

Gifted Education Parent Information



Tunkhannock Area School District

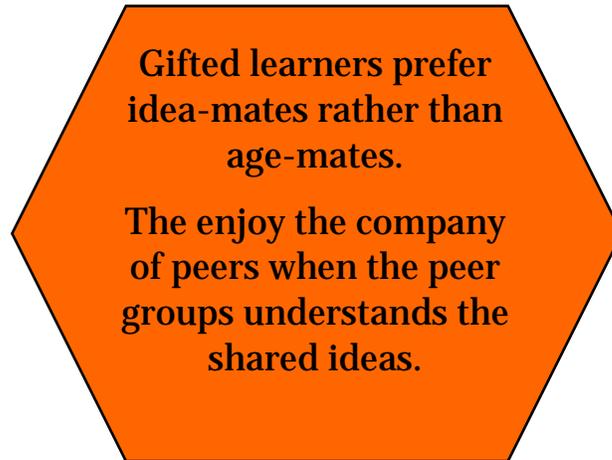
-----Mission-----

The mission of the Tunkhannock Area School District's Gifted Program is to ensure that all gifted and talented students are identified and provided with individualized and challenging programs. We offer a range of options so that individual programs can be designed around each student's needs. These programs are based on each student's strengths and needs and designed to develop their unique talents and abilities. We encourage gifted and talented students to join all students in making positive contributions to society.

The Tunkhannock Area School District provides a full range of acceleration and enrichment options that include programs aimed at meeting the intellectual and academic abilities and needs of students. Gifted education for each identified student is based on the unique needs of the student, not solely on the classification. Responsibility for the development, implementation, and plan revisions of each Gifted Individualized Education Plan is seen as a team effort between general education teachers, teachers of the gifted, and administration.

The Tunkhannock Area School District provides a combination of both acceleration and enrichment for the greatest opportunity to meet the needs of the gifted learner. We believe every gifted student must be provided individual instruction tailored to meet the need of their level of challenge. Special programs ensure instruction for the gifted which promotes in-depth learning and investigation in real life situations. These programs also allow for the development and application of critical thinking skills to enable students to use new understanding for the 21st century learner.

-----Characteristics of Gifted Learners-----



Gifted students are not always high-achieving students and may not always have the highest grades. It should be noted that characteristics may vary as a function of the student's cultural background.

High Achiever:

- Knows the answers
- Is interested
- Is attentive
- Has good ideas
- Works hard
- Answers the questions
- Is in the top group
- Listens with interest
- Learns with ease
- Understands ideas
- Has synchronous development

Gifted Student:

- Asks the questions
- Is highly curious
- Is mentally and physically involved
- Has wild silly ideas
- Plays around yet tests well
- Discusses in detail
- Is beyond top group
- Has strong feelings and opinions
- Already knows
- Constructs abstractions
- Has asynchronous development

The Tunkhannock Area School District's Gifted Services include:

- Identifying candidates for the program and assessing their eligibility using a variety of tools and procedures;
- Emphasizing a positive working relationship between parents and school personnel;
- Creating an individualized, flexible, and appropriate program based on the measured strengths and needs of each eligible student;
- Providing counseling and appropriate support services for eligible students, including those students who are low achieving or at risk;
- Providing professional development opportunities for all school personnel, including support for the preparation of differentiated educational plans, materials, and curriculum by regular education teachers;
- Promoting the use of strategies developed for challenging students' analytical and critical thinking skills in regular classrooms; and
- Instruction that is responsive to the needs of all gifted learners, which includes pre-assessment, curriculum compacting, telescoping, acceleration, and rigorous enrichment.

----- Gifted Education Acronyms -----

Acronym:	Meaning:
AP.....	Advanced Placement
GIEP.....	Gifted Individualized Education Placement
GMDE.....	Gifted Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation
GWR.....	Gifted Written Report
IQ.....	Intelligence Quotient
Keystone	End-of-course Assessments (Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Literature, English Composition, Biology, Chemistry, U.S. History, World History, and Civics and Government)
LEA.....	Local Education Agency
MDE.....	Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation
NORA.....	Notice of Recommended Assignment
PAGE.....	Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education
PDE.....	Pennsylvania Department of Education
PSSA / ELA	Pennsylvania State Standards Assessment / English Language Arts Assessment
PVAAS.....	Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System
PTE.....	Permission to Evaluate

----- GMDE / GIEP Flow Chart -----

**Parent Permission to Evaluate or
Notice of Intent to Reevaluate**

60
calendar
days

**Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation Completed
Gifted Written Report (GWR) Completed**

30
calendar
days

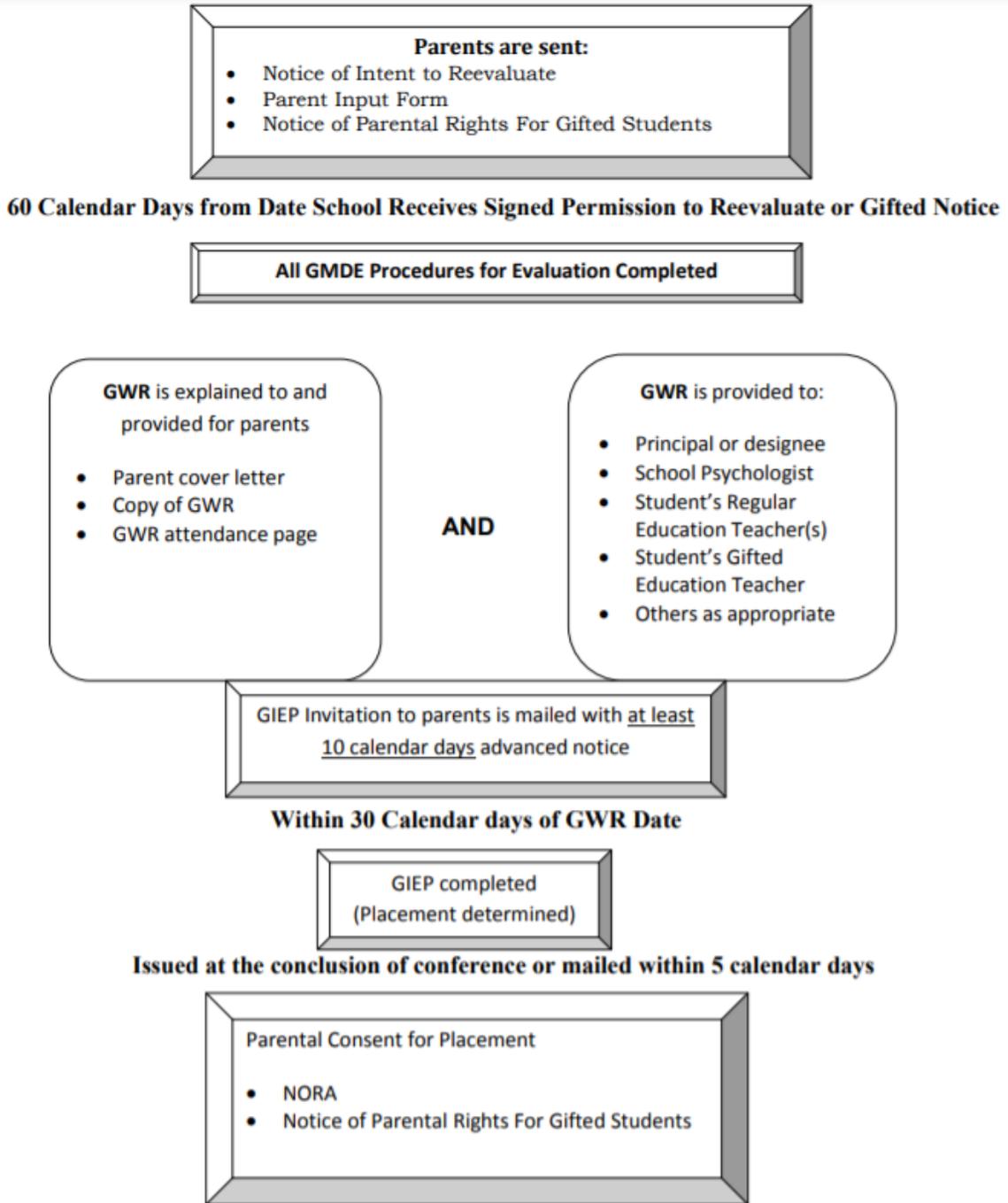
GIEP

**NORA Issued at Conclusion of GIEP
Conference**

10 school
days

GIEP shall be implemented after 5 calendar days from signature and 10 calendar days if mailed, or at the start of the following school year if completed less than 30 (calendar) days before the last day of scheduled classes.

----- Reevaluation Timeline Chart -----



GIEP shall be implemented no less than 5 calendar days and no more than 10 school days after it is signed, or at the start of the following school year if completed less than 30(calendar) days before the last day of scheduled classes.

----- Gifted Referral Process -----

Chapter 16 requires that school districts use “multiple criteria” in the screening of students for eligibility in gifted programs. Students will enter into Gifted Support Services because they meet the selection criteria and also show a need for specially designed instruction as required by Chapter 16 regulations. Students can be screened at any grade for the program and may be referred for a Gifted Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) through any of the following avenues:

Gifted Review Team: Gifted Review Team will review the level I data annually to identify students who may qualify for level II screening.

Teacher Referral: Upon review of data and if the teacher feels that a student may be in need of specially designed instruction, they will make the referral by completing the Gifted Referral Form.

Parent Referral: A parent can, at any time, request that his or her child be screened for Gifted Support. Parents may contact any school official regarding their interest in comprehensive screening. When a verbal request for a GMDE is made the school must provide the parents a copy of the Permission to Evaluate form within 10 calendar days of the oral request. District will issue a Permission to Evaluate and following parental consent on this form the District has 60 calendar days to complete a GWR followed by a GMDE meeting to discuss the outcomes of the GWR.

Student Referral: A student may ask, at any time, to be screened for the program. Pursuant to appropriate parental consent the district will initiate screening.

Gifted Screening and Evaluation Guidelines

In accordance with the Board's philosophy to develop the special abilities of each student, the district shall provide gifted education services and programs designed to meet the individual educational needs of identified students.

The Tunkhannock Area School District Policy #114 (adopted May 20, 2010) and Chapter 16 of the Pennsylvania Code will guide this process. The Tunkhannock Area School district's gifted education support services shall provide the following:

- (1) The district's process for identifying gifted children in need of specially designed instruction.
- (2) The gifted special education programs offered by the district.
- (3) Reports of gifted students, personnel and program elements, and costs, as required by the Department of Education.
- (4) Screening and evaluation process that meets state requirements, to determine students' educational needs.
- (5) Services and programs planned, developed and operated for the identification and evaluation of each gifted student.
- (6) Procedures to determine whether a student is mentally gifted.

(7) Gifted education for each gifted student, which is based on, the unique needs of the student, not solely on the student's classification, as identified within the written report of the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMDT).

(8) Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) developed, and subsequently modified, to provide gifted education for gifted students, which enables them to participate in acceleration or enrichment programs, or both, as appropriate, and to receive services according to their intellectual and academic abilities and needs.

In compliance with Chapter 16, (Pa. Code 16.21 (b)), the Tunkhannock Area School District is responsible for locating, identifying, and educating school-aged students requiring specially-designed programs or services:

Chapter 16 requires that "Each school district shall adopt and use a system to locate and identify all students within that district who are thought to be gifted and in need of specially designed instruction." (22 Pa. Code §16.21(a))

"Each school district shall determine the student's needs through a screening and evaluation process which meets the requirements of this chapter." (22 Pa. Code §16.21(c))

Definition of Giftedness

Mentally gifted is defined as outstanding intellectual and creative ability the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the regular education program. (22 Pa. Code §16.1)

Intellectual ability is not equated with an IQ score alone. Intellectual ability is and should be a reflection of a range of assessments including a student's performance and potential.

Guidelines for Identification

Each school district shall establish procedures to determine whether a student is mentally gifted. The Tunkhannock Area School District uses a multi-criteria process to determine whether students move to a gifted evaluation.

"Mentally gifted" refers to a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher or when multiple criteria as set forth in this chapter and in Department Guidelines indicate gifted ability. Determination of gifted ability will not be based on IQ score alone. Deficits in memory or processing speed, as indicated by testing, cannot be the sole basis upon which a student is determined to be ineligible for gifted special education. A person with an IQ score lower than 130 may be admitted to gifted programs when other educational criteria in the profile of the person strongly indicate gifted ability. No one test or measure is sufficient to determine giftedness, and the evaluation and testing literature recognizes that there is a margin for error in any standardized testing. The standard error of measurement also applies when reporting IQ. Determination of mentally gifted must include an assessment by a certified school psychologist. Multiple criteria indicating gifted ability include:

- A year or more above grade achievement level for the normal age group in one or more subjects as measured by nationally normed and validated achievement tests able to accurately reflect gifted performance. Subject results shall yield academic instruction levels in all academic subject areas.

- An observed or measured rate of acquisition/retention of new academic content or skills that reflect gifted ability.
- Demonstrated achievement, performance or expertise in one or more academic areas as evidenced by excellence of products, portfolio or research, as well as criterion-referenced team judgment.
- Early and measured use of high-level thinking skills, academic creativity, leadership skills, intense academic interest areas, communications skills, foreign language aptitude or technology expertise.
- Documented, observed, validated, or assessed evidence of intervening factors.

The team must also consider:

- Are there any health (physical or mental) factors that impact this student's learning?
- Are there any familial variables that impact this student's learning?
- Is the student bi-lingual or is another language spoken in the home?
- Are there any concerns you have about this student's behavior in the classroom or school setting?
- Are there any concerns you have about this student's learning performance, output, and/or participation?
- Does the student currently receive any supports through Chapter 14 (IEP) or 15 (504)?

Gifted Evaluation Timeline

- The allotted period of time to conduct the gifted evaluation and prepare the Gifted Written Report (GWR) is 60 calendar days from the date the signed consent is received by the school district. The Gifted Written Report brings together the information and findings from the evaluation or reevaluation concerning the student's educational needs and strengths. The report will then recommend as to whether or not the student is gifted and in need of specially designed instruction.
- If the student is determined to require a gifted education plan (GIEP), a meeting must be held within 30 calendar days after issuance of the written report.
- The Gifted Written Report is provided to the parent to review and a meeting is held to discuss the evaluation process and the testing results. There are three possible outcomes from the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team Evaluation, which are the following:
 - The student is not gifted and therefore is NOT ELIGIBLE for gifted placement and programming; or
 - The student is gifted but does not need specially designed instruction, and therefore is NOT ELIGIBLE for gifted placement and programming; or
 - The student is gifted AND is in need of specially designed instruction therefore is ELIGIBLE for gifted placement and programming.

----- Gifted Written Report Process -----

The Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation is a process that gathers information about a student whose educational program may not be appropriate and who may be mentally gifted and in need of specially designed instruction. The process is initiated in one of the following ways:

1. A request for evaluation is made by the parents/guardians. OR
2. The professional team determines the student needs a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation. OR
3. The student is thought to be gifted and the screening procedure determines that the student should be referred for a gifted multidisciplinary evaluation. OR
4. A hearing officer or court decision orders the evaluation.

Gifted Multidisciplinary Team Meeting

After the completion of the GMDE, a meeting may be held to discuss its contents. The school psychologist will either mail the GWR out to the parents/guardians via mail or schedule a meeting. The child's learning strengths and educational needs are delineated and recommendations are formulated.

----- Gifted Individualized Education Plan Process -----

A Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) is a written plan for the appropriate education of a mentally gifted student. After presented with the GWR, the GIEP team shall develop a GIEP for a student who is identified to be mentally gifted and arrive at a determination of educational placement, change in educational placement or continuation of educational placement for a student based upon the GIEP. GIEP Guidelines

- The Gifted Education Teacher or Gifted Coordinator will schedule the GIEP meeting at a time and place to accommodate parent and staff schedules. Written notice of that meeting will be sent on the fully completed Invitation to the GIEP. It should also be sent to the Special Education Administrator, Teacher of the Gifted, Regular Education Teacher(s), Special Teachers, and other school staff that may be involved with the student.
- The GIEP shall be developed from the data and information that are available prior to or at the GIEP Team meeting.
- A GIEP should be presented as a "Draft" until it is fully agreed upon by the members of the GIEP team. Draft GIEP's with a cover letter must be sent to parents 3 days prior to meeting.
- Baseline data will have been collected prior to the GIEP meeting to support the development of the annual goals and short-term learning outcomes. No one test or type of test may be used as the sole criterion for the development of the GIEP.
- At the GIEP meeting the following two questions are answered:
 - a) Is the student mentally gifted?
 - b) Is the student in need of specially designed instruction?
- If the answer is yes to both of those questions, then a GIEP is written.

• The Gifted Teacher of the GIEP team shall issue a NORA and Notice of Parental Rights for Gifted Students. How often are meetings held? A GIEP meeting must be held at least annually. In addition, a GIEP meeting must be held when a parent or teacher requests a meeting to develop, review, or revise a student's individualized education program. How are parents invited? The school district must take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of the student attend the GIEP meeting or have the opportunity to participate. An invitation of the GIEP meeting must be provided to parents at least 10 calendar days in advance of the meeting, or as soon as the district knows about the meeting. The meeting should be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time and place. The teacher of the gifted should document 3 attempts to ensure parent participation in meetings. This could include the following types of attempts of communication: documented phone calls, letters and certified letters with return receipts. Documentation should be maintained by the Teacher of the Gifted.

Who is part of the GIEP team?

The school district should ensure that the following people are included:

- One or both of the student's parents / guardians
- The student if the parents choose to have the student participate or if the student is of age 14 or older
 - A representative of the school district who acts as the chairperson and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the district and who is authorized by the district to commit those resources
- Gifted education teacher
- One or more of the student's current regular education teachers
- Other individuals who are at the discretion of the parents

What should be written in the GIEP?

- Present Levels of Educational Performance, which establish the extent of gifted potential, academic functioning levels, the child's rates of acquisition/retention, and performance levels. Information would include the child's intellectual/academic assessments, aptitudes, and abilities, strengths, interests, and needs.
- Annual Goals are to be developed from the present educational performance and be reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and student progress within one year's time.
- Short-Term Learning Outcomes are the actions and activities that will help the child reach the annual goals, evaluation criteria to determine when the child has achieved the annual goals, and the timelines. They should include what the student will produce, how he/she will apply the skills, or what real outcome will be achieved as a result of their engaging in a study, activity, or subject.
- Specially Designed Instruction is the adaptation or modification to the general curriculum, instruction, instructional environments, methods, materials, or specialized curriculum.

- Specially Designed Instruction consists of planning and implementing varied approaches to content, process, and product modification in response to the student's interests, ability levels, readiness, and learning needs.
- Support Services could include, but are not limited to the following: career guidance, counseling, transportation, and technology education.
- Dates indicate when the services will begin and the anticipated duration, based on one year of the services.

Parent Resources for Gifted Students

The following information is helpful for Parents/Guardians of Gifted Students:

Books Every Child Can Succeed: Making the Most of Your Child's Learning Style. Tobias, Cynthia. (1996). Focus on the Family Publishing.

How to Help Your Child with Homework: Every Caring Parent's Guide to Encouraging Good Study Habits and Ending the Homework Wars: For Parents of Children Ages 6-13. Radencich, M., Schlumm, J.S., & Espeland, P. (1996). Free Spirit Publishing.

Is My Child Gifted? A Guide for Caring Parents. Martin, David. (1986). Charles C. Thomas Publishing Ltd.

Kid Think: Revolutionary New Insights Into Dealing with the Six Most Common Behavioral Problems of Children. Carter, William Lee. (1993). Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Parents Guide for Helping Kids Become "A" Students. Farrell, Watson, & Dundas. (1990). Blue Bird Publishing.

Parents Guide to Raising a Gifted Child: Recognizing and Developing Your Child's Potential from Preschool to Adolescence. Alvino, James. (1996). Ballantine Books.

Raising Each Other: A Book for Teens and Parents. Brondino, Jeanne. (1988). Claremont, CA: Hunter House Inc., Publishers.

Stand Up for Your Gifted Child: How to Make the Most of Kids' Strengths at School and at Home. Smutny, Joan F. (2000). Free Spirit Publishing.

The Survival Guide for Parents of Gifted Kids: How to Understand, Live With, and Stick up for Your Gifted Child. Yahnke Walker, Sally. (2002). Free Spirit Publishing.

They Say My Kids Gifted, Now What?: Ideas for Parents for Understanding & Working with Schools. Olenchak, Richard. (1998). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

Websites

AAGC (American Association for Gifted Children) ~ www.aagc.org/

AEGUS (Association for the Education of Gifted Underachieving Students): ~ www.aegus1.org/
 BEC (Basic Education Circular) ~ www.portal.state.pa.us

CEC (Council for Exceptional Children) ~ www.cec.sped.org/

C-MITES (Carnegie Mellon Institute for Talented Elementary Students) ~ www.cmu.edu/cmities/

EPGY (Education Program for Gifted Youth Stanford University) ~ <http://epgy.stanford.edu>

GCC (Gifted-Children.com: Identification, Encouragement, and Development) ~ www.giftedchildren.com

Hoagies Gifted Education Page ~ www.hoagiesgifted.org

Johns Hopkins University ~ www.jhu.edu/gifted

Khan Academy ~ <https://www.khanacademy.org/>

NAGC (National Association for Gifted Children) ~ www.nagc.org

National Resource Center on the Gifted and Talented ~ www.gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt/nrconlin.html

NEA (National Education Association) ~ www.nea.org/tools/12983.htm

PAGE (Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education) ~ www.penngifted.org

Parent Education Network ~ www.parentednet.org

Pennsylvania Department of Education ~ www.pde.state.pa.us

PSEA (Pennsylvania State Education Association) ~ www.psea.org

PaTTAN (Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network) ~ www.pattan.net

SENG (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted) ~ www.sengifted.org

TAG (The Association for the Gifted) ~ www.cectag.org

General Resources for Students / Teachers

Teachers First ~ <http://www.teachersfirst.com/gifted.cfm>

National Association for Gifted Children ~ <http://www.nagc.org>

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented at University of Connecticut ~ <http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt/nrconlin.html>

Learning Styles ~ <http://www.learning-styles-online.com>

Khan Academy ~ <https://www.khanacademy.org/>

Kidsource online ~ <http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/ed.gifted.html>

Kid-safe Search Sites ~ <http://www.sldirectory.com/searchf/kidsafe.html>

A-Z Listing of Useful Websites ~ <http://indispensibletools.pbworks.com/>

Learning Games For Kids ~ <http://www.learninggamesforkids.com>

Learning Planet ~ <http://learningplanet.com>

ReadWriteThink from the International Reading Association ~ <http://readwritethink.org>

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics ~ www.nctm.org

Gamequarium ~ <http://www.gamequarium.com/math.htm>

Math is Fun ~ <http://www.mathisfun.com>

Math Playground ~ <http://www.mathplayground.com/index.html>