



A Parent's Guide: Deciding to Submit a Gateway Interest Form

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Greetings! Making the decision to submit a Gateway Interest Form can be a bit overwhelming. We would like to provide you with some assistance and information to support your decision process.

The form is the first step in requesting the 833 Gifted Education staff to review your child's learning environment needs for grades 3 or 4. Please note that submitting a Gateway Interest Form **does not** guarantee Gateway as a recommended learning environment for your child.

For parents who submitted a Parent Observation Form connected to the Cognitive Abilities Testing (CogAT), which occurred last November, additional information is required at this time using the Gateway Interest Form found on the website and specific to your interest in Gateway. The Parent Observation Form you submitted in November, will also be added to your Interest Form.

Essential background information for all parents:

- *The family of a current 4th grade student who has been identified as a gifted learner in District 833 is able to submit a Gateway Interest Form by **4:00 p.m. on April 18th, 2019** based on their child's learning styles and needs.*
- *Unlike programs that provide educational services in order to develop students from solely an achievement perspective, 833 Gifted Education services are structured to best develop your gifted child's:*
 - *overall development in grades 3-5*
 - *relationship with learning*
 - *skills navigating learning as a gifted learner*
 - *sense of autonomy*
 - *skills to be successful as measured by diverse versions of achievement*
- *Gateway is a Program-Within-A-School which is one cluster classroom option for serving highly gifted learners in District 833. Please see the information document posted on the website or included in your CogAT results for more information.*
- *Not all highly gifted students thrive in a Program-Within-A-School structure. Your decision is best based on your child's specific learning styles and developmental needs, as stated below.*

Things to look at when deciding whether or not to submit a Gateway Interest Form:

Parent Indicator #1: *When reviewing your child's student ability test scores, is there a score of 140+ on one or more subtests?*

- a. Most students who have scores of 140+ demonstrate a need for gifted education instruction.
- b. Being a "highly gifted" learner indicates a need for increased dimension in instructional planning, rather than an indication of achievement or demonstrated mastery of grade level content and skills.
- c. Students with a 140+ on one or more subtests on a student ability assessment, 98th percentile and above on one or more MAP scores and, when available, "Exceeds" scores on MCA grade-level assessments would be a good initial indicator to submit a Gateway Interest Form.

Parent Indicator #2: *When reading the observable traits listed on the Observation Form, how closely matched is your child's learning styles to the descriptions listed?*

- a. Gifted learners are a diverse group of learners. The Observation Form assists in distinguishing the vast differences in gifted learner styles and then the best instructional options for the learner.
- b. When completing the Observation Form, please focus on observable evidence and provide specific examples based on your observations of your child over time.
- c. 833 Gifted Education staff is happy to assist you if you have questions about any of the items on the Observation Form.

Parent Indicator #3: *Does your child prefer a small cohort of classmates who attend school together for multiple years or does your child excel in a larger cohort of classmates, classes and school with opportunities to meet many new classmates and idea-mates?*

- a. Gifted education at Gateway includes one classroom in third grade, and two classrooms in fourth and fifth grade, with the same students in class together through grades 3, 4 and 5.
- b. Gifted education at the neighborhood schools includes 1-5 cluster classrooms per grade and 2-7 total classrooms at each grade level, with new class lists prepared for each school year.

Parent Indicator #4: *District 833 has a long history of sustained gifted education services in Grades 3-5.*

- At this time, all District 833 neighborhood schools and gifted cluster teachers, including Gateway cluster teachers, are committed to further developing and deepening instruction, which supports growth in our diverse population of gifted learners.
- 833 Gifted Education staff is involved in a continuous improvement process to ensure increased access to gifted education training and knowledge of gifted learners over time.

Parent Indicator #5: *How would a school change impact your child and your family, the family schedule and transportation logistics?*

- Each family has unique schedule and logistical needs based on family makeup, impact on siblings' school schedules, etc.

- Your child's level of comfort and flexibility in changing learning environments.
- Social needs and commitment to current friendships and ease in which your child develops relationships.
- Support structure for learning at your student's current school.

Because of the flexible use of Levels of Service in 833 Gifted Education, the provided parent indicators can assist you in having a personalized view of your child's unique needs and learning styles in regard to submitting a Gateway Interest Form.

After considering the above information, if you would like to submit a Gateway Interest Form for your 4th grade child, please complete the form and submit it **by 4:00 p.m. on April 18th, 2019** in one of the following ways:

- Drop it off or send it via U.S mail (it must be received by the deadline) to:
District Service Center
Attn: Gifted Education
7362 E. Point Douglas Rd. S.
Cottage Grove, MN 55016
- Emailed to: lvogel2@sowashco.org

If emailed, you will receive a confirmation within 48 hours. If you do not, please call Laura Vogel at (651) 425-6246 to make sure we have received your Gateway Interest Form.

I hope this has helped in making the decision of whether or not to submit a Gateway Interest Form for your child.

With Regards,

833 Gifted Education Staff