

# *The Center Program for the Highly Gifted*

**for Grades 4 and 5**



Critical and  
Creative  
Thinking  
Skills

Authentic  
Products

MCPS  
Curriculum



Rockville, Maryland

## Center Program for the Highly Gifted

MCPS offers a Center Program for the Highly Gifted for students in Grades 4 and 5. The Centers are designed for students who learn at a faster pace and can handle advanced concepts of greater complexity. The goal of the program is to provide highly able and motivated elementary students with an accelerated and enriched instructional program.

Students enrolled in this program have a unique academic profile and educational needs that are more easily addressed in the Center Program than in a typical classroom. The Center Program provides an instructional atmosphere that promotes thinking skills, risk taking, and creative expression to help highly able students realize their potential.

## Who is the Center Program Designed For?

Students who have been successful in the Center Program have come from diverse backgrounds and share the following traits:

- Advanced academic performance in multiple content areas.
- Curiosity and motivation to learn.
- High level of commitment, persistence, and independence.
- Eagerness to solve challenging problems or tasks for which the solution is not readily known.
- Ability to generate unique, unconventional ideas or solutions to problems.
- Ability to consider multiple perspectives and apply critical and creative reasoning skills.

## Organization

The Centers are housed in elementary schools in seven different areas of the county. The Center Program begins in Grade 4. Students attend the Center school and participate in all of its activities for Grades 4 and 5. At the end of Grade 5, students may apply to middle school magnet programs, middle school magnet consortium, or return to their home middle schools.

*“I think this program opens up our minds and challenges us. In this class, our creative juices get flowing every day; we get to use our real strengths.”*



## Application Process

The families of all Grade 3 students are mailed applications for the Center Program. Applications are also available on our website [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms).

Parents submit the application to Division of Consortium Choice and Application Process Services. Students who have submitted an application participate in an above-grade-level assessment administered in small groups.

The Gifted and Talented Committee at the local school meets to examine all available data and other information on Grade 3 students including academic performance, data from standardized tests and evidence of and potential for success with accelerated and enriched instruction.

## Selection Process

Multiple criteria are used in the selection process to identify students whose unique learning profiles indicate a need for the Center Program. The Selection Committee, composed of school based and central services based staff, looks for students who have intellectual curiosity, analytical thinking, and creativity and unusual strengths or talent. The committee carefully reviews all of the data collected on each applicant.

Students are selected based on evidence of motivation, above-level achievements, teacher recommendations and parent responses on the application, test scores, and grades. Parents are notified of the committee's decision by the end of April.

## Transportation

Transportation is provided for the Center Program for the Highly Gifted to and from central stops (usually MCPS schools) determined by the Department of Transportation. Stops may be several miles from the student's home. Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to and from central stops. Bus trips are usually significantly longer than local school transportation and vary by program or location. Please carefully consider transportation options and responsibilities. Details will be available at selection time from the MCPS Department of Transportation.

## Academic Environment

The Center Program provides a learning environment that enriches, accelerates, and extends the MCPS curriculum. To meet the unique needs of the students, the Center Program provides the opportunity to do the following:

- Participate in a learning environment that provides a rigorous academic program.
- Engage in problem solving and critical, creative, and evaluative thinking.
- Engage in academic dialogue and develop an openness to new ideas.
- Discover new problems and new solutions; create authentic products.
- Pursue in-depth independent study and acquire advanced research skills.

## For Additional Information

Contact your principal or call the Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction at 301-279-3163.

website:

[www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms)

Each Center draws from a defined set of high school clusters;  
Centers are located at the following elementary schools:

### **Lucy Barnsley Elementary School**

Clusters: Walter Johnson, Richard Montgomery, Rockville, Wheaton

### **Chevy Chase Elementary School**

Clusters: Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Whitman

### **Clearspring Elementary School**

Clusters: Clarksburg (except Daly ES and Fox Chapel ES),  
Damascus, Gaithersburg, Magruder, Watkins Mill

### **Cold Spring Elementary School**

Clusters: Churchill, Wootton

### **Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary School**

Clusters: Blake, Paint Branch, Sherwood, Springbrook

### **Fox Chapel Elementary School**

Clusters: Clarksburg (only Daly ES and Fox Chapel ES),  
Northwest, Poolesville, Quince Orchard, Seneca Valley

### **Pine Crest Elementary School/Oakview Elementary School**

Clusters: Blair, Einstein, Kennedy, Northwood

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Rockville, Maryland

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