Procedures for Access: Revised 1/28/10

I. Gifted and Talented Definition

According to the N.J.A.C. 6A: 8, gifted and talented students are those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability functioning at least one year above their chronological age, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

II. Long Range Goals

- The gifted and talented students in the Lincoln Park School District will be identified and provided appropriate means of learning based on individual skills, interests and needs in a program designated as the Academic and Cultural Curriculum for Exceptional Student Scholars (ACCESS).
- The ACCESS program is to provide g/t students with a continuum of learning experiences, called the Core Modules that leads to the development of advanced level products and performances. As well as the opportunity to reach, through enrichment, the upper levels of achievement in the major categories of the cognitive domain.
- The primary goal of the ACCESS program is to develop self-directed learners by providing an instructional program which integrates the cognitive and affective processes.
- Provide qualified teachers' assistance to ensure the implementation needs of the program.

III. Identification and Selection Process

Step 1: Nominations

A. Any professional staff member may nominate a student for the ACCESS program. The nomination will be made by completing the Teacher Nomination Form.
B. The Parents of students who are nominated will complete a Parent Nomination Form.
C. Non-qualifying students will be reassessed annually.
D. Transfer Students -If a student transfers from another school district, they may also transfer their ACCESS placement on a probationary semester basis under the following conditions:

- The student's previous school district verifies their identification and placement in written form.
- At the end of the probationary period the ACCESS instructor recommends that the student be placed permanently into the program.
- If at the end of that grading period, the ACCESS instructor recommends that the student be exited from the program, the parent or guardian may request that the school district test the student using our identification process.

E. The following information will be considered and placed on a matrix:

- Cognitive Skills Index Score
- Achievement Scores or Kindergarten Screening Scores
- Teacher Recommendation Score
- Parent Nomination Score
- Report Card Grades

Students in grades K-8, who score 15+ points for one area will be recommended for further testing. Kindergarten students who score 13+ points may also be tested.

Step 2: Testing

A. The ACCESS teacher will notify by letter the parents of children nominated and will send them a parental permission form for testing. The permission form must be returned before any testing can take place.
B. Students will be assessed with an instrument that will aid in determining whether or not the student is functioning at least one year above same age/grade peers.

Step 3: Selection

A. Students who demonstrate skills at least one year above their chronological age will be recommended for the ACCESS program.
B. The District will make every attempt to insure that the population of the ACCESS program reflects the population of the total district.
C. Parents of all students screened will be notified of the results of the selection committee.
D. Parent permission will be secured in writing before the student is placed in the ACCESS program.
E. If a student is dismissed he/she may be reevaluated to determine eligibility for the following school year.

IV. Appeal by parent(s) for non-acceptance into ACCESS

A. Should a student not meet the criteria for entrance into the math and/or language arts/reading program(s), the following are steps in the appeal process:

- A conference is set up in which the ACCESS teacher will review and explain the criteria and the reason for non-admittance;

- If the parent(s) wishes to pursue the matter further, a letter must be sent to the Supervisor of Special Services stating the reason for further appeal and the matter will be decided by the Administrative Team.

V. ACCESS Exit Criteria

A. An ACCESS student must maintain an "A" average for at least three marking periods in all subject areas in which the child was identified as being gifted, in order to remain in the program.
B. When student is in jeopardy of being dismissed for not meeting above cited requirement the parent will be notified by mail that the student will need to improve his/her grades or face dismissal.
C. A parent may request that their child be withdrawn from the program at any time. Request must be made in writing.
D. Students may be released from the ACCESS program for one or a combination of the following:

- Lack of interest or participation in ACCESS
- Poor performance on ACCESS projects
- Poor attendance in ACCESS or regular classes
- Poor classroom performance (Report card indicates student is not finishing his/her class work, hands in assignments late, not completing assignments, not participating in class etc.)
- Poor grades ("C" or lower in **any** subject area)

The ACCESS teacher will meet with the student, the parent(s) and the classroom teacher to determine if the student should be released for the remainder of the school year. The parents will sign a release form and the student can be reconsidered in the following school year.

VIII. Description of Programs

The Academic and Cultural Curriculum for Exceptional Student Scholars (ACCESS) program meets the needs of gifted and talented students in grades K-8 as stated in the Core Module description. Students receive services through the Core Module model, which may take the form of one of these three modules:

- *Exploration Module* – All students participate in classroom instructional activities. The unique needs of students begin to emerge during these activities. These unique needs may initiate a concern from the classroom teacher, who then confers with the ACCESS facilitator.
- *Modification Module* – For students whose needs go beyond the Exploration Module, the classroom teacher and program facilitator collaboratively develop modifications. These modifications will be implemented by the classroom teacher and may include differentiation options such as acceleration, curriculum compacting, independent study, assignment modification, and/or flexible grouping.
- *Extension Module* – For students whose needs go beyond the Modification Module, the program facilitator will provide a pull-out program. This program will provide enrichment across content areas. The focus of the program includes independent study, special events and project-based learning. The program is facilitated by a certified teacher who works collaboratively with the classroom teacher.

IX. Annual Review

All students identified as "gifted" are accepted into the ACCESS program for the full school year. The student's record will be reviewed annually. Should a student begin to fail academically, not continue to meet the criteria, loose interest, and/or begin to underachieve in the gifted program he or she will be dismissed from the program per the exit criteria and process. The following data will be analyzed and may include, but not be limited to IQ scores, standardized achievement scores, writing proficiency scores and report card grades. Such a student may be re-nominated after completing one full school year while successfully achieving the gifted criteria in Section III.