

Wolfe County Schools

Gifted and Talented Handbook

Policies and Procedures

Mr. Jeff Stamper
Written: October 5, 2010

Mission and Program Goals

Definition of a Gifted and Talented Student:

Gifted learners are “Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.” (NCLB, 2002).

Wolfe County School District Gifted/ Talented Mission Statement

The mission of Wolfe County Schools Gifted Education Program is to provide advanced, appropriate, and quality educational experiences, which develop in students’ higher level thinking skills, creative problem solving, and the desire for excellence.

Program Goals

The gifted and talented program was developed to ensure that students are challenged to achieve their highest potential and that curriculum and learning opportunities are in line with specific needs, interests, and abilities.

The district’s goals for meeting student needs include the following:

- Implementing an ongoing identification process of screening and selecting students based on multiple and specific criteria (both qualitative and quantitative) utilizing a selection committee.
- Developing and implementing a variety of differentiated and substantive learning opportunities that are linked meaningfully to the core content strands.
- Provide ongoing and appropriate training and staff development opportunities for administrators, counselors, and teachers involved in serving gifted and talented students.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the gifted program for the purpose of continued improvement and development.

Program Description/ Procedures

Gifted/ Talented Program Description/ Procedures

Wolfe County School District seeks to identify those students who possess exceptional abilities and potential for accomplishment so outstanding that they require special gifted and talented programs to meet their educational needs. Through the procedure described below, an ongoing, comprehensive, and systematic review of all students will be made in an attempt to identify those

students in need of gifted/talented services. The purpose of identification is to determine which students will benefit from the services provided in the districts' program for these services.

Primary Talent Pool

Students in grades K-3 who possess potential to become a "high learner" are *selected* to participate in PTP activities. This informal process allows teachers to select students who have characteristics and behaviors of a high potential learner. (Typically 25% of the entire primary student population participates in one of the five areas of gifted identification.)

Step One: Nomination Process

Students may be nominated for the Gifted and Talented Program by any of the following:

- Parents
- Teachers (any teacher who is familiar with the student's abilities)
- Counselors
- Administrators
- Any concerned parties with knowledge of the students' abilities.

Nominations by staff members may be submitted to the district Gifted/ Talented Coordinator. Parents can contact the district Gifted/ Talented coordinator or their child's school office to request a nomination and permission to test form.

Students in grades K-12 have the opportunity to be screened annually. If nominated, students new to the district may be tested within six weeks of their enrollment.

All students in third grade will be screened during the spring semester using the RAVEN.

Step Two: Screening

During the screening process, relevant data is collected which shows the student's ability to perform or the potential to perform at the level of accomplishment that might indicate a student's need to be placed in the G/T Program.

- As soon as the student is nominated, the district will send home a Parental Response Form.
- When the forms are returned, the appropriate test will be given to develop the students' profile.
- Testing data must be collected for each student being screened for the program. Wolfe County Schools uses both quantitative and qualitative measures to aid in the identification of gifted students. To qualify for entrance into the Gifted/Talented Program, a student must exceed the norms of their peers in that grade level. The following tests will be administered.

Qualitative Information:

- RAVEN Test
- Kentucky State Test (CTBS, IOWA, etc)
- Think Link

Qualitative Information

- Teacher Observation
- Parent Inventory of Student Characteristics.
- Portfolio (Student Sample Work)

Upon completion of the screening process, the student's records continue to the final step of selection.

Explanation of Criteria

- **RAVEN Test-** Nonverbal assessment of perception and thinking skills. (designed for ages 5-adult)
- **Kentucky State Test (CTBS, IOWA, etc)-** Kentucky State Tests are designed to measure academic skills important to achievement across the curriculum in reading, writing, math, science and social studies.
- **Think Link-** Similar to Kentucky State Tests, the Think Link tests provide more data on regarding the students' achievement across the curriculum areas.

Step Three: Selection Process

Decisions regarding placement of students in the Wolfe County Schools Gifted and Talented Program are made by a District Selection Committee (Principal or designee, Gifted/ Talented Coordinator, teacher(s), and consulting professional(s) as needed) (KRS 157.200)

- The selection committee reviews all information. The Selection Committee makes the decision to place the student or to decline to place the student in the Wolfe County School Gifted/ Talented Program based on the information.
- In order to qualify for placement, a student must meet or exceed the norms of the existing gifted students in that grade level.
- When the Selection Committee has made a recommendation regarding placement, the campus Gifted Specialist will notify the parents of the committee's decision. Notification will be made in writing and sent by mail to the parents. If the student qualifies for the Gifted Program, the district shall obtain written permission from the parents before a student is placed in the program.

Exit Procedures

In accordance with Board Policy 8.132 AP.1, "Once identified as qualifying for gifted education services in grades four through twelve (4-12), a student need not be re-evaluated, except to determine suitability of services."

Transfer Students

Students transferring from another district may be nominated for the Wolfe County Schools Gifted and Talented Program by a parent, a teacher, or a member of the community. Students new to the district who have participated in another G/T Program must be nominated and meet district identification criteria in order to be placed in the program. A form for nomination and permission to test may be requested from the school office or the district Gifted/Talented Coordinator.

Appeals Process

Students or parents who wish to file an appeal concerning the following areas:

- Talent Pool selection process.
- Formal identification of gifted and talented students.
- The appropriateness and/or adequacy of talent pool services or services addressed in a formally identified student services plan. (Policy 8.132)

Students or parents may follow this procedure to formally petition for identification or may appeal nonidentification or appropriateness of services.

- The appealing party shall submit in writing to the Gifted/Talented Coordinator specifically why s/he believes that screening results are not accurate or talent pool services or service options in the gifted and talented student services plan are not appropriate and why an exception should be made or reconsideration given.
- The Gifted and Talented Coordinator shall compile student data and present that along with the petition or appeal to the District Selection Committee. The information presented shall include a recommendation accompanied by available substantiating evidence.
- The Committee shall hear appeals, make recommendation, and respond in writing to the appealing party within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal and accompanying information.
- If the Committee rules in favor of the party appealing, the following option shall apply as appropriate:
 - S/he may participate in the program as soon as the parent or guardian signs the required permission form.
 - A change in either the gifted and talented student service plan or provision of services shall be made in a timely manner.
- If the committee rules against the appealing party, a further written appeal may be made to the Superintendent, who must respond in writing within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal.

- Should the Superintendent uphold the decision of the Selection/ Placement Committee, the appealing party may petition the Board, which will have the final decision in the case. The Board shall make a determination at the next regular meeting following receipt of the appeal.

Gifted Student Service Plan:

Each student participating in the gifted and talented program shall receive a personal Gifted/Talented Student Service Plan that shall be catered to their individual needs. Students shall receive instruction through classroom differentiation and supplemental activities/instruction.

Homework and Class Assignments:

All students participating in school sponsored gifted/talented activities are still responsible for all assignments and homework from the class in which they missed. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher(s) and request those assignments.

Program Evaluation:

The Gifted/Talented Coordinator shall coordinate the annual, on-going process of evaluating all aspects of the gifted education program and make recommendations for upgrading those areas found to be deficient. Data collected in the annual evaluation shall be used in the comprehensive improvement planning (CSIP) process and results of the evaluation shall be presented to the council in SBDM schools for review of instructional progress and to the Board who shall determine if District goals are being accomplished.

Community Awareness:

The District shall ensure that information about the District's gifted and talented program is available to parents and community members. They will be kept informed of district needs for the program and legislation related to the gifted. Parents and community members will be actively involved by serving on planning and evaluation committees.

Five Areas of Identification of Gifted and Talented Education:

General Intellectual Ability: (a) Either the potential or demonstrated ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in general intellectual ability, which is usually reflected in extraordinary performance in a variety of cognitive areas, such as abstract reasoning, logical reasoning, social awareness, memory, nonverbal ability and the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information, and (b) A consistently outstanding mental capacity as compared to children of one's age, experience and environment. (Gifted and Talented Coordinators Resource Handbook, 2010)

Academic (Specific): Those who possess either potential or demonstrated ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in one (1), or very few related, specific academic areas significantly beyond the age, experience or environment of one's chronological peers. (Gifted and Talented Coordinators Resource Handbook, 2010)

Creative: Students who possess the ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in creative thinking and divergent approaches to conventional tasks as evidenced by innovative or creative reasoning, advanced insight and imagination, and solving problems in unique ways. (Gifted and Talented Coordinators Resource Handbook, 2010)

Leadership: Those with the ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in social skills and interpersonal qualities such as poise, effective oral and written expression, managerial ability, and the ability, or vision, to set goals and organize others to successfully reach those goals. (Gifted and Talented Coordinators Resource Handbook, 2010)

Visual and Performing Arts: Students must be able to perform at an exceptionally high level in the visual or performing arts and demonstrating the potential for outstanding aesthetic production, accomplishment, or creativity in visual art, dance, music, or drama. (Gifted and Talented Coordinators Resource Handbook, 2010)

Programs Provided by Wolfe County School District

Gifted and Talented Students Need:

- Evidence of continuous progress.
- Advanced research
- Access to resources
- Real world problem solving
- Creative writing
- Exploration of leadership skills

Wolfe County School District will Provide These Services:

- Advanced Placement in grades 7-12
- Acceleration by subject
- Cluster Groups
- Consultations between regular education teachers and district staff
- Special counseling available