



School District of the Menomonie Area

Gifted and Talented Parent Handbook

Updated 3/1/2018

Introduction

The School District of the Menomonie Area provides quality education for ALL students, offering personalized intervention and enrichment opportunities for each child.

This Handbook is designed to help parents, educators, and administrators provide Gifted and Talented students with opportunities to be both challenged and successful in their education.

The Gifted and Talented education program offers multiple levels of advanced enrichment opportunities for students identified as Gifted and Talented. The School District of the Menomonie Area does not support supplanting of classes. If a parent request involves supplanting, this request requires approval through the DEP process which also includes administrative approval.

For people wondering whether a child qualifies for this program and what the program provides, the first person to contact is the child's classroom or homeroom teacher.

At the classroom level, the school level, and the district level, your involvement in the Gifted and Talented education program is welcomed. Through the involvement of dedicated teachers, parents, and administrators, the School District of the Menomonie Area is committed to providing every child ready for college and career.

Menomonie Area School District

Mission Statement for Gifted and Talented Education

The School District of the Menomonie Area recognizes and empowers diverse learners' exceptional abilities by challenging students to maximize their potential. In partnership with the community, and with the guidance of highly qualified teachers, students are offered differentiated and enriched learning opportunities commensurate with their interests and abilities in an environment that is intellectually and academically rigorous, fosters creativity, develops leadership and provides social/emotional support.

The School District of the Menomonie Area provides a variety of learning experiences to extend and enrich the development of students who qualify for the Gifted and Talented (GT) education program. Support and opportunities are provided based on the principles that all students have the right to an appropriate education. To achieve that objective, all students will have opportunities to:

- communicate effectively;
- think critically, reflectively, creatively, and adaptively;
- seek, access and apply information;
- exhibit responsibility and global awareness;
- display ethical behavior;
- commit to continuous learning and self-understanding;
- develop and maintain personal wellness.

Wisconsin State Standards

Wisconsin Statute 121.02(1)(t): Each school board shall provide access to an appropriate program for pupils identified as gifted and talented.

Wisconsin Statute: s. 118.35, Wis. Stats. Programs for gifted and talented pupils.

1. In this section, "gifted and talented pupils" means pupils enrolled in public schools who give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, or specific academic areas and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program in order to fully develop such capabilities.
2. The state superintendent shall by rule establish guidelines for the identification of gifted and talented pupils.
3. Each school board shall ensure that all gifted and talented pupils enrolled in the school district have access to a program for gifted and talented pupils.
4. From the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (fy), the department shall award grants to nonprofit organizations, cooperative educational service agencies, institutions within the University of Wisconsin System, and school districts for the purpose of providing to gifted and talented pupils those services and activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program that allow such pupils to fully develop their capabilities.

Administrative Rule 8.01(2)(t)2. Each school district shall establish a plan and designate a person to coordinate the gifted and talented program. Gifted and talented pupils shall be identified as required in s. **118.35(1)**, Stats. This identification shall occur in general intellectual, specific academic, leadership, creativity, and visual and performing arts. A pupil may be identified as gifted or talented in one or more of the categories under s. **118.35(1)**, Stats. The identification process shall result in a pupil profile based on multiple measures, including but not limited to standardized test data, nominations, rating scales or inventories, products, portfolios, and demonstrated performance. Identification tools shall be appropriate for the specific purpose for which they are being employed. The identification process and tools shall be responsive to factors such as, but not limited to, pupils' economic conditions, race, gender, culture, native language, developmental differences, and identified disabilities as described under subch. **V** of ch. 115, Stats. The school district board shall provide access, without charge for tuition, to appropriate programming for pupils identified as gifted or talented as required under ss. **118.35(3)** and **121.02(1)(t)**, Stats. The school district board shall provide an opportunity for parental participation in the identification and resultant programming program for gifted and talented pupils.

Key Characteristics of an Effective Gifted Education

1. Systematic
 - a. K-12 during regular school day and school hours
2. Collaborative
 - a. Responsibility of all staff members
3. Sustainable
 - a. Not dependant on one person or one source of funding
4. Responsive
 - a. Local needs considered such as demographics, curriculum, and resources
5. Fluid
 - a. Flexible and continuously adapt to student needs
6. Appropriate
 - a. Opportunities in place of instead of additional regular classroom instruction and activities
7. Comprehensive
 - a. Consider the whole child as academic, social and personal growth
8. Aligned
 - a. Goals aligned with state standards
9. Measurable
 - a. Specific enough that progress can be monitored

Source: Chrystyna Mursky, DPI

Recommendation and Identification Process

Nomination of a Gifted and Talented Student can be made by teachers, parent(s), or the student themselves.

Teacher Recommendation

- All student data is discussed during grade level PLC meetings. If a student's data shows evidence of a possible gifted and talented profile, then a referral for further testing will be completed.
- If further testing is needed, parents will be contacted and asked to complete the parent consent to be evaluated for gifted and talented form.
- After further testing is complete, parents and teacher will be notified as the results and any recommendations.

Parent/Student Recommendation

- The parent/student shall contact the classroom/homeroom teacher to discuss the area(s) of Recommendation.
- Teacher will bring nomination to the grade level PLC team meeting to discuss the gifted and talented referral.
- If a student's data shows evidence of a possible gifted and talented profile, then a referral for further testing will be completed.
- If further testing is needed, parents will be contacted and asked to complete the parent consent to be evaluated for gifted and talented form.
- After further testing is complete, parents and teacher will be notified as the results and any recommendations.

Tiered Level of Identification

Tiered Level Student Indicators		
Level 1 Possesses high capabilities	Level 2 Possesses advanced capabilities	Level 3 Possesses superior capabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IQ at or above 125 ● 95th/96th (+) percentile on nationally normed test ● Exhibits high interest in one or more topics ● Sees things from different perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two or more years beyond grade level/peers ● IQ at or above 128 ● 97th (+) percentile on nationally normed test ● Needs few repetitions for mastery ● Possesses a high interest on a topic ● Internally motivated to accomplish task in which interested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multi-years beyond grade level/peers; demonstrated through class performance or test results ● Innately capable/aptitude in academics, leadership, intellect, creativity, or visual-performing arts ● 98th (+) percentile on a nationally normed test ● IQ at or above 130 ● Unrelenting passion on a topic which is internally prompted ● Significantly stands apart from peers. Unconventional approach to life's issues or to solve problems
Regular Classroom Differentiation	Opportunities Beyond the Regular Classroom	Individualized Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enrichment and/or acceleration ● Flexible grouping within and across grade levels ● Extend Skill Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pull-out extension activities ● Advanced classes ● Enrichment and/or acceleration ● Flexible grouping within and across grade levels ● Extend Skill Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>DEP</i> - Differentiated Education Plan

* *There are many other educational opportunities, which can be utilized that are not listed*

High Achiever versus Gifted and Talented

High Achiever

- Knows the answers
- Is receptive to new ideas
- Is interested in learning
- Copies accurately
- Is attentive in class
- Enjoys school
- Loves the teacher
- Absorbs information
- Has good ideas
- Is a technician of ideas
- Answers the questions
- Good memorizer
- Loves to memorize
- Completes assignments
- Enjoys a straightforward, sequential presentation
- Works hard
- Is alert
- A top group student
- Is pleased with his/her own learning
- Listens with interest
- Likes an authority to be in charge
- Loves rules
- Learns with ease
- Learns easily at the knowledge and comprehension level
- Six to Eight repetitions for mastery
- Wants the "rules" of the assignment spelled out
- "What do I need to do to get an A?"
- Understands ideas
- Enjoys peers
- Grasps the meaning
- Is focused on the end product

Gifted and Talented Student

- * Asks the questions
- * Is intense about ideas
- * Is highly curious
- * Creates a new design or way
- * Is mentally & physically involved
- * Enjoys learning
- * Loves ideas
- * Manipulates information
- * Has wild, silly ideas
- * Is an inventor of ideas
- * Discusses in detail, elaborates
- * Good, informed guesser
- * Loves to think and ponder
- * Initiates projects
- * Thrives on complexity and loves ambiguity
- * Plays around, yet tests well
- * Is keenly observant
- * Is beyond the group
- * Is highly self-critical
- * Shows strong feelings & opinions
- * Has own idea of how it should be done
- * Wants only basic guidelines
- * Already knows
- * Sees relationships and combines ideas; sees the whole picture
- * One to two repetitions for mastery
- * "I want to do it my way" or has a better way to do it
- * "What is the purpose of the assignment?"
- * Constructs abstractions
- * Prefers older students or adults
- * Draws inferences
- * Is focused on the "journey"

Adapted from "The Gifted and Talented Child" by Janice Szabos, MD Council for GT, Inc.

Glossary of Terms

Acceleration - grade: Students are moved ahead one or more grade levels for their total program.

Acceleration - subject: Students move ahead one or more grade levels in a subject area but remain at the regular grade level for most of their program.

AP (Advanced Placement) Classes: A nationally recognized program which consists of college-level courses and examinations for high school students.

Autonomous Learner: A self directed student; a learner who makes positive educational decisions which further his/her learning.

Cluster groups: An arrangement in which a group of approximately 4-8 students with similar talents are assigned to a particular teacher in order to facilitate modifications of their curriculum.

Competitions: Competitions which encourage a student to perform at a high level of skill or thinking, to solve challenging problems, and/or to create new products such as inventions or creative writing. Competitions might include, but not be limited to, Math Counts, various Olympiads, writing competitions, and competitions in the performing and visual arts.

Cooperative Learning: A teaching strategy utilizing the concept of cooperative group effort in achieving a goal or purpose. Each participant has a determined role in helping the group reach their goal. Not synonymous with group work.

Creativity: Specific instruction in techniques that encourage the development of fluency, flexibility, elaboration, originality, complexity, curiosity, imagination, and risk-taking.

Curriculum Compacting: Modifying or “stream-lining” the regular curriculum in order to eliminate repetition of previously mastered material and to provide time for appropriate enrichment and/or acceleration activities while ensuring mastery of basic skills.

D. E. P.: A Differentiated Educational Plan created for an identified student due to the level of acceleration/services required to meet learning needs. This plan is developed at the school site with parents and staff on an as needed basis.

Differentiation: At its most basic level, differentiating instruction means "shaking up" what goes on in the classroom so that students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas, and expressing what they learn. In other words, a differentiated classroom provides different avenues to acquiring content, to processing or making sense of ideas, and to developing products.

Dual Enrollment: Students at any grade level, who are allowed to simultaneously take courses at the next school level.

Early Entrance: An acceleration strategy in which a student enters elementary, middle, high school, or college earlier than the age usually prescribed.

Early Graduation: When all high school requirements have been met and the student is allowed to graduate before the end of her/his senior year.

Enrichment: Provides students with opportunities to be challenged with more complex, higher level thinking and/or broader based activities instead of regular classroom work (different – not more).

Flexible grouping: Grouping of talent pool students together within a classroom or between classrooms in order to provide instruction or activities at an appropriate level in the students' talent areas. Groupings may be short term or long term.

Higher level thinking: Activities or assignments which require the students to operate at the levels of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. May be enhanced by teaching students the differences between the levels of thinking and by discussing the thinking levels/skills used in various activities.

Independent study/project: A programming option in which students pursue an extensive study of an area of interest or complete a course independently rather than by attending a class. In some cases, students may earn credit for the independent study program.

Leadership skills: Direct teaching of concepts and skills related to leadership, including concepts of leader and leadership, characteristics of leaders, communication skills needed for leadership, understanding of group processes and dynamics, decision making skills, planning skills, problem solving skills, conflict resolution, the study of leaders, and the taking of leadership roles.

Level 4 assignments: Assignments given to a particular student or small group instead of the assignment given to the rest of the class. Designed to be more challenging or to capitalize on a student's interests or skills. See also: Tiering

Pull-out groups: Programming in which students meet periodically during the year to participate in specific enrichment activities in their talent areas, usually under the guidance of a gifted and talented resource teacher or other adult.

RtI: Response to Intervention/Instruction: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction recognizes the potential of RtI for achieving higher levels of academic and behavioral success for all students, including those whose needs extend beyond the core curriculum. For this reason, Wisconsin uses Response to Intervention /Instruction to reflect this inclusive philosophy.

Tiering: Tiering is a process of developing assignments or assessments with parallel tasks at varied levels of complexity, depth and abstractness with various degrees of scaffolding, support or direction. Students work on different levels of activities, all with the same essential understanding or goal in mind.

Strategies for Differentiating Instruction

Abstraction	Content that goes beyond surface detail and facts to underlying concepts, generalizations, and symbolism
Active Engagement	Instructional strategies that result in relevance and engagement for students.
Agendas	A personalized list of tasks that a particular student must complete in a specified time
Choice	Provide opportunities for choices and flexibility. Many GT students love the opportunity for choice and given an opportunity will construct their own differentiated choices.
Choice boards, Tic-tac-toe	Students make a work selection from a certain row or column. Teachers can provide for student learning needs while giving students choice.
Compacting	This strategy should be done at <i>all</i> levels to prevent repetition and re-teaching of content students have already mastered. To compact, the teacher must pre-test students in the content to be presented. Students mastering, or nearly mastering the content, then move on to an advanced level of difficulty.
Conceptual discussions	High level discussions of themes, concepts, generalizations, issues, and problems, rather than a review of facts, terms and details.
Extensions	Offer relevant extension options for learners who need additional challenges.
Flexible Assessments	Offer different assessment options that allow students to demonstrate their mastery of new concepts, content, and skills.
Flexible tasks	Allowing students to structure their own projects and investigations according to their strengths and interests.
Flexible project deadlines	Students negotiate for more or less time to complete a learning experience and its matching product or assessment.
Grouping	Regular opportunities to work in whole groups, small groups, with a partner, or in an independent setting
Higher-order thinking skills	Questioning in discussion or providing activities based on processing that requires analysis, synthesis, evaluation, or other critical thinking skills.
Independent study	Students research a teacher-chosen or self-chosen topic, developing either traditional or non-traditional products to demonstrate learning.
Jigsaw/Cooperative learning	Just as in a jigsaw puzzle, each piece-each student's part is essential for the full completion and full understanding of the final product.
Learning centers or stations	Activity stations that demonstrate awareness of different academic needs and learning style preferences.
Learning contracts	Students negotiate individually with teacher about what and how much will be learned and when product will be due; often connected with an individual or independent project-see Appendix A.
Learning programs	Computer programs or websites to meet learners' needs.
Mini-lessons	Mini-lessons provide levels of scaffolding, support and challenge as needed for students of like ability/need.
Most difficult first	Students can demonstrate a mastery of a concept by completing the five most difficult problems with 85 percent accuracy. Students who demonstrate mastery do not need to practice any more.
Open-ended	Providing students with tasks and work that do not have single right answers or

assignments	outcomes. The tasks may have timelines and a sequence of activities to be accomplished, but outcomes will vary for each student
Orbital study/Genius Hour Pre-assessment	Independent investigations, generally of three to six weeks. They orbit or revolve around some facet of the curriculum. Students select their own topics for the orbital, and they work with guidance and coaching from the teacher to develop more expertise on the topic as well as learning the skills of an investigator.
Pre-assessment	An array of pre-assessment options can guide instruction. By regularly pre-assessing students, teachers can flexibly group students by ability and readiness levels. Pre-assessment is also essential for compacting.
Problem-based learning	A student-centered instructional strategy in which students collaboratively solve problems and reflect on their experiences. Learning is driven by challenging, open-ended problems. Students work in small collaborative groups. Teachers take on the role as "facilitators" of learning.
RAFT	Provides students choice in a writing assignment varying Role, Audience, Format, and Topic.
Subject integration "Theme-based" units	Uniting two or more disciplines and their content through a conceptual theme, such as "origins," "change" or "friendship."
Tiered assignments	Varied levels of tasks to ensure that students explore ideas and use skills at a level that builds on what they already know and encourages growth. All students explore the same essential ideas but work at different levels of depth and complexity.
Vary levels of complexity	Books and instructional materials at different levels of complexity allow students to study the same concepts but at levels of depth and complexity to fit their learning needs.
Vary pacing	Planning to accommodate varied pacing allowing students to move through content at a pace appropriate for their learning needs.
Vary tasks	Providing different homework options, journal prompts, and questions

Resources for Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

[Gifted and Talented Education in Wisconsin](#)

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