



Union Public Schools

Gifted Educational Plan and Program Monitoring

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Definition

“Gifted and talented children” means those children identified at the elementary and secondary level as having demonstrated potential abilities of high performance capability and needing differentiated or accelerated education or services.

Goal

Gifted and talented students will be identified and provided instructional programs which differentiate, enrich, and support the regular educational program.

Identification

The *Union Gifted Procedures Manual* is a written process for assessment and selection of children for placement, ensuring that procedures are clearly stated and uniformly implemented. The identification process extends from school entry to twelfth grade and calls for students to have opportunities for identification throughout their school experience. The identification process has several stages:

- a. **Nominations are sought** from a wide variety of sources: referrals may be initiated by teachers, parents, administrators, peers, or the student. Parents complete and sign a *Permission to Evaluate* form to begin the evaluation process. Students may be considered for evaluation each school year; however, at least one year must elapse between administrations of identical tests. Requests for re-evaluation are forwarded to the site Enrichment Specialist (elementary) or the site Gifted Coordinator (secondary). Identification procedures are nondiscriminatory with respect to race, gender, economic background, national origin, or disabling condition.
- b. **Data are collected** as follows at the elementary level:
To qualify on the basis of cognitive ability, students complete a nationally standardized test of intellectual ability and meet any one of the following criteria:
 - (1) a composite score at or above the 97th percentile.
 - (2) a qualifying score on the district multi-criteria index composed of a composite score in the 85th-96th percentile, scores on Behavior Characteristics Rating Scales and applicable areas of advocacy.

To qualify on the basis of academic ability, students complete Oklahoma School Testing Program assessments (state tests) or a standardized test of academic achievement that is norm-referenced (NRT), and meet either one of the following criteria:

- (1) a qualifying score on the district multi-criteria index composed of state test scores of Advanced or Proficient, semester grades of 'A' (or equivalent) in math and English language arts, scores on Behavior Characteristics Rating Scales and applicable areas of advocacy.
- (2) a qualifying score on the district multi-criteria index composed of NRT scores in the 90-99th percentile in math and reading, semester grades of 'A' (or equivalent) in math and English language arts, scores on Behavior Characteristics Rating Scales and applicable areas of advocacy.

Data are collected as follows at the secondary level:

To qualify on the basis of cognitive ability, students complete a nationally standardized test of intellectual ability and meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) a composite score at or above the 97th percentile.
- (2) a composite score at the 85-96th percentile—or a subtest score at the 95-99th percentile and a grade point average of at least 3.5.

To qualify on the basis of academic ability, students complete Oklahoma School Testing Program assessments (state tests), a nationally norm-referenced test (NRT) of academic ability, or a standardized test of academic achievement (such as PSAT, SAT, or ACT) and meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) Score of Advanced (or highest performance level) on two or more state tests of the same or different core curriculum subject during 5th-12th grades and either a grade point average of at least 3.5 or a teacher recommendation.
- (2) NRT score of the 85th percentile or above and either a grade point average of at least 3.5 or a teacher recommendation.
- (3) Score at the college readiness benchmark or higher on a subtest of a standardized test of achievement and either a grade point average of at least 3.5 or a teacher recommendation.

c. Instructionally useful information about individual students obtained during the identification process is communicated to the appropriate members of the instructional staff regardless of final placement.

d. Placement is based on the information gathered in the identification process as well as other information known about the educational needs of the students. Placement is made in programming options appropriate to the student's educational needs, interests and /or abilities.

Elementary parents are notified by letter regarding the eligibility status of their child. For children eligible for placement at the elementary level, parents are notified that placement options include enrichment in the regular classroom, group instruction in a variety of settings, instruction by teachers in the gifted program, or school-wide enrichment activities. The parent signs a form allowing the student to be placed in the GT program; it is kept on file with the building GT specialist or coordinator. Elementary students begin receiving services when all placement procedures are completed. Secondary students may elect to take Advanced, Pre-Advanced Placement, and/or Advanced Placement courses at the beginning of a semester. Parents sign enrollment forms. Secondary students and parents of students that are identified as gifted on the basis of cognitive ability are informed of program options for those students and may elect to have students participate.

Re-evaluation: Re-evaluation of placement is not required if students remain in the program consistently; they may continue until graduation. If a student formally withdraws from the GT program, he or she may re-enter at the beginning of any semester without the requirement of re-evaluation.

Refusal or Withdrawal: A parent may refuse placement or withdraw the child from the program at any time. A student's withdrawal from the program will require written parent consent. Consultation is available to students electing not to participate in an Advanced, Pre-AP or AP courses. Students may be removed from a programming option following a conference with parents. Students whose needs are not met by current placement will be considered for other programming options which may be more appropriate.

Appeal: A parent or guardian may appeal the placement decision by the committee to the school principal. Should the appeal not be resolved to the satisfaction of the parent or guardian by the school principal, a further appeal may be made to the district administrator responsible for gifted and talented programming. At his or her discretion, the district administrator may assemble an ad hoc committee consisting of members of the Local Advisory Committee members to assist in making a final decision on the appeal.

Transfer: Students entering Union schools from another district where they were identified as gifted must forward appropriate evaluation results. These results will be reviewed to determine if the student qualifies for the GT program based upon Union's eligibility criteria. If the documentation is inconclusive the student may be referred for the evaluation process.

Records/Confidentiality: All testing results and student files concerning evaluations/placement are confidential and stored in the files maintained by Enrichment Specialists (elementary sites), Gifted Coordinators (secondary sites), or at the Educational Service Center. Release of this information requires written parent consent. Records of placement decisions and evaluation data are kept for a minimum of five years or as long as needed for educational decisions.

Differentiated Education / Programming Options

The GT program includes multiple options and a curriculum modified in pace, breadth, and depth. The gifted student's educational programming is ongoing and a part of the school schedule. Differentiated education shall be in place within three weeks of the beginning of the school term or of the date the student is identified.

PK-12 programming options include the following:

Enrichment

- *Enrichment of Content in the Regular Classroom*—experiences are provided in regular classrooms that are supplemental to the established curriculum and which are purposefully planned with the needs, interests, and capabilities of particular students in mind. Appropriate enrichment experiences are not a repetition of material.
- *Creative and Academic Competitions*—organized opportunities for students to enter local, regional, state or national contests in variety of areas.
- *Differentiated Curriculum*—curriculum designed to meet the needs of high ability students and differentiated according to content, process and product.
- *Learning Centers*—a designated area or portable center designed to enrich and/or accelerate students' interests in a given content area.

Special Classes

- *Advanced Placement (AP) Courses*—college level courses provided at the secondary level for which students may receive college credit by examination (administered by the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board). AP classes need not be limited to identified gifted students.
- *Pre-Advanced Placement Classes*—include curriculum and instructional strategies designed to prepare able students for Advanced Placement courses. Pre-AP classes need not be limited to identified gifted students.
- *Independent Study*—individually contracted in-depth study of a topic; also a course or unit of study taken through individual arrangement.
- *Enrichment Classes*—a group organized from one or more classrooms which meets on a regular basis to provide experiences beyond the established curriculum.
- *Resource Room*—a class for students released from their regular classroom on a scheduled basis to work with a teacher trained in the education of the gifted.

Flexible Pacing (Types)

- *Continuous Progress*—the content and pacing of curriculum and instruction are matched to the students' abilities and needs. Students move ahead on the basis of mastery.
- *Acceleration*—administrative practices designed to allow students to progress through the curriculum and/or grade levels at a rate faster than the average.
- *Proficiency-Based Promotion*—elementary or secondary students advancing one or more levels in a curriculum area by demonstrating proficiency at the 90 percent level on a designated assessment.
- *Concurrent Enrollment*—qualified students taking college courses concurrently while in high school.
- *Dual Enrollment*—qualified students taking middle level or high school courses while at the elementary level or high school courses while at the middle level.

Flexible Pacing (Ways to Implement)

- *Cluster Grouping*—any classroom with a group of identified, able learners purposefully organized to provide planned differentiated instruction most of the time.
- *Cross Grade Grouping*—opportunity for a student to work in an advanced grade-level setting with one or more students sharing a similar readiness for the learning task and performance expectations.

- *Instructional Groups*—any group of identified, able learners organized to provide planned, differentiated instruction in a curriculum area.
- *Individualization of Instruction*—instruction for an individual student focused on the specific educational needs of that student.

Other Services

- *Guidance and Counseling*—planned activities, sessions and policies that assist gifted and talented students in planning their academic career in school and after high school, and that also address the specific social-emotional needs of the gifted, including underachievement.
- *Duke Talent Search* or similar services—conducted by Duke University (or other agency) to identify academically talented youth and inform them about their abilities and academic options.

Curriculum

The curriculum, delivered via the options listed above, extends or replaces the regular curriculum. It is differentiated in content, process, and product, as well as in breadth, depth, and pace. Creativity and higher-level thinking skills are developed. The curriculum assures continuity.

Homework Requirements: The cooperation of the regular classroom teacher is essential for the student's success in the elementary GT program, as gifted education program services extend or replace the regular curriculum. GT students will not be required to complete the daily classroom assignments missed during their attendance in GT program activities/classes. Missed tests or exams may be made up according to the guidelines in Union's Student Handbook. Long-term assignments should be completed by the GT student by the assigned due date.

Attendance: Discipline problems should not result in suspension of attendance in the GT program, unless the student is currently on an individual behavior management plan. The elementary homeroom teachers and/or parent may request that a student be excused from attending GT programming on a given date for a specified purpose, only if the request is presented in advance to the GT teacher.

Evaluation

An annual evaluation of the gifted education program will be conducted. The plan for annual evaluation includes the components of (a) identification, (b) staff development, (c) programming options, (d) curriculum, (e) community involvement and evaluation, and is coordinated by the GT district administrator. This plan is developed at the time the programming option is planned (for flexible pacing, enrichment, and academic/social support), using a variety of instruments and information sources, with description of types of data to be collected and by whom. Student progress is assessed, with attention to content mastery as well as higher-level thinking skills and development of creativity. These data are compiled and analyzed by GT teachers (*Enrichment Specialists*) with the GT district administrator, then submitted to the Gifted Local Advisory Committee, and administrative teams at the district and/or site levels. It is expected that this evaluation process will provide accurate, timely, and relevant information in order to assure continuous improvement of the gifted education program.

Local Advisory Committee

The Local Advisory Committee consists of no less than three and no more than eleven members who are demographically representative of the community, including parents and community members as well as school district staff who have training in gifted education. Members are appointed by the Board of Education upon the recommendation of the superintendent by September 15 of each year; it meets no later than October 1. This and all subsequent meetings are subject to the provisions of the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act. This committee assists in writing district GT goals, develops the district GT plan, oversees the district report on GT programming, and performs other advisory duties as requested by the Board of Education.

Qualifications and Responsibilities of Gifted Child Educational Program Staff

GT teachers and coordinators hold valid Oklahoma teaching certificates appropriate to the grade levels included in the program. They participate in in-service training or college training in order to strengthen their abilities in gifted education.

Elementary Enrichment Specialists provide oversight and services to students in the identification, placement and evaluation processes. They also serve as the school representative for GT matters at the district level.

Secondary Gifted and Talented Coordinators provide oversight to the identification, placement and evaluation processes for gifted students. They also facilitate supplementary programming opportunities for students and serve as the school representative for GT matters at the district level.

The district administrator responsible for gifted and talented programming oversees and supports GT program for all schools and is responsible to lead the evaluation process of the GT program. The district administrator coordinates meetings of the Local Advisory Committee, Elementary Enrichment Specialists, and Secondary Gifted and Talented Coordinators. The administrative duties may be delegated to administrators responsible for elementary and secondary programming separately at times.

Budget

A report describing the expenditures made by the district for GT programming during the previous year, by major object codes and program classifications pursuant to Oklahoma Cost Accounting System, will be submitted by the superintendent to the Oklahoma State Department of Education by August 1 of each school year. The budget for GT programming will be approved by the Board of Education.
