

District 27 Gifted Education Program

Philosophy

Northbrook District #27 believes there are children who can be identified as intellectually gifted. These children have unique and exceptional needs and abilities that necessitate a program qualitatively different from the regular classroom program. While a rigorous curriculum meets the needs of most students, a small percentage of students demonstrate a need for services beyond those provided in the classroom. District 27 provides enriched services in two programs: English Language Arts and Mathematics. The English Language Arts program, Extended Learning Program (ELP), is designed to meet the needs of students displaying academic strengths in the areas of reading and language arts for students in 4th through 8th grades, and additionally, in social studies for students in Grades 6 through 8. Advanced math placement begins in fifth grade for qualifying students; ELP identification is not a prerequisite for advanced math.

Referral/Nomination and Formal Identification Process for 4th through 8th Grade ELP Placement

The referral process is the first step in the identification process for ELP. Students entering 4th through 8th grades may be nominated for screening by teachers, parents, or administrators who have knowledge of the student's intellectual capabilities. The following academic data are analyzed:

- Terra Nova scores in the areas of Vocabulary and Reading: The Terra Nova is a nationally-normed criterion reference test; scores reflect the child's local percentile, that is, the child in comparison to his/her Northbrook 27 grade-level peers.
- STAR Reading scores: STAR is also a nationally-normed criterion reference test which is aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards.
- The Aptitude score from the Test of Cognitive Skills, administered during the Terra Nova testing. It measures a student's readiness for learning and is not necessarily commensurate with an IQ score.

As a result of this data analysis, some students are invited to take the Stanford Binet V individual intelligence test. The Binet is administered by a School District 27 Psychologist. The results of this test

(IQ Score) contribute to the placement decision. A District 27 school psychologist may administer additional testing to complete the referral process, if any is required.

Curricula for Gifted Students

Northbrook School District 27 believes in the practice of differentiation for all students. Differentiation is an instructional philosophy and practice that includes modifying the product, the process, the content, and the learning environment based upon student interest, student readiness, and individual student needs.

English Language Arts

K-3 ELA

Kindergarten through third grade students are not formally identified for gifted education services, nor are they pulled out of the regular classroom for enrichment. In recent years, District 27 has shifted service delivery from pull-out groups during the week to in-class differentiation. The early primary learner who demonstrates competency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening benefits from a teacher who differentiates instruction to meet student needs fluidly throughout the day and week. This focus on differentiation is more natural and consistent as opposed to having a child leave the classroom for an isolated and limited enrichment session. Differentiated instruction in the primary grades may include book clubs using above-grade-level books and stories, writing assignments and research projects, and flexible groupings for reading instruction.

Beginning in first grade teachers utilize an instructional approach called “leveled literacy.” Based upon assessment data gathered, the teacher forms “guided reading groups” to deliver instruction targeted to meet students’ needs. Each guided reading group receives instruction from the teacher throughout the week at their specific level with appropriate resources chosen for their reading group. Guided reading groups are flexible, and student groupings may be adjusted throughout the year in response to student growth. Classroom teachers are highly skilled at utilizing this instructional model, which is aligned with best practices in teaching exceptional learners in the early elementary years. The District curriculum reflects the use of in-class leveled literacy rather than having selected students pulled out

of class for enriched reading sessions. In this way, high level literacy instruction is consistently delivered on a daily basis.

4th and 5th ELA

At Shabonee School, students are assigned two core teachers; one teacher is responsible for a half day of English Language Arts and the other teacher for a half day of Math, Science, and Social Studies. All 4th and 5th grade ELP students spend half of their day with the ELP teacher for English Language Arts instruction. The students read, discuss, and analyze a variety of novels as related to the Common Core State Standards. They are engaged in writing activities; they study and learn vocabulary and grammar. In addition, students are engaged higher level thinking skill activities and research projects related to their reading.

6th, 7th, and 8th ELA

The ELP program in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade is a humanities based program integrating the reading, language arts, and social studies classes. The students meet with the gifted education teacher(s) daily for these three class periods. The students read and discuss novels using the Common Core State Standards as related to the themes developed at each grade level. The students read outstanding literature and engage in small group as well as whole class discussions. In addition, students deepen their critical thinking and writing skills as related to the novels and the thematic units.

Mathematics

3-5 Math Extensions

Students who qualify for participation in math extension groups meet with a designated teacher for approximately one hour each week to focus on problem solving, reasoning, patterns, and mathematical communication.

Honors Math 5th - 8th

Beginning in fifth grade, students may be identified for honors math placement. Honors math meets for one hour daily as opposed to enrichments sessions offered one hour per week. Many of these students progress to pre-algebra in 6th grade, algebra in 7th, and geometry in 8th grade.

Math extensions and honors math placement are determined by analysis of student data, including NWEA, Terra Nova, and other standardized measures.

Transfer Students to District 27 (New to District)

Students new to District 27 who were formally identified as gifted in the previous district must provide documentation acknowledging that the student was a participant in a gifted program. Test scores used to determine such placement must be provided. These test results must not be more than two years old, and nationally normed ability and/or achievement tests must have been utilized. District 27 will not honor assessments conducted outside of a school environment, such as that conducted by a private counselor or psychologist.

If the data collected is sufficient to determine that the qualifications for and rigor of the gifted education program in the previous district is equal to District 27, ELP placement will be offered. If data is insufficient, District 27 may administer additional assessments with our school psychologist and/or enroll the student in the regular education program and monitor the student's academic needs for a specified period of time.

Other Enrichment Opportunities for District 27 Students

Hickory Point School: Broadcast Club; Eco-Empowered Kids

Shabonee School: Chess Club; Broadcast Club: Photography Club; Eco-Empowered Kids; band; orchestra; chorus

Wood Oaks: Science Fair; STEM Electives; Annual Play Production/Musical; Chess Club; Honor Choir; Jazz Band; Creative Writing Club; Yearbook; Student Council; Library Leaders; Student-led book clubs outside of the classroom; Debate; Art Club; various competitions, including the Scripps Spelling Bee and local math contests; Student Government Day for 8th graders; Village of Northbrook Quiz Bowl for 8th graders

Frequently Asked Questions

When and how will I know that my child has been recommended for placement in ELP?

Students are referred for ELP during April and May. Parents are notified by mail of the results of the screening process at the end of the school year. Students who qualify for individual testing are scheduled to take the Stanford-Binet within a two to three-week window after school has been

dismissed for summer vacation. Parents will be notified by mail of eligibility for placement in ELP during the month of July.

Once identified as gifted, will my child continue in ELP placement through 8th grade? Yes, students who qualify for ELP placement continue in that placement.

Does the District offered advanced placement and/or enrichment in other subjects beyond English Language Arts and Math? Yes, District 27 offers the following opportunities:

- Advanced placement in Spanish and French beginning in 7th grade
- Science Fair elective in 8th grade
- Band, orchestra and chorus electives
- Interscholastic sports
- Creative dramatics and musical production for 6th through 8th grades
- Various electives and extracurricular clubs for 6th through 8th grades

If my child was identified for ELP or advanced placement in District 27, does that mean he/she will be placed in honors classes at the high school? No, Glenbrook High School uses its own criteria for student placement.

What is the District's policy regarding private testing?

The District will consider the results of private evaluations, but reserves the prerogative of administering further evaluation conducted by District 27 school psychologists.

Can my child enter the program at any time?

Students typically enter the program at the beginning of the school year at fourth grade and beyond. However, each student placement is handled on an individual basis.

How do I prepare my child for taking the Stanford Binet V?

Your child cannot study for the Stanford Binet nor can your child be tutored for it. Tell your child that one of the District's psychologist will ask him/her to answer questions or to perform some tasks; try

not to refer to the Stanford Binet as a test. While some children are comfortable in a testing situation, others may feel worried or anxious.

Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep before the test and has a healthy meal or snack before the testing session. If for any reason your child is not feeling well on the day scheduled, cancel the test and reschedule for another day.

Gifted Resources for Parents

Davidson Institute www.davidsongifted.org; non-profit organization supporting profoundly gifted students

Gifted Children) www.gifted-children.com; monthly magazine

Hoagies Gifted www.hoagiesgifted.org; resources, articles, books and links to help and support parents, teachers, and gifted children

Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth www.cty.jhu.edu; identifies, supports, and develops the talents of K-12 gifted students

Illinois Association of Gifted Children www.iagcgifted.org; organization of parents, educators, and others in Illinois committed to the education and development of gifted children

National Association of Gifted Children www.nagc.org national organization that supports and develops policies and practices that encourage and respond to the needs of gifted children

Northwestern University Center for Talent Development <http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/>; serves the gifted community to ensure that students receive the needed education, encouragement, and support

Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted www.SENGifted.org; non-profit organization that supports the emotional needs of gifted children and adults

Summer Institute for the Gifted <http://www.giftedstudy.org>; provides summer educational and social opportunities for academically gifted and talented students through programs designed to meet students' abilities and needs