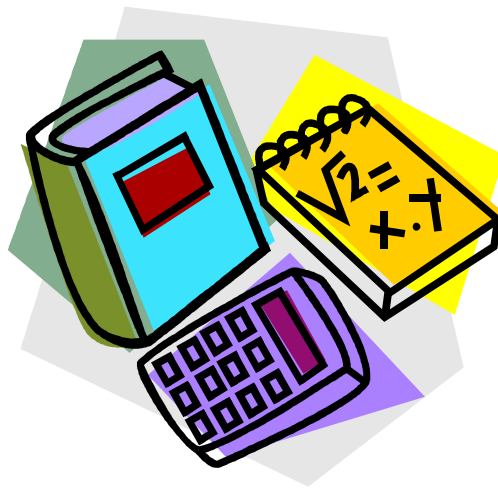


COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR
GIFTED ACADEMICALLY TALENTED
EDUCATION
IN
NEW LENOX SCHOOL DISTRICT #122



Revised Spring 2010

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Gifted Committee Members:

SCHOOL	MEMBER	
Haines	Barb Mores	
Nelson Prairie	Trisha Anderson	Peggy Driscoll
Spencer Pointe	Robin Agema	
Tyler	Linda Haring	
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New Lenox School District #122 Comprehensive Plan For Gifted Academically Talented Education (GATE)

Mission Statement for Gifted Education

Our mission is to motivate, challenge and educate all students to achieve their highest level of performance so they can contribute to the positive development of themselves and society.

Philosophy Statement for Gifted Education

New Lenox School District 122 believes that each child is unique and has special talents. Our job is to provide experiences in an atmosphere in which these talents will be nurtured and new talents will be acquired and encouraged. Teachers will provide options in classroom assignments and learning experiences that will encompass a variety of intelligences, modalities or learning styles.

Legal Basis for the Comprehensive Plan for Gifted Academically Talented Education

District 122's philosophy of gifted education and the components of the following comprehensive plan for gifted education, is designed to be in compliance with the provisions of Section 14A-3.1 of the School Code which states, "each school district shall develop a plan which either provides or makes available for all gifted and talented pupils, gifted education programs which encompass all grade levels and fundamental areas of learning." In addition, this comprehensive plan has been designed to be in accordance with the ISBE gifted education rules Section 227.14. The implementation of this plan began during the 2003-2004 school year in accordance with the provisions of Section 227.18.

Definition of Giftedness

Who Are Gifted Children?

Former U.S. commissioner of Education Sidney P. Marland, Jr. in his August 1971 report to Congress, stated, "Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society." State criteria indicate that approximately 5% of the student population would qualify for gifted programs.

The same report continued:

Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following area, singly or in combination:

1. general intellectual ability
2. specific academic aptitude
3. creative or productive
4. leadership ability
5. visual or performing arts
6. psychomotor ability

District 122 accepts State of Illinois definitions of the gifted and talented child. “Gifted and Talented Children” mean those children who consistently excel or show potential to be consistently superior in one or more of the following areas of human endeavor:

General Intellectual Ability - The child possesses general intellectual ability and HIGH LEVEL THOUGHT PROCESSES (e.g. the ability to identify and consider multiple, valid solutions to a given problem) which are consistently superior to that of other children to the extent that he or she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program.

Specific Aptitude/Talent – The child possesses a specific aptitude/talent in a specific academic area, creativity or the arts, which is consistently superior to the aptitudes of other children to the extent that he or she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program.

Creative and productive thinking – This is the ability to produce new ideas by bringing together elements usually thought of as independent or dissimilar – the aptitude for developing new meanings that have social value. Characteristics of creative and productive students include openness to experience, setting personal standards for evaluation, ability to play with ideas, willingness to take risks, preference for complexity, tolerance for ambiguity, positive self-image, and the ability to become submerged in a task.

Leadership ability – Leadership can be defined as the ability to direct individuals or groups to a common decision or action. Many teachers recognize leadership characteristics include self-confidence, responsibility, cooperation, a tendency to dominate, and the ability to adapt readily to new situations.

Visual and performing arts – Gifted students with talent in the arts demonstrate special talents in visual art, music, dance, drama, or other related studies.

Psychomotor ability – This involves kinesthetic motor abilities such as practical, spatial, mechanical, and physical skills. It is seldom used as a criterion in gifted programs.

Other Viewpoints

Robert Sternberg and Robert Wagner (1982) have suggested that giftedness is a kind of mental self-management. The mental management of one’s life in a constructive, purposeful way has three basic elements: adapting to environments, selecting new environments, and shaping environments. According to Sternberg and Wagner, the key psychological basis of intellectual giftedness resides in insight skills that include three main processes:

1. separating relevant from irrelevant information
2. combining isolated pieces of information into a unified whole, and
3. relating newly acquired information to information acquired in the past.

Howard Gardner (1983) also suggested a concept of multiple intelligences, stating that there are several ways of viewing the world: linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and interpersonal intelligences.

Joseph Renzulli (1986) stated that gifted behavior reflects an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits: above average general and/or specific abilities, high levels of task commitment (motivation), and high levels of creativity.

Some General Characteristics

- Shows superior reasoning powers and marked ability to handle ideas; can generalize readily from specific facts and can see subtle relationships; has outstanding problem-solving ability.
- Shows persistent intellectual curiosity; asks searching questions; shows exceptional interest in the nature of man and the universe.
- Has a wide range of interests, often of an intellectual kind; develops one or more interests to considerable depths.
- Learns quickly and easily retains what is learned; recalls important details, concepts and principles; comprehend readily.
- Shows insight into arithmetical problems that require careful reasoning and grasps mathematical concepts readily.
- Shows creative ability or imaginative expression in such things as music, art, dance, drama, shows sensitivity & finesse in rhythm & movement.

New Lenox School District#122 Gifted Education Program

In District 122, the program for gifted and talented students shall be known as the GATE Program (Gifted Academically Talented Education). GATE represents those instructional programs in the six areas of learning, support services, unique materials, learning settings and any other adopted educational services which modify, supplement and support the standard education program of District 122, and shall include the following components:

- Identification of the gifted and talented child
- Differentiated Instruction which may include strategies such as
 - Compacting
 - Accelerating
 - Tiering assignments
 - Integrating curriculum
 - Developing projects
 - Problem-based learning
 - Flexible grouping
 - Independent study opportunities
 - Learning contracts
 - Learning centers
 - Mini-classes
 - Mentorships
 - Anchoring activities
 - Student learning choices
- Continued development, evaluation and refinement of the program
- An appropriate, ongoing staff development plan
- Parent information

Program Goals

The New Lenox School District 122 GATE Program will emphasize the following areas:

1. basic skills (grade level skills all students need to master)
2. higher level thinking skills (problem solving; critical and creative thinking; divergent, abstract and evaluative thinking).
3. enrichment (research, project development, skill or talent refinement).
4. creativity (awareness of the world through different perspectives, different ways of solving problems).
5. emphasis on the whole child (emotional and academic growth that fosters communication skills necessary to interact acceptably and comfortably with other students in order to share his or her knowledge and talents in a positive manner).

Program Structure

Based on current research practices regarding the multiple intelligences theory and the testing of primary school-age children, the District 122 GATE Program for students in grades K-3 will be taught within the classroom using differentiated instructional techniques. Beginning in fourth grade, ability grouping in reading/language arts and math will occur. Due to the increased range of abilities as children grow older, ability grouping will become more specific in the upper grades.

Identification of Gifted Academically Talented Students:

The identification of students for the District 122 GATE Program will be based on multiple and specific criteria using content appropriate instruments. The guidelines for the identification of the gifted and talented students in District 122 make use of both objective measures and professional judgment, as so required by the Illinois School Code. The identification process will be uniformly applied to all students in the district's population. **Screening will formally occur every year for incoming 4th grade students and incoming 7th grade students.**

Screening Components

1st and 2nd grade identification: (as needed)

Screening tools for multiple intelligence strengths may be used for selected students as identified by the teacher. Services at this level are provided through differentiated instruction by the classroom teacher.

3rd grade identification: (as needed)

2nd grade Terra Nova Reading, Language Arts, Math and CSI, GPA for Grammar/Writing and Reading and Everyday Math report card. Services at this level are provided through differentiated instruction.

4th grade identification: (Language Arts and Math Placement)

An identification matrix consisting of the following: Terra Nova Reading, Math, and Language Arts, CSI, GPA for Grammar/Writing and Reading and Everyday Math report card. Services are provided through ability grouped classes.

5th grade identification: (Language Arts and Math Placement)

An identification matrix consisting of the following: Terra Nova Reading, Language Arts, Math and CSI, GPA for Grammar/Writing, Reading and Everyday Math report card. Services are provided through ability grouped classes.

6th grade identification: (Language Arts and Math Placement)

An identification matrix consisting of the following: Terra Nova Reading, Language Arts, Math and CSI. GPA for Grammar/Writing, Reading and Math. Services are provided through ability grouped classes.

7th grade identification: (Language Arts and Math Placement 7, 8)

6th grade Terra Nova Reading, Language Arts, Jr. High Math placement tests, CSI and **GPA total for 7th grade**. Services are provided through ability grouped classes.

New students entering the district will be placed only after past records are received and they are evaluated by current teachers and demonstrate ability to do GATE material at grades other than the GATE identification years, screening may consist of examination of student records and scores from the previous grade's end of year local benchmark test for Math and Reading.

Identification Procedures

Identification will only occur for incoming 4th grade students and incoming 7th grade students. Teachers need to locate the GATE Identification Matrix for Reading /Language Arts and/or Math.

For 3rd-4th

- To begin screening, the building administrator will fill out a matrix for students who have earned at least one of the following:
 - 120 or higher CSI on Terra Nova
 - 90% or higher on Total Math Terra Nova
 - 90% or higher on Total Reading Terra Nova
 - 90% or higher on Total Language Terra Nova

- Matrices will be ranked according to the total scores. A score of 18 or a CSI of 130 or higher is needed to qualify for GATE Reading/Language Arts, and a score of 9 or a CSI of 130 or higher is need to qualify for GATE math. These scores reflect an identification of the top 5% of the student population.
- After the identification process has been completed, a letter will be forwarded to the parents notifying them of their child's placement status. ***If a former GATE student no longer qualifies, the appropriate parent notification letter will be sent home to the student's parents.***
- The parent always has the prerogative allowing or disallowing his/her child who has qualified for the program to actually be enrolled in the GATE class.

For 6th-7th

- Junior High teachers will identify incoming 7th grade students by ranking students using a spreadsheet consisting of the following data:
 - Total Terra Nova Scores in Reading, Language, and Math
 - Total Math Scores
 - CSI Scores
 - 6th GPA in Reading, Language and Math
 - Previous GATE/HIGH Placement
- Students placed in the GATE and HIGH classes will receive a letter/schedule from the junior high principals depicting their placement.

General Information

- All matrices and signed parent letters should be placed in a GATE/HIGH file in the school office. Please retain matrices of all students screened.
- Each year students placed in the GATE and/or HIGH class will receive a letter depicting the students' placement.
- Grades K-3 will continue to informally evaluate students for gifted characteristics. It is recommended that those students displaying gifted characteristics be clustered in groups of 4-6 within classrooms to provide opportunities for differentiated learning experiences.

Collaboration Team Process

In rare cases, District 122 recognizes that a child may be exceptional beyond the grade appropriate curriculum. Before alternative placement is considered, the child may be referred for collaboration. (e.g., a second grade student who is capable of consistently doing fourth grade math with 90% accuracy).

1. Child exhibits capabilities beyond the gifted classroom.
2. Teacher attempts to meet the child's needs.
3. If child's needs are not being met, teacher requests collaboration meeting. (parent informed)
4. Preliminary data collection (cum folder reviewed and academic history summarized).
5. Initial collaboration meeting (problem clarified and interventions determined).
6. Interventions monitored.
7. Follow-up meeting –If interventions are successful, then continue monitoring. If not successful, then decide on new interventions or accelerated placement.

Team Members' Responsibilities

1. Classroom teacher completes "Request for Collaboration" to state concerns.
2. A designated team member sets up meeting date. Notices are given to all team members.
3. Designated team member reviews cumulative records and summarizes academic history.
4. Classroom teacher brings to the meeting:
 - Student's cumulative folder
 - Student's work samples
 - Documentation of tried interventions
5. Designated team member documents information and interventions during meeting.

Removing Students From The Program

Continued participation in the GATE Program will be assured as long as the student meets the criteria and performance standards that are both commensurated with his/her ability and within the minimum established for the program. A student's progress may be re-evaluated at any time by request of the parents, teacher, or principal. An initial conference, including parents, teacher, principal, and program coordinator will be conducted to identify problems. Specific goals and tasks that the student must accomplish in order to remain in the program will be established at the initial conference. A time frame will be set for the completion of the goals and task. All test scores will be reviewed as well as classwork. A final conference, including the same participants as the initial conference, will be held to review the results. Removal of the student from the GATE Program will be based on evidence that the student is not profiting academically, socially or emotionally from the program. The principal of the student's attendance center is responsible for setting the time and place of the conference, as well as the notification of the parents.

Ongoing Staff Development Plan

Goals:

1. Assist with the implementation of the district Comprehensive Gifted Education Plan.
2. Retrain those who need to update their skills in gifted education.
3. Train teachers to make curriculum modifications that meet the needs of gifted/talented students.
4. Provide trainer of trainer opportunities for staff development within the district.
5. Provide opportunities for teachers to share classroom strategies and methods of curriculum differentiation.

Type of staff Development	Suggested Provider	Suggested Audience	Suggested Focus
Informational	Gifted Committee	School Board members, parents, administrators, teachers	Comprehensive Gifted Education Plan
Awareness	PDA, Consultants, Teachers, Workshop Presenters	Teachers, Administrators	Definitions of terms, rationale, characteristics myths, identification
Curriculum and Development	PDA, Consultants, Teachers, Workshop Presenters	Teachers, Administrators	Programming, classroom management, differentiated instructional strategies
Advanced Coursework	Universities	Teachers, Administrators	Credit coursework

Evaluation of GATE Program

The district GATE Program will be evaluated and updated annually. Revisions and/or additions to the program will be based on student and teacher needs, as well as available funding.