**Riverview School District**

**Gifted and Talented Handbook**

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**Board Approved 2/2014**

**RIVERVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM**

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Numbers reflect requirements stated in the Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards from the Arkansas Department of Education.

**OUR PHILIOSOPHY**

The gifted and talented program is built on a fundamental belief in serving the needs of all our students as unique individuals. We believe that gifted and talented individuals have special characteristics. Potential for accomplishment is such that they require special provisions, experiences, and services not provided in the regular instructional program.

We are committed to provide a program for identifying and meeting the needs and interests of our gifted and talented students. The identification and placement of these gifted and talented students will be based on documented objective and subjective evidence which shall include above average intellectual ability, creative ability, skills, products, and task commitment/motivation.

Gifted and talented students are outstanding consumers and producers of knowledge and ideas in any worthwhile endeavor. They may have potential abilities in general intelligence, creative or productive thinking, exceptional leadership, and specific aptitudes. These abilities must be cultivated, nurtured, and developed.

Gifted and talented students must be provided opportunities to interact with their peers and to work with materials, which challenge their abilities and encourage them to expand their abstract thinking and reasoning skills.

Maximizing the potential of gifted and talented students requires a commitment of school, community, and home. The gifted and talented program is designed to cultivate within the student a desire for excellence and sense of productive responsibility to self, family, school, community, and to our changing society.

**HISTORY OF GIFTED EDUCATION**

National attention was not given to gifted education until 1957 when Russia successfully launched Sputnik, which shocked America. A special federal report in 1972 resulted in the creation of the office of Gifted and Talented. Since 1975 emphasis has increased on providing educational opportunities for gifted and talented students. All states require local school districts to implement programs for identifying and serving gifted and talented students.

**DEFINITION OF THE GIFTED OR TALENTED**

The gifted/talented child and youth are those with high potential or ability whose learning characteristics and educational needs require qualitatively differentiated educational experiences and/or services.

**4.00 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Opportunities for community awareness and involvement in the gifted program are available throughout the school year. Questions and suggestions are accepted throughout the year. Please contact the GT coordinator/teacher or check the school website for more information.

* *Report to the Public* and *Open House* in August of each year
  + Information about the gifted program is shared annually.
* *Parent-Teacher Conferences* in the fall and spring of each year
* Other family involvement opportunities offered at the individual campuses
* Opportunities to chaperone field trips and help with tournaments and projects
* *GT Bulletin* newsletters are distributed periodically throughout the year
* GT website (accessed through the Riverview School District website) provides information about upcoming opportunities for involvement
* *GT Advisory Committee*

Every year parents and community members are invited to be part of the GT advisory committee. This group of parents and community members meet with the GT coordinator/teacher at least once annually to discuss components of the program. Suggestions and questions will also be addressed at these meetings.

**5.00 Staff Development**

All staff members will receive training from the GT coordinator/teacher annually. Training will include information about the identification process, differentiation procedures, or other topics that would help teachers challenge gifted students in the regular classroom.

**6.00 Personnel**

The GT coordinator/teacher will hold a current Arkansas Teaching License, pass appropriate state approved assessments, and meet performance standards as set by the State Board of Education through the Arkansas Department of Education, professional licensure department for add-on endorsement in gifted education.

**7.00 IDENTIFICATION**

Identification for placement in the gifted and talented program is an ongoing process throughout the year and across grade levels.

The identification process consists of three main stages:

1. Referral

2. Screening

3. Placement

Public Announcement

Phase

3

Placement

Phase

2

Screening

Phase

1

Referral

Accept Referrals

from Stakeholders

Gather Data

Using nondiscriminatory objective and subjective instruments

Test of Mental Ability

Test of Creative Ability

Teacher and Parent Surveys

Achievement Tests

Identification Committee Meeting

(Blind Screening))

Notification of

Placement Services

**Identification Process**

Identification of gifted and talented students will consist of the following steps:

1. Teachers, parents, students, peers, and community members may refer students that show characteristics of needing the gifted and talented program. The GT coordinator/teacher may also refer students based on work samples collected from enrichment in kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades.

2. Once referred, multiple methods and instruments are used to screen referred students. The following instruments are used during the initial screening process:

a. Standardized group achievement test

b. Individual Ability IQ test

c. Rating scales from teachers

d. Rating scales from parents

e. Creativity test

f. Student grades

g. Work samples-from classroom or GT enrichment work samples that exhibit characteristics of giftedness.

3. Once tested, an identification committee chaired by the GT coordinator, consisting of principals, counselors, and teachers will review each student's profile. Referred students will be given ID numbers for reference (blind screening). Placement decisions will be based on multiple criteria mentioned above and no cut-off score will be used to include or exclude a student.

4. If evidence collected for a student is inconclusive, an in depth case study may be done.

5. Parents of all tested students will be notified by mail of student placement recommendations. Students that are identified as gifted and talented will be placed in the program after receiving parental permission to enter the program.

6. Records on both the identified and non-identified students are maintained by the GT coordinator.

Information gathered during the gifted and talented screening and identification process will be made available to the regular classroom teachers of both the identified and non-identified students. Information given to the other teachers will include: (1) student strengths, (2) student weaknesses, (3) special needs of students, (4) special interest areas of students. Specific suggestions will be made to the classroom teacher when appropriate. This information will be provided to teachers in a meeting with the GT coordinator/teacher.

**Transfer of GT Students**

If a student has been previously placed in a gifted program at another school, GT testing records will be requested and reviewed. Retesting may be required. Placement will be determined by the identification committee and the process mentioned above will be followed. Placement decisions will be based on the student’s needs and the program options available.

**Exit Procedures**

Students are placed in the gifted program based on need as determined by a committee examining multiple criteria during the screening process. If evidence suggests that a student no longer requires the services offered by the gifted program, the procedures listed below will be followed.

Guidelines for Removal from the Gifted Program

1. Parent or guardian requests a student to be removed from the gifted program.

The GT teacher will contact the parent to discuss reasons for wanting the child removed from the program. If the parent continues to feel that the program cannot meet the needs of the student, said student will be removed immediately from the gifted program.

1. GT teacher or classroom teacher requests a student to be removed. The teacher must present the reasons in writing to the GT coordinator and the identification committee. The identification committee, chaired by the GT coordinator will review the information. Additional records, testing, or information may be requested for the committee to make a decision based on multiple criteria that will best meet the educational needs of the student. Criteria examined will include at minimum two objective, two subjective, and a creativity measure.

The committee may recommend:

1. The student remains in the gifted program.
2. The student remains in the gifted program and a plan will be developed to assist the student with areas of concern.
3. The student will be removed from the gifted program.

The final decision concerning removal or continuation of a student will be the responsibility of the identification committee chaired by the GT coordinator. After the decision has been made, the coordinator will notify the parent in writing. Parents have the right to appeal the decision.

**Appeal Procedures**

If a parent/guardian or student disagrees with the decision of the identification committee it should be communicated to the GT coordinator. The person requesting the appeal will be asked to create a signed written appeal that contains the following:

1. Student name, name of person requesting the appeal, and the date
2. A short statement of the disagreement
3. Any additional information that might be helpful when the committee reviews the case

The identification committee chaired by the GT coordinator, consisting of a principal, counselor, and two teachers, will meet to review the initial placement decision and information provided by thedissatisfied party. The committee will review all the required data sources of at least two objective and two subjective measures, one of which must assess creativity, used in the initial placement decision. The person appealing the decision will not be present while the committee reviews the data. Additional testing or information may be requested by the committee. A decision will be made by the identification committee. The person requesting the appeal will be notified by mail of the committee decision.

**8.00 PROGRAM OPTIONS**

**Program Goals**

1. To develop high-level thinking and creativity.
2. To provide appropriate intellectual acceleration.
3. To provide appropriate educational enrichment.
4. To develop independence and self-direction.
5. To assist with personal and social development.
6. To promote leadership and independent thinkers.

**Program Objectives**

Provide services and in-service through staff development for teachers and administrators.

1. To identify all gifted and talented students who have the greatest need for qualitatively differentiated educational experiences and/or services.
2. To involve the community through advisory committee, volunteers, media releases and surveys, in the gifted and talented program.
3. To provide a wide variety of program options.
4. To evaluate the program so that it is responsive to student’s needs.

The gifted and talented program provides these opportunities beginning in kindergarten. All students from kindergarten through second grade are provided educational enrichment, including creativity and critical thinking. Enrichment classes are a minimum of 30 minutes a week, with at least one time per month taught by a GT teacher. Beginning in third grade, students that are identified for placement in the gifted and talented program are provided opportunities to develop in all the program goals through the use of gifted and talented curriculum units, technology, and independent study projects. These students meet with the GT teacher in a resource setting at least 150 minutes per week until they complete sixth grade.

Beginning in seventh grade, GT students are provided instruction from teachers that have been trained in differentiated instruction for advanced learners. Secondary content teachers have been trained to develop modified instruction for those students with gifted abilities. In high school, students can take Pre-AP classes in the core content areas to prepare them to take AP classes for college credit. The teachers of AP and Pre-AP classes are trained to offer differentiated instruction to the advanced learners. At least one AP course is offered in science, social studies, math, and English each year. College credit courses are available to students entering college. Acceleration as a program option is addressed in the Riverview School District’s student handbook.

**9.00 CURRICULUM**

Curriculum for the gifted must differ in degree and in kind. It is ***in place of*** the regular curriculum, not in addition to regular curriculum. GT students should not be penalized for being identified as gifted by being given extra work. Modifications to the regular curriculum should be made by differentiating the content, process, and/or product

The gifted and talented enrichment curriculum for kindergarten through second grades is based on the "Primary Heaven Curriculum," GT Scope and Sequence, and science, social studies, literacy, and math standards. All lessons are designed for age appropriate students with high abilities. Lessons are differentiated in content, process, or product.

The 3rd-6th grade pullout gifted program is based on the needs and interests of the students. There are between two and five projects required each year. These projects are individual, small group or large group designed. Every project requires creativity, higher order thinking, and leadership. Projects are differentiated in content, process, and/or product.

The junior high and high school have teachers differentiating curriculum in the secondary content areas. Differentiation may occur in content, process, and/or product. Students are also offered a monthly meeting with the GT teacher to focus on creativity, affective development, and critical/logical thinking skills. At the high school, Pre-AP, AP and concurrent credit college classes are offered to the students.

**Curriculum Outline**

A. Content

1. Advanced level concepts

2. Organized around a major issue

3. Allow for integrations of multiple disciplines

B. Process Developing

1. Basic skills

2. Research skills

3. Thinking skills

A. Creative thinking

B. Critical thinking

C. Problem solving

D. Logic

The curriculum for the gifted should encompass Bloom’s taxonomy of cognitive, affective and psychomotor development, creativity training, and the following objectives:

A. Continuing interest in learning

B. Stimulating curiosity

C. Developing independent thinking

D. Providing for various levels of intellect and cultural differences

E. Providing broader scope, not just higher sequence

F. Developing the ability to work cooperatively with others

G. Providing for personal/social development

H. Enhancing demonstrated skills or talent areas

I. Providing work for specific weakness

J. Opportunity to develop leadership qualities

**10.00 EVALUATION**

**Program Evaluation**

Evaluation is the collecting, analyzing and reporting of data for the purpose of making decisions about educational programs. It is a process to be carried out so that improvement of services to students will result through the continuation, elimination, or change of those conditions that affect students' learning.

The evaluation plan for our district’s gifted and talented program is designed to provide information relative to program effectiveness and student growth, thereby allowing decision makers to determine how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives and how well the component parts are working.

For its present evaluation design, the district chooses to employ questionnaires and items which are evaluating criteria for the major goals and specific objectives established for the program as well as for the standards. Specific questionnaires are given to classroom teachers, GT students, parents, administration, and community members including school board members. Survey questions are designed to evaluate all programming components. Data from each group is then analyzed, tabulated and compiled into reports which are made available to the appropriate individuals and stakeholder groups including ADE-Office of Gifted and Talented and Advanced Placement.

**GT Student Evaluation**

Evaluation of student progress is accomplished through a variety of methods. Procedures may include: standardized instruments, teacher-made checklists, **and** appraisal of products by self or peers and classroom teachers. If annual review data indicates that current placement may not be most appropriate for meeting the student’s needs, then exit procedures will be followed to determine the most appropriate placement for the student.

* 9 week reports from classroom teacher
* 9 week reports from GT teacherfor pullout students (3rd-6th grade)-The GT report is used to document assessment of the level of mastery of content, higher level thinking skills, creativity, and affective growth.
* GT teacher and student discussions
* GT placement is noted in the student’s permanent record folder and entered into APSCN.

**WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO HELP?**

Parents share with the school an important responsibility in helping their children to achieve their maximum potential. Some of the ways in which parents can supplement and extend the school programs are:

1. Share an interest in reading with your children: Read to them and discuss with them the books they are reading. Be sure they have a library card and have the opportunity to use it often.
2. Encourage originality: Help children make their own toys, projects, or models from wood, clay, or other materials.
3. Encourage questions: Help your children find books or other sources which can provide answers rather than attempting to answer all questions yourself.
4. Stimulate creative thinking and problem solving: Encourage children to try solutions without fear of making mistakes. Help them to value their own thinking, learn from their mistakes and encourage them to try again.
5. Foster good work habits: Help children to plan their work and then be sure they complete their plan. This applies to daily tasks at home and in the community as well as school work.
6. Find time for the family to talk together about many different things, help your children work toward expressing themselves better.
7. Allow for some free time to encourage your children to wonder, to engage in reflective thoughts and to appreciate the world around them.
8. Be a real companion to your children: Explore and share each other’s thinking. Enjoy your children and help them to remember their childhood with pleasure.

**National Association for Gifted Children**

**Local Resources of Interest**

Arkansas Art Center

Discovery Museum

Public Library

UALR Fine Arts Gallery

Toltec Mounds State Part Museum

Museum of Science and History

Old State House

Territorial Restoration

Mount Olive Cemetery, Little Rock

Mid America Museum

Children Theatre, Conway

Ice Skating

**CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED LEARNERS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A Bright Child… | A Gifted Learner… |
| Knows the answers. | Asks the questions. |
| Is interested. | Is highly curious. |
| Is attentive. | Is mentally and physically involved. |
| Has good ideas. | Has wild, silly ideas. |
| Works hard. | Plays around, yet tests well. |
| Enjoys sequential presentation. | Thrives on complexity. |
| Learns with ease. | Already knows. |
| Answers the questions. | Discusses in detail, elaborates. |
| Is in the top group. | Is beyond the group. |
| Listens with interest | Shows strong opinions. |
| Is pleased with own learning. | Is highly self-critical. |
| Understands ideas. | Constructs abstractions. |
| Enjoys peers. | Prefers adults. |
| Grasps the meaning. | Draws inferences. |
| Completes assignments. | Initiates projects. |
| Is receptive. | Is intense. |
| Copies accurately. | Creates a new design. |
| Enjoys school. | Enjoys learning. |
| Absorbs information | Manipulates information. |
| Is a technician. | Is an inventor. |

Source: Janice Szabos, Challenge Magazine. Tennessee Association for the Gifted: http://www.tag-tenn.org