

Adopt Universal Screening Procedures

1. Adopt a policy of universal screening of all students in one or more grade levels for the identification process.
2. Select assessment instruments that are culturally sensitive and account for language differences.
3. Assess the speed of English language acquisition and monitor the rate of mastering reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in English.
4. Consider including reliable and valid nonverbal ability assessments as part of the overall identification process.
5. Use other identification tools to supplement results of universal screening.

Create Alternative Pathways to Identification

6. Use native language ability and achievement assessments as indicators of potential giftedness, when available.
7. Maintain a list of multilingual school psychologists who are qualified to administer assessments in the student's native language.
8. Establish a preparation program prior to formal identification procedures that provides students with learning opportunities to enhance knowledge and academic skills necessary for a student to be recognized.
9. Create a talent pool list of students who exhibit high potential but are not yet enrolled in gifted and talented programs. Observations, daily interactions between teachers and students, informal assessments, and formal assessments provide multiple opportunities to gauge students' learning progress. Make identification of giftedness an ongoing process rather than a single event.

Establish a Web of Communication

10. Establish an identification committee that includes representatives who have key responsibilities in various roles and departments.
11. Develop and implement intentional outreach to the school community, particularly parents/guardians/caretakers. This process should utilize multiple pathways in languages appropriate to the population.
12. Emphasize collaboration within and across specializations/departments (e.g., general education, English as a second language [ESL], special education, gifted education) so people view themselves as talent scouts.

View Professional Development as a Lever for Change

13. Provide professional development opportunities for school personnel about effective policies and practices to support equitable representation of ELs in gifted and talented programs.
14. Develop a systematic approach to analyzing district and school demographics and the status of students identified/not identified for gifted and talented programs.
15. Promote efforts to diversify the teaching corps so that the adult community of a school reflects the student population.



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Tips for Identifying Gifted EL Students

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English learners (ELs) are the fastest growing population of learners in the United States. However, despite the growing numbers of ELs, their representation in gifted identification and programming continues to lag behind not only traditional

populations of learners from advantaged communities, but also other underserved populations of learners. The United States

Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights indicates that 2% of ELs are enrolled in gifted and talented programs, as compared to 7% of non-ELs. Historically, there is an under-

representation of students from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse communities in gifted and talented programs. Identification procedures and policies have been cited as the crux of the problem.



Improving identification of EL students, as well as students from other underserved populations, for gifted programs requires a new paradigm that centers around identifying students' strengths, rather than focusing on their weaknesses. Under this paradigm, every stakeholder, from EL service providers to school psychologists to classroom teachers to parents/guardians/caretakers, form a web of communication and serve as talent scouts.

Professional development creates an opportunity to improve school personnel's awareness of EL issues related to identification. This increased awareness results in changes in identification practices, the evolution of a web of communication among all stakeholders, and modifications in program services.

Changes in identification practices include providing pre-identification opportunities to encourage emergence of talents, using universal screening to avoid overlooking talented students, setting alternative pathways to identification to increase opportunities for talents to be recognized, frequently screening students to identify students whose talents manifest later, and using culturally appropriate assessments, such as testing in the student's native language.

Each of these practices has the potential to increase the number of ELs identified for gifted services. The evolution of a web of communication promotes awareness of EL talent among all stakeholders (e.g., administrators, district gifted coordinators; gifted specialists; parents/guardians/caretakers; EL specialists, classroom teachers, school psychologists, or counselors). This encourages the practice of stakeholders serving as talent scouts. It also increases the trustworthiness of communications among the stakeholders about opportunities for talent development.

Improved awareness of EL identification issues results in modifications to program services that involve inclusion of culturally responsive curriculum and adding support services to ensure ELs are successful in gifted and talented programs. These modifications increase trustworthiness in communication among stakeholders and improve acceptance rates and placement of ELs in the gifted and talented program.

