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GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAM

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MISSION

The mission of the Liberty Elementary School District's gifted education program is to meet the social-emotional and academic needs of each of our identified gifted and talented students by providing rich learning opportunities to enhance their potential to become innovative thinkers, community leaders and lifelong learners through a continuum of differentiated services.

AZ State Law

Article 4.1 Gifted Education for Gifted Children

15-779 Definitions

15-779.01 Powers and duties of the school district governing board

15-779.02 Gifted pupils; scope and sequence; annual financial report

15-779.03 Additional assistance for gifted programs

15-779.04 Powers and duties of the superintendent of public instruction

<http://www.azed.gov/gifted-education/>

"Gifted education" means appropriate academic course offerings and services that are required to provide an educational program that is an integral part of the regular school day and commensurate with the academic abilities and potential of a gifted pupil.

"Gifted pupil" means a child who is of lawful school age, who due to superior intellect or advanced learning ability, or both, is not afforded an opportunity for otherwise attainable progress and development in regular classroom instruction and who needs appropriate gifted education services, to achieve at levels commensurate with the child's intellect and ability.

T H E L I B E R T Y S C H O O L D I S T R I C T

PROGRAM DESIGN

Definitions

The following definitions define the Liberty Elementary School District's Gifted Education Program:

A **gifted student** is a student who scores at or above the ninety-seventh (97th) percentile on national norms in any one (1) of three (3) areas: verbal, nonverbal, or quantitative, on any test from the State Board-approved list.

Alternative Pathway to Services:

A Gifted Review process has been created as an additional instrument to determine student eligibility for gifted education. Those students scoring between the 94th and 96th percentiles will be considered for GATE services upon parent request in writing and a teacher recommendation letter. This request will be reviewed by the Campus Gifted Review Committee.

The Campus Gifted Review Committee is made up of GATE Cluster teachers and the GATE Coordinator. This committee meets three times a year to review service requests submitted by the parent and the teacher. The GATE Coordinator will notify the parents of the final decision. Parents of students who qualify for GATE services sign a permission form in order for the student to participate in the GATE program.

Transfer Students

Provisional placement for students who have been previously identified and served in another district using different criteria - that may be different than scoring at the 97th percentile in any one of the three areas on a State Board of Education approved test will be placed for gifted services. The placement is then evaluated after 30 days by the Campus Gifted Review Committee, along with the parents, to determine if the placement was appropriate.

Gifted Education Program is defined as specialized instruction that challenges the student's intellect and ability to develop critical thinking skills leading to a life-long desire to continue learning.

Enrichment is a means of providing differentiated services for the gifted student within the regular education classroom.

Acceleration is a strategy to advance the gifted student to the next level in grade and/or subject area.

Clustering is a method of grouping gifted students in the regular classroom to provide opportunity to interact with their intellectual and age peers.

Compacting is a technique for differentiating for students where the teacher makes adjustments to curriculum for students who have already mastered the material to be learned and offers new content, enrichment or another activity.

Philosophy

The Liberty Elementary School District recognizes that gifted students have unique educational needs that are met by educating the whole child through a variety of services and options. The role of the gifted program is to identify gifted students and to challenge them at their individual academic level while teaching creative and higher-level thinking skills.

Program Objectives

- Enhance critical thinking and reasoning abilities
- Utilize differentiated strategies for learning
- Build and extend cognitive language skills
- Facilitate opportunities for learning
- Establish and promote scholarly behavior
- Develop social and emotional skills

Differentiation

Content

Content is differentiated to ensure access to meeting the Arizona educational standards and the National Association of Gifted Children Programming Standards. goo.gl/bMNycX. Teachers differentiate content to focus on essential and meaningful understanding. Content may be compacted and enriched or accelerated based on student readiness. Teachers include extension activities that are connected to the regular curriculum but at a much greater depth.

Process

Process differentiation is designed to help students to progress from one point of understanding to a more complex level of understanding. Higher-order questioning is used to foster meta-cognition in students so they become fluent thinkers. Teachers may provide activities such as advanced graphic organizers, independent study groups based on interest surveys, or experts in the field when studying a content unit depending on the level and needs of the students, among other activities.

Product

Product differentiation allows students to demonstrate what they have learned after a unit of instruction. The criterion for product selection are predetermined, and requirements are presented to students to enable them to choose a product to complete. Products may replace a written test, worksheets, or similar activity to demonstrate mastery of content.

Learning Environment

The Liberty Elementary School District offers several gifted models to ensure that all gifted students receive appropriate instruction.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten on all campuses will receive enrichment within the regular classroom during the school day provided by the general education teacher. Differentiation takes the form of enriched activities in various subject areas.

1st-8th Grade Cluster Grouping

The schoolwide cluster model, as identified by Winebrenner & Brulles 2008, will be utilized. A general education teacher will teach clustered grade level classes on all campuses. Gifted services are provided throughout the day. The cluster teacher provides differentiated instruction in the way of enriched curriculum that is more challenging, offers extension activities, and/or independent research projects. Projects require higher-order and creative thinking skills.

Self-Contained Multi-age Gifted (MAG) Classroom offered at Westar

The multi-age gifted classroom serves students in a self-contained setting in (4-6) and (7-8). Selection is based on a primary area of giftedness with a score of 97 or better on at least one area (verbal, nonverbal or quantitative) on the Cognitive Abilities Test. The multi-age classroom provides students an alternate setting to the cluster gifted classrooms to ensure highly gifted student needs are met. Gifted instruction is provided throughout the day. Students may attend some classes with other non-gifted students throughout the day.

Gifted Education Curriculum Objectives

Creative and Productive Thinking

Students will study techniques that help them to become comfortable with new ideas, assumptions and new ways of thinking in the search for innovative solutions.

Problem Solving

Students will learn to think creatively, share thoughts and opinions, create, discuss and solve problems, and draw conclusions so they may apply them to problems and issues in today's world.

Thinking Skills

Students will make connections between present knowledge and new information derived from varied resources. They will analyze relationships, by applying standards of judgment,

seeking new information and being able to discriminate these relationships to validate conclusions through logical reasoning.

Communication

Students will use formal and informal communication in the forms of written, oral, listening, and presenting to demonstrate knowledge through a variety of subjects. They will use social skills to work collaboratively.

Research

Students will use strategies to locate and access information so that they can extract needed information which may be synthesized and evaluated.

Personal Development

Students will recognize their strengths, needs, and individuality, and develop skills to achieve their potential. This may be accomplished by being prepared to learn; developing organizational and study skills; realizing that they will always have more to learn; creating both short and long term goals; trying challenging tasks; and taking risks in learning while pondering ideas and problems that will assist them in making contributions to society.

Individualized Gifted Plan

Each gifted student will have an Individualized Gifted Plan (IGP), which will be developed by the student's teacher with input from the student and shared with parents. This will be the guiding educational document for the student and will be updated yearly.

Parental Involvement

The Liberty Elementary School District encourages parents to take an active role in their child's classroom. Parents are invited to participate in open house, informational meetings and day-to-day activities. Parents may assist with projects, field trips, extracurricular activities and volunteering in the classroom, in accordance with the Liberty Elementary School District Student Handbook <https://goo.gl/oPiHLy> . Communication with parents will be through newsletters, e-mail, phone calls, progress and report cards, and parent conferences.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Differentiated Instruction

Curriculum is differentiated in the Liberty Elementary School District for grades 1-8 in clustered classrooms and grades in 4-8 self-contained to meet individual students' needs.

Curriculum Materials

Students receive differentiated instruction, using resources aligned to Arizona educational standards and the National Association for Gifted Children, (NAGC) Programming Standards.

IDENTIFICATION

Referral Process

All students in Kindergarten will be screened for giftedness using the CogAt Universal Screener. Students who present potential for giftedness will be rescreened in first grade. Students in grades 2–8 may be recommended for testing by a parent, teacher or administrator. The referral may be based on student performance in class, exceeding the standards on assessments, and/or the student's demonstrated need for a more challenging curriculum.

Assessment

With parent permission, students may take the Cognitive Abilities Test or the Naglieri (if the student is an English Language Learner) during one of the three designated testing periods. These dates will be posted on the district website at the beginning of the school year. The GATE Testing Coordinator administers the chosen assessment three times a year. The GATE Testing Coordinator scores the assessments, and reports the results to the parents, classroom teacher, building level principal, and District level administration within 30 days. Students may only test one time per school year.

Eligibility

The District will provide services to students who score at or above the ninety-seventh (97th) percentile on national norms in any one (1) of three (3) areas: verbal, nonverbal, or quantitative reasoning, on any test from the State Board-approved list. The District utilizes the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) to identify students. Parents may opt out of services.

Social and Emotional Development

Affective Needs

Cluster teachers use the cluster model to address the affective needs of gifted students. This model allows students to build relationships with their intellectual and same-age peers.

“At Risk” Gifted Students

Administrators, teachers, and parents identify a student who may have problems academically, behaviorally, or emotionally as being “at risk”. Counselors or school psychologists are available to assist students and may recommend and develop a collaborative plan for working with at-risk gifted learners that involve the parents, the teacher, and the student.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Liberty Elementary School District provides professional development to all teachers, administrators, counselors and school psychologists. Professional development will be provided to increase their strategies and skills for supporting gifted students’ needs. Using the National Association for Gifted Children CEC Teacher Preparation Standards in Gifted and Talented Education standards <https://goo.gl/HSv7Jb> , professional development may include differentiating for students, social and emotional needs of gifted students, flexible grouping, curriculum compacting, tiered lessons, and enrichment materials.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Surveys

The Liberty Elementary School District conducts anonymous parent, staff, and student surveys once per year to gather information on its various programs. Information is shared with staff, administrators, and the Governing Board.

District Gifted Review Committee

The District Gifted Review Committee, which consists of all campus Gifted Coordinators, cluster teachers, administrators, and interested parents, will meet annually in the spring in the form of a public stakeholder forum. Here, they will review the survey results, the scope and sequence, and address any program needs. The campus Coordinators will then make recommendations to the Superintendent for changes and updates based on the suggestions.

Student Achievement

State and district assessment data are used to determine the academic progress of gifted students. This information is reviewed by teachers and administrators, and provided to parents.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Parents may obtain program information from the district office or website. Parents may also obtain information at open house, conferences, or through their school offices. Parents who wish to have their child assessed for gifted services may register on the school website.

Scope and Sequence Access

The scope and sequence is available on the district website, at each school site and in the district office. Parents may request a copy of the scope and sequence from the Educational Services department at the district office by calling 623-474-6600.

BUDGETING

Supplemental Allocation Use

The Liberty Elementary School District receives no state or federal allocation to fund the Gifted Program.

District Funding:

The Liberty Elementary School District supports the gifted program by funding, as M & O resources will allow, the following:

- Self-contained teacher(s) salary
- Self-contained classroom supplies and materials
- Professional development for teachers
- Testing materials and costs