



# **Gifted and Talented Program**

## George-Little Rock Community School District

School Plan for management and evaluation of the program for Gifted Youth PK-12

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# **GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM**

## **Philosophy**

A fundamental premise underlying our society is a belief in the intrinsic worth of every individual. It is generally conceded that education is a vehicle by which each and every individual may advance towards his/her fullest potential. The needs, interests, and readiness of high ability students require special educational considerations.

A common denominator agreed upon by researchers and educators is that content and activities for high ability students should be differentiated in the classroom and across building levels. In addition, a predominant objective in a program for high ability students is to motivate them with a desire for excellence and lifelong learning. This program will provide extensions of learning which allow exploration, experiences, and expression beyond the regular classroom.

Gifted and Talented activities and opportunities are necessary to assist students in accessing and capitalizing upon unique abilities, talents, and needs. In addition, individual learning styles are reinforced by resources and tasks which are differentiated in content and intent. It is also important to include affective education with cognitive learning characterized by diversified opinions and beliefs.

As an outcome of their education, high ability students should increase their (higher level) thinking skills, problem solving skills, goal setting, creativity, divergent thinking, and tolerance for ambiguity.

## **Definition of Gifted and Talented Students**

Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons. Gifted and talented children, by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance in the areas of general intellectual ability, creative thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts ability, and specific ability aptitude.

[Iowa Code section 257.44](#) defines gifted and talented children.

## **Mission of Gifted and Talented Education**

The mission of the George-Little Rock Gifted and Talented Program is to provide challenge, enrichment, and a differentiated curriculum to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of gifted and talented students as defined by the school district to maximize the students' potential.

### **Student Goals for the Gifted and Talented Program: Elementary and Middle Schools**

1. The gifted learner will acquire advanced knowledge and comprehension skills to gather, understand, analyze, and apply information and abstract ideas with a greater degree of independence.
2. The gifted learner will acquire knowledge and skills to communicate abstract ideas effectively within and beyond the classroom.
3. The gifted learner will use critical, creative, analytical, and organizational thinking skills to recognize and solve problems.
4. The gifted learner will acquire strategies and skills to make decisions in order to act as a responsible member of a global society.
5. The gifted learner will develop an understanding of himself/herself and unique interests that foster a feeling of belonging to society so as to reach intellectual potential.

### **Student Goals for the Gifted and Talented Program: High School**

- A. Student outcomes
  1. To nurture the development of the student's role as a lifelong learner and productive member of society (affective education)
  2. To broaden perceptions of the student's diversified opinions and beliefs (multicultural/gender fair)
  3. To assess and capitalize upon the student's unique abilities, talents, interests, needs and learning styles
  4. To develop the student's skills for independent study, higher level thinking, creativity, problem solving, research, technology, and goal setting
  5. To broaden the student's awareness of college and career options
- B. Curriculum and Instructional strategies
  1. To provide a differentiated educational program beyond the regular classroom which will meet each identified student's needs/learning style(s)
  2. To provide extensions of learning which can afford the high ability students open circuits for expressing, exploring, and experiencing opportunities according to their creative and cognitive capabilities

### **GLR Gifted and Talented Program Management and Development: TK - 12**

- A. Program Management
  1. To collaborate with the business community, volunteers, and colleagues
  2. To utilize available community and school resources
  3. To follow a program evaluation cycle
- B. Program Development
  1. To extend the use of community resources
  2. To extend use of technological resources
  3. To continue assistance to classroom teachers
  4. To continue curriculum expansion, differentiation, and enrichment
  5. To continue service learning

## **Gifted and Talented Program Model**

GLR CSD Talented and Gifted Personnel: The Gifted and Talented (TAG) Program is staffed by a .5 FTE of highly qualified, licensed individual(s). More than one individual can fill this position. In the GLR Elementary School and Middle School, Grades TK-8, this position will be .355 FTE. In the GLR High School, Grades 9-12, a .145 FTE will staff this position. A GLR District TAG Committee will consist of the TAG Teacher(s), two elementary teacher representatives, a middle school teacher representative, and a high school teacher representative. Any of the building representative positions on the Committee (other than the TAG teachers) may be filled with a corresponding building principal or corresponding building instructional coach.

### **Students will follow classes, instruction, and coaching in the following program format:**

1. Program begins shortly after school resumes in the fall.
2. Grade levels involved at present are grades TK-12.
3. GLR Elementary School, Grades TK-6:  
The elementary gifted and talented program is split into two formats. TK and Kindergarten are whole grade instruction that focuses on higher order thinking skills. Additional staff discussion will center on students displaying additional needs. Possible topics will include how to best meet the needs of students and assign pullout/mentor interventions as needed.
4. In 1<sup>st</sup> grade the program transitions to the pullout format. In this format the students who are identified in the gifted and talented pool will leave their classroom at a scheduled time and go to the gifted and talented room for 30 minutes each week. The students will participate in a differentiated curriculum which will be supplementary to their grade level curriculum. Pulled out groupings will be 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. They will be working with other students as well as doing independent study, as time permits.
5. In addition, there is a variety of activity possibilities for all students in Grades TK-6 within the whole classroom setting. Some options are whole class higher level thinking skills, group work with high ability reading students, group work with high ability mathematics students, and group work with high ability spelling students.
6. Seventh and eighth grade students meet for flexible sessions throughout the year to accomplish group and individual projects.
7. High School students meet at least three times each year. Additional sessions are scheduled as needed for individual projects.
8. The number of students involved in the program varies each year. A "revolving door" policy is in effect. A student, and/or parent/guardian, and/or teacher may request an exit and re-entrance to the program for appropriate reasons.
9. Student evaluations are made each semester. Evaluations are made available to parents and teachers during parent teacher conferences.

## **PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

### **Elementary and Middle School:**

1. Short and long-term projects/activities
2. Individual, small group and large group activities
3. Affective education – working with self-knowledge and relationships with others
4. Enriching higher level/critical thinking skills
5. Strengthening self-directed learning skills
6. Fostering creative thinking skills
7. Strengthening of independent study and research skills
8. Participation in individual learning

### **High School:**

1. Individual conferencing
2. Class scheduling assistance (for example Dual Enrollment Classes)
3. College prep
4. Informal group sessions
5. Participation in individual learning and projects

## **Identification Process**

The talent pool identification process will begin in 1<sup>st</sup> Grade. Student(s) must acquire three of the following requirements to be accepted into the Talent Pool.

1. Staff will review the periodical local testing data and the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) data. Requirements will be determined from this data.
2. Written teacher recommendation with an artifact  
Note: Artifacts are examples of student work that display outstanding achievement.
3. Written parent recommendation with an artifact
4. Written student recommendation with an artifact and interview with the GLR District TAG Committee.
5. Other valid tests or assessments that show achievement in a non-academic area (creativity, leadership, music, and/or art). Content area specialists may administer these assessments.

Student(s) who meet three of the criteria above are considered "Talent Pool Students" and will take the Cognitive Abilities Test in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to assess their abilities. They must score a 7 or higher in two of the three areas on the CogAT to be admitted to the program. Some students may be asked to have an interview or be assessed in another way depending on the students' areas of giftedness to attain the information about the students. The District TAG Committee will use all information compiled for each student and decide whether to admit students into the Gifted and Talented Program.

In 1<sup>st</sup> grade, students that are considered in the GLR Talent Pool will begin to be pulled out for class. Students will be re-evaluated at the end of their 6<sup>th</sup> grade year. Once admitted after their 6<sup>th</sup> grade school year, students will not be asked to go through the identification process again. However, students who have not qualified for the program may be identified after their 6<sup>th</sup> grade school year as their situations and needs arise. Students who are in grades 1-2 will be identified based on scores in reading fluency, reading comprehension, and basic mathematics scores from classroom formative assessments. These lower-elementary students may qualify for the pull-out program if their needs require more individualized instruction.

### **Underrepresented Populations**

The identification process shall provide equitable opportunities for the District TAG Committee to discuss and include students from Culturally Linguistically Diverse backgrounds (CLD), English Learners (EL), Twice Exceptional (2E), as well as students who exhibit behaviors such as shyness, underachieving, ADD/ADHD, disruptiveness, or continual questioning. Throughout the identification process, careful consideration will be made with all available information.

### **Exit Procedures**

Once a student is placed in the gifted and talented program, they will most likely continue in the program. However, it may be in the best interest of the student to exit from the program. Parents or guardians will be notified and involved in intervention strategies before and during the process. The final exit decision should be based on educational, psychological, and personal reasons with no single criterion acting as the determining factor for exiting the student. If a formal exit is deemed appropriate by the District TAG Committee, parents or guardians will be notified and at least one signature will be required.

### **Evaluation of the Gifted and Talented Program**

Informal surveying will accomplish evaluation of the TAG Program. Students in the middle and high schools who are involved in the program will be given a student survey in grades six, eight, and eleven that evaluates the program and effectiveness. Parents/guardians of students in the TAG Program will be given an opportunity to evaluate the program on its effectiveness, communication, scheduling, and any problems with the program model. Teachers, as well as the District TAG Committee, will have an opportunity to evaluate the program on an annual basis. These surveys will be done anonymously and will be reviewed by the TAG Committee. The Committee will use the surveys to identify strengths and weaknesses and do its best to find solutions to any problems or weak areas defined by the students, parents/guardians, and teachers.

## Resources

Iowa Talented and Gifted Association  
PO Box 665  
Iowa City, IA 52244  
[www.iowatag.org](http://www.iowatag.org)

Belin-Blank Center  
The University of Iowa  
600 Blank Honors Center  
Iowa City, IA 52242  
800-336-6463  
<https://www2.education.uiowa.edu/belinblank/>

Northwest Area Education Agency  
Gifted Education Consultant(s)  
800-352-9040

[www.hoagiesgifted.org](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org)

This website supports and informs parents and teachers about gifted education and resources.

<https://eric.ed.gov>

This website provides research on gifted education. This is a database for educational articles.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 1(866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact the USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 1(800)877- 8339 or 1(800)845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

