

## Guiding Principles of High Ability Education

At its January 24, 2005 meeting, the Broad-Based Planning Committee approved a set of four principles that should guide the identification of students to be served by the High Ability program in MCCSC. These principles are:

1. **Equity:** The process must be structured to ensure that every high ability child in MCCSC is considered for and given the opportunity to participate in the High Ability program without regard to or influence by his or her family's education level, stability, influence, motivation, economic status, or political savvy.
2. **Consistency:** The process, factors or elements considered, and, when possible, the criteria used to make identification decisions must be clearly defined, defensible, and applied consistently to each eligible student. When questions arise about decisions made for particular students, we must be able to demonstrate exactly how the identification process was applied and how or why the student's placement came about.
3. **Legitimacy:** The factors that are considered in making identification decisions must be legitimate or valid and must be viewed as such by those outside the process. Complete agreement will never be reached about exactly what should be considered, but we must be clear about and able to justify to others how we arrived at the operational definition of "high ability" that we apply.
4. **Significance:** The decisions that result from the process should result in meaningful differences in the types of educational experiences and challenges that students receive. While differentiated instruction throughout the district should allow every child to receive instruction that is appropriately tailored to her or his particular needs and abilities, being identified as a participant in the district's High Ability program must mean that a child is experiencing something genuinely different than students not participating in the program.