Characteristics of Highly Capable Students

Part I: Learning Characteristics:

✓ Has unusually advanced vocabulary for age or grade level; uses terms in a meaningful way; has verbal behavior characterized by “richness” of expression, elaboration and fluency.

✓ Possesses a large storehouse of information about a variety of topics.

✓ Has quick mastery and recall of factual information.

✓ Has rapid insight into cause-effect relationship; tries to discover the how and why of things; asks many provocative questions.

✓ Has a ready grasp of underlying principles and can quickly make valid generalizations about events, people and things.

✓ Is a keen and alert observer; usually “sees more” or “gets more” out of a story, film, etc., than others.

✓ Reads a great deal on his/her own; usually prefers adult level books; does not avoid difficult material.

✓ Tries to understand complicated material by separating it into its respective parts; reasons things out for himself/herself.

Part II: Motivational Characteristics:

✓ Becomes absorbed and truly involved in certain topics or problems; is persistent in seeking task completion.

✓ Is easily bored with routine tasks.

✓ Needs little external motivation to follow through in work that initially excites him/her.

✓ Strives toward perfection; is self critical; is not easily satisfied with his/her own speed or products.

✓ Prefers to work independently; requires little direction from teachers.

✓ Is interested in many “adult” problems such as religion, politics, and race -- more than usual for age level.

✓ Often is self assertive (sometimes even aggressive); stubborn in his/her beliefs.

✓ Likes to organize and bring structure to things, people and situations.

✓ Is quite concerned with right and wrong, good and bad; often evaluates and passes
judgment on events, people and things.

✓ Part III: Creativity Characteristics:

✓ Displays a great deal of curiosity about many things; is constantly asking questions about anything and everything.

✓ Generates a large number of ideas or solutions to problems and questions; often offers unusual (“way out”), unique, clever responses.

✓ Is uninhibited in expression of opinion; is sometimes radical and spirited in disagreement; is tenacious.

✓ Is a high risk taker; is adventurous and speculative.

✓ Displays a good deal of intellectual playfulness; fantasizes; imagines (“I wonder what would happen if ...”); manipulates ideas (i.e., changes, elaborates upon them); is often concerned with adapting, improving and modifying institutions, objects, and systems.

✓ Displays a keep sense of humor and sees humor in situations that may not appear to be humorous to others.

✓ Is unusually aware of his/her impulses and more open to the irrational in himself/herself expression of feminine interest for boys, greater than usual amount of independence for girls); shows emotional sensitivity.

✓ Is sensitive to beauty; attends to aesthetic characteristics of things.

✓ Is nonconforming; accepts disorder; is not interested it details; is individualistic; does not fear being different.

✓ Criticizes constructively; is unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination.