

## **Teacher for talent encouragement:**

### **Basic information:**

There are several kids and pupils with special talents and gifts, who are not able to develop them in an optimal way in normal lessons. There are also pupils, who are very intelligent, but underachieve at school. These pupils have to be distinguished from children with learning problems and have to get special training to reach their proficiency level.

Teacher for talent encouragement support students with special or superior abilities in different subjects. They are deployed in elementary schools, as well as in “Gymnasien” (type of school which leads to “Abitur” and university studies) and special schools for gifted students.

Teacher for talent encouragement know much about the phenomenon “giftedness” and are able to identify gifted students very early. Their teaching and instruction methods are adapted to the needs of these pupils. In lessons they have to arrange a learning environment that enables the pupils to develop in a sophisticated and the individual gift-supporting way.

It is the aim of the Bavarian government to have at least one teacher for talent encouragement in the surrounding area of every elementary school, who acts as contact person for the school, class teachers and especially parents.

The enhancement of the diagnostic abilities of teachers should bring them especially to identify gifted pupils who underachieve early and to support them to get at their proficiency level by adequate aid.

### **Fields of activities:**

Teacher for talent encouragement undertake teaching as well as consultative activities. That means parents or class teachers contact them when there is an indication of giftedness and they want to have this checked.

Furthermore, teachers for talent encouragement hold parent-teacher conferences to inform and sensitise parents for the topic “giftedness”. For other teachers they also held conferences, because they act as multipliers, which means that they have to inform the other teachers how they can identify and assist gifted pupils within normal lessons (e.g. by individualisation and differentiation)

### **Education of teachers for talent encouragement:**

To become a teacher for talent encouragement, the first step is to finish a university teacher education or even an education of a school psychologist. Furthermore an additional qualification “specialist in gifted education” has to be acquired. This qualification can be achieved in certain seminaries.

### **Measures for talent encouragement:**

After the identification of talented and gifted pupils, the Bavarian government offers some measures to encourage the talents of gifted children.

- Acceleration:  
(especially geared to intellectual gifted pupils)  
means shortening the time in school by skipping a year (→ two school grades are done in one school year)
- Enrichment:  
(especially geared to pupils with special talents in single subjects)  
means to get extra lessons and curriculum overlapping duties