**Traits Aptitudes and Behaviors**

The degree of **frequency, complexity,**and **intensity**of the demonstrated traits, aptitudes, and behaviors determine whether students require differentiated instruction in Gifted and Talented/Advanced Academics (GT/AA) programs and services. Observing and documenting the frequency, complexity, and intensity of a behavior can contribute to a student’s profile and inform instructional choices.

**Frequency**refers to the rate of occurrence or the number of times any event recurs in a given period.

**Complexity**refers to intricacy or sophistication and can be demonstrated and documented through a student’s response, performance, or product.

**Intensity**refers to the passion and energy that a student demonstrates when engaged in an area of interest or ability.

Students requiring GT/AA are, by their very nature, diverse in their range and expression of giftedness (Tomlinson, 2001). The following should be considered:

* Student strengths may be inconsistently demonstrated within and across disciplines.
* Students may selectively demonstrate their abilities only in an area of personal interest.
* Students may intentionally mask potential due to perfectionism or fear of failure.
* Students may demonstrate potential when the learning environment and experiences are designed to address and support learning preferences.
* Students may demonstrate potential when the learning environment and experiences support intellectual risk-taking.
* Students’ strengths or potential may be masked by their educational disabilities.

Recognizing that there is a complex interaction of factors, the purpose of the*Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors of Advanced and High Potential Students* chart is to stimulate dialogue among educators, enhancing the investigation into the identification and provision of service for students with advanced or high potential abilities (VanTassel-Baska, 2003). There are many ways for students to demonstrate gifted traits, aptitudes, and behaviors and, subsequently, there are many ways to gather evidence and supporting documentation.

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| **Trait, Aptitude, or Behavior** | **Description of Trait, Aptitude, or Behavior**  ***The student may demonstrate evidence of:*** |
| **Motivation/** **Task Commitment** | * Internal drive; little need for external motivation * Persistence in pursuing or completing self-selected tasks * Concentrating for longer periods when interested * Initiating projects * Working independently at an earlier age * Playing around, yet testing well * Seemingly boundless energy and endurance * A common attitude of “I’d rather do it myself” * Fascination and involvement in a particular problem, area of study, or form of human expression * Attraction to complicated material; boredom with routine tasks |
| **Interests** | * Intense, sustained, sometimes unusual or advanced interests * Unceasing pursuit of an activity beyond the group * A wide range of interests * Intellectual playfulness * Self-taught concepts, ideas, or content * Immersion in task of personal interest; “labor of love” |

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| **Communication** | * Highly expressive communications skills * Use of examples, illustrations, or elaborations * An extensive vocabulary * An ability to pick up and interpret nonverbal cues and draw inferences * Early or avid reading ability * Reading a variety of genres and interests * A preference for books and magazines written for older students * Advanced oral skills * Advanced written language skills * Interest in word-play * Advanced artistic expression * Advanced dramatic expression * Thinking faster than able to write * Preference for speaking over writing |
| **Problem Solving** | * Creating new designs * Inventing strategies for recognizing and solving problems * Playing around yet testing well * Thriving on complexity * Tackling tasks and problems in a well-organized, goal-directed, and efficient manner * Attacking complicated material by separating it into components and analyzing it systematically * Requiring little direction from teachers * Continuing despite setbacks * Daring to differ, challenge, change, make mistakes, and fail |
| **Memory** | * Having considerable information on school or non-school topics * An extensive background of knowledge * The need for only one or two repetitions for mastery * Paying attention to details * Being a good guesser |
| **Curiosity/ Inquisitiveness** | * Asking unusual questions for age * Playing around with ideas * Exhibiting a sense of wonder * Demonstrating many interests, hobbies, or collections * Receptiveness to new thoughts, actions, and products |
| **Insight** | * Quickly grasping new ideas * A heightened capacity for seeing unusual and diverse relationships * Keen powers of observation and a sense of the significant * Making valid generalizations about events, people, or objects |
| **Sensitivity** | * Strong reactions of compassion * An awareness of global issues * A keen sense of justice * Early moral and ethical concern; empathy * Being highly self-critical * Perfectionism * An orientation toward success * Hesitation to try something where failure is a possibility * Skeptical, critical, and evaluative attitudes * An attraction to aesthetic values |

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| **Humor** | * Conveying and picking up on humor easily * Precocity; maturity for age * Humor expressed both in work and in social situations * The capacity for seeing the unusual * Seeing humor in situations that may not appear to be humorous to others; the ability to see relationships and make connections |
| **Intensity** | * Strong reactions, responses, and behaviors * Heightened sensory experiences * Seeking intellectual stimulation * Questioning authority; nonconforming * Critically examining adult pronouncements * Uninhibited intellectual willingness to express opinions and ideas * Spirited disagreement with the statements, opinions, ideas, and beliefs of others * Belief in his/her ability to carry out important work |
| **Interpersonal** | * A preference to respond and relate to older student and adults * Interest in mature or sophisticated issues or topics * Resistance to cooperative or collaborative learning * Social challenges with peers |
| **Intrapersonal** | * Self-confidence * Self-awareness and reflection * Motivation by personal goals and beliefs * Freedom from feelings of inferiority * A drive to achieve * Setting high standards for self * A sense of excellence about his/her own work and the work of others * Openness toward new experiences; being adventurous * A willingness to take risks in thought and actions |
| **Creativity** | * The production of many ideas * The production of highly original ideas; imagination * Exceptional ingenuity in using everyday materials * A vivid imagination * Fluent thinking in generating possibilities, consequences, or related ideas * Flexible thinking using different alternatives or approaches * Original thinking seeking new, unusual, or unconventional associations and combinations * Elaborate thinking embellishing basic ideas, situations, or problems * Non-traditional responses and products |
| **Reasoning** | * Logical approaches to figuring out solutions * Thinking things through in a logical manner * Judgment that seems mature for age * Making quick perceptions of similarities, differences, and anomalies * Seeing relationships and making connections not readily apparent * An ability to spot inconsistencies and to cope with uncertainty * Sorting out relevant and irrelevant information associated with a particular problem or area of study * Common sense * A willingness to debate topics at greater depth |