

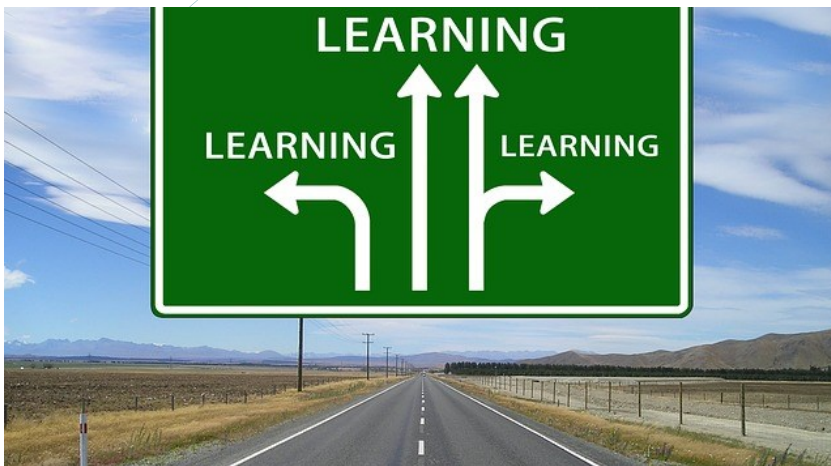
ADVANCED LEARNING PROGRAM

PARENT GUIDE

WELCOME TO MABRY MIDDLE SCHOOL!

Your child is about to embark on a challenging and rewarding path to high school. Middle school is a time when young adolescents begin to develop responsibility and become independent learners. The advanced content class is the gifted delivery model for middle schools in Cobb County.

Students in middle school are expected to go beyond baseline standards and develop the critical thinking, reasoning, and writing skills for complex subject matter that will ensure academic success during their high school and college academic classes.



What are AC classes?

Advanced Content (AC) classes in middle school have more rigorous academic requirements than regular classes since they are designed to prepare students to take honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes in high school. It is not a pull-out program like Target in elementary, but an academic course in the student's schedule.



Who is eligible for AC classes?

Students eligible for advanced placement include gifted-identified and highly able students who demonstrate potential to be successful with advanced classes. Typically, these classes promote more in-depth learning opportunities on given topics and provide extension activities for each unit of study.

How are students placed in classes?

Students are placed in AC classes according to a broad profile of performance data. ITBS scores in the areas of language arts, social studies, and science are used for placement. In addition, CRCT scores and classroom performance may also be used in conjunction with ITBS for a more complete picture. The three AC classes offered are language arts, social studies, and science. Math offers an accelerated track as well; it has a separate criteria guideline.

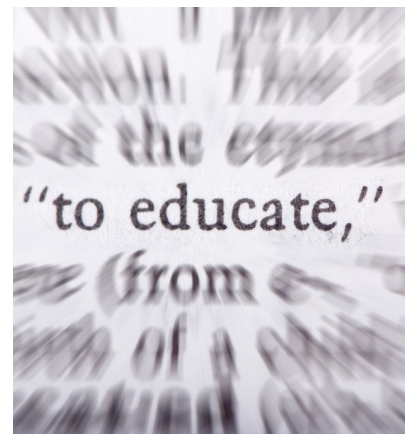
CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED KIDS

Intellectual

- ◆ Exceptional reasoning ability
- ◆ Intellectual curiosity
- ◆ Rapid learning rate
- ◆ Abstract and complex thought processes
- ◆ Vivid imagination
- ◆ Early moral concern

Personality

- ◆ Need to understand and be understood
- ◆ Need for mental stimulation
- ◆ Perfectionism (may lead to procrastination)



UNDERSTANDING GIFTED KIDS

Sidebars complement a main article. Use them when you want to keep your main articles direct and information packed, but you still want to share extra or supplementary content.

For example, if your main story is about your new building plans, consider using the sidebar to talk about the history of the land plot, or to tell a story of your first encounter with the property.



What scores are needed to qualify for AC classes?

Students must have ITBS and CRCT scores in the top 20% of their local school population per content area. There is no exact score cutoff since the score can vary by grade level and the numbers of teacher allotments/student numbers for each grade.

At Mabry, it is our goal to schedule gifted students in all of the AC classes for which they qualify. However, the state of Georgia only requires schools to serve gifted students in **one AC class** if class sizes and availability limit placement. Because teacher allotment and total gifted students per class may not be certain until the first week of school, student schedules may not be firm until that time.

Understanding Gifted Kids

Many myths about gifted children and adolescents exist that affect their well-being and success in school::

- *Gifted kids do not have problems.*
- *Gifted students have high ability, so they should always make high grades.*
- *Gifted kids should not require interventions since they can handle difficulties on their own.*

Research shows that many gifted children have the capacity for intensified thinking, feeling, and a vivid imagination. “Being different” in ability and personality traits may lead to higher expectations and resentment by adults and peers.

Specific problems may surface with gifted kids.

- *Difficulty with social relationships*
- *Refusal to do routine or repetitive tasks*
- *Lack of sufficient challenge in school work*
- *High levels of anxiety*
- *Nonconformity and resistance to authority*
- *Poor study habits (Silverman, 1987)*

What can parents do?

- *Become aware of gifted needs and issues.*
- *Let children know that they are more than their achievement or academic ability.*
- *If you sense sadness, rejection, or anger, find a counselor who has experience in working with gifted adolescents.*
- ***Really listen to your kids!***