

Gifted and Talented 3-Year Plan



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Overview Statement

The Minidoka County Joint School District #331 is the 20th largest of Idaho's 114 school districts, covering 762 square miles in the Southeast Region of Idaho and serving the populations of Paul, Rupert, Heyburn, Acequia, and Minidoka. The District also serves students from portions of Lincoln, Cassia, Jerome Counties. The District educates over 4,000 students in preschool through grade 12. It currently operates nine schools: four elementary (K–5), three middle (6–8), and two high schools (9–12). The Minidoka County School District offers a wide range of programs and services for its students, including vocational and college preparatory classes. The District employs approximately 700 individuals, about 35% of whom require university degrees and certification from the Idaho State Board of Education.

A. Philosophy Statement

Each child is a unique human being possessing individual educational needs and abilities. The Minidoka County School District (MCSD) recognizes that a number of students possess extraordinary learning abilities and specialized talents requiring differentiated educational experiences. MCSD acknowledges its responsibility to identify these abilities and provide opportunities beyond the traditional classroom to develop each child's potential to the fullest degree. The District believes that differentiated programs for gifted and talented (GT) students are a logical and essential part of its educational offerings. These programs require a curriculum of greater challenge, complexity, and abstraction, as well as a faster instructional pace. Gifted students have the potential to become lifelong, independent learners through the development of appropriate skills, concepts, and attitudes. Program planning must be based on the actual needs and interests of GT students, providing enhanced opportunities for learning both within and beyond the regular classroom.

B. Definition of Giftedness

"Gifted and talented children refers to those students who are identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performing capabilities in intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership areas, or ability in the performing or visual arts and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities." (Idaho Code 33-2001)

MCSD recognizes gifted and talented children as those who demonstrate or show potential for advanced abilities in one or more of the five talent areas identified by the State of Idaho:

- **Intellectual giftedness** – superior aptitude for understanding concepts, identifying patterns, reasoning, spatial perception, and idea development.
- **Specific academic giftedness** – superior mastery of skills or concepts in one or more academic areas.
- **Creative giftedness** – exceptional fluency, flexibility, originality, and problem-solving skills.
- **Leadership giftedness** – superior aptitude for responsibility, organization, interpersonal skills, motivation, and insight into relationships.
- **Visual or performing arts giftedness** – outstanding aptitude demonstrated through performance or production in dance, music, theater, or the visual arts.

C. Program Goals (2025–2028)

The Minidoka County School District’s gifted and talented program aims to expand student identification and provide equitable services across all schools.

Elementary Level:

Students are referred for GT testing through teacher or school GT lead recommendations to district psychologists. Enrichment opportunities vary by school and may include independent projects and advanced learning options.

Middle School Level:

Honors classes in English and mathematics are available, along with clubs, leadership activities, and elective courses such as band, orchestra, choir, woodworking, and art.

High School Level:

Honors, dual credit, and Advanced Placement (AP) courses are offered in English, math, government, history, and science. Leadership and elective programs (drama, speech, art, and CTE) also support GT development.

Professional Development Goals:

- Provide PD for teachers and administrators on GT identification, differentiation, and instructional strategies.
- Train GT leads in screening tools and equitable identification practices.

District Improvement Goals:

1. Identify GT students in all elementary schools using consistent procedures.
2. Provide teacher training on recognizing and differentiating instruction for GT learners.
3. Implement a district-wide tracking system to monitor GT students' progress and opportunities.

D. Program Options

Elementary (K–5): Students receive differentiated enrichment opportunities emphasizing critical and creative thinking, problem solving, analysis, and innovation.

Middle School (6–8): Students meet with counselors to set goals and plan academic pathways. They are enrolled in advanced classes and encouraged to participate in academic competitions (e.g., Spelling Bee, Math Competition, National History Day).

High School (9–12): Students engage in honors, AP, dual credit, and CTE courses and participate in leadership and performing arts opportunities. Advisors guide students in aligning coursework with postsecondary goals.

E. Identification Procedures

In accordance with IDAPA 08.02.03.171, all potentially gifted students will be screened using multiple criteria. Identification relies on multiple indicators from various sources, including standardized assessments, teacher observations, nominations, and student interviews.

Phase One – Screening:

Students are screened by teachers, GT leads, and trained personnel using group achievement tests (95th percentile and above) and other indicators of giftedness. Referrals may come from teachers, parents, peers, or community members.

Phase Two – Placement:

The GT Placement Team (GT leads, administrators, teachers, psychologists) reviews data to recommend placement and further testing if needed. Parents are informed of results and placement decisions.

F. Program Evaluation

Evaluation includes surveys of students, parents, and staff, as well as analysis of longitudinal data such as participation in honors/dual credit courses and graduation rates.

Focus Areas for 2025–2028:

- Implement uniform identification procedures districtwide.
- Increase professional development on meeting GT needs in general classrooms.
- Ensure equitable access to advanced learning opportunities.

Program Review:

The District will use the Idaho Self-Assessment for Gifted and Talented Program Evaluation annually. Results will be shared with the school board and stakeholder group and used to refine the GT plan.

Idaho Self-Assessment for Gifted and Talented Program Evaluation

Program Design Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Evidence/Comments
1. There is a written philosophy statement related to students with gifts and talents. Idaho Three Year Plan Section A <i>IDAPA 08.02.03.171.03.a</i>			X	
2. There is a written definition of which students the LEA considers to have what particular needs that require specialized gifted and talented services. Section 33-2001, Idaho Code <i>IDAPA 08.02.03.171.03.b</i>			X	
3. There are written goals and objectives for these services. At the end of three years, the program goals have been met. Idaho Three Year Plan Section C <i>IDAPA 08.02.03.171.03.c</i>			X	
4. There is a written description of the services to be provided for the described students at each grade level and in each area served. Idaho Three Year Plan Section D <i>IDAPA 08.02.03.171.03.d</i>			X	
5. Services provided align with how giftedness is defined. Idaho Three Year Plan Section A:d <i>IDAPA 08.02.03.171.04.c</i>		X		
6. Gifted students are grouped together for instruction in their area(s) of talent. NAGC Best Practice	X			
7. Services are constructed so that there is a continuum of services to meet the broad range of needs of individual G/T students. Idaho Three Year Plan Section D		X		

8. Policies are in place to allow early entrance, grade skipping, subject skipping, early credit, and early graduation according to individual student need. NAGC Best Practice			X	
9. The roles of personnel at the district, the building and the classroom are clearly defined. IDAPA 08.02.03.171.06		X		
10. A district-wide stakeholder group exists and meets on a regular basis to review the district services for students with gifts and talents. NAGC Best Practice	X			
Identification Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
1. The district uses a norm referenced measure of ability in each of the areas for which program services are offered (i.e. math, language arts). NAGC Best Practice			X	
2. The district uses an assessment in each area for which services are offered (e.g., math, language arts) aligned with the talent area, service to be provided, and with adequate ceiling to assess performance above grade level. NAGC Best Practice		X		
3. The district uses qualitative indicators in each of the areas for which program services are offered. NAGC Best Practice IDAPA 08.02.03.171.05.b			X	
4. The procedures ensure that all students have an opportunity to be included or nominated for screening by publicizing the process and receiving nominations from all stakeholder groups. NAGC Best Practice			X	

5. Students are identified in all grade levels for which services are provided. NAGC Best Practice		X		
6. The formal identification process is repeated at targeted grade levels including (but not limited to) kindergarten, 2 nd grade, prior to placement for middle school, and prior to placement in high school. NAGC Best Practice			X	
7. The appeals process is publicized. NAGC Best Practice	X			
8. The appeals process allows for students to take alternative ability, achievement, and/or qualitative measures at no cost to the family. NAGC Best Practice	X			
9. The exit procedure includes a period of intervention no less than one grading period to determine if student can be successful in the program with supports. NAGC Best Practice	X			
Curriculum and Instruction Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
1. There is a written curriculum in core subject areas and other areas served by the district that is specific to students identified as high ability K-12. NAGC Best Practice		X		
2. Student learning goals are clear, and evidence of how the learning will be demonstrated is clearly stated. NAGC Best Practice		X		
3. The written curriculum has clear evidence of vertical articulation from grade to grade and K-- 12. NAGC Best Practice		X		

4. There is clear evidence of acceleration of curriculum in areas served. NAGC Best Practice		X		
5. There is clear evidence of enrichment of curriculum in areas served. NAGC Best Practice		X		
6. Instruction and learning experiences are clearly differentiated to focus on higher order thinking. NAGC Best Practice			X	
7. There is evidence of teaching of communication, collaboration, research, critical thinking, problem solving. NAGC Best Practice			X	
8. The pace of instruction is appropriate for G/T students. NAGC Best Practice		X		
9. There is evidence of student use of technology for creating content, learning content, and communicating content. NAGC Best Practice			X	
10. There is evidence of alignment of curriculum with Idaho's Content Standards but including further differentiation for students with gifts and talents in the specific domain(s). NAGC Best Practice			X	
11. Assessments are aligned to curriculum goals. NAGC Best Practice			X	
12. Pre-assessment is used to determine individual instructional plans. NAGC Best Practice			X	
13. Post-assessment is used to demonstrate student growth and attainment of stated learning goals. NAGC Best Practice			X	

Affective Needs Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
1. A written, differentiated, affective curriculum is available and used by teachers that addresses social and emotional needs of students with gifts and talents. NAGC Best Practice			X	
2. Affective curriculum teaches students about social and emotional characteristics as well as potential issues they may face. NAGC Best Practice			X	
3. Documentation of differentiated college guidance for high ability students is available (e.g. fieldtrips, independent study projects, speakers, or shadowing experiences pertaining to college exploration). NAGC Best Practice			X	
4. Documentation of differentiated career guidance for high ability students is available (e.g. fieldtrips, independent study projects, mentors, speakers, or shadowing experiences pertaining to college exploration). NAGC Best Practice			X	
Professional Development Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
1. Personnel working with G/T students are provided with opportunities for continuing professional development in the area of G/T education. <i>IDAPA 08.02.03.171.06</i>		X		
2. Parents of students with gifts and talents are provided with opportunities for professional development about the characteristics and needs of this population. NAGC Best Practice	X			

Program Evaluation Items	No Evidence	Some Evidence	In Place	Comments
1. The LEA uses multiple strategies to assess G/T students' performance and growth. NAGC Best Practice			X	
2. All components of the G/T program are periodically reviewed by individuals knowledgeable about G/T learners and who have competence in the evaluation process. The results are used for continuing program improvement. <i>IDAPA 08.02.03.171.06. f</i>			X	
3. The evaluation report for all educational services involving G/T students includes both strengths and areas of challenge of the program and is accompanied by a plan with implications for improvement and renewal over time. NAGC Best Practice		X		
4. The results of the program evaluation are presented to the local school board, the stakeholder group, and accessible to all constituencies of the program. NAGC Best Practice		X		

Checklist is modified from Speirs Neumeister, K. & Burney, V. (2012). *Gifted Program Evaluation: A Handbook for Administrators & Coordinators*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.