

Minidoka County School District
Gifted / Talented Three Year Plan
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A. PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT:

Please describe how your school/district mission, vision, core values relate to the education specifically of gifted students. Include information on the following:

- a) How do gifted children's needs vary from the general population in your district?*
- b) How do approaches to teaching gifted children employ best practice?*
- c) How do approaches to teaching gifted children relate to Idaho Core Standards?*
- d) Other pertinent information*

Each child is a unique human being who possesses individual educational needs and abilities. It is the responsibility of our schools to identify those needs and abilities and then to provide the kinds of educational experiences that hold the greatest potential for meeting the needs and developing each child's ability to the fullest degree.

Minidoka County School District recognizes that a number of students in its school system possess extraordinary learning abilities and specialized talents to the degree that their needs require different educational experiences. Through this recognition and respect for individual differences among students, the district believes that differentiated education programs for the gifted and talented are a logical and essential part of the school program. These programs require a differentiated curriculum of greater challenge, more complexity and abstraction, and faster paced instruction.

Gifted students have the potential of becoming life-long, independent learners with the appropriate skills, concepts and attitudes. Emphasis must be placed on the development of these skills, concepts, and attitudes. Program planning must be based on actual needs and special interests of gifted/talented students.

B. DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS:

- a) *Intellectual*
- b) *Academic Area*
- c) *Creativity*
- d) *Leadership*
- e) *Visual and Performing Arts*

Gifted/Talented children are those who possess demonstrated or potential high abilities in one or more of five talent areas, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities.

Specific Academic—as evidenced by superior ability in mastering skills and concepts in one or more curriculum areas.

Intellectual—as evidenced by superior aptitude for:

- Understanding facts, concepts, generalizations and their relationships
- Identifying patterns
- Verbal and nonverbal reasoning
- Spatial perceptions
- Developing and evaluating ideas

Creativity—as evidenced by superior abilities in:

- Fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration
- Divergent thinking skills
- Problem-solving strategies

Leadership—as evidenced by superior aptitude for:

- Responsibility
- Organization
- Interpersonal skills
- Ability to motivate performance of others
- Insight into cause/effect relationships

Visual and Performing Arts—as evidenced by a superior aptitude for demonstrating, through exhibition or performance aspects of dance, music theater or the visual arts in the areas of:

- Aesthetic
- Critical
- Historical
- Production

C. PROGRAM GOALS:

Please describe the current status of gifted education in your district and your goals for improvement in the coming three years. How might professional development assist personnel improve their delivery of gifted education? What options for gifted students need expansion? What needs might you identify in your district regarding the gifted program? In what ways will improved instruction in gifted education relate to best practice in general for district personnel?

Current Status:

The current status of the Gifted and Talented program in the Minidoka District at the elementary level has two of our four elementary schools identifying students who are intellectually gifted. One of these two schools provides a weekly pull out program for gifted/talented (G/T) students led by a teacher holding Idaho G/T certification. The other school has an enrichment program with students working on independent projects.

Both middle schools provide honors classes in English and math for grades 6-8. There are leadership opportunities in student government and the Renaissance program. Band, choir, orchestra and art classes are all offered as elective courses giving students the opportunity to excel in visual and performing arts.

At the high school level, Minidoka District offers honors and dual credit courses in English, math, government, history, psychology and science. Student government allows leadership opportunities for G/T students. Elective courses provide additional programming for G/T students including drama, speech, art, band, orchestra, choir and pottery. Our PTE programs provide opportunities for students to grow by providing divergent thinking and problem solving strategies.

Need for Professional Development:

Teachers and administrators in the Minidoka District would benefit from professional development (PD) in learning how G/T students are identified, how to meet individual needs of G/T student and how to provide differentiated instruction for all students.

Expansion:

Our most critical area of need is expanding the G/T program in our elementary schools. First, G/T students need to be identified in all elementary schools. Teachers then need to know how to recognize students who may qualify for G/T services and how to refer for testing. Next, teacher training in skills which will help meet student G/T needs in the classroom as, G/T students spend the major portion of their school day in the general education classroom (even in schools with pull-out programs).

D. PROGRAM OPTIONS:

Elementary: Grade level 1-5 receive

Enrichment Activities

- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Simulations
- Research
- Analysis and Evaluation
- Problem Solving
- Questioning
- Creating Unique Products
- Competitions: Students will be encouraged to participate in available competitions.

Middle School: G/T students 6-8 will be encouraged to meet with the school counselor to determine needs, interests and goals in planning their academic and elective course work.

Students will be clustered in advisory and advanced classes.

Competitions: Students will be encouraged to participate in available competitions, Geography Bee, Spelling Bee, National History Day, Math Competition, and Invention Convention.

High School: G/T students 9-12 will be clustered in advisory to help determine needs, interests, goals and planning their academic and elective course work.

Students will be encouraged to participate in dual credit, honors classes, professional technical education and student leadership and given the opportunity to participate in the performing arts.

E. IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES:

Types of Assessment Instruments

Members of the G/T Placement Team, which may include the nominating teacher, G/T facilitator, school administrator, school psychologist, nominating teacher and school counselor, will decide on the appropriate instruments for student eligibility. No single criteria will determine the student's qualifications to participate in the G/T Program. Identification will involve administering a variety of assessments, which may include the following: standardized tests, e.g., intelligence, aptitude, achievement, criterion-referenced tests, observations by trained teachers and other personnel, nominations by parents, peers and staff, student interviews.

Screening Processes:

- a) Teacher referral*
- b) Parent referral*
- c) Other referral means*
- d) Types of screening testing (list specific screening tools)*
- e) Eligibility*
- f) Criteria for Placement in gifted programs*

Phase One:

The purpose of phase one screening is to develop a pool of students who may need further testing and qualify for special services. Screening should occur routinely and may be conducted by classroom teachers, G/T facilitators and other trained personnel. The district may target one grade level or establish a more inclusive approach. Group screening assessments do not require parental permission.

The following may be used as screening instruments:

- Group achievement tests at the 95th percentile.
- Referrals initiated by classroom teachers, administrators, parents, students and community members.
- Observations conducted by school personnel, parents or others.
- Past performances in various content areas, e.g., grade point average, outstanding products and/or projects, cumulative records.

Phase Two:

Appropriate Placement After the data from Phase One has been accumulated, the G/T Placement Team will meet for the following purposes:

1. Reviewing available data, such as teacher and/or parent referral forms formal measures (group standardized) informal measures (past and present classroom performance ratings, anecdotal information.
2. Recommending appropriate service option(s) and/or further testing to be completed. Testing will include, and not be limited to, achievement, psychological and/or creativity tests. Parental permission will be obtained for students who need individual testing.
3. Parents will be invited to discuss child placement and review testing results. If the parents are unable to attend the G/T placement meeting, they will be informed of the evaluation results and placement decisions.

F. PROGRAM EVALUATION:

- a) *Types of surveys administered in the district (e.g. attitudinal surveys given to parents, students, district personnel) and how the results are used for improvement*
- b) *Longitudinal data tracking (e.g. how the district follows students through their educational career in the district and how they perform in secondary school and post-secondary school; drop-out rates of identified elementary gifted students when they reach secondary school).*
- c) *Other means of evaluation*

Evaluation will include attitudinal surveys of students, parents, and district personnel. A Gifted/Talented Advisory group, which includes parents will be formed to review the surveys, evaluate the G/T program and assess program needs.

Longitudinal data will track percentage of students identified as gifted who are enrolled in honors and dual credit courses at the secondary level. Graduation rates will also be tracked.

Please rank your district's four (4) most pressing needs concerning gifted education: number in order of importance, with #1 having the highest priority:

- 1) Fidelity in identifying G/T students across the district
- 2) Professional development for general educators in GT best practice
- 3) Resources, curriculum, consumable materials
- 4) Monthly collaboration time focused on GT needs
- 5) Professional development regarding how to identify giftedness