

STEM SCHOOL

HIGHLANDS RANCH

GIFTED & TALENTED PROGRAMMING AT STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH

At STEM School Highlands Ranch, we are committed to supporting the unique strengths, talents, and needs of our gifted learners. Our Gifted & Talented (GT) programming provides students with opportunities to develop their areas of strength, accelerate their learning, and thrive in a supportive environment.

ADVANCED LEARNING PLANS (ALPS)

- Each identified gifted student has an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) developed annually.
- ALPs outline academic goals, affective (social-emotional) goals, and strategies to support continued growth.
- Students, teachers, and families collaborate with our GT Coordinator to ensure these plans are meaningful and effective.

INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH

- **Problem-Based Learning (PBL):** Gifted students engage in authentic, hands-on learning that encourages critical thinking, creativity, and innovation across all grade levels.
- **Acceleration:** Students have access to curriculum at an advanced pace, ensuring their learning remains challenging and appropriate to their ability level.
- **Differentiation:** Classroom teachers work closely with the GT Coordinator to provide enrichment, depth, and complexity within the core curriculum.

IDENTIFICATION & SCREENING

Douglas County School District (DCSD) is committed to equitable access to advanced learning opportunities.

- **Universal Screening:** All students in **2nd and 5th grade** are screened using the **Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)** unless they are already identified for gifted programming.
- **2nd Grade Universal Screen:** As part of this process, ALL students in 2nd grade not identified for gifted programming will take the **Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)** the week of **February 2nd**. This assessment indicates the level and pattern of cognitive development of a student in comparison to grade and age mates. These general abilities, which start developing at birth and continue through early adulthood, are influenced by experiences gained both in and out of school.
- **Referral Process:** Families and teachers may refer students that are not in **2nd or 5th grade** if they believe a child should be evaluated for GT identification. This begins with completing the [DCSD Gifted Education Identification Referral Form](#).
- **Identification and Screening Information** [\(Spanish\)](#)

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RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

- [DCSD Gifted Education Identification Referral Form](#)
- [DCSD Gifted Education Identification Referral Form \(Spanish\)](#)
- [DCSD Gifted Community Website](#)
- [Douglas County Association of Gifted and Talented \(DCAGT\)](#)
- [Colorado Association of Gifted and Talented \(CAGT\)](#)
- [National Association for Gifted Children \(NAGC\)](#)
- [Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted \(SENG\)](#)
- [Colorado Department of Education - Gifted Information](#)
- [Designation Imagination](#)

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AT STEM

- **Clubs & Competitions:** Gifted students are encouraged to participate in academic clubs, STEM competitions, Destination Imagination, and leadership opportunities.
- **Enrichment Pathways:** Opportunities for advanced coursework, mentorships, and cross-grade learning are available as students progress.
- **Social-Emotional Support:** Recognizing the unique needs of gifted learners, we provide resources through counseling and social/emotional learning to support their emotional well being.

At STEM School Highlands Ranch, we believe gifted students deserve both challenge and support. Our GT programming ensures every learner is given the opportunity to grow academically, socially, and emotionally to their fullest potential.

For more information, please contact:

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