**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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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| **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
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