

6080.1.1**Educating Students in the Gifted and Talented Program**

The Madison Board of Education recognizes that there are some students with extraordinary learning ability or outstanding talent in the creative arts, the development of which requires programs or services beyond the level of those ordinarily provided in the core educational program.

General Principles for Programming

Section 10-4a of the Connecticut General State Statutes requires that “each child shall have equal opportunity to receive a suitable program of educational experiences.” Therefore, the Madison Board of Education affirms the following:

- The Madison Public Schools should identify gifted and talented students, K-12.
- The Madison Public Schools should meet the educational needs of gifted and talented students, including expanding enrichment learning opportunities.
- Instructional modifications should occur in the core educational program as part of a planned, ongoing, and systematic approach to meeting the needs of gifted and talented students.
- In addition to the core educational program, specialized learning opportunities should be available.
- Educators working with gifted and talented students should receive specialized training.

#6080. 1.1 (continued)

General Identification Guidelines

Connecticut state statute requires K-12 students who are gifted and talented to be identified. The purpose of assessment to identify giftedness is to determine areas of unusually high performance or potential and to develop them to the maximum extent. The Board recognizes that gifted and talented students possess a range of gifts and talents and that exceptionality may be exhibited in one or more specific areas, but not necessarily in all. Gifted and talented students' social and emotional development may not always match their advanced intellectual, academic or creative development. For these reasons, identification must be accomplished by multiple procedures which are methodologically sound. Procedures may include portfolio review, performance-based assessment, judgment by experts, and standardized tests, as well as information collected from teachers and parents.

Guidelines for Instruction

The Madison Public Schools should provide challenging programming that nurtures the strengths, interests, and abilities of gifted and talented students. These students with exceptional gifts and talents deserve learning experiences that provide a wide range of open-ended activities designed to accommodate the students' learning styles.

Quality instruction for gifted and talented students may be differentiated by faster pacing and greater depth and breadth, higher levels of abstraction and complexity, and presentation at an earlier age. Learning experiences which may be particularly successful with these students include in-depth investigations of special topics, directed independent study, regional or statewide off-campus courses, internships, mentorships, and peer teaching, all of which should respect each student's learning style and area of giftedness. Gifted and talented students also need opportunities to interact with each other. Interaction periodically with others learning at a similar pace and level provides additional intellectual challenge, social, and emotional support, and the opportunity to gain a more accurate perspective of their own abilities and those of others.

#6080. 1.1 (continued)

Opportunities should be provided for both direct instruction and facilitation by those teachers trained especially to work with gifted and talented students, as well as by the core educational program teachers. These opportunities should be an integral part of the student's total instructional time.

K-12 Program Development

The Board of Education requires the Madison Public Schools' administration and staff, under the direction of the Superintendent, to develop and implement a planned, challenging, and integrated program of instruction for gifted and talented students in the Madison Public Schools (K-12). Each school should incorporate the development of a gifted and talented program as a school-based initiative documented in the school's improvement plan.

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