

Dardanelle Gifted and Talented Program Handbook

2017-2018
School Board Approved



Arkansas' Definition of Giftedness

"Gifted and Talented children and youth are those of high potential or ability, whose learning characteristics and educational needs require qualitatively differentiated educational experiences and/or services. Possession of these talents and gifts, or the potential for their development, will be evidenced through an interaction of above average intellectual ability, task commitment and/or motivation, and creative ability."

Dardanelle School District Gifted and Talented Program Goals

The Dardanelle School District strives to meet the needs of its gifted and talented youth and children. The goals of the district are:

1. To provide a differentiated educational program which encourages each student to strive to reach his/her individual potential.
2. To help each student gain a realistic self-concept, understand his/her strengths and weaknesses, and help the student to create personal goals.
3. To give students the tools and encouragement to become life-long learners, emphasizing their responsibility to self, others and community.
4. To provide a wide range of opportunities and experiences that allow students to explore individual interests, experiment, take risks and produce creative products.
5. To prepare students for future success by exposing them to group and social settings that may be new to them.

Statement of Evaluation

The Dardanelle Gifted and Talented Program is evaluated annually in areas that are relevant to student learning and success. This evaluation and the pursuant plan of action are based on program goals and objectives. All components of the program are evaluated, including identification processes, program options, community involvement, teacher and student resources, staff development, program expenditures, curriculum and evaluation processes. Evaluation information is gathered through a variety of sources such as interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

Evaluation reports are generated and disseminated to the Arkansas Department of Education, Office of Gifted and Talented, as well as to the Superintendent of Schools and other appropriate audiences.

Identification/Placement Procedures

Identification of gifted and talented students is an ongoing process extending from kindergarten through grade 12 and may occur at any time. Identification data is collected during K-3 enrichment classes and classroom teacher observation. Formal identification of gifted students is initiated generally at the end of the third grade or later and will begin with the referral of students. Referrals may be submitted by parents, teachers, students, or community members. These referrals do not guarantee placement in the program. Students will be recommended to receive services through the Gifted and Talented program if a case study reveals their needs are not being met in the regular classroom and are in need of qualitatively differentiated instruction.

After a referral is received and parental permission to collect data is granted, information from multiple sources, such as state achievement tests, tests and tools that are specifically designed and administered for the purpose of the identification of gifted and talented students, and information shared by parents and teachers will be compiled in a case study. All case studies will be screened by an Identification Committee, made up of at least 5 educators and chaired by the Gifted and Talented Coordinator. The function of this committee will be to determine if students' needs are being met in the regular classroom setting and make a recommendation for placement or non-placement based on that determination.

The following steps will ensure each student's rights and provide a guide for the referral and evaluation of gifted and talented students:

Referral Procedure:

1. Students may be referred for the Gifted and Talented Program by contacting the classroom teacher, Gifted and Talented Coordinator, school office, or by printing off and returning a signed *Permission for Data Collection* form from the school website. Referrals may be made by one or more of the following:
 - a. teachers
 - b. parents
 - c. students
 - d. community members

2. After a referral is received, a *Permission for Data Collection* form will be sent home and must be returned with appropriate signatures before evaluations may begin. No child will be tested without parental consent to test on file.
3. When the *Permission for Data Collection* form is signed and returned, a battery of tests will be given. Those test scores, as well as achievement test scores, grade reports, teacher and parent rating scales and anecdotal information will be compiled in a portfolio. Data collection shall consist of *at least* two objective and two subjective measures (one of which must assess creativity), chosen from the following:
Objective: Standardized mental ability test, standardized achievement test, test of creative ability. **Subjective:** Behavioral checklists, rating scales, evaluation of products, student interviews, biographical inventories, grades, auditions, and observations.
Instruments and procedures used in the identification process are non-discriminatory with respect to race, cultural or economic background, religion, national origin, sex, or handicapping condition.
4. After portfolios are completed, the Identification Committee will meet, review each portfolio, and make a recommendation for placement or non-placement. The committee will consider objective criteria and subjective criteria in selection. Although there is no single cut-off score for placement, the committee will consider placement for those students scoring above average in several areas, including academics, creativity and/or task commitment.
5. Parents will then be notified about the recommendation made by the Identification Committee.
6. If there is a disagreement with the placement decision of the Identification Committee, an appeal may be initiated and the following guidelines shall be followed:

Appeals Procedure

- Request an initial meeting with the GT Coordinator regarding the placement decision.
- If, after this informal meeting, a formal appeal is desired, a written notice of appeal shall be filed with the GT Coordinator. This appeal should include relevant information indicating why the

- placement recommendation is considered inappropriate to meet the needs of this student.
- Upon receipt of a formal notice of appeal, the GT Coordinator will collect additional information/data concerning the student. This additional information/data may include additional testing, interviews, and/or student observations.
 - An appeals committee of at least 5 professional educators (including a mix of initial committee members and new committee members), chaired by the GT Coordinator will review the appeal and make a placement recommendation. Those initiating the appeal have the right to address the committee, but will not be present when placement decisions are made.
 - The decision of the Appeals Committee is based on multiple criteria and will be communicated in writing to the parent/guardian and/or referring teacher (person that initiated the appeal). This decision will be final.

After a student is placed in the Gifted and Talented program, a review of his/her placement is made annually to ensure continued appropriate placement. Although great effort and attention is given to appropriate student placement in the G.T. program, situations may arise when placement in the program no longer meets the student's needs. If a review of placement becomes necessary, the following guidelines shall be followed:

Exit Procedure

- An exit request may be initiated by teachers, administrators, parents, and/or the student.
- Information concerning the request will be collected and sent to the ID Committee, chaired by the Gifted and Talented Coordinator, to determine if the program continues to meet the student's needs. As with determining initial placement, no single criteria may be used to exit a student from the program. Multiple criteria will be used when determining all student placements.
- If a student is exited from the program, parents will receive written notification of that decision. If parents or classroom

teachers wish to appeal the exit recommendation, they must follow the appeals procedures outlined in this handbook.

- Parents may choose to withdraw their child at any time. No conference or ID Committee meeting would be required.

Records of placement decisions and data on all referred students are kept on file for a minimum of five years or for as long as necessary for educational decisions. Knowledge gained throughout the identification process may be shared with instructional staff in order to benefit the student and assist in creating a learning environment conducive to his/her learning, regardless of final placement. Since all Gifted and Talented student records are confidential, the handling and destruction of current and outdated records containing identifiable information will be done in a manner which assures confidentiality.

Participation in the gifted program is noted on student transcripts and permanent records. Permanent record notation is made at the time of placement in the program. Transcript notation is made on student's final transcript.

**In the case of multiple absences, including suspension or ISS, gifted students served through a pull-out option may receive their G.T. services for the week in an alternate form. Students with multiple absences may also be excluded from activities or experiences that are in addition to the required 150 minutes of service. These decisions are at the discretion of the GT Coordinator.*

***There is a major identification in the spring of each year when most of the students are identified to participate in the program for the following fall. After school begins, students who have moved into the district have the opportunity to apply for participation in the program. Although students may be placed throughout the year, it is recommended that students who move into the district wait a minimum of one grading period before being referred for placement in the program.*

Gifted & Talented Attendance And Regular Classroom Work

“Curriculum for the gifted must differ not only in degree, but in kind. It is important to avoid simply ‘more of the same’. It should be in place of rather than in addition to required classroom work. Students should not be penalized for being identified as gifted by being given extra work. Teachers should be sensitive to student interests and talents in planning both cognitive and affective activities.”

***Taken from the Arkansas Department of Education
Gifted and Talented Rules and Regulations:
Program Approval Standards
2009**

Dardanelle School District Guidelines

In accordance with the Arkansas State Department Rules and Regulations concerning gifted and talented students, a student attending a gifted and talented program shall not be held accountable for all assignments missed while attending G.T. classes or activities. He/she may, rather, be held accountable for the concept to be developed in his/her absence. Teachers should be very selective in the make-up work required of G.T. students during these out of class experiences. Alternative assignments should be required of these students so that it does not become a burden to participate in the GT program. Teachers should make every effort to avoid planning tests, reviews or introducing new material during their students' scheduled G.T. block time.

Program Options

(Grades K-3)

At the K-3 level, the G.T. Coordinator works with each classroom teacher to provide whole group enrichment lessons, focusing on creativity, higher order thinking skills and problem solving. Students are provided enrichment opportunities a minimum of thirty minutes per week, delivered by their regular classroom teacher. The G.T. Coordinator meets with each class monthly to oversee classroom enrichment, model lessons and work with teachers and students. The G.T. teacher serves as a resource for teachers and administrators, and collaboratively works with teachers to document gifted characteristics of students for use in future identification.

(Grades 4-6)

Identified 4th – 6th grade students attend a G.T. resource room for a minimum of 150 minutes weekly. The pull-out program's curriculum is a student-centered project based approach to learning. Differentiation focuses on enrichment and extension of basic skills by focusing on higher order thinking skills, research skills, critical and creative thinking, independent learning, problem solving, logic, product construction, competitions and technology skills. An emphasis on affective behavior is in place to help students better understand themselves, others around them and develop a personal responsibility for learning.

(Grades 7-8)

Gifted middle school students are served primarily through Pre-AP classes in Science and Social Studies and advanced math classes, as well as high quality art, music, and athletic programs. In addition to these, many clubs and/or leadership programs are available for students who wish to participate. The G.T. Coordinator meets with identified gifted students weekly to serve as a resource for them and to inform them of independent educational opportunities that may be of interest to them. All core-content teachers serving gifted students have received training in differentiation through Secondary Course Content training. All Pre-AP teachers have attended College Board approved training institutes and possess a current Pre-AP certificate.

(Grades 9-12)

At the high school level, gifted students are served primarily through Pre-AP and AP class offerings, as well as high quality art, music, and athletic programs. In addition to these, many clubs and/or leadership programs are available for students who wish to participate. Extended library hours and after school enrichment opportunities are often available at different times of the year. The G.T. Coordinator meets monthly with identified gifted students, and serves as a resource for students, teachers and administrators. All core-content teachers serving gifted students have received training in differentiation through Secondary Course Content training. All AP and Pre AP teachers have attended College Board approved training institutes and possess current AP/Pre AP certificates in their content area.

Resources

Differentiation Central

<http://www.differentiationcentral.com>

Council for Exceptional Children – The Association for the Gifted (TAG)

<http://www.cectag.org>

Gifted and Talented – A Resource for Parents and Teachers

<http://www.gifted-children.com>

Hoagies' Gifted Education

<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org>

National Association for Gifted Children – NAGC

<http://www.nagc.org>

Uniquely Gifted – Resources for Gifted Children with Special Needs

<http://www.uniquelygifted.org>

AGATE Arkansans for Gifted and Talented Education

<http://www.agate-arkansas.org>

Gifted and Talented Team

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