

Target Eligibility FAQs

What does it mean to be “gifted”?

The Georgia State Board of Education defines a gifted students as “a student who demonstrates a **high degree of intellectual and/or creative ability**, exhibits an exceptionally **high degree of motivation**, and/or **excels in specific academic fields**, and who needs special instruction and/or special services to achieve levels that accommodate his or her abilities.”

What is Target?

Target is the elementary component of Cobb County’s Advanced Learning Program. It is designed for students identified by Georgia State Law as gifted. It is a one day a week elementary resource class that provides a differentiated curriculum to meet the needs and challenges of these students. Multi-disciplinary units are designed to refine research skills, encourage higher levels of learning, enhance creative/productive thinking, and extend the academic base of knowledge. Students must maintain high levels of performance in the regular and target class in order to remain in the program.

Is there Target for Kindergarten students?

Cobb County tests Kindergarteners in May. Eligible students will start services in the fall of first grade. Until testing, Kindergarten students are served through the talent development model.

When are students tested for Target?

Students are automatically tested in grades 1, 3, 5, and 7 system-wide. Students in grades 1, 3, and 7 take the cogAT. Students in grades 3, 5, and 7 take the Iowa. These scores are valid for 2 years. Scores return around early November. Based on those scores, it is determined which student need further testing. The Target teachers then conduct further testing in December to determine eligibility into the gifted program.

Reported referrals can be made by anyone for students that have transferred to Cobb County from out of state, or from a private school. A form needs to be completed and submitted to me. Making a referral begins the review of existing data; this does not mean that a student will be tested.

If a student is transferring from another Georgia school, no further testing is needed. Any student that meets GA eligibility is considered eligible in Cobb County.

What are the eligibility criteria for placement in the gifted program?

Option A/Psychometric: A student must meet eligibility requirements in **both** areas:

- **Mental Ability:** 96th percentile (3-12) or 99th percentile (K-2) on a standardized test of mental ability - Composite Score only.
- **Achievement:** 90th percentile in total battery, total reading, or total math section of a standardized achievement battery.

Option B/Multiple Criteria: A student must meet eligibility requirements in 3 of the 4 following areas:

- **Mental Ability:** 96th percentile on a standardized test - Component or Composite score
- **Achievement:** 90th percentile in total battery, total reading, or total math section of a standardized achievement battery
- **Creativity:** 90th percentile/90 percent on a creativity assessment
- **Motivation:** 90th percentile/90 percent on a motivation assessment

Are Milestone scores used for Target placement?

No. The Milestone is a state-normed test. We are only allowed to use nationally-normed tests. In Cobb County, that process begins with the cogAT and the Iowa.

Do classroom teachers have any input?

The classroom teacher completes behavioral rating scales which are used as primary measures of creativity and motivation. All classroom teachers receive annual training on the completion of behavioral rating scales to strengthen validity and reliability. Students cannot become eligible for gifted services based solely on teacher recommendation; a student must complete state mandated testing.

When are parents notified about gifted eligibility?

Generally, eligibility letters are sent home right before Christmas holidays. There are some exceptions to this rule based on what tests are required for each particular child.

Are students in grades 2 & 4 tested for Target?

Students who are new to Cobb County in grades 2 and 4 may be tested if there are test scores indicating testing is necessary or if a recommendation is made by the teacher or parent.

What is Talent Development?

Talent Development is a program that offers enrichment and extension to students who do not qualify for Target but have test scores indicating that they are above average. We look for students who exceed standards in Reading, Language Arts, and Math. This year, Talent Development is being offered to all grades K-5. Classes are put together based upon assessment scores and teacher recommendation. Students are pulled from their regular class for one hour per week. Curriculum includes problem solving, logic, creativity, vocabulary building, math enrichment and writing enrichment.

What can I do to help my child qualify for the Target program?

Learning is FUN!! I don't recommend lots of workbook pages or extra written work. Help prepare your child by:

- Keeping him or her motivated (go beyond what the classroom teacher assigns)
- Giving plenty of opportunities for creative expression (draw/write with details, think up original ideas to solve problems, invent things, etc.)
- Nurturing curiosity (read non-fiction, explore your neighborhood or city, answer questions)
- If you feel you have to do written worksheets, then practice analogies and vocabulary building (books can be purchased at School Box).

More questions? Chanda.Steve@cobbk12.org

(Please include your child's name, grade, and teacher's name)