

Q & A – TDSB Universal Screening Process

1. Why are we doing this screening test? What is it supposed to accomplish?

- To give the teacher information to develop a class profile.
- To help with programming.
- To help the teacher know when to bring a student forward to SST for programming suggestions and possible referral to psychology in light of high or low cognitive functioning or otherwise remarkable cognitive profiles.
- To make the process of identification for giftedness more comprehensive and equitable, this would reflect best practices and align with the processes of other GTA boards.

2. Is a student required to take the test if their parents do not want them to be assessed?

- No, parents who do not want their child screened can indicate this.

3. This screening test will give information for a possible gifted exceptionality. Will this screening test be used for other exceptionalities?

- The CCAT will provide information about the range of cognitive abilities. It may suggest learning profiles associated with other exceptionalities. The CCAT is a screener and a screener only. It should not be mistaken as a test for exceptionality. It will be useful in flagging students for further discussion with parents and staff at a School Support Team.

4. What does the Canadian Cognitive Abilities test include to ensure that the test is barrier-free to ensure students of all abilities are able to take the test?

- For students with an IEP, accommodations outlined in the IEP can be followed
- The CCAT can be administered individually.
- In cases in which students have difficulty reading, the CCAT can be administered and responded to orally or with the use of assistive technology and modification of time.
- The CCAT can be prorated for a student who is slow at completing the test: If the number of correct responses divided by number attempted falls above a certain percentage, the student is assessed with the WISC-V.
- It can be administered in shortened blocks for students with attentional difficulties.
- The test includes a large print version which can be administered for low vision students.
- Glossaries or translation of instructions can be provided for students who need help with vocabulary, and time limits adjusted accordingly.
- The test can be administered individually or in smaller groups for students who have attentional/behavioural difficulties in large groups or with group administration.
- If there is a physical disability or impairment that prevents the student from completing the answer document, a scribe can work with the student.

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- Instructions can be repeated.
- Extended time can be given for an ELL student on the Verbal battery if necessary to reduce the effect of a slow pace of work.

5. What training will teachers receive to understand the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test scores?

- Teachers administering the test will be provided with information materials and will receive training through a video presentation on all that they can do to support students before, during and after the test administration. They will also receive support in terms of understanding the scores from the testing which will help them to better program for students.

6. What steps have been taken to ensure that the test is money well spent?

The following were carried out:

- A review of other tests that are used for gifted screening elsewhere. The CCAT was found to be frequently used for this purpose;
- Consultation with other boards that have used this test for any difficulties/challenges and experiences that they have had with this teacher administered group test;
- A survey across the province of the gifted process, and of the screening measures that were used at their boards;
- A review of literature around gifted identification.

7. How can the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test and Gifted Rating Scale (School Age) determine whether or not a student is identified as gifted?

- The CCAT provides information about students' cognitive abilities. The (teacher-rated) Gifted Rating Scale (School Age) (GRS-S) provides information about important non-cognitive aspects of functioning, like motivation and creativity. The CCAT and GRS-S cannot determine this alone. Best practice suggests the need for multiple sources of information in the determination of a gifted identification.
- However, the CCAT does provide some general information about students' cognitive abilities. The Teacher rated Gifted Rating Scale (School Age) provides information about important non cognitive aspects of functioning, like motivation and creativity, which are important in the determination of the gifted profile. In order to determine whether the student meets the cut-off for a gifted exceptionality, however, an individual intellectual assessment by the psychologist is an important component.

8. How will a student with dyslexia or a visual impairment take the test? Will it be read to them?

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- Yes, the CCAT can be administered orally or individually for students with dyslexia; for students with visual impairments, the large print version of the test can be administered.

9. What happens if the student cannot read effectively in Grade 3?

- The CCAT can be read to a student if necessary or use assistive technology.

10. Some school boards test students as early as in Grade 1. Why does the TDSB wait until Grade 3 for the testing? Why not earlier?

- The testing is done in Grade 3 because of developmental considerations: abstract reasoning skills develop as students mature and, as much as possible; we want the testing to be predictive of future potential. Given developmental considerations, by Grade 3 students have generally matured sufficiently to measure abstract skills more reliably than in the younger years. Testing at Grade 3 is therefore more likely to yield results that are predictive of future potential and can be considered more reliable. It might also be noted that some boards do not test until Grade 4.

11. What is the process for identifying students with an exceptionality of giftedness outside of Grade 3?

- At this time, students will be discussed at the In-School Team (IST) which will determine if it is appropriate to move forward with the completion of a Gifted Rating Scale (School Age) by the teacher. Upon completion and scoring of the Gifted Rating Scale (School Age) (GRS-S), the student may be referred to the School Support Team (SST). The SST will consider the scoring of the GRS-S and discuss possible referral to psychology if there is a GRS-S score of 60 or more on any of the scale's six domains.

12. If a student in Grade 3 does not meet the criteria for gifted according to the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test or Gifted Rating Scale (School Age), what is the appeal process for parents?

- As with any student that is considered for the gifted exceptionality, the student should be discussed at a School Support Team meeting (SST).

13. Given that the test is broken into three sections of thirty minutes each, what is the most appropriate time frame for a school to complete the testing process for all students in Grade 3?

- Schools will vary in terms of their workspace, number of students needing screening, and other classroom and student considerations. The testing will need to be done in September, and ideally within a one-week period.

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14. What is a reasonable or typical number of days that a school should hold the testing for cases such as student absenteeism?

- Given the timelines required for the gifted process, testing should not be put on hold past the end of the first week of October, which means a period of a week past the planned week for the testing of the other students.

15. What happens when students arrive later in the year or shortly outside of the testing timelines?

- It is possible to test the student with the CCAT individually when he or she arrives, or the student can be included in the following year's screening using the appropriate level of material at their grade level. This would be addressed through the School Support Team (SST) process.

16. Can the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) be administered to ELL students?

- The CCAT can be administered to English Language Learners (ELLs). The purpose of using testing accommodations with English Language Learners is to reduce the impact that their limited experience with English has on the measurement of their reasoning abilities. The newest version of CCAT (CCAT-7) was designed to be accessible to English Language Learners.

17. Is the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test available in a French version for students taking instruction in French Immersion Classes? If not, will there be a disadvantage to them given that the majority of their instruction in grade 3 is in French? French, even for FI students, may be too difficult.

- The test is not available in French. In the case of many French Immersion students, English language of communication will occur in various forms throughout the school at recess, during lunch and in a number of discussion points throughout the day at school and home. However, the CCAT-7 version has been designed to be much more ELL friendly. None of the items on the Quantitative Battery use language, so both the Quantitative and Nonverbal batteries can be administered to ELL students. This enhancement would also be supportive of FI learners.

18. Currently, the CCAT test was last updated in 1993. Will this impact the reliability of the test? Is there a plan for the CCAT test to be updated in the near future?

- There now is a 2016 update of the CCAT.

19. What is the scoring process/cut-off point for the Canadian Cognitive Abilities test?

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- See Appendix.

20. What is the scoring process/cut off point for the Gifted Rating Scale (School Age)?

- Students scoring at or above the 84th percentile on the GRS-S may be referred on for further assessment of giftedness. (See Appendix.)

21. What happens if a child has a psychological report outlining a gifted exceptionalism, prior to the Grade 3 universal screening test, and then does not meet the criteria on the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test for consideration of a gifted profile? Does the test screen them out of a gifted assessment that already exists from a previous assessment?

- Two factors need to be considered to answer this question:
 - (1) Which test results take precedence or trump the other?
 - (2) What was the child's age and/or grade when individually assessed?
- 1. The individual test of intellectual functioning (WISC-V) takes precedence over the CCAT screener. The CCAT would not screen out or exclude a child whose individual assessment was conducted within the TDSB age/grade parameters and meets TDSB criterion for Giftedness identification
- 2. The new TDSB guideline indicates that the child must be of Grade 3 age for results of an individual test of intellectual functioning to be considered for an Identification of Giftedness. If the child was assessed prior to this period, a reassessment could be considered even though the child did not meet criterion based on the CCAT. A discussion at the School Support Team would be useful in understanding the discrepancy between CCAT and WISC-V results

TDSB UNIVERSAL SCREENING – PROPOSED GIFTED SCREENING PROCESS

Step 1 Obtain signed Consent Form for the CCAT

Step 2 Administer CCAT

When the school report is received, convert percentile ranks to points for CCAT Verbal, Nonverbal, and Quantitative scales based on the following table:

Points	Percentile
1	80-83
2	84-88
3	89-92
4	93-95
5	96-97
6	98
7	99
8	>99

Add Verbal Scale points + [(Quantitative + Nonverbal Scale points) ÷ 2] = **Point Total**

As many students do not finish the CCAT, the psychology staff member at the school will review all of the incomplete tests and:

1. Calculate the percent correct in each of the incomplete CCATs.
2. Predict the total score the students would achieve if they had finished the CCAT.
3. Obtain a prorated Points total for Verbal, Nonverbal, and Quantitative scales.
4. Proceed to Step 3 based on the Prorated point count.

Step 3 Proceed to IST and record the CCAT Points Total on the Individual Learning Profile (ILP) for students with a point total of 5 or greater.

Through IST discussion, have teachers complete the GRS-S¹ for all students who achieve a score of **6 points or greater**.

Students achieving a point total of **5 (percentile rank of 96 or 97)** may be referred for a GRS-S.

Step 4 Proceed to SST and, in addition to the CCAT Points Total already recorded on the ILP, record the GRS-S score for all six domains. A referral for individual psychological testing will be made for all students earning a **GRS-S score of 60² or more on any of the six domains and a CCAT Point Total of 6**.

Discuss students who have a point total of at least **6 points but with a GRS-S below 60** to determine if these students should go forward to a referral for individual psychological testing.

Students achieving a point total of **5 (percentile rank of 96 or 97) and a GRS-S of at least 60** may be considered for a referral for individual psychological testing.

Step 5 Upon completion of the individual psychological testing, return to SST.

¹ NB: GRS-S can be administered and scored online for a cost of \$3.25 per student. A paper version will be used for the 2016-2017 school year.

² A GRS-S T score below 55 (below 69th percentile) indicates a low probability of gifted, a score between 55 and 59 (69th–83rd percentile) moderate probability, a score between 60 and 69 (84th–97th percentile) high probability, and a score above 70 (98th+ percentile) a very high probability.

All students with a **WISC-V GAI score at the 98th percentile or higher (6 points) and a GRS-S score of 60 or higher** go forward to IPRC.

Discuss students with a **WISC-V GAI score at the 98th percentile or higher but with a GRS-S below 60** to determine if these students should go forward to IPRC.

Provide enrichment for all students who do not meet gifted criteria.