
an enrichment program.

Our enrichment program was declared our gifted program in response to parents challenging the district on its failure to comply with current New Jersey law. Unfortunately, it is still just an enrichment program.

The checklists that were enumerated in Jonathan Lekstutis' article are part of the "Regional Enrichment Philosophy" that were created in 2002 to "identify students who demonstrate academic excellence." Although some students who demonstrate academic excellence may be gifted, these criteria alone do not and cannot identify gifted students.

Furthermore, our enrichment program does not offer gifted students defined, consistent opportunities for appropriate instructional learning, nor are they afforded ongoing opportunities to work in groups with gifted students.

Rather, our enrichment program in the elementary schools allow only for students to receive enrichment in their classrooms.

The other response of our district – that a differentiated educational model addresses the needs of all children, including the gifted – is simply ridiculous and far-reaching. While we have many outstanding professionals teaching in our schools, they are constrained by an educational system that offers them little support for addressing the needs of gifted students. The board has repeatedly told parents that the difference between an enrichment program and a gifted program is nothing more than semantics; what an insult to our children!

Elysa Levy
Upper Saddle River

UPPER SADDLE RIVER

There's a difference between gifted and enrichment programs

DEAR EDITOR:

I am writing in response to the article about the gifted program in Upper Saddle River ("Are gifted kids properly identified/taught?" May 1, Page 4). The Upper Saddle River School District does not have a gifted program; we have