

OAK PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 97

Oak Park, Illinois

May 25, 2010

Gifted/Talented and Differentiation (GTD) Program

Related Strategic Plan Specific End Results:

- 1.3 Adapt instruction to meet the needs of different academic abilities and learning styles.
- 1.4 Redefine the role of the current GTD teachers to meet the needs of students with different academic needs and learning styles.

The following information about the Gifted/Talented and Differentiation program in District 97 addresses several questions that have arisen during the past few months. In addition to this written information, brief oral presentations will be made by current GTD teachers to explain their local programs and how children are served in grades K-8.

Recent History of Changes to the Program

- Prior to July 2005, the program was not using nationally normed standardized tools for identification purposes.
- In July 2005, the board was presented with a governing document that provided structure for the program in District 97.
- In that document, a model of two levels of services was outlined. Level II services are direct services. The GTD works directly with children in this category. Level I services are provided through the GTD working with that child's classroom teacher in a consultative manner. In 2005/2006, the program included cognitive and achievement testing to determine eligibility. We started to use the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) at kindergarten, 3rd, and 5th grade. We also used the ITBS (Iowa Tests of Basic Skills) to provide a well-rounded profile of an academically gifted child.
- Also in that year, District 97 started using the Naglieri non-verbal skills test at 1st grade to screen for spatial ability, especially in minority children.
- In 2007, District 97 eliminated cognitive testing in kindergarten. We also moved the testing of whole grade levels to 1st, 2nd, and 4th.

- In 2007, we also started to place children in advanced math classes using test results to a larger degree (see attached middle school math matrix). To determine advanced math placement at the 6th grade level, all 5th graders take the PASeries, the CogAT, and the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT).
- In 2008/2019, we placed 17 7th and 8th graders in the high school Advanced Algebra Freshmen class (AAF). These children were bussed back to their middle school after the math class at the high school.
- In 2009/2010, the AAF students have taken the class at the middle school, taught by 8th grade teachers. The teachers use high school texts and materials. In addition, our children take tests and quizzes very similar if not identical to the high school materials. We currently have about 28 students in AAF.

Differentiation In District 97

What is differentiation in the learning setting? Differentiation is a teacher's response to learner needs, the recognition of students' varying background knowledge and preferences, and instruction that appeals to students' differences. Teachers can differentiate process, product, and content to address students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. The definition of differentiation used by District 97 since June 2008 has been:

Differentiation is a process that enables teachers to improve student learning by matching students' learning characteristics to the District 97 curriculum.

The testing instruments used by the District to identify differentiation strategies for each child include:

- The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) measuring verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal reasoning abilities. The CogAT is a group administered, timed test.
- The Iowa Test of Basic Skills Survey Battery (ITBS) measuring math application and reading comprehension achievement levels. The ITBS is a nationally normed, standardized achievement test.
- Gates-McGinitie (Gates) measuring reading achievement levels. The Gates is a group administered, nationally normed timed test.
- The Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test 2nd Edition (KBIT2) is an individually administered cognitive ability test that is not timed. The test measures verbal and nonverbal reasoning ability.
- Naglieri is a nonverbal cognitive ability test that is timed. The Naglieri uses test results from minority students across the country in creating norms.

District 97 GTD testing schedule

- At this time, all 1st graders are given the Naglieri the last week of September. The classroom teacher administers and scores the test. The building GTD converts the raw scores to standard scores. Because the CogAT measures nonverbal cognitive ability as well, there have been useful discussions as to eliminating 1st grade

Cognitive testing (Naglieri) for the 2010/2011 school year. In addition, there is not a great need for cognitive testing in 1st grade because direct services are not provided until 3rd grade.

- All 2nd graders are given the CogAT during the last week of September. The district office collects the answer sheets and mails them to Riverside Publishing for electronic scoring. The scores are then given to the schools.
- All 4th graders are given the CogAT during the first week of September. The answer sheets are sent to Riverside Publishing for electronic scoring purposes. The scores are then made available to the schools.
- At any time, a parent can request additional testing. For these purposes, the GTDs mainly use the KBIT2 because it is best used in an individual testing setting. While the parent can ask for testing or retesting at any point in the school year, the GTD makes an appointment for testing based on his/her schedule.

Measurement of Differentiation Usage

Questions regarding metrics to evaluate the use of differentiation in District 97 have been asked at the Board table. In response, the administration has consistently replied that there are no quantitative metrics available to measure the use of differentiation strategies. Measurement typically involves anecdotal evidence of usage compared to predetermined patterns of training and usage.

Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson is a nationally recognized differentiation expert. Dr. Baird contacted Dr. Tomlinson in January 2010 to get her thoughts regarding measuring the use of differentiation. Her comments (from published materials and the conversation with her) regarding assessing differentiation in a district included:

- District leaders must plan to determine what is working and what needs modification within the district pertinent to differentiation.
- Clear statements of differentiation philosophy or vision as well as goals at the front end of planning provide a measuring rod for assessing progress all along the journey.
- To effectively assess the use of differentiation within a district, the following questions must be asked:
 - Where does the District want to go regarding differentiation?
 - What steps will we follow to get there?
 - When will we take stock of our progress to meet the philosophy and goals?
 - How do we get assistance to conduct meaningful and useful evaluations of our growth?
 - What should we do with what we learn in the assessment process?
- Finally, Dr. Tomlinson reported that differentiation programs fail because no one has drawn a roadmap for growth or a viable plan for learning from the journey, or a systematic way of turning experience into progress.

Differentiation in Other Districts: Wilmette and Winnetka

- Wilmette has had a very well developed program of training and usage for many years.
 - Wilmette has one Differentiation Support teacher (DST) at each of five elementary buildings. The junior high school has two.
 - The district has applied a differentiation model built on the differentiation of many educators including Carol Ann Tomlinson and Jim Curry.
 - While identification instruments are used for specific services, differentiation is provided to all children.
- Winnetka has also had a well-established program stressing differentiation for several years.
 - Winnetka is a district built on the progressive education theories of John Dewey.
 - Differentiation is a big part of instruction in the district. However, there are no specifically identified differentiation specialists. Rather, teams of teachers are constantly meeting to discuss differentiation strategies to use with each child.

Gifted Services

The following narrative describes the nature of services offered for gifted students:

- The K-2 program is flexible in nature. The GTD works with the classroom teacher to provide differentiated instructional strategies.
- The 3rd through 5th grade program is both classroom-based and pull out. Identified Level II students receive their instruction from the GTD in a small setting outside the classroom.
- Math acceleration (subject acceleration) occurs in the elementary buildings on a case-by-case basis.
- Math acceleration is more formal at the middle school level. A math matrix has been developed so that quantitative and qualitative data from the K-5 buildings can be used for placement purposes in 6th through 8th grade.

Number of Students Receiving Level II (Direct) Services in Grades 3-5

- Beye - 94
- Hatch - 64
- Holmes – 56
- Irving - 92

- Lincoln - 54
- Longfellow - 60
- Mann - 70
- Whittier - 75

In order to provide a view of the daily routine of the GTDs, several teachers will provide an overview of the programs at their buildings. Scheduled to present are Paul Packer (Irving), Leanne Scaro (Longfellow), and Carla Circo (Holmes). While identification is consistent across the District, program services may vary based on GTD expertise and student needs within the various buildings.

Gifted/Talented and Differentiation in the Middle Schools

The following bullet points highlight services at the Middle Schools:

- Math acceleration is in place for our 6th through 8th graders. Math acceleration is one of the most common forms of differentiation found in middle school across the country.
- In addition to math acceleration, each middle school has a GTD. At this time, the GTD at each building provides slightly different services to the middle school children.
 - At Brooks, the GTD spends approximately 30% of her time serving as a differentiation consultant working with teachers. The balance of her time is spent providing instruction in a Lit Skills class. All children having received an “exceeds” on the ISAT reading subtest from the previous year, will be with the GTD for one trimester during the school year. The GTD follows this model with each grade level (6th through 8th grade).
 - At Julian, the GTD provides consultation to teachers regarding differentiation for approximately 30% of the time. For the balance of the day, the GTD teaches elective classes focusing on the problem based learning model of differentiation instruction. The classes are open to all children.

Dr. Kelly Baird
Curriculum Coordinator

Dr. Kevin M. Anderson
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

Attachment A

Identification Matrix for Math and Reading Services (Grade three through five)

STUDENT LEARNING PROFILE FORM

Student Learning Profile – Recommendation for Differentiated Learning Services

Student Name _____ Grade _____ Teacher _____

Math

Date initiated:	Not at this time	Level 1 - Differentiation	Level 2 - Direct
Teacher Checklist		High Achiever Traits	Gifted Traits
Parent Checklist		High Achiever Traits	Gifted Traits
Unit Tests and Classroom Evidence Everyday Math Assessments	3s	3s and 4s	All 4s
Report Card Data	3s	3s and 4s	All 4s
Cogat - Quantitative		120-129	130 and above
Cogat – Non-verbal		120-129	130 and above
ITBS – Math Section		90-94 th Percentile	95 th percentile and above
K-Bit Nonverbal		120-129	130 and above
PA Series - Math		Meets	Exceeds
Teacher Recommendation – Level 2, Level 1, not at this time.			
Parent Recommendation – Level 2, Level 1, or unsure			

Reading

Date initiated:	Not at this time	Level 1 - Differentiation	Level 2 - Direct
Teacher Checklist		High Achiever Traits	Gifted Traits
Parent Checklist		High Achiever Traits	Gifted Traits
Unit Tests and Classroom Evidence Open Court Assessments	3s	3s and 4s	All 4s
Report Card Data	3s	3s and 4s	All 4s
Gates Reading Test		90-94 th percentile	95 th percentile and above
Cogat - Verbal		120-129	130 and above
Cogat – Non-verbal		120-129	130 and above
ITBS – Reading Section		90-94 th Percentile	95 th percentile and above
K-Bit Verbal	114 and below	115-129	130 and above
PA Series - Reading		Meets	Exceeds
Teacher Recommendation – Level 2, Level 1 or not at this time.			
Parent Recommendation – Level 2, Level 1, or unsure			

Attachment B

Middle School Math Placement Matrix : 6th Grade Math Placement

Student Name: _____

Elementary School: _____

	“Course One” Text with Academic Support	“Course One” Text. Math at Grade Level	“Course Two” Above Grade Level
5th Grade PA Series End of Year Test	400-754	755-899	900
IAAT Percentiles	0-44%	45-79%	80-98%
Cognitive Ability Quantitative Standard Score	75-89	90-119	120-134
ISAT 2009	1 or 2	2 or 3	3 or 4
Math Report Card Grades	1 or 2	2 or 3	3 or 4
5th Grade Curriculum	5 th Grade Everyday Math Text	5 th Grade Everyday Math text	6 th Grade Everyday Math Text <i>and/or</i> 6 th Grade Supplemental Math
Math Ability	Low	Average	High/Exceptional
Elementary Teacher Input: Homework Completion	Inconsistent	Inconsistent/Consistent	Consistent
Elementary Teacher Input: Homework Quality	Low	Average	Average/Above Average

Additional Information:

_____ GTD math in 5th grade

_____ Special Ed _____ Resource _____ Instructional

_____ Recommended Summer School

_____ Recommended Academic Support

Other:

Attachment C (Also found on District Website Under Publications)

Examples of a Differentiated Instruction Classroom

Cluster Grouping—grouping of highly capable students with similar needs. The classroom teacher works closely with the GTD to design appropriate differentiated curriculum.

Curriculum Compacting—modifying or streamlining the regular curriculum in order to eliminate repetition of mastered material. It serves to upgrade the challenge level of the regular classroom curriculum and provides time for the appropriate enrichment and/or acceleration activities while ensuring mastery of basic skills.

Enrichment—students work on interest/content related topics either in the classroom or as a temporary pullout by the GTD. Activities extend beyond the regular curriculum and focus on specific process skills, such as: critical and creative thinking, research skills, independent and small group investigations, and computer/telecommunications skills.

Learning Centers—an appropriate way to provide content enrichment. Learning centers are designed as table top work stations for individual group work. Students may self select centers or be assigned to centers according to readiness, interest or learning styles. The modification adapts well to the development of multiple intelligences.

Flexible Grouping—students are put in groups that do not remain the same. The composition of the group is determined by interest, learning style and acceleration through curriculum compacting.

Tiered Lesson/Assignment/Product—the lesson is the same for all but the process and/or products are varied according to the student's level of skill.

Content, Process, Product

In differentiated instruction, teachers address student learning differences by modifying content, process and product.

The Content is what students learn and the materials they will use to acquire knowledge. When teachers differentiate the curriculum, they may vary depth and breadth of learning and/or the complexity of ideas. It may also involve student choice of topics related to the content.

The Process describes how children make sense of content. When teachers differentiate process, they design learning experiences that involve thinking from basic to complex understanding.

The Product is the application and/or demonstration of what the student has learned. When teachers differentiate product, they present students with options of how to express required learning.



Oak Park School District does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to its programs or activities. We invite individuals requiring reasonable accommodation to contact the ADA Coordinator (524-5637) at least 48 hours before the scheduled meeting time.

1/10



**Oak Park
District 97**

Gifted/Talented and Differentiation



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Philosophy

Oak Park District 97 recognizes that outstanding talent is present in children from all cultural groups, across all economic strata and in all areas of human endeavors. Oak Park teachers are committed to discovering, nurturing and developing the potential of students by meeting their diverse academic needs through an array of differentiated service options.



These options are designed to maximize the students' opportunities to develop and demonstrate talent, knowledge and skill. Differentiated services are provided by the classroom teacher with support from the Gifted/Talented through Differentiation (GTD) Resource Teacher. We encourage continuous staff development and collaboration among teachers, parents and administrators to better meet the needs of students through the philosophy of differentiated content, process and product.

This philosophy will guide the resource and classroom teacher, as well as the administrators, in the consistent implementation of this program in each District 97 school.

Roles and Responsibilities

GTD's Role

- Participates in the collaborative identification and placement of students; facilitates the integration of differentiation services into the school environment.

- Collaborates with classroom teachers to differentiate curriculum and instruction; offers challenging alternatives and encourages problem-solving skills for all children.
- Provides differentiation services to all students who demonstrate the need for intense differentiation in reading and math.
- Advocates for the needs of academically talented learners.
- Communicates with the parents and staff about the programs and resources available for differentiation opportunities.
- Facilitates evaluation of differentiation effectiveness in the building.
- Maintains appropriate records and documentation.

Teacher's Role

- Stays abreast of current trends in differentiated instruction and research.
- Implements appropriate differentiation strategies for all children.
- Assesses differentiation needs for all children.
- Collaborates with the GTD resource teachers as needed.
- Communicates with parents and other staff.

Principal's Role

- Serves as a differentiation advocate for both children and teachers.
- Collaborates with teachers and parents to implement appropriate differentiation service options for all children.
- Participates in the evaluation and communication of differentiation effectiveness in the building.
- Communicates the components of differentiation to teachers and parents.



Parent /Guardian's Role

- Advocates for the needs of the child.
- Gains awareness of the options available through the differentiation of content, product and process.
- Encourages the pursuit of intellectually stimulating activities for his/her child outside of the classroom.
- Communicates with staff members directly involved in the student's educational program.



Student Identification

- Inclusive identification procedures (multiple criteria) are used to ensure that all students are identified and nurtured through differentiation.
- All first, second and fourth grade children undergo a differentiation assessment process that includes cognitive and achievement testing.
- All first graders are given the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (Naglieri) in the fall of each school year.
- In the spring, children in fifth grade are given the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT) to help determine appropriate math placement in the middle schools.
- Parents/guardians of children, other than first, second or fourth grades, may request identification during the school year by contacting the classroom teacher, the building GTD or the principal. Arrangements will be made for testing at a future date.

If you have any questions about Gifted/Talented Differentiation, please contact your building principal.