

Gifted Education Parent/Guardian and Staff Informational Handbook



Gifted Education Department
School District Two
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719.579.3240

Gifted Definition, Vision, and Mission

Harrison School District Two adopts the state of Colorado's Gifted Education Definition, Vision, and Mission to guide our practices.

Definition

Gifted students are those persons between the ages of four and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services.

Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice-exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these **areas of giftedness**:

General or Specific Intellectual Ability

I intellectual ability is exceptional capability or potential recognized through cognitive processes (e.g., memory, reasoning, rate of learning, spatial reasoning, ability to find and solve problems, ability to manipulate abstract ideas and make connections).

Specific Academic Aptitude

Specific academic aptitude is exceptional capability or potential in an academic content area(s) (e.g., a strong knowledge base or the ability to ask insightful, pertinent questions within the discipline). All academic areas should be considered.

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Musical, Dance or Psychomotor Abilities (Talent Aptitudes)

Visual arts, performing arts, musical, dance or psychomotor abilities are exceptional capabilities or potential in talent areas (e.g., art, drama, music, dance, body awareness, coordination, and physical skills).

Creative or Productive Thinking

Creative or productive thinking is exceptional capability or potential in mental processes (e.g., critical thinking, creative problem solving, humor, independent/original thinking, and/or products).

Leadership Abilities

Leadership is the exceptional capability or potential to influence and empower people (e.g., social perceptiveness, visionary ability, communication skills, problem solving, inter- and intra-personal skills, and a sense of responsibility).

Vision

All gifted students will accomplish challenging post-secondary work/force goals and become productive, creative citizens capable of succeeding in their area of strength.

Mission

Ensure gifted students' growth and achievement through systems of support, programming and advocacy.

Colorado State Law Regarding Gifted Education

Gifted Education is addressed in the Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA) in the Colorado Revised Statutes. The Colorado State Board of Education promulgates the rules for the implementation of statutes. The rules provide the administrative framework for schools and districts for the provision of services to gifted students.

The rules require each Administrative Unit, and Harrison School District Two is its own administrative unit, to submit a four-year Gifted Education Program Plan. This program describes how the district meets, or is working towards meeting the state statute in the following areas:

- Engagement and Communication
- Definition
- Identification
- ALP Content, Procedures, & Responsibilities
- Programming
- Evaluation & Accountability
- Personnel
- Budget
- Reporting
- Record Keeping
- Monitoring
- Dispute Resolution
- Early Access

Further information on state gifted laws and regulations can be accessed through the Colorado Department of Education website at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/lawsregs.htm>

Gifted Identification Process

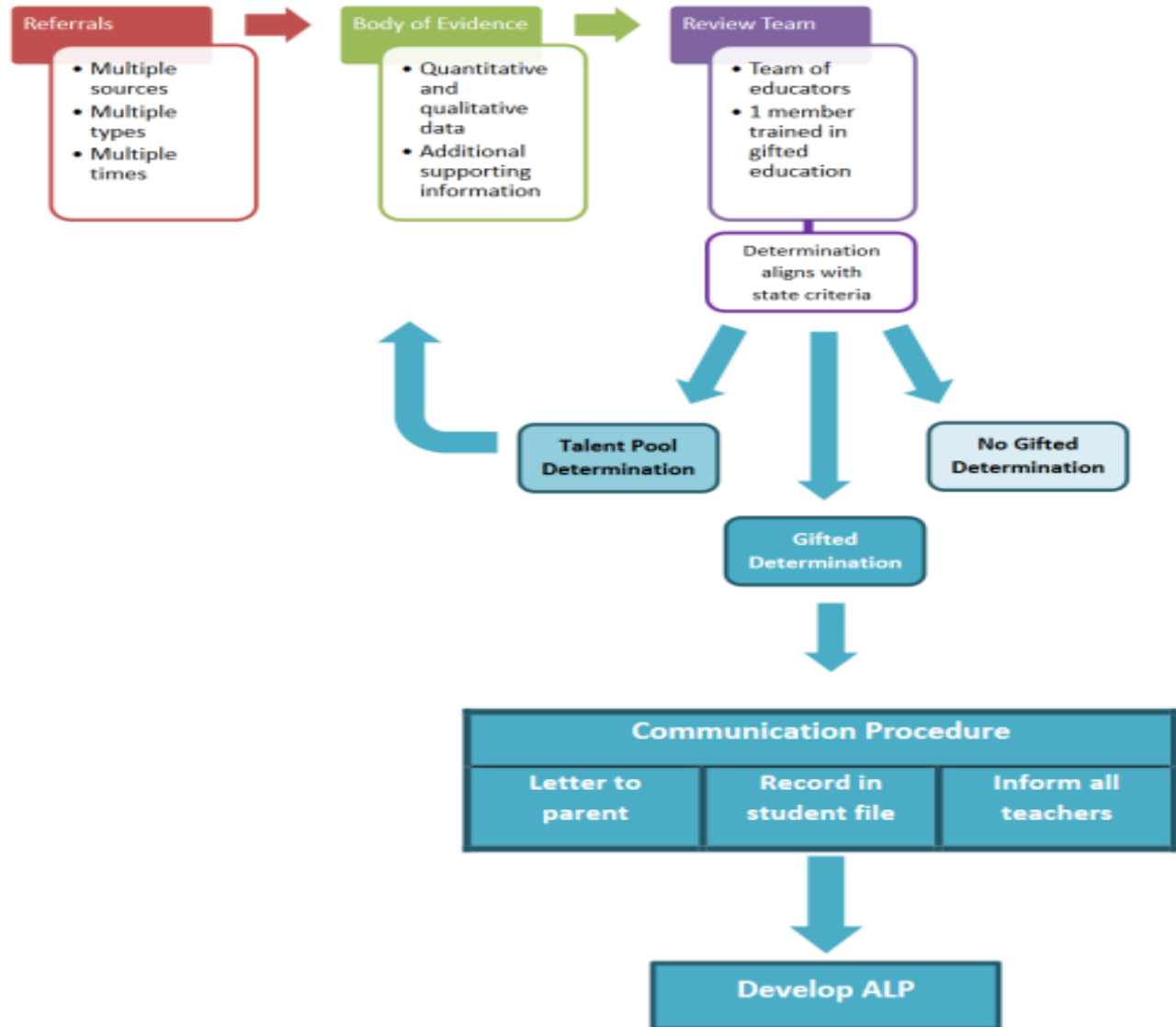
- **Nomination***
A student may be nominated for the identification process by a parent, teacher, self, peers, assessment results, or previous GT identification in another district or state.
- **Screening Process**
An educational team consisting of the classroom teacher/s, counselor, GT specialist and/or building administrator will meet to initiate the GT screening process. (Please know all 2nd and 6th graders are administered the Cognitive Abilities Test [CogAT] as a universal screening.)
- **Synthesis of Body of Evidence**
Information from various sources, a Body of Evidence, will be collected for the nominated student. This includes assessment results, class work, parental input, and teacher observations. The Screening Committee will determine if the nominated student meets the identification criteria of Harrison School District Two and Colorado.
- **Communicate Results**
A representative of the Screening Committee will communicate the results of the nomination to all stakeholders. A parent, student or teacher has the right to appeal the identification decision. To initiate an appeal process, the appellant should contact the Gifted Coordinator and complete the necessary documentation.
- **Development of an Advanced Learn Plan****
If a student is identified as a Gifted Learner, the educational team, along with parents, will

collaborate to develop an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP). This individualized plan will outline student learning goals/objectives and identify instructional programming/strategies to ensure student growth. This plan serves as a record of student progress and will be reviewed and updated using both formative and summative data including but not limited to state and district assessments on a yearly basis.

*A determination will be made no longer than 30 days after a referral (see glossary).

** An ALP will be written no later than 30 school days from the time of formal identification.

A gifted identification assessment should include the following components:



Traits of Giftedness

No gifted individual is exactly the same, each with his own unique patterns and traits. There are many traits that gifted individuals have in common, but no gifted learner exhibits traits in every area. This list of traits may help you better understand whether or not your child is gifted.

Cognitive	Creative	Affective	Behavioral
Keen power of abstraction	Creativeness and inventiveness	Unusual emotional depth and intensity	Spontaneity
Interest in problem-solving and applying concepts	Keen sense of humor	Sensitivity or empathy to the feelings of others	Boundless enthusiasm
Voracious and early reader	Ability for fantasy	High expectations of self and others, often leading to feelings of frustration	Intensely focused on passions—resists changing activities when engrossed in own interests
Large vocabulary	Openness to stimuli, wide interests	Heightened self-awareness, accompanied by feelings of being different	Highly energetic—needs little sleep or down time
Intellectual curiosity	Intuitiveness	Easily wounded, need for emotional support	Constantly questions
Power of critical thinking, skepticism, self-criticism	Flexibility	Need for consistency between abstract values and personal actions	Insatiable curiosity
Persistent, goal-directed behavior	Independence in attitude and social behavior	Advanced levels of moral judgment	Impulsive, eager and spirited
Independence in work and study	Self-acceptance and unconcern for social norms	Idealism and sense of justice	Perseverance—strong determination in areas of importance
Diversity of interests and abilities	Radicalism		High levels of frustration—particularly when having difficulty meeting standards of performance (either imposed by self or others)
	Aesthetic and moral commitment to self-selected work		Volatile temper, especially related to perceptions of failure
			Non-stop talking/chattering

Overview of Appeals

Selection Committee Decisions Grades K-11

Parents may appeal the decision of the Selection Committee within 10 days of receiving the notification that the child was not accepted.

Below are the steps to follow:

Parent/Guardian notifies Coordinator of Gifted Education of the parent's concerns.

Coordinator of Gifted Education meets with parent/guardian explaining the process and show him/her the child's profile and the guidelines for selection. The student products may be examined along with the results of the tests and checklists.

*Most appeals end here.
If the parent/guardian is not satisfied with the explanation, she may ask to go to the next step.*

Parent/Guardian must write a formal letter/email explaining their disagreement with the decision of the Selection Committee and return the letter/email to Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning.

The Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning and Gifted Coordinator will work with the school to set up an appointment at the school. The Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, the Coordinator of Gifted Education, school principal and school gifted education facilitator meet with parent/guardian to discuss testing results and other data.

Conclusion of appeal ends here.

Advanced Learning Plans

Each formally identified gifted student at Harrison School District Two will have an Advanced Learning Plan developed. The plan will document the student's strength areas, and set goals for academic and affective (social/emotional) growth. This plan will also document the programming that is in place to meet the needs of the student. These plans are developed and reviewed annually, with the input of the teacher, student, parent, and gifted specialist.

What is an ALP?

An ALP, or Advanced Learning Plan is a legal document [22-20-R-1200, C.R.S] outlining programming for identified gifted students and is used as a guide for educational planning and decision-making. Criteria for ALPs is detailed in the Rules promulgated by the State Board of Education. ALPs may be electronic or paper versions and are to be reviewed annually.

Why are ALPs important?

The ALP is a direct link between the student profile created during the identification process utilizing quantitative and qualitative data and the implementation of programming services. ALPs are a planning guide for making instructional decisions about materials, programming options, and assessments for gifted students based upon strengths, interests, and affective needs. They are a critical component in the successful transition of gifted students from one level to the next and from school to school.

What are the critical components for an ALP?

The ALP should include information about the student's area of strength, and what programming options will be provided to match these strengths at tiers 2 (targeted) and 3 (intensive). It should

describe the differentiated methods to be used for acceleration, depth, and complexity, higher order thinking skills and content extensions.

The ALP should include S.M.A.R.T standards aligned goals for student achievement and for affective growth. It should also include student interests and extracurricular activities. ALPs are held electronically in our data system as well as in paper copy in the students' cumulative file within each school.

Programming Options

Harrison School District Two uses a wide range of programming options to meet the needs of gifted students we serve. Programming is matched to student's needs and strengths and reviewed annually through the Advanced Learning Plans. Each school provides differentiated instruction, enrichment, independent study, cluster grouping, advanced placement (middle and high), single subject acceleration, whole-grade acceleration and dual enrollment (elementary through college).

Elementary Programming Options

- Accelerated classes
- Afterschool Enrichment Opportunities
- Art Club
- Band
- Battle of the Books
- Chess Club
- Clustered classes
- Compacted Curriculum
- International Baccalaureate School (Sand Creek P6LEPS6T&PSH, VR&&H)
- Gifted Magnet School (Soaring Eagles d&DD[PT63, VR&&H)
- Rubik's Cube Club
- STEM
- Summer Camp
- Universal screening at 2nd grade

Middle School Options

- 6th grade universal screening
- Afterschool Opportunities
- AVID
- Mentoring
- Physics in all middle schools
- Pre-Advanced Placement courses offered beyond math and English to
- include other contents
- Pre-Collegiate partnership with middle schools to prepare students for college
- Rubik's Cube Club
- SE YMCA partnership with PanoramabT//HL, VR&&H
- STEAM Innovation Lab
- STEM/STEAM
- The Colorado Springs Conservatory

High School Options

- Advanced Placement in all academic areas
- Afterschool Opportunities
- ASCEND Mentoring
- AVID
- AVP (Area vocational programs)
- Concurrent enrollment

- CSU – Pueblo
- PPSC
- UCCS

CSU Ft. Collins Alliance School
 International Bachelorette School (Harrison High School)
 Pre-Collegiate
 Robotics
 SE YMCA Partnership (Sierra High School)
 STEM

Additional Gifted Education Enrichment Opportunities

Gifted Summer Camp
 Legislative Day at the Capital
 Science Fair
 Sky Sox Math Day
 Destination Imagination
 Computer Science (K-12)

Early Access to Kindergarten and 1st Grade

General Information

The Colorado Exceptional Children’s Act (ECEA) and **Harrison School District #2 School Board Policy** allows highly gifted students, who do not meet the age requirement for enrollment into kindergarten or first grade, to apply for Early Access into school.

House Bill 1021 stipulates that districts may count in their enrollment and receive State Educational Funds for highly advanced gifted students who meet the criteria established by Colorado.

The district must abide by the rules promulgated by the State Board of Education.

The district may charge a reasonable fee for the Early Access process.

--- District responsibilities:

1. Provide early access information to parents
2. Educate teaching staff and community about Early Access.
3. Ensure that Early Access aligns to K-12 identification process.

Definition

Early Access is defined as a highly gifted four-year-old child entering kindergarten, or a five-year-old entering first grade. **A highly gifted child is defined as a gifted child whose body of evidence demonstrates a profile of exceptional ability or potential compared to same--age children. A child may be identified as gifted, but still not qualify for Early Access.** To meet the needs of highly advanced development, early access to educational services may be considered as a special provision. Early entrance into school is regarded as a form of acceleration. The decision to accelerate a child can have a profound effect on the child’s academic and social performance for the remainder of his/her school career. Therefore, Harrison School District Two adheres to a thorough set of research-based procedures to determine if a child is eligible for Early Access.

Contact the Gifted Coordinator for application information or application is posted to D2 website January 1st of each calendar year.

Gifted Education Resources

The Gifted Education Department in Harrison School District Two has a large resource library, The Professional Resource Center (The PRC), available to teachers, students, and parents/guardians. The resources include academic materials and supplemental curriculum, as well as resources on the social emotional needs of gifted students. Please contact our office at 719.579.3240 for further information on the materials available. Below are suggested websites and books to learn more about the gifted population.

Websites:

Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented - www.coloradogifted.org

Colorado Department of Education Gifted and Talented - www.cde.state.co.us/qt/index.htm

National Association for Gifted and Talented - www.nagc.org

Hoagies' Gifted Education - www.hoagiesgifted.org

Books:

A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children by James Webb, Janet Gore, Edward Amend, and Arlene DeVries

Genius Denied: How to Stop Wasting Our Brightest Young Minds by Jan Davidson and Bob Davidson

Keys to Parenting the Gifted Child by Silvia Rimm

Smart Boys by Barbara Kerr and Sanford Cohn

Smart Girls by Barbara Kerr and Sanford Cohn

Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom by Susan Winebrenner *The Gifted*

Kids Survival Guide by Jim Delisle and Judy Galbraith

The Social and emotional Development of Gifted Children: What Do We Know? By Maureen Neihart and Sally Reis

Upside-Down Brilliance: The Visual-Spatial Learner by Linda Kreger Silverman *When Gifted*

Kids Don't Have All the Answers by Jim Delisle and Judy Galbraith

A Glossary of Common Terms

A Glossary of Common Educational Terms Particular to Gifted Education

Acceleration – moving at a faster pace through academic content. There are many different forms such as full grade acceleration, subject acceleration, and curriculum compacting.

Advanced Placement (AP) – college-level courses for high school students.

Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) – a written record of gifted education programming utilized with

each gifted child and considered in educational planning and decision making.

Affective Needs – social and emotional needs of a child.

Asynchronous Development – differing rates for physical, cognitive, and emotional development. The gifted child may have a chronological age of 8 years, a mental age of 12 years, and an emotional age of 5 years.

Cluster grouping – the intentional placement of a group of similar-ability students in an otherwise heterogeneous (mixed-ability) classroom for a particular learning activity. Ex. placing gifted students in a special class or together in a group in one regular class.

Commensurate Growth - the academic and affective progress that can be measured and should be expected of a gifted student given the student's level of achievement, learning needs, and abilities matched with the appropriate instructional level.

Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) – the test most used to identify gifted students. It is an ability test that includes 6 subtests in 3 areas: verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and nonverbal reasoning skills.

Curriculum compacting – an instructional strategy in which a student's grasp of a subject area is frequently reassessed by the instructor, and following demonstration of mastery of the subject, the student is allowed to progress to the next level or is given more in-depth work in the same subject area.

Determination – the results of the gifted educational team to identify a student as gifted, place student in talent pool and collect more data, or did not meet the requirements set forth by the school district and the Colorado Department of Education.

Differentiation – the modification of programming and instruction based on a student's academic need and intellectual ability.

Dual Enrollment – students take courses part time at a college or university in addition to attending classes at their regular school.

Early Access - early entrance to kindergarten or first grade for highly advanced gifted children under the age of six.

Enrichment – the enhancement of the curricular program with additional opportunities and avenues of learning. The process of covering a subject in greater depth than is usual, or tackling subjects not usually covered.

Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA) – a Colorado law that groups students with disabilities, students for whom English is not the primary language, and gifted students as those who have different educational needs based on their identified exceptionality.

Out-of-level testing – administering a test at a higher grade level or more advanced content to a younger student to assess their true abilities.

MTSS Multi-tiered System of Supports – an adaptable problem-solving model for parents and teacher to use to assess and address individual student needs.

Tiered Assignments – assignments that are designed for different abilities.

Twice Exceptional (2X or 2E) – a student who is identified as both gifted and as a child with a disability.

Underachievement – a discrepancy between recognized ability and actual academic performance. The causes of underachievement may be social, emotional, physical, and/or academic. Inappropriate curriculum can have its consequence the underachieving gifted student.

Western Academic Talent Search (WATS) – an opportunity for students in grades 3 to 9 to take above-level testing typically not available at this age. The testing includes the Explore test (grades 3-6), and the ACT and SAT for grades 6-9. This is a program sponsored by the Center for Bright Kids in Denver.

Gifted Education Contacts

Coordinator of Gifted Education for Harrison School District Two – Pattie Vail – pvail@hsd2.org
Support Staff for Gifted Education – Teresa Thomas – tthomas@hsd2.org

Gifted Education Facilitators

Secondary

Career Readiness Academy – Melva Hall – mehall@hsd2.org
Harrison High School – Ali Duran – aduran@hsd2.org
Sierra High School – Brittany Ellis – bellis@hsd2.org

K-8 (or growing to K-8)

Aspire Online Academy – Janelle Trujillo – jtrujillo@hsd2.org
Carmel Community School – Brooke Sinicropi – bsinicropi@hsd2.org
Mountain Vista Community School – Kelsee Barnes – kbarnes@hsd2.org
Sand Creek International School – Maggie Noland – mnoland@hsd2.org
Soaring Eagles Community School – Gina Oellig – goellig@hsd2.org

Middle School

Fox Meadow Middle School – Lee Cooper – lcooper@hsd2.org
Panorama Middle School – Siobhan Gallagher – sgallagher@hsd2.org

Elementary School

Bricker Elementary School – Danielle Fix – dfix@hsd2.org
Bricker Elementary School – Megan Wier – mwier@hsd2.org
Centennial Elementary School - Jennifer Fisk – jfisk@hsd2.org
Centennial Elementary School – Shayna Vastilla – svastilla@hsd2.org
Giberson Elementary School – Lindsey Norwood – lnorwood@hsd2.org
Monterey Elementary School – Chez’Ra Sankey – csankey@hsd2.org
Oak Creek Elementary School – Lavena Kubatzky – lkubatzky@hsd2.org
Otero Elementary School – Audrey Degenhardt – adegenhardt@hsd2.org
Stratton Meadows Elementary School – Kaitlyn Smith – kasmith@hsd2.org
Turman Elementary School – Candice Green – cgreen@hsd2.org
Wildflower Elementary School - Lois Poulson-Fowler – lpoulson@hsd2.org

K-12 School

The Vanguard School – Bridgett Stone – bridgett.stone@thevanguardschool.com

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