



SNAPSHOT

Gifted Education in Tennessee

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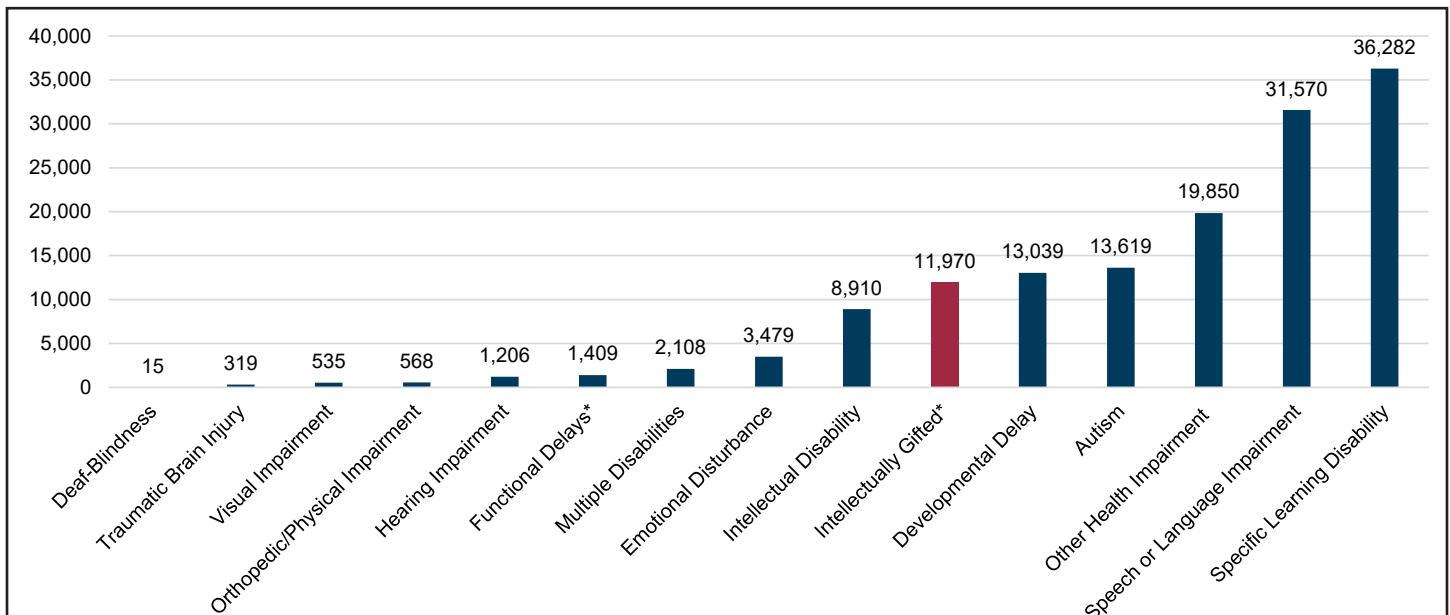
The Tennessee Comptroller’s Office of Research and Education Accountability (OREA) has completed a study of gifted education in Tennessee. The OREA study examines how intellectually gifted students are identified, the special education services they receive, the certification process for teachers of gifted students, and funding available for gifted education.

Intellectually gifted is a category of special education in Tennessee. School districts in Tennessee are required to identify and evaluate intellectually gifted students, as is required for all special education categories. If a student is determined to be intellectually gifted, special education services are provided according to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed for the student.

Students with intellectually gifted IEPs are included in the enrollment count for special education students and generate funding through the special education component in the state’s education funding program, the Basic Education Program (BEP). The BEP formula generates funding for special education instructional positions, instructional supplies, equipment, and travel based on the number of identified and served special education students enrolled in a school district.

In school year 2019-20, 135 school districts in Tennessee reported a total of 13,441 students with intellectually gifted IEPs. The school districts with the highest number of intellectually gifted IEPs were Shelby County Schools, Hamilton County Schools, Williamson County Schools, and Rutherford County Schools. All other districts had fewer than 550 students with intellectually gifted IEPs; 44 districts had fewer than 10 students with such IEPs.^A The number of intellectually gifted IEPs in the state has decreased in the last three school years, from 15,743 in school year 2017-18 to 13,441 in 2019-20.

Exhibit 1: Special education IEPs by category | School year 2019-20



Note: * Functional delays and intellectually gifted are disability categories recognized in Tennessee that are not recognized under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Source: Tennessee Department of Education.

To read the report, visit the Comptroller’s OREA website at tncot.cc/orea.

^A The totals provided are based on end-of-year counts. The totals provided in the chart are based on December 1 data, as used for reporting IDEA disability totals to the federal government.