Mission Statements

Elizabeth School District

To provide our students with excellent and diverse learning opportunities that inspire passion for learning, develop individual potential, and prepare them for a successful future.

Colorado Department of Education

Ensure gifted student growth and achievement through systems of support, programming and advocacy.

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CHALLENGE

The surest path to positive self esteem is to succeed at something which one perceived would be difficult.

Each time we steal a student’s struggle, we steal the opportunity for them to build self-confidence.

They must learn to do hard things to feel good about themselves. – Sylvia Rimm
Characteristics of ...  

While it is unusual for a child to manifest all of the following behavioral characteristics, parents will see many of them even at an early age:

- Possesses a large storehouse of information about a variety of topics
- Shows quick mastery and recall of factual information
- Has insight into cause-effect relationships
- Has a ready grasp of underlying principles
- Is a keen and alert observer
- Exhibits advanced vocabulary for age or grade level
- Reads with comprehension at an early age
- Displays curiosity about many topics
- Has a passionate interest area
- Is intense; gets totally absorbed in activities and thoughts
- Prefers complex and challenging tasks rather than “basic” work
- Sees connections between apparently unconnected ideas and activities
- Prefers to work independently
- Prefers older companions
- Is a perfectionist
- Has a sophisticated sense of humor
- Loves puzzles, mazes, numbers

Source: Adapted from Clark (1992) and Seagoe (1974)
Identification of Gifted Students

*Hide not your talents. They for use were made. What’s a sundial in the shade?* – Benjamin Franklin

Gifted Education is a strength-based model that identifies students with exceptional abilities and potential. The purpose of identification is not to label a child, but to match instruction, programming and support systems to their identified area(s) of strength.

**Definition**

"Gifted and talented children" means those persons between the ages of five and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services.

Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice-exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic, ethnic and cultural populations.

Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:

- General or specific intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, music and psychomotor abilities

**Identification Process**

The identification process begins with a referral that may come from a variety of sources such as:

- Universal Screening at second and sixth grades using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
- Parent, teacher or student referrals
- Achievement measures
- Behavioral observations
- Performance indicators

Once a student has been referred for gifted identification, a body of evidence is collected that includes quantitative and qualitative data. Criteria for identification usually requires three qualifying pieces of data that meet the state criteria of 95th percentile or higher on a norm referenced approved measurement tool or an advanced or distinguished level on a criterion referenced approved measurement tool or performance rubric.

Identification is determined by a team of educators who have been trained in the gifted identification process, procedures and criteria. Once the process is completed, students, parents and teachers are notified. Students who have a body of evidence that partially meets required criteria may be placed in a talent pool for further consideration over time.

**Colorado State Board of Education Rules for the Administration of the Exceptional Children’s Educational Act**

12.02(2)(d) Criteria for Determining Exceptional Ability (Giftedness) or Talent Pool

12.02(2)(d)(i) For each category of giftedness defined in 12.01 (16), criteria for exceptional ability means: 95 percentile or above on a standardized nationally normed test or observation tool, or a rating on a performance assessment that indicates exceptionality/distinguished compared to age mates.

12.02(2)(d)(ii) Not meeting criteria on a single assessment tool shall not prevent further data collection or consideration for identification, if other indicators suggest exceptional potential as observed in a body of evidence.

12.02(2)(d)(iii) Criteria for screening assessments is a score range less than the 95 percentile ranking or results on observation/performance assessment tools as determined by the AU to determine referrals, further data collection and observation, and/or formation of student talent pools.
Teachers play a vital role in the identification of gifted students in three ways.

Referral:
- Gifted students are often referred to the RtI team for behavior problems that may arise from a lack of challenge and slow pacing in the classroom. Such a student might be achieving, but causing problems in the classroom or not achieving and having behavior issues. Further testing and observation can point to possible giftedness, which the collection of a body of evidence for formal identification.

- A teacher may also observe that a student in the classroom is thinking and performing at a very high level, but has not been identified as gifted. In this case, the school Gifted Education Liaison is notified and the teacher fills out a referral form to initiate the identification process.

Observation
When a body of evidence is being collected on a student for gifted identification, the school Gifted Education Liaison may contact the student’s primary classroom teacher to fill out the Gifted Evaluation Scale 3. The GES-3 is a normed behavior and characteristics instrument used to record gifted behaviors in students ages 5-18 years old. If asked to complete the scale, the teacher should refer to the document, How to use the Gifted Evaluation Scale – Third Edition (GES-3) – as part of a Body of Evidence for Gifted Identification in the appendix of this handbook.

Data Collection
The school’s Gifted Education Liaison may also ask the classroom teacher to collect data on a student for the body of evidence. Such data could include MAP percentiles or RIT scores; state assessment data, classroom performance assessments or portfolio of work.

Administering the CogAT
Classroom teachers may be asked to administer the online version of the Cognitive Abilities Test 7 (CogAT7) as a universal screener. Unlike other assessments, this test is only administered at the second and sixth grades to better understand students’ reasoning skills that develop gradually throughout a person’s lifetime, and at different rates for different individuals. CogAT measures learned reasoning and problem-solving skills in three different areas: verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal. CogAT does not measure such factors as effort, attention, motivation, and work habits, which contribute to school achievement as well.

Teachers can use CogAT scores to help all students learn more effectively, and measuring how each student is progressing is an essential component of instructional planning.
Gifted Identification Criteria: Specific Academic Aptitude (with Cognitive)

Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (with Cognitive)

Content areas for specific academic aptitude include: reading, writing, math, science, social studies and world language. Two pathways may lead to identification in the area of specific academic aptitude. First, a student may score 95th percentile or above on one or more batteries of a cognitive test and demonstrate aptitude on two specific academic measures.

- Cognitive Test 95th percentile or above on one or more batteries and...two measures from any area or combination of areas below
- Criterion- or Norm-referenced Achievement Test
  - Advanced/Distinguished State Assessment and/or
  - 95th percentile or above on norm-referenced achievement test and/or
  - 95th percentile or above on CDE Resource Bank or district bank of approved assessments for non-state tested standards
- Norm-Referenced Observation Scale
  - 95th percentile or above on normed observation scale for specific content area
- Performance Evaluation
  - State or national academic contest – top place or ranking and/or
  - Expert juried performance (Advanced or Distinguished) and/or
  - Teacher/Expert assessed portfolio review (Advanced / Distinguished/Above Grade Level)

Specific Academic Aptitude
Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies, World Language
Area of Giftedness: Specific Academic Aptitude (without Cognitive)

Content areas for specific academic aptitude include: reading, writing, math, science, social studies and world language. Two pathways may lead to identification in the area of specific academic aptitude. Second, a student may not score 95th percentile or above on a cognitive assessment. However, a review team may determine a comprehensive body of evidence demonstrates gifted academic ability. Content specific measurement tools to meet criteria for identification should include at least three or more measures from two of the three areas below. When cognitive data does not meet gifted criteria, identification in a specific academic aptitude requires an examination of multiple data points and trends over time.

Three or more measures from two of the three areas below

**Criterion- Norm-referenced Achievement Test**
- Advanced/Distinguished State Assessment and/or
- 95th percentile or above on norm-referenced achievement test and/or
- 95th percentile or above on CDE Resource Bank or district bank of approved assessments for non-state tested standards

**Norm-Referenced Observation Scale**
- 95th percentile or above on normed observation scale for specific content area

**Performance Evaluation**
- State or national academic contest – top place or ranking and/or
- Expert juried performance (Advanced or Distinguished) and/or
- Teacher/Expert assessed portfolio review (Advanced / Distinguished/Above Grade Level)

**Specific Academic Aptitude**
- Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies, World Language
Area of Giftedness: General Intellectual Ability

Students may qualify in the area of general intellectual ability with a score of 95\textsuperscript{th} percentile or above on one or more batteries of a cognitive test. The determination team must collect and review additional data for the body of evidence to develop the student’s learning profile. A gifted determination based solely on a cognitive assessment score, without any other qualifying data, is the exception. A review team should use their professional judgment to determine if identification is appropriate by examining supplemental or non-traditional information collected through interviews, observations or performances beyond the academic content areas. Students from underrepresented populations may not demonstrate gifted abilities through the use of traditional assessment data. When only cognitive ability assessment data meets criteria in a body of evidence (95\textsuperscript{th} percentile or above), the review team may determine that the student is identified with general or specific intellectual ability. This meets portability requirements.

Cognitive Test

- 95th percentile or above on one or more batteries on an intellectual ability assessment

General Intellectual Ability

Observation/Performance

Checklist/Inventory

Interview
Area of Giftedness: Specific Talent Aptitude

Identification in the talent domains requires the examination of a variety of instruments and multiple pathways that lead to identification. Talent domains include: visual arts, performing arts, music, dance, psychomotor, creativity and leadership. Often criterion- or norm-referenced assessments are not available in a talent area; therefore performance evaluation is an important component in the body of evidence. If data from a valid and reliable test are not available to demonstrate exceptional ability, two or more indicators in the performance area may be used to meet identification criteria along with an exceptional rating on a norm-referenced observation scale. Identification in area of psychomotor is designated for national-level athletes who require programming accommodations to address the number of school days that might be missed during training and/or competitions. Districts are not required to provide or financially support athletic coaching, training or competitions for students identified in this area.
Advanced Learning Plan (ALP)

A student’s body of evidence is used to determine appropriate instruction and placement within the classroom. An Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) is created on an annual basis to reflect that instruction as well as students’ interests.

Advanced Learning Plans (ALP) are written in collaboration with the student, parents and school personnel. An academic SMART goal, based on the student’s identified area of strength, is written using student achievement and growth data and Colorado Academic Standards. An affective SMART goal is also created to address areas such as personal, social, leadership, communication and cultural competence or to guide career and college planning. The aim of affective goals is to teach or improve upon habits of success.

SMART goals are written annually, monitored by the student and teacher throughout the year and evaluated for success within a timeframe recorded on the ALP. Goal attainment is a shared responsibility of the student, teacher and parent as agreed upon when the ALP is created.

Advanced Learning Plans are housed in Alpine for easy teacher access or may be found at the high school and middle school levels in the student’s Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP). These plans move with the student from one grade, building or district within the state to ensure continuity for the student.

Colorado State Board of Education RULES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN’S EDUCATIONAL ACT

12.02(2)(f) Advanced Learning Plan Content

The AU shall develop an ALP for every gifted student according to the student’s determined area(s) of giftedness, interests, and instructional and affective needs. The ALP shall be considered in educational planning toward post-secondary readiness outcomes and decision-making concerning subsequent programming for that student and be used in the articulation/transition process, preschool (if applicable) through grade 12. At the high school level ALPs may blend with the student’s individualized career and academic plan (ICAP) if all content of the ALP are inclusive in the ICAP which includes achievement and affective goals.

To learn more about standards based Advanced Learning Plans go to the Colorado Department of Education’s Office of Gifted Education website to view the CAGT ALP Presentation video.

http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt
Teacher’s Role in the ALP Process

The classroom teacher is responsible for knowing which students in his or her classroom are identified as gifted and in what areas. Depending on the type of ALP the student has created, the classroom teacher has one or more responsibilities in the implementation of the ALP:

- Write and monitor ALP goal progress
- Provide appropriate programming that supports the student in goal attainment
- Provide differentiated instruction in the child’s area of giftedness
- Allow for accommodations for student to achieve the ALP goal, if outside of the teacher’s content area.

ALP Process

- At the elementary level ALPs are written, monitored and implemented by students during Extended Learning Time. Students create interest- and standards-based ALP goals for their identified area of strength and affective Habits of Mind skills.

- At the middle school level, ALPs are written, monitored and implemented during advisory class using the College in Colorado platform. Students create individual or group ALP goals that are interest- and standards-based for their identified area of strength and affective National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) standards.

- At the high school level the building Gifted Education Liaison and counselors assist students in writing, monitoring and implementing their ALP goals using the College in Colorado platform. Students may create long term secondary goals that increase their exploration and understanding of post-secondary options.

Collaboration with parents:

Once the ALP SMART goal is written and agreed upon by the teacher and student, the ALP is sent home for parent approval and input. Parents sign and return to the building Gifted Education Liaison to be placed in the students cumulative folder and uploaded to Alpine.

Building Gifted Education Liaison Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the building liaison to:

- Make sure teachers know who the gifted students are in their classrooms. The first week of school.
- Ensure that ALPs are completed for all identified students by Fall parent teacher conferences each year.
- Make a copy of the final signed and completed ALP worksheet for the classroom teacher, student, parent and student’s cumulative records folder.
- Enter SMART goals into Alpine for all identified students in their building. (Unless high school students are using College in Colorado to record their goals.)
- Collect the ALP before the end of the school year marked as completed or not. Replace the ALP worksheet in the cumulative folder with the completed ALP worksheet and enter the completion date into Alpine.
Standards Based ALPs

Affective

The purpose of affective goals is to assist gifted students in developing habits and skills of success. Such habits and skills fall under six categories:

- Personal competencies
- Social competencies
- Leadership competencies
- Cultural competencies
- Communication competencies
- College and Career guidance (Affective goals dealing with college and career can be recorded and monitored through the student’s Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) housed in the student’s personal College in Colorado account.)

As a general rule, affective goals are strength based. For instance, if a student has been identified as a leader, leadership, communication and social competencies that improve upon that strength would be appropriate goals. If however, a student is weak in a specific competency area that interferes with his or her personal or academic goals, that impediment can be addressed through an ALP goal.

Affective standards:

The Colorado Department of Education Office of Gifted Education provides a variety of standards to choose from when meeting gifted students affective needs. These documents are located at the end of this handbook:

- National Association for Gifted Children Standards
- Colorado Community College Essential Skills
- Career Standards and Indicators
- CDE Leadership Standards
- Affective Competence Chart

Academic

Academic goals provide impetus for instruction and learning that is commensurate with the gifted student’s ability and potential in his or her area(s) of identified strength.

Best Practices in Gifted Education:

Classroom instruction that follows best practices in gifted education is important to the success of gifted students’ learning and growth as measured through the advanced learning plan. Best instruction includes, but is not limited to:

- Acceleration/Grouping
- Pre-testing
- Inquiry using Depth and Complexity Icons
- Reinforcing habits, practices and skills necessary to “become an expert”
- Facilitating the student making interdisciplinary connections
- Allowing faster instructional pacing based on the student’s rate of acquisition

Academic standards:

When writing ALP goals using academic standards consider the following options:

- Depth & Breadth: Use depth and complexity to broaden student thinking and learning about a standard. This is done through differentiated lessons, tasks and learning outcomes.
- Acceleration: Use MAP RIT bands to determine what above grade level standards the student is ready to learn. Allow students to test out of classes or standards to do independent projects, mentorships, internships or work study
- Student-directed: The ultimate goal is for gifted students to become self-directed in their learning. This should result in student-driven ALPs at the middle or high school level.
Programming

Programming for gifted students in the Elizabeth C-1 School District is predominantly done within the regular classroom using differentiated instruction strategies. Content acceleration and flexible cluster groups. Honors and Advanced Placement classes are also instructional options for gifted students.

Differentiation Models

The district predominantly uses three models for gifted differentiation

Depth and Complexity Model—Sandra Kaplan

This model differentiates thinking by adding depth and complexity to programming for gifted students.

Depth in the curriculum is ensured by including: the language of the discipline; details, rules, and patterns; trends; ethical issues; unanswered questions and big ideas. Complexity is created by examining: multiple perspectives, changes over time and interdisciplinary links.

Differentiation of Instruction Model—Carol Ann Tomlinson

This model describes how to respond to the needs of gifted learners by modifying content, process and products to match students’ readiness, interests and learning profiles.

Integrated Curriculum Model (ICM)—Joyce VanTassel-Baska

This curriculum framework emphasizes advanced content, higher level thinking processes and products and interdisciplinary themes

The district has materials and is in the process of training teachers in the use of materials created at The College of William and Mary using this model.

Extensions and Enrichment Opportunities

Secondary Students are invited to attend the Ultimate Scavenger Hunt 3-day retreat for grades 7-12. This event brings students from Colorado’s north and eastern plains together with experts to think about big ideas, network with gifted peers, experience team work and collaboration through physical and mental problem solving and take educated risks outside their comfort zones at mountain retreats and colleges around the state.

Elementary Students are invited to participate in the Ultimate Celebration twice a year. This regional event, hosted by the Northeast Region gets students grades 3-6 together to interact with like-ability peers and explore content areas through inquiry led by Colorado experts from a variety of fields.

Elizabeth C-1 also offers a summer week long STEAM Camp for gifted and talent pool students grades 2-5.

Depth & Complexity Resources

- Depth & Complexity PLC in Google Classrooms https://classroom.google.com/u/0/c/NTY0MDg4OTFa (email kkendig@esdk12.or for the entry code)
- Colorado
- JTaylor Education materials for purchase http://jtayloredducation.com/
- Downloadable Depth & Complexity Icons for classroom use http://jtayloredducation.com/downloadable-icons/
- YouTube Gifted Education Channel ESDK has multiple videos on Depth & Complexity https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbbkoEma9pfVGfErsDcGxgw
Colorado Department of Education (CDE): This link within the larger Colorado Department of Education is provided to assist with questions that both educators and parents may have around working with gifted and talented students. http://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/index.htm

Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented (CAGT): CAGT is a nonprofit organization of parents, educators, and others interested in promoting suitable education, including creative stimulation, for gifted and talented children, while also seeking public recognition and aid for the special needs of these children. http://www.coloradogifted.org/

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC): NAGC is a non-profit organization of parents, teachers, educators, other professionals and community leaders who unite to address the unique needs of children and youth with demonstrated gifts and talents as well as those children who may be able to develop their talent potential with appropriate educational experiences. http://www.nagc.org/

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRCG/T): NRCG/T promotes and publishes research on current and emerging issues in the education of gifted and talented students. http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt.html

Gifted Child Monthly: This is an on-line newsletter for parents and teachers of gifted and talented children. https://gifted-children.com/

Hoagie’s Kids and Teens: This site links to contests and awards, hot topics, internet investigations, lists of movies with gifted kids as the leading characters, and much, much more! http://www.hoagiesgifted.org

SENG (Social Emotional Needs of Gifted): SENG is dedicated to fostering the social emotional needs of gifted adults and children. At this site, current articles and conference information are available that serve to support social and emotional issues that affect the gifted population. http://www.sengifted.org/

Twice Exceptional Newsletter: This site has articles, resources, events and book recommendations for families with twice exceptional children. http://2enewsletter.com

Davidson Institute: Davidson Institute is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting profoundly gifted students 18 and under. http://www.davidsongifted.org/

State Professional Development Opportunities

The Colorado Department of Education Office of Gifted Education offers a variety of online learning opportunities for teachers and administrators in gifted and twice exceptional education. https://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/

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