**Guides for Best Practices**

- Children who are gifted form a diverse group with a variety of needs and, therefore, require a range of service options.
- Children who are gifted learn at a faster rate than other children of their age, experience and environment and, therefore, can often move through the curriculum at a more rapid pace (which is developmentally appropriate for them).
- Children who are gifted share the ability to think with more complexity and abstraction than other children of their same age, experience and environment and, therefore, require differentiation in the curriculum.
- Children who are gifted have some unique social needs and may feel “different” from other children of their age, experience and environment; they, therefore, may need access to appropriate counseling and support to ensure their affective well-being.
- Because of their different learning and social needs, children who are gifted require time with others, who are similar to them in order to establish cognitive relationships and to facilitate their academic and social growth.
- Some children who are gifted may not be reaching their potential; in fact, they may not even be recognized as gifted. This may be particularly true of students with limited opportunities to learn. For these students, additional support is needed to offer opportunities for their “giftedness” to develop.
- Because the learning needs of children who are gifted are different from other children of their age, experience or environment, teachers responsible for these students must have an appropriate base of knowledge and skills to meet these needs, and should enjoy working with these students.
- When an appropriate differentiated education is not provided, children who are gifted do not thrive in school and may even suffer cognitive or affective harm.
- Services for children who are gifted must be part of an overall educational program that supports excellence for all students; this “excellence” must include opportunities for advanced learners.
- The early educational experiences of potentially gifted students help to shape their learning habits; therefore, it is essential that young people with high abilities have access to an appropriately stimulating and challenging education to help ensure that their potential is developed.
- When given appropriate educational opportunities, children who are gifted will become knowledgeable and, therefore, their needs for differentiation increase as well, as compared to others of their age, experience, and environment.