



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 that 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 that 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 students are those identified by professionally qualified persons. Gifted and talented students, 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 that can afford the high-ability students open circuits for expressing, exploring, and experiencing opportunities according to their creative and cognitive capabilities.
- C. 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
- D. Program Development
 1. To extend the use of community resources.
 2. To extend the 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 highly qualified, licensed individual(s) with the schedule determined by the building principal's recommendations and approved by the superintendent. More than one individual can fill this position. One certified teacher will be assigned to the elementary building (1-6), and one certified teacher will be assigned to the middle school/high school building (7-12). 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 a 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 taught by their respective classroom teachers that focuses on higher-order thinking skills. First through sixth grade are pull-out classes. In this format, the students who are identified as gifted 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. 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.
4. Seventh and eighth grade students meet Tuesday and Friday during WIN time for 20 minutes each day to accomplish group and individual projects.
5. High School students meet Monday and Thursday during WIN time for 20 minutes each day to accomplish group and individual projects.
6. The number of students involved in the program varies each year. A student, and/or parent/guardian, and/or teacher may request an exit and re-entrance to the program for appropriate reasons.
7. Student evaluations are made each year. Evaluations are made available to parents and teachers during parent-teacher conferences. In addition, Middle School and High School parents are encouraged to sign up to a SportsYou group to get updates on opportunities provided by the program.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

Elementary and Middle School:

1. Short and long-term projects/activities
2. Individual, small-group 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 lunch sessions
5. Participation in individual learning and projects

Identification Process

The identification process will be done at the beginning of the student's 4th-grade school year. Student(s) must acquire two of the following requirements to be accepted into the Talent Pool.

1. Staff will review the ISAP data and determine the requirements needed.
2. Written teacher recommendation with an artifact
Note: Artifacts are any 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 two of the criteria above are considered "Talent Pool Students" and will take the Cognitive Abilities Test in 4th 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 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 4th grade, students will begin to be pulled out for the talented and gifted program. Students will be re-evaluated at the end of their 5th-grade year. Once admitted after their 5th-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 5th-grade school year as their situations and needs arise. Students who are in grades K-3 will be identified at the conclusion of each third quarter based on scores in reading fluency, reading comprehension, and basic mathematics scores from classroom formative assessments. These lower-elementary students may also qualify for the pull-out program if their needs require more individualized instruction. The students' parents/guardians, teachers, and TAG teachers will collaborate to determine this designation.

Underrepresented Populations

The identification process shall provide equitable opportunities for the 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, he or she will most likely continue in the program. However, it may be in the best interest of the student to exit him or her 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

Surveying three groups of people will accomplish the 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 its effectiveness. Parents/guardians of students in the TAG Program will be given a survey when their students are in grades eight and eleven 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

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

Sue Chartier
Northwest Area Education Agency
Gifted Education Consultant
712.222.6309
schartier@nwaea.org

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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