigned to and currently attend ("home" school). In contrast, center-based program models transport students from their "home" school to another location to receive gifted program services and then transport the students back to their "home" school for regular instruction. School districts generally use a combination of both school-based and center-based programs to provide services to gifted students within the district.

Based on the 20 districts we reviewed, we identified four different models districts use to provide school-based gifted program services, and two different models districts use to provide center-based program services. Exhibits 6 and 7 explain the models and describe the circumstances under which the districts typically use different models.

Exhibit 6
The 20 School Districts We Reviewed Are Using
4 Different Models to Provide School-Based Gifted Programs

<p>(1) Resident Teacher Model</p> <p>16 districts</p>	<p>Under this model, the gifted program teacher is employed as part of the teaching staff at the school. Normally, this model is used when there are enough gifted students at the school to fund a full-time gifted program teacher. If the number of gifted students is not extremely low, a school could employ a resident gifted program teacher part-time if there are not enough gifted students to generate the FTEs required to pay for a full-time program teacher. In this case, the teacher could be used to teach gifted classes part-time and given additional instructional responsibilities for other subject areas. According to district staff, the part-time resident teacher model can be used at the middle and secondary school level because of period scheduling for teachers and students; however, this model would be very difficult to implement in an elementary school setting and structure.</p>
<p>(2) Itinerant Teacher Model</p> <p>11 districts</p>	<p>Under this model, one gifted program teacher serves several different schools. The teacher travels from school to school providing gifted program services. The itinerant teacher is not assigned to one school. This model is used when there are not enough gifted students at schools to support a full-time gifted program teacher. However, there is a point when the number of gifted students at a school becomes too low for this model to be very effective. For example, this model may not be effective if there are fewer than five gifted students at a school and the students are at different grade levels.</p>
<p>(3) Co-Teacher Model</p> <p>2 districts</p>	<p>The co-teacher model is an experimental model that is being implemented as part of a pilot project under DOE and is not in widespread use across school districts. This model is similar to the resident teacher model, except that students in the gifted program are provided program services in their regular classroom. The gifted program teacher and the regular teacher "co-teach" a particular class that includes both gifted and regular students. At some point during the school week, the gifted students and gifted program teacher meet to discuss their experiences for the week. This model could be used when there are not enough gifted students at a particular school or as a matter of a district's policy (philosophy) for its gifted program.</p>
<p>(4) Reassignment Model</p> <p>5 districts</p>	<p>Under this model, students are permanently reassigned to another school or location (from the students' initially assigned school) in order to receive gifted program services. School districts use reassignment models for two different reasons. First, reassignment models are used by school districts when schools do not have enough gifted students to support gifted program teachers at each of the schools. In this case, the gifted students from several schools could be reassigned to one school that has enough gifted students to support a full-time gifted program teacher. Secondly, reassignment models are also used by districts when they want to provide a full-time gifted program to highly gifted students. In this case, the students are reassigned to a school where they will receive <u>full-time instruction</u> in the gifted program. The gifted students are served "full-time" by a gifted program teacher; both their regular and gifted classes are provided by a gifted program teacher.</p>

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability analysis of 20 school districts.

Exhibit 7
The 20 School Districts We Reviewed Are Using
2 Different Models to Provide Center-Based Gifted Programs

<p>(1) School Clustering Model</p> <p>13 districts</p>	<p>Under this model, gifted students are transported from their "home" school at some point during the school week to another nearby school to receive gifted program services. This model is normally used when schools do not have enough gifted students to fund a gifted program teacher. The school (cluster site) to which the students are transported has enough gifted students to support a gifted program teacher. Unlike reassignment delivery models, after receiving gifted program services at the cluster site, the students are transported back to their "home" school to receive their regular instruction. The cluster school site is a normal school that also provides regular classroom instruction to all students permanently assigned to that school. There may be several of these cluster sites in one district.</p>
<p>(2) Gifted Center Model</p> <p>3 districts</p>	<p>Under this model, gifted students in the school district are transported to one location within the district (usually a special campus or district building) to receive gifted program services. The location where students receive their gifted program services <u>provides only</u> specialized services to gifted students and possibly other groups of exceptional students. After receiving the services, the students are transported back to their "home" school. Districts will typically use this model when they want to provide a "full blown" enrichment type of gifted program. However, this model could also be used when there are not enough gifted students at a school to support a full-time gifted program teacher. Gifted students may receive some of their gifted program services at their "home" school and some of the services at the gifted center.</p>

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability analysis of 20 school districts.

Cost Differences Between School-Based and Center-Based Gifted Program Models

Overall, school-based programs will typically incur additional costs to purchase equipment, materials, and supplies for each school site, whereas center-based models typically incur additional costs to transport students back and forth to the centers. However, the cost differences between school-based and center-based gifted programs will vary depending on the particular model used and the circumstances in which it is used. To identify cost differences between the models, we consulted with DOE finance officers and program administrators and interviewed district staff in 20 districts. DOE and district staff reported that they could not easily disaggregate their cost data for district (school level) gifted

programs in a manner that could be used to provide an actual cost estimate for each of the different models.

Based on responses from district staff, some models appear to be more cost effective than other models in certain situations. The primary factor that affects a district's decision to use a particular delivery model(s) is the prevalence (dispersion and number) of gifted students across the individual schools within the district. Schools with large populations of gifted students may generate enough funds to support one or more full-time gifted teachers at the school, whereas schools with small gifted student populations may not generate enough funds to support a gifted program teacher at the school. District staff also reported that a certain number of students per grade level is needed to implement an effective curriculum. Exhibit 8 identifies models that are potentially the most cost effective and those that are the least cost effective.

Exhibit 8
The Cost Effectiveness of School-Based and Center-Based Programs Vary Depending on the Model Used and the Prevalence of Gifted Students Across Schools

	Schools have enough gifted students to support full-time gifted teachers	Schools do not have enough gifted students to support full-time gifted teachers
Most Cost Effective Model	<p><i>Resident Teacher Model</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program funds pay for the cost of a full-time gifted program teacher at each school • No additional transportation costs are required • Teacher can provide maximum hours of service to students due to absence of travel and ease of scheduling 	<p><i>Reassignment Model</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less gifted program teachers are needed to serve gifted students across the schools • Additional transportation costs to and from school are minimal compared to center-based programs • Can provide maximum hours of service due to absence of travel between schools
Least Cost Effective Model	<p><i>Gifted Center Model</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation costs are high due to the transporting of students back and forth to the center • Instructional time that gifted program teacher can provide to students is limited due to travel time for students and the large number of gifted students that need to be served at one location (the gifted center) • Plant operation and maintenance costs could be higher because a gifted center usually requires an additional building 	<p><i>Resident Teacher Model</i>¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel costs are excessive because there are not enough program funds to pay for each school's gifted program teacher • Equipment, materials, and supply costs are high because each school will need its own set

¹ The resident teacher model could be used cost effectively in this situation if the gifted program teacher is employed to teach other subjects in addition to their gifted program responsibilities. District staff indicated that a part-time resident teacher model can be used at the middle and secondary school level because of period scheduling for teachers and students; however, it would be very difficult to implement in an elementary school setting and structure.

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability analysis of 20 school districts.

Based on our interviews with district administrators, some models appear to be more cost-effective than others depending on the dispersion (number) of gifted students at individual schools. The **resident teacher model** appears to be the most cost-effective model when schools have enough gifted students to generate the funds required to pay for gifted program teachers. In this case, no additional transportation costs are involved, and the hours

of program services that can be provided to gifted students is optimal (no loss of instructional time due to travel) compared to center-based programs. When there are not enough students to generate the funds for a gifted program teacher, several models could be used: itinerant teacher model; reassignment model; school clustering model; and gifted center model. **Reassignment models** appear to be the most cost effective in this situation because additional transportation costs (for students who must travel farther than to their initially assigned school) are low compared to the other 3 models, equipment and supplies can be consolidated, and the students can be provided more hours of service due to the lack of travel time between schools. The other three models all involve additional travel by the gifted teacher (itinerant) or by the students.

Of the school districts we reviewed, most (16 of 20) use a combination of delivery models to provide gifted program services based on the model they perceive to be the most cost effective, given the number of students at individual schools and other considerations. Very few districts use one delivery model on a districtwide basis. Based on our interviews with district administrators, the most costly model to implement on a districtwide basis would be the **resident teacher model**. Under this scenario, every school would have to employ a gifted program teacher, and every school would have to have its own equipment, materials, and supplies. Furthermore, many schools would not have enough gifted students to pay for a gifted teacher. The least costly delivery model to implement on a districtwide basis would be the **reassignment model** because fewer gifted program teachers would be required, additional transportation costs would be lower than in a center-based model, and less equipment and supplies would be needed than in the other school-based models.

Reassignment models offer the major cost advantages of school-based programs and center-based programs, because additional transportation is not required and resources can be consolidated and used more efficiently. Although there may be some students who must travel farther due to the school reassignment, we would expect these costs to be relatively

minor when compared to the additional transportation costs associated with center-based programs. Furthermore, school districts can consolidate and use resources more efficiently with reassignment models than with other school-based models. However, as discussed in the next section, reassignment models have certain disadvantages that may keep them from being used more often by school districts.

Question 6

Do students who attend a school-based or center-based gifted program, or both, report advantages/disadvantages?

According to district administrators, each of the different school-based and center-based gifted program models has advantages and disadvantages for students in the gifted program. School-based programs allow students to stay at their "home" school when receiving program services, whereas center-based programs generally give students greater access to technology and equipment and offer the students more options for receiving program services.

We interviewed district administrators to identify the advantages and disadvantages of school-based and center-based gifted programs. We did not directly speak with students in the gifted program. Across the different school-based delivery models, the primary advantage is that students do not have to travel to another school or location to receive needed services. For center-based programs, the primary advantage is that resources (teachers, equipment, materials, and supplies) can be more efficiently used due to consolidation and centralization of services. As a result, students in center-based programs may have access to more gifted program teachers and more technologically advanced equipment. Exhibit 9 presents specific advantages and disadvantages for each of the different models.

Exhibit 9
Each of the School-Based and Center-Based Models
Has Advantages and Disadvantages.

Model	Advantages	Disadvantages
Resident Teacher (school-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students do not have to travel, they can remain at their home school • Students have more available instructional time because travel is not required • More opportunity exists for interaction and collaboration between the gifted program teacher and a student's regular teacher • Scheduling program services for students is easier • Better opportunity for parent/teacher communication • Gifted teacher may be able to help other teachers identify gifted students at the school • Ripple effect – Gifted teacher may be able to informally inservice other teachers on gifted teaching strategies • Individual schools have more control over the delivery of gifted program services for their students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources (equipment and supplies) cannot be pooled; consequently, equipment and supply costs may be higher • May not generate enough FTEs to cover program costs if the number of gifted students per school is small • If the number of gifted students at a school is very low, providing program services may be difficult because a certain number of students per grade level is required to have an effective curriculum • Gifted students may have few other gifted students with whom to interact • From a student's and parent's perspective, there may be fewer program options available than at a center-based program
Itinerant Teacher Model (school-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students do not have to travel, they can remain at their home school • Provides a way to serve gifted students at schools that do not have enough students to support a full-time gifted teacher • Gifted teacher may be able to help other teachers identify gifted students at the school • Better opportunity for parent/teacher communication than in center-based models because the teacher is close to the student's home school • Less gifted program teachers are needed to provide program services for the whole district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and collaboration between the gifted program teacher and the regular teacher could be a problem • Less instructional time available due to itinerant teacher travel time • If the number of gifted students at a school is very low, providing program services may be difficult because a certain number of students per grade level is required to have an effective curriculum • Finding available space at schools to provide instructional services may be difficult for the itinerant teacher • Gifted students may have few other gifted students with whom to interact • From a student's and parent's perspective, there may be fewer program options available than at a center-based program

Model	Advantages	Disadvantages
Co-Teacher (school-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students do not have to travel, they can remain at their home school • Regular students and teachers are exposed to gifted teaching techniques and strategies • Best opportunity exists for interaction and collaboration between regular and gifted teacher • Students have more available instructional time because travel is not required • Gifted teacher may be able to help other teachers identify gifted students at the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not generate enough FTEs to cover program costs at a school if the number of gifted students is low • The co-teacher model represents a new instructional model for delivering gifted program services that requires administrators and teachers to spend additional time developing, planning, and implementing such a model • Gifted students may have few other gifted students with whom to interact • From a student's and parent's perspective, there may be fewer program options available than at a center-based program
Reassignment (school-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a way to serve gifted students at schools that do not have enough students to support a full-time gifted teacher • Students do not have to travel; they can remain at their home school • Less gifted program teachers are needed to provide program services across schools • Students have more available instructional time because travel is not required • More opportunity exists for interaction and collaboration between the gifted program teacher and a student's regular teacher • Better opportunity for parent/teacher communication than in center-based models • Ripple effect – Gifted program teacher may be able to informally inservice other teachers on gifted teaching strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students could be transferred from their neighborhood school to another school • Instructional time could be reduced if the number of gifted students at the school is very high and additional gifted program teachers are not employed • Schools from which students are transferred lose some of their best and brightest students
School Clustering (center-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a way to serve gifted students at schools that do not have enough students to support a full-time gifted teacher • Less gifted program teachers are needed to provide program services for the whole district • Equipment, materials, and supplies can be pooled and used more efficiently • Curriculum at center can be more flexible and innovative • Opportunity for gifted students to interact with a greater number of gifted students than at their home school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and collaboration between the gifted program teacher and a student's regular teacher could be a problem • Less instructional time available due to student travel • Instructional time could be reduced further if the number of gifted students at the cluster school is very high and additional gifted program teachers are not employed • Parent/teacher communication is more difficult • Students may be required to miss a full day of regular classes that could put them behind in those classes • Scheduling to provide program services is more difficult

Model	Advantages	Disadvantages
Gifted Center (center-based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a way to serve gifted students at schools that do not have enough students to support a full-time gifted teacher • Less gifted program teachers are needed to provide program services for the whole district • Equipment, materials, and supplies can be pooled and used more efficiently • Gives gifted students an opportunity to be served in educational settings with only gifted students • Curriculum at center can be more flexible and innovative because teachers there do not have to serve non-gifted students (program options) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and collaboration between the gifted program teacher and a student's regular teacher could be a problem • Less instructional time available due to student travel • Instructional time could be reduced further if the number of gifted students at the cluster school is very high and additional gifted program teachers are not employed • Parent/teacher communication is more difficult

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability analysis of school districts' information.

Alternatives to Gifted Programs

Question 7

How do Advanced Placement or Honors courses compare to gifted courses in the same subject area? What are the similarities and differences in terms of funds generated, class size, instructional staff, instructional materials, instructional strategies, rigor of course content, and students' profiles?

Gifted courses primarily differ from Advanced Placement and Honors courses in the same subject area in the following ways: gifted programs generate more funds per FTE; gifted program instructional staff must meet additional qualification requirements; instructional strategies are more student-directed; the rigor of course content depends on the individual student's choices and strengths; and gifted students' profiles reflect a wide range of performance and motivational levels. Core course materials and basic course content are similar or comparable in all three programs. Class size is not generally affected by program type.

To compare gifted courses to Advanced Placement and Honors courses, we reviewed literature on alternative accelerated course offerings and Department of Education gifted program documents. We also interviewed school district exceptional student education coordinators and alternative accelerated program staff in 18 districts. Each of these accelerated educational programs has a different purpose. Gifted programs provide services to eligible students who demonstrate superior intellectual development and are capable of high performance. Advanced Placement courses provide high-achieving and self-motivated students opportunities to earn college credit while still in high school. Honors courses typically offer students who are high achievers in a particular subject a course of study that is more intensive and demanding than others in the same area. We compared gifted courses with Advanced Placement and Honors courses in terms of funds generated, instructional staff, instructional strategies, rigor of course content, students' profiles, instructional materials, and class size. Exhibit 10 lists the differences and similarities of gifted, Advanced Placement, and Honors courses.

Exhibit 10
Gifted, Advanced Placement, and Honors Courses Within the
Same Subject Area in Grades 9-12 Have Differences and Similarities

Differences			
Comparison Area	Gifted	Advanced Placement (AP)	Honors
Funds Generated	For Fiscal Year 1995–96, the cost factor for a student (FTE) in the gifted program is 1.747. The program cost factor is multiplied by the Base Student Allocation to determine the amount generated per FTE.	An AP student generates the same basic cost factor as any other high school student (i.e., 1.198). For each student scoring a 3 or higher on the AP exam, the school is also awarded an additional .24 FTE the following year. Statewide, 59% of the students enrolled in AP classes perform at this level.	An Honors student generates the same Basic Cost Factor as any other high school student (i.e., 1.198).
Instructional Staff	Gifted certification ("endorsement") is required in addition to class content area certification.	Instructors are certified in content area(s); districts strongly encourage AP training provided by the College Board. Additional requirements are determined by the district and/or school.	Instructors are certified in content area(s). Additional requirements are determined by the district and/or school.
Instructional Strategies	The basic course content in all three areas may be the same or comparable; however, instructional strategies for delivering content vary. In all three programs, strategies may vary according to the individual teacher's philosophy of instruction.		
	The student has more influence on the course strategy. Core instruction may be compacted or condensed and augmented with in–depth study according to a student's strengths and interests. Students are involved in more individual and small group projects. The teacher serves as a facilitator.	The teacher has more influence on the course strategy. Courses are more teacher–directed or lecture–oriented. Emphasis is on college–level work and helping students achieve high performance on college–level tests.	The teacher has more influence on the course strategy. Emphasis is on accelerated and/or in–depth learning of the basic education curriculum.
Rigor of Course Content	District staff report that all three programs are rigorous but reach their goals in different ways.		
	Rigor will vary according to individual student strengths and choices; some students select more rigorous projects. Individual student differences shape both depth and level of instruction.	The focus is on acceleration of academic learning and college–level performance. District staff report that the highly structured program may be the most demanding of the three.	Courses are locally developed and tend to focus on acceleration of learning or earlier student access to curriculum or courses usually reserved for higher grades.
Students' Profiles in the Class	Students exhibit a wide range of performance and motivational levels. Gifted students tend to prefer self–direction and opportunities for in–depth learning. Some classes will closely match the AP/Honors profile, including more independent learners and students who are not necessarily motivated by grades and teacher expectations.	Students are basically high achievers and academically motivated. They may be more productive, yielding high quality classwork and assignments. Students are interested in doing advanced work assignments and performing well academically. AP students may receive college credit for work completed in high school.	
Similarities			
Instructional Materials	Core course materials and basic course content in all three courses are often the same or comparable.		
	Gifted course materials may also include materials that provide for more student choice and in–depth study in areas of interest.	In addition to core course materials, supplemental materials are more college–oriented. Curriculum instruction is strongly influenced by established Advanced Placement program guidelines.	Honors course materials usually include the state adopted text and supplementary materials as determined by the instructor or department.
Class Size	Class size does not necessarily vary from one program to another.		
	There is no uniform policy at the state or district level concerning class size in gifted, Advanced Placement, or Honors programs. A few districts report that gifted classes are usually the smallest of the three; however, class size seems to vary by districts and courses. Class size is influenced by the nature of the course and district and school demographics. A more specialized or advanced level course, whether Advanced Placement, Honors, or gifted, will be smaller than a more general course. Courses with a higher number of prerequisites are usually smaller. Larger districts tend to have larger classes regardless of the program; a school with many high performing students will tend to have larger classes.		

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability analysis of Department of Education and district data.

Question 8

Are alternative course offerings, e.g., Advanced Placement, Honors, Dual Enrollment courses, meeting gifted students' needs?

While districts interpret the needs of gifted students in many ways, the majority of districts perceive that alternative courses are designed to meet the intellectual and academic needs of high performing gifted students. However, alternative programs may not meet gifted students' needs in some areas such as social, emotional, and creative needs or meet the needs of underachievers.

A variety of alternative course offerings are designed to meet the intellectual and academic needs of high-performing secondary students, including gifted students. Of the alternative course offerings available, we analyzed the Advanced Placement, Honors, Dual Enrollment, International Baccalaureate, and Magnet programs. Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, and International Baccalaureate programs are provided for in law while Honors and Magnet guidelines are established locally. The purpose of these accelerated programs is to broaden the scope of curricular options available to students, increase the depth of study available for a particular subject, or shorten the time necessary for a student to complete the requirements for obtaining a degree. Exhibit 11 provides a brief description of the gifted program and these five alternative programs for secondary gifted students and the eligibility criteria for each program. To assess whether these alternative programs meet the needs of gifted students, we surveyed exceptional student education coordinators in 67 districts and interviewed Department of Education staff and 18 district staff members working with alternative accelerated programs. We also reviewed literature regarding alternative program options.

Exhibit 11
Districts Provide a Variety of Course Offerings
at the Secondary Level for Gifted Students

PROGRAM	PURPOSE	CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY
GIFTED (48 Districts)	To provide services to eligible students who have demonstrated superior intellectual development and are capable of high performance.	A student is eligible for the gifted program if the student meets the following criteria: Student demonstrates a need for a special program; Student has a majority of characteristics of gifted students according to a standard scale or checklist; and Student has superior intellectual development as measured by an intelligence quotient of two (2) standard deviations or more above the mean on an individually administered test of intelligence; OR The student is a member of an under-represented group and meets the criteria specified in an approved school district plan for increasing the participation of under-represented groups in programs for gifted students. Serves secondary students in Grades 9-12.
ADVANCED PLACEMENT (54 Districts)	To provide high-achieving and self-motivated students opportunities to enroll in advanced courses of study and have the opportunity to earn college credit and/or advanced placement while enrolled in high school.	Eligibility is determined by: Preliminary Scholastic/Scholastic Aptitude (PSAT) scores and Student's readiness to engage in postsecondary level work, as indicated by subject area teacher and previous performance. Serves secondary students in Grades 11-12.
HONORS (64 Districts)	To offer students who are high achievers in a particular subject a course of study that is more intensive and demanding than others in the same area.	Honors program requirements are not described in statute or rule. Eligibility is determined by: Student interest, teacher recommendations, previous academic grades, and standardized test performance. Serves secondary students in Grades 9-12.
DUAL ENROLLMENT (67 Districts)	To provide high-performing students the opportunity to enroll in basic postsecondary courses creditable toward a vocational certificate or an associate or baccalaureate degree while enrolled in high school.	A student enrolled in a Florida secondary school is eligible for the dual enrollment program if the following criteria are met: Administrative approval – includes certification of class rank, verification of 3.0 grade point average, and acceptable college admission test scores. Demonstrates a readiness to engage in postsecondary level academic work. Serves secondary students in Grades 10-12.
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAM (24 Districts)	To provide an advanced level of high school coursework designed to meet various international university entrance standards. To provide highly motivated students from diverse linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds with the intellectual, social, and critical perspectives needed to excel in college and beyond.	A student is eligible if the following criteria are met: Student must be enrolled in a school authorized by the International Baccalaureate Association (IBO). Demonstrates high level of achievement or preparation at the middle school and pre-IB levels. Diploma student is required to select one subject from each of 6 subject areas: Language A, Language B, Individuals & Societies, Experimental Sciences, Mathematics, and Sixth Subject from school-based syllabus approved by IB. Serves secondary students in Grades 11-12.

The survey responses from 51 districts state that alternative programs are designed to meet gifted students' intellectual and academic needs. They provide academically challenging opportunities, an expanded curriculum, variety in courses, and/or opportunities for exploring advanced subject matter in depth. These course strategies promote higher-level thinking skills and allow students to move at an accelerated pace. In addition, Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, and International Baccalaureate programs provide opportunities for students to earn college credit and participate in learning experiences that will better prepare them for college and career paths. District staff indicate that students choosing not to participate in gifted programs perceive that alternative programs are adequately meeting their needs.

The survey responses from 11 districts state that alternative programs may not address students' emotional, social, or creative needs. Also, alternative academic programs may not provide counseling and guidance needed by gifted students. Staff perceive that gifted students need support "for fitting in," and alternative programs may not meet gifted students' need to socialize with gifted peers. Alternative programs may not provide exposure to career choices and internship opportunities that expand gifted students' future options. District staff also report that alternative programs may not meet the creative needs of students who may be directed toward the arts, creative thinking, or other special areas of interest.

Seven districts report that alternative programs do not meet the needs of gifted underachievers. According to staff, these students are not necessarily academically motivated and may need to move at a different pace according to their individual learning style. Underachieving gifted students may not meet the eligibility criteria for alternative program participation. Staff perceive that gifted programs are designed to address a wide range of performance and motivational levels. The survey responses from seven other districts indicate that some needs could not be met through alternative course offerings but did not identify these needs and one district did not respond to the question.

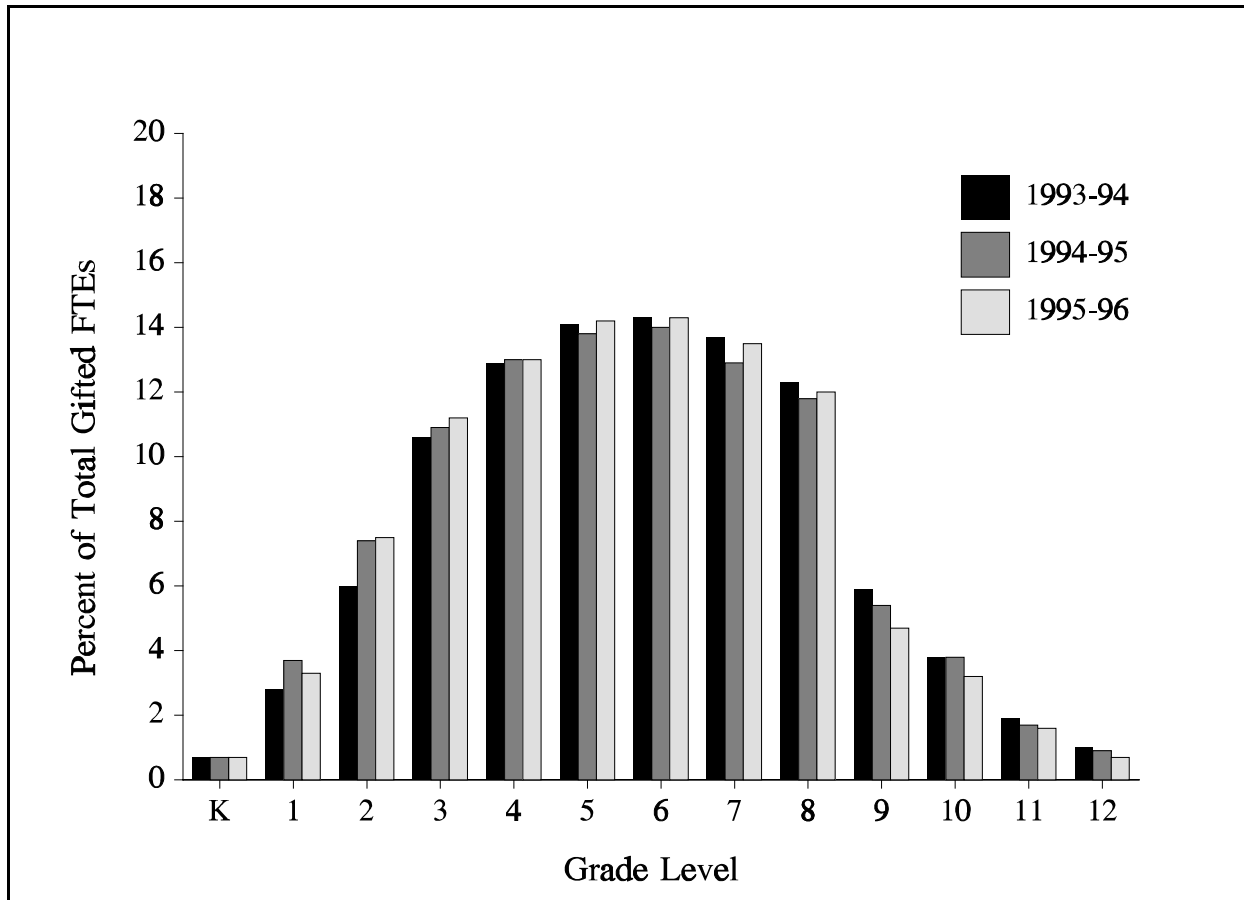
Question 9

Are gifted students in grades 9-12 choosing not to participate in the gifted program, or is their lack of membership the result of a lack of program offerings at the secondary level?

District staff attribute the lack of high school gifted program membership to students choosing not to participate and districts not offering gifted programs. Eighteen districts do not offer a high school gifted program.

Enrollment in gifted programs declines dramatically at the secondary level. To determine whether this decline can be attributed to students choosing not to participate in the gifted program or the lack of program offerings at the secondary level, we reviewed Department of Education FTE data, surveyed the 67 school districts, and interviewed exceptional student education coordinators and alternative accelerated program staff in 18 districts. The FTE data indicates that in fiscal year 1995-96, 42 school districts operating high school gifted programs had 12% of their total gifted FTEs in grades 9-12 compared to 39% in grades 6-8. As can be seen in Exhibit 12, gifted FTE's peak in grade 6 with a gradual reduction through grade 8 and then a dramatic reduction in grade 9. In addition, 18 school districts that operate K-8 gifted programs do not offer a high school gifted program. Six school districts offer a gifted program at the secondary level but have no FTEs. One district, Holmes, does not have gifted FTEs at any level and is not included in our analysis.

Exhibit 12
Gifted FTE's Peak in Grade 6 and Dramatically Decrease in Grade 9



Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability analysis of Department of Education FTE data.

According to district staff, students decide for various reasons not to participate in the gifted program at the secondary level. In the 42 districts operating gifted programs, students elect not to participate primarily because alternative programs (such as Advanced Placement, Honors, Dual Enrollment, and Magnet Programs) better meet their needs. Students believe these programs better satisfy their educational objectives and will prepare them for college and/or their chosen career. Other reasons students decline program enrollment at the secondary level include scheduling conflicts between gifted programs and other class activities, lack of interest, and districts' practices of not awarding quality points to

students in gifted programs.⁶ Students do not want to be separated from their peers and may prefer electives they perceive are less demanding and fulfill their own personal or creative interests. Students also opt for electives that provide quality points which may help improve their grade point average, thus increasing their opportunities for scholarships, fulfilling college entry requirements, and/or obtaining advanced placement in college courses.

Students in 18 districts are not participating in gifted programs because these districts do not offer gifted programs at the secondary level. (See Appendix A.) According to staff in nine such districts, students believe other advanced programs better meet their needs. In 8 of the 18 districts, staff indicated students elected not to participate in previous years when gifted programs were offered. In at least six districts, staff report a policy decision was made not to offer gifted programs at the secondary level because students' needs are met through other academic programs.

⁶ A quality point is a numerical value attached to a letter grade. For example, on a 4-point system, grade A would equal 4 points, grade B would equal 3 points, grade C would equal 2 points, and grade D would equal 1 point. A school may elect to award extra quality points for certain courses. For example, for an honors course a school may award 5 points for grade A, 4 points for grade B, etc.

Identification of Gifted Students

Question 10

Which districts allow the standard error of measurement (SE_m) to be used as a factor in computing IQ scores for determining eligibility for the gifted program?

Fifty-nine school districts allow the standard error of measurement to be used as a factor in computing IQ scores for determining eligibility for the gifted program.

The standard error of measurement (SE_m) is a property of mathematical statistics used to compensate for a test's inability to accurately reflect a student's true score. It is a range of scores that fall on each side of a student's actual score. A student's true score (the score a student would receive if retested on the same test instrument) is always unknown because no measure can be constructed that provides a perfect reflection of a student's true aptitude (intelligence). Therefore, statements about a student's actual score are expressed in terms of confidence intervals - a range or band of scores around the student's actual score. For example, a 68% confidence level with the SE_m of three points means a 68% certainty that a student's true score is within \pm three points of the student's actual test score. A 95% confidence interval would provide a broader range of scores. However, the best estimate of the student's true score on a given test is the actual score obtained.

The Department's Technical Assistance paper dated February 1996 reports that it is appropriate to consider the SE_m if factors at the time of testing (i.e., the student's physical condition, or environmental factors) may adversely impact test results, and the student has other evidence of unusually high intellectual functioning as indicated by previous evaluation results. Information provided by 59 districts indicates their use of the SE_m is consistent with the instructions of the Department's Technical Assistance Paper. One district's guidelines provide that staff should use the SE_m if a student is on free or reduced lunch. Since the SE_m should not arbitrarily be applied, this district's criteria does not appear to be consistent with the Department's recommended use of the SE_m .

Of the state's 67 districts, 60 districts allow the use of the standard error of measurement (SE_m) on intelligent quotient tests. The primary reason districts use the SE_m is to compensate for factors that could influence testing results. Factors identified by the districts that may influence testing results include test anxiety, the student's health at the time of testing, and the testing environment. Some districts report that the SE_m allows more students to achieve a test score necessary to qualify for the gifted program. Seven districts use the student's actual score rather than the SE_M to determine program eligibility. Exhibit 13 lists all the districts according to number of unweighted FTEs and use of the standard error of measurement.

Exhibit 13
60 School Districts Use the Standard Error of Measurement (SE_m)
in Determining Eligibility for the Gifted Program

School Districts that use the Standard Error of Measurement (n=60)				School Districts that do not use the Standard Error of Measurement (n=7)
<i>Small Districts, Less Than 10,000 Unweighted Full-Time Equivalent (UFTE)</i>				
Baker	Franklin	Hendry	Monroe	Holmes
Bradford	Gadsden	Jackson	Nassau	Okeechobee
Calhoun	Gilchrist	Jefferson	Taylor	Sumter
Columbia	Glades	Lafayette	Union	Suwannee
DeSoto	Gulf	Liberty	Walton	
Dixie	Hamilton	Levy	Wakulla	
Flagler	Hardee	Madison	Washington	
<i>Medium Districts, 10,000 to 100,000 UFTE</i>				
Bay	Hernando	Martin	St. Lucie	Alachua
Brevard	Highlands	Okaloosa	Santa Rosa	Leon
Charlotte	Indian River	Osceola	Seminole	Sarasota
Citrus	Lake	Pasco	Volusia	
Clay	Lee	Polk		
Collier	Manatee	Putnam		
Escambia	Marion	St. Johns		
<i>Large Districts, Greater Than 100,000 UFTE</i>				
Broward	Hillsborough			
Dade	Palm Beach			
Duval	Pinellas			
Orange				

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability analysis of school districts' data.

Question 11

If SE_m were not used, how many students would not have been eligible for the gifted program during the last three years?

Although districts do not maintain data on whether students' eligibility is based on the SE_m , 33 districts each estimated that 10% or fewer of their gifted students' eligibility was based on the SE_m during 1992-93 through 1994-95.

Sixty districts allow the use of the SE_m in determining student eligibility for the gifted program. Forty-two districts provided estimates of the impact of the SE_m over the past three years.⁷ Staff in 33 districts estimated that in each of the last three years, 10% or fewer of their gifted students were determined eligible for the program using the SE_m . The percentage of gifted students not eligible for the gifted program without applying the SE_m in the remaining nine districts, ranged from 11% to 50%. However, five of these districts (Baker, Dixie, Jackson, Monroe, Taylor) reported testing very few students in the past three years. In school year 1994-95 for example, Baker county tested only two students for the gifted program, and the SE_m was considered in the placement decision for one of the two students. Refer to Exhibit 14 for the estimated impact of the SE_m for school year 1994-95.

⁷ Seventeen districts that use the SE_m did not estimate the number of students that would not have been eligible for the gifted program without the SE_m .

Exhibit 14
In 33 of the 60 Districts Using the Standard Error of Measurement
10% or Fewer of Their Gifted Students' Eligibility Was Due
to Using the SE_m in School Year 1994-95

Estimated Percentage of Students Whose Eligibility for the Gifted Program Was Due To the Standard Error of Measurement During School Year 1994-95					
Districts That Estimated					
Don't Know or Information Not Accessible (n= 17)	Less Than 2% (n= 21)	2% - 10% (n= 12)	11% - 20% (n= 3)	21% - 30% (n= 3)	31% - 50% (n= 3)
<i>SMALL</i> ¹					
Columbia DeSoto Lafayette Levy	Bradford Calhoun Franklin Gilchrist Glades Hardee Hamilton Hendry Jefferson Liberty Madison Wakulla Walton	Flagler Gadsden Gulf Nassau Union Washington	Taylor	Monroe	Dixie Jackson Baker
<i>MEDIUM</i> ²					
Clay Collier Hernando Lake Lee Manatee Marion Martin Pasco Polk Santa Rosa	Bay Brevard Charlotte Indian River Putnam Seminole St. Lucie	Highlands Osceola St. Johns Volusia	Escambia	Citrus Okaloosa	
<i>LARGE</i> ³					
Dade Hillsborough Orange	Palm Beach	Duval Pinellas	Broward		

¹ Small District = Less than 10,000 Unweighted Full-Time Equivalent (UFTE)
² Medium District = 10,000 to 100,000 UFTE
³ Large District = Greater than 100,000 UFTE

Source: Summary of district responses to information requested by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Districts use of SE_m to place students does not result in significant numbers of additional students in gifted programs. According to Department data, the 42 districts that provided estimates served approximately 40,000 gifted students in 1994-95. Based on these

districts' estimates, approximately 2,200 gifted students served in 1994-95 would not have been eligible without using the SE_m . District staff stated the estimated percentage of students placed in the gifted program did not typically vary between years. Therefore, the estimated average of the percentage of students placed using the SE_m is a reliable indicator from one year to the next.

Question 12

Which districts have a system for using the results of psychological evaluations that are obtained by parents through independent evaluators?

- **What are districts' policies and practices regarding the use of outside test results in determining eligibility for the gifted program?**
- **What are the reasons parents seek independent evaluations?**
- **How frequently do parents seek independent evaluations?**

The Department of Education's rules and procedures permit the use of independent evaluators in determining eligibility for the gifted program. All school districts have adopted these procedures and consider the results of psychological evaluations obtained through independent evaluators. In addition, many districts have adopted additional procedures regarding the use of outside test results (requiring the district psychologist to review the results of independent review). Two major reasons parents seek independent evaluations include the lengthy waiting period for the district to test their child and parents' preference for an independent evaluation. Forty-three districts each estimate they received less than 10 independent evaluations during the 1994-95 school year.

Each district considers the results of independent evaluations when provided by parents. District staff in all 67 school districts reported they consider the evaluations of independent evaluators, as permitted by Department rule, when determining a student's eligibility for the gifted program. Section 6A-6.03311(4)(a), F.A.C., states that parents have the right to have their child evaluated independently, and that the district shall consider the results of an independent evaluation in any decision affecting the placement of a student.

Policies and practices in all districts are consistent with the Department's rules and procedures regarding independent evaluations. The districts' policies and practices are generally consistent with Department rules and Special Programs and Procedures for Exceptional Students. According to Department policies, the results of independent evaluators may be used if the evaluator is qualified in accordance with Department rule and/or law, and is not employed by the district's school board. Fifty-five districts use the procedures as developed by the Department. The remaining 12 districts augment these provisions. For example, some districts require the independent evaluation include the license number of the evaluator or that a school psychologist (or an appropriate school staff) review all independent evaluations to ensure the appropriateness of the evaluation and the procedures used in scoring the tests.

Some Parents Obtain Independent Evaluations for Their Children

Four main reasons parents seek independent evaluations. According to district staff, the following are the four main reasons parents seek independent evaluations of their child:

- 1) **Parents don't want to wait for the district to evaluate their child** - Staff in 36 districts reported it takes a long time (one district reported 6-8 months) for parents to get the results of a district evaluation. Staff explained this is due to the large volume of students waiting to be tested by a limited number of district clinicians. Conversely, staff in three districts reported that parents can usually get the results of a private evaluation within 24-48 hours of testing;
- 2) **Parents disagree with the results of the district's evaluation** - Staff in 30 districts stated that if a child scores poorly on a district test, the parents will request an independent evaluation to dispute, or confirm, the district's results;
- 3) **Parents believe that an independent evaluation will be more accurate and increase the probability of placement in the gifted program** - Staff in 10 districts stated parents believe that because they are paying for the evaluation, the test scores will be more accurate (higher) and, therefore, provide a greater probability their child will be placed in the gifted program; or,

-
- 4) **Parents are concerned about the confidentiality of their child's test** - Staff in nine districts stated parents are concerned their child's test results will be known throughout the local school system if their child is tested by district staff. District staff perceive parents don't want their child's test results known unless the child scores well enough to be placed in the gifted program.

Prior to district testing, parents may choose to have their child tested independently at their expense. Although Department rules state that parents may seek an independent evaluation, the rules do not identify the circumstances under which the results of a private evaluation will be considered in the placement decision. However, if a parent is not satisfied with the results of a district evaluation, the parent may seek an independent evaluation that will be paid for by the district if the results of that evaluation are used in the placement decision.

The frequency of parents seeking independent evaluations. Staff in 43 school districts estimate they each received less than 10 independent evaluations a year. Staff in 10 of these districts stated that parents have never submitted an independent evaluation for consideration in the placement decision. Seven districts estimated they annually receive more than 10 independent evaluations. Seventeen districts reported the information necessary to answer this question was not readily available. Exhibit 15 lists all districts according to student population and number of independent evaluations.

Exhibit 15
43 Districts Estimate They Received Less Than 10 Independent Evaluations
During the 1994-95 School Year

Districts That Did not Know or the Information Was Not Readily Available (n=17)	Districts That Have Never Had Parents Submit Independent Evaluations (n=10)	Districts That Estimated They Receive Less Than 10 Independent Evaluations a Year (n=33)	Districts That Estimated They Receive More Than 10 Independent Evaluations a Year (n=7)
Small size districts (districts with student populations less than 10,000)			
	Calhoun Dixie Franklin Gilchrist Glades Holmes Liberty Taylor Walton Washington	Baker Bradford Columbia DeSoto Flagler Gadsden Gulf Hamilton Hardee Hendry Jackson Jefferson Lafayette Levy Madison Monroe Nassau Ockeechobee Sumter Suwannee Union Wakulla	
Medium size districts (districts with student populations between 10,000 and 100,000)			
Alachua Hernando Indian River Lee Manatee Pasco Polk Putnam St. Lucie St. Johns Santa Rosa Seminole Lake Leon		Bay Charlotte Citrus Clay Collier Highlands Martin Okaloosa Osceola Sarasota	Brevard – 29 (3%) ¹ Escambia – 36 (22%) Marion – 15 (15%) Volusia – 25 (5%)
Large size districts (districts with student populations over 100,000)			
Dade Hillsborough Orange		Duval	Broward – 158 (22%) Palm Beach – 220 (20%) Pinellas – 150 (11%)

¹ Percentage of independent evaluations to total number of evaluations performed.

Source: Summary of district responses to Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability information request.

Staff in districts with the highest rate of independent evaluations (Escambia, Broward, and Palm Beach) report the primary reason parents seek independent evaluations is they don't want to wait for the school system to evaluate their child. Staff in each of these districts stated that they have very few school psychologists to test a large number of students which can delay the placement process. For example, Broward staff estimate that a student may have to wait 2 to 3 months to be evaluated by a district psychologist versus 24-48 hours to be tested by a private psychologist. District staff in Escambia and Palm Beach stated that private evaluations can be accomplished in a more timely manner in their districts as well. As a result, parents seek private evaluations to expedite the placement process.

List of Appendices

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Appendix A
Alternative Programs for Eligible
Gifted Students at the Secondary Level (School Year 1995-96)

District	Gifted	Advanced Placement	Honors	Dual Enrollment	International Baccalaureate	Other Program Options
Alachua		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Baker	✓	✓	✓	✓		Beta Club High Academic Achievers
Bay	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	AICE Program (similar to IB)
Bradford			✓	✓		
Brevard	✓	✓	✓	✓		Mini Seminars
Broward	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Calhoun	✓		✓	✓		
Charlotte		✓	✓	✓		
Citrus	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Clay	✓	✓		✓		
Collier		✓	✓	✓		Mentoring Laureate Program (similar to IB)
Columbia		✓	✓	✓		
Dade	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Academic Internships Numerous Magnet Programs <i>Examples:</i> - International Studies - Architecture - Arts - Medicine - Technology
DeSoto	0		✓	✓		
Dixie				✓		
Duval	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Escambia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Magnet Program
Flagler	✓	✓	✓	✓		Gifted Studies
Franklin	✓		✓	✓		
Gadsden	0		✓	✓		
Gilchrist	0	✓	✓	✓		
Glades	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Gulf	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Hamilton	0		✓	✓		
Hardee		✓	✓	✓		Computers & TV Production
Hendry		✓	✓	✓		"Research" Course Offering
Hernando	✓	✓	✓	✓		Externship
Highlands	✓		✓	✓		

District	Gifted	Advanced Placement	Honors	Dual Enrollment	International Baccalaureate	Other Program Options
Hillsborough	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Magnet Programs <i>Examples:</i> - Health Academy - Service Academy - Engineering - Medicine - Technology
Holmes	*	✓	✓	✓		
Indian River	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Jackson		✓	✓	✓		Extracurricular Activities Early Admission Academy for Advanced Studies in Technology
Jefferson	0		✓	✓		
Lafayette	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Lake	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Lee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Magnet Programs <i>Examples:</i> - Cypress Lake Center for Arts - Science & Math Technology
Leon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Levy			✓	✓		
Liberty	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Madison	✓			✓		
Manatee	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Marion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Martin		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Monroe		✓	✓	✓		
Nassau	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Okaloosa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Okeechobee		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Orange	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Magnet Programs <i>Examples:</i> - International Studies - Travel & Tourism - Engineering - Health Careers
Osceola	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Palm Beach	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Magnet Programs <i>Examples:</i> - Performing Arts - Math & Science - Sports/Hotel Management - Finance - Environment
Pasco	✓	✓	✓	✓		Mentoring Externships
Pinellas		✓	✓	✓	✓	Magnet Programs <i>Example</i> - 21st Century Learning Center for Advanced Technology

District	Gifted	Advanced Placement	Honors	Dual Enrollment	International Baccalaureate	Other Program Options
Polk	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Putnam		✓	✓	✓		
St. Johns	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Environmental & Architectural Program
St. Lucie	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Santa Rosa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Mentorships
Sarasota	✓	✓	✓	✓		Gifted research classes with an affective component
Seminole	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Sumter	0	✓	✓	✓		
Suwannee		✓	✓	✓		
Taylor	✓		✓	✓		
Union			✓	✓		
Volusia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Wakulla	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Walton		✓	✓	✓		
Washington	✓	✓	✓	✓		

✓ Indicates program is offered in 1995-96.
 0 Indicates program is offered but district reported 0 gifted FTEs in 1995-96.
 * Indicates district did not report any gifted FTEs in 1995-96 for grades K-12.

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability analysis of district survey data.

Appendix B

Response From the Department of Education

In accordance with the provisions of s. 11.45(7)(d), F.S., a list of preliminary and tentative review findings was submitted to the Commissioner of Education for his review and response.

The Commissioner's written response is reprinted herein beginning on page 51.

The agency response for this report is not available electronically. Please contact OPPAGA at 1-800-531-2477 or (904) 488-1023 for a printed copy of this report.