

# Potentially

gifted preschoolers are those who show promise of performing

at high levels due to their advanced or accelerated development (Clark, 2002). The state of Mississippi defines giftedness for students in grades 2 through 12 in four categories. Currently the state mandates gifted education for intellectually gifted students in grades 2 through 6.

**Intellectually Gifted Children:** Those children and youth in grades 2 through 12 who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of intelligence as documented through the identification process.

**Academically Gifted Children:** Those children and youth in grades 9 through 12 who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of demonstrated academic ability as documented through the identification process.

**Artistically Gifted Children:** Those children and youth in grades 2 through 12 who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of creativity and exceptionally high degree of ability in visual arts as documented through the identification process.

**Creatively Gifted Children:** Those children and youth in grades 2 through 12 who are found to have an exceptionally high degree of creativity and exceptionally high degree of ability in the performing arts (music, drama, or dance) as documented through the identification process.

# The

**Frances A. Karnes Center for Gifted Studies on the campus of The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg was established in 1979 to further the education of gifted students through teaching, research, and services. The center operates within the Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education in the College of Education and Psychology.**

**Instructional programs are provided for intellectually gifted students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12. A program to develop leadership concepts and skills is offered for students enrolled in grades 6 through 11. An accelerated academic three-week program is conducted in the summer for students in grades 7 through 10.**

**Teacher training and in-service education are provided for regular education personnel and for teachers who specialize in gifted education. A conference for parents of gifted youth and other concerned adults is conducted on an annual basis. Research is conducted in rural and urban schools for a variety of purposes.**

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# Reaching Potential

## ***Recognizing, Understanding and Serving Gifted Preschoolers***



THE  
FRANCES A. KARNES  
CENTER  
FOR  
*Gifted  
Studies*



# Understanding

## ***Social/Emotional characteristics***

- ▶ Early empathy development
- ▶ Emotional intensity/sensitivity
- ▶ Frustration with own limitations
- ▶ Concern with truth and fair play
- ▶ Early awareness of difference
- ▶ Mature sense of humor
- ▶ Perfectionism
- ▶ Leader in cooperative play

## **A Word About *Asynchronous Development:***

**Intellectual, social-emotional, and motor development often proceed unevenly in young children. This pattern is especially evident in gifted youngsters. For example, a gifted preschooler might have a remarkable vocabulary and ability to engage in conversation, but motor skills may be developing normally. The child may display gifted characteristics in one area and not in another.**

# Recognizing

## ***Cognitive characteristics***

- ▶ Alertness in infancy
- ▶ Faster pace in reaching motor development milestones
- ▶ Early language development
- ▶ Advanced vocabulary
- ▶ Complex speech patterns
- ▶ Interest in the alphabet and symbols
- ▶ Intense curiosity
- ▶ Sustained attention
- ▶ Abstract thinker
- ▶ Ability to transfer knowledge
- ▶ Generates original ideas
- ▶ Creative/Imaginative
- ▶ Excellent memory
- ▶ May be an early reader

# Serving

## ***Ideas for school and home***

- ▶ Create balance between academic and play activities
- ▶ Involve children in decisions about what to learn
- ▶ Integrate learning from a wide range of fields
- ▶ Remember that social development is important: children need intellectual peers in addition to age peers
- ▶ Allow children to explore the world through drama, art, and movement
- ▶ Teach processes such as brainstorming and thinking aloud
- ▶ View the child as separate from their gift
- ▶ Build on prior knowledge and scaffold new experiences based on the child's comments and current understanding of his or her world
- ▶ Provide centers or learning spaces in the classroom and home



- Writing and art
- Science
- Math
- Technology
- Reading
- Drama and dance