



**Board Meeting Date: 3/13/2023**

**Title:** Talent Development Universal Screener Recommendation

**Type:** Discussion

**Presenter(s):** Jody De St. Hubert, Director of Teaching and Learning; Leigh Ann Feily, Student Support Services Continuous Improvement Specialist and MTSS Coordinator; Debra Richards, Talent Development Coordinator; and Chris Holden, Principal of Normandale Elementary

**Description:** In alignment with Policy 614 the Edina Public Schools Assessment Calendar was collectively created throughout the 2021-22 school year. When the calendar was approved, Teaching and Learning was asked to form a Talent Development Assessment Design team to recommend a Talent Development universal screener.

The CogAT assessment was historically used as a Talent Development universal screener in EPS for Gifted Education (the term utilized at the time) identification. Following a cost-benefit analysis it was determined that Edina Public Schools was not receiving the cost benefit from the tool. There was redundancy in identification between assessments that were part of the EPS system at that time.

The current recommendation of reinstatement of CogAT as a Talent Development universal screener comes in light of design team work that followed implementation science and EPS's shift away from Gifted Education to Talent Development. In a system of talent development, a portfolio with multiple assessment tools is necessary for identification in order to ensure that all students have an equitable opportunity for access to talent development opportunities. Diversity of assessment within the portfolio is necessary in order to uncover hidden talents. The CogAT brings an opportunity to view all students through a strengths-based mindset which was previously missing.

**Recommendation:** This report is for discussion to add the CogAT in 2nd grade as a Talent Development Universal Screener to the 2023-24 Assessment Calendar. The recommendation will be brought to the board for approval on April 17th.

**Desired Outcomes from the Board:** Review in detail and provide questions and feedback.

**Attachments:**

1. Report (next page)

**Links:**

1. [Talent Development Universal Screener Presentation](#) (March 2023)

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**Talent Development Identification for a Select Few Classes:**

Talent Development identification is designed to be comprehensive. The grade level bands that students are identified for a different class than their typical grade level class are:

- 3-6 grade accelerated math
- 4-6 grade extended reading
- 6 grade accelerated science
- 6 grade math

A change in Edina since the Edina Gifted Education Study in 2017 is that for these select classes, instead of relying on only one piece of data, there are MULTIPLE data points (portfolio) that are gathered to determine placement. These data points can include observation protocols, summative assessments, formative assessments, teachers feedback, classroom engagement and performance, parent and student feedback, and extenuating circumstances.

**Universal Screener Addition to the Identification Portfolio:**

Using a Talent Development approach has eliminated the need for having two consecutive scores in the 97% or higher on the MAP test to participate in Extended Reading and/or Accelerated Math. Instead, a portfolio that collects data for a body of evidence is currently in place to determine appropriate programming options. This shift began in the fall of 2021.

**2022-23 Talent Development Portfolio**

Data Piece	Area Measured
FASTBridge (aReading and aMath)	Academic
MCA State Assessment	Academic
Classroom Benchmark Assessment	Academic
Classroom Flexible Grouping Unit Assignments	Academic
Grades	Academic

Observations	Behavior
Teacher Input Checklist	Behavior/Readiness
Teacher Anecdotal Information	Motivation/Student Situational Factors

As evidenced, the current Talent Development portfolio includes a variety of measures. One facet of the portfolio that is missing is a cognitive test. Cognitive tests are designed to measure a student's reasoning ability. Such tests do not measure specific academic performance in content areas such as math and reading. It allows students to demonstrate their talent other than through academic measures. Using a cognitive measure in Talent Development identification can remove barriers and open opportunities for students, especially students from groups that have been historically underserved from gifted education. It is a way to provide students with equitable and systemic programming options.

A recommended change to the District Assessment Calendar for the 2023-2024 school year is to add the CogAT in 2nd grade. This recommendation is aligned with best-practice as stated by the National Association for Gifted Children and the Minnesota Department of Education. It fulfills the task of identifying a Talent Development Universal Screener proposed in the June 2022 Assessment Plan presentation.

A universal screener is a way to systematically identify exceptional potential and hidden talent among all populations, including English Language Learners, students with special needs and those who may not be achieving on other traditional academic measures. Using a universal screener is considered a best practice in the field of gifted education. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) recognizes the importance of this in their Gifted Programming Standards. The recently passed House Bill 1102 (2014) had the implementation of a universal screener "no later than second grade" as one of its primary attributes. The use of a universal screener is of critical importance to a Talent Development program.

The Talent Development Assessment Committee utilized implementation science to arrive at the recommendation of the CogAT as the Talent Development universal screener. The results of the review were shared with the Talent Development District Advisory Council and they offered insights about the recommendation and the next steps of implementation. Members include:

#### **Concord**

- Joe Dvorkin
- Chad Forslin
- Thuy Anh Fox
- Erin Plasch

#### **Cornelia**

- Gina Felton
- Nikita Iyengar

- Christine McCarthy
- Neeta Rajan

### **Countryside**

- Melissa Cohen
- Nicole McClure
- Paul Tessmer-Tuck
- Dawn Yocum

### **Creek Valley**

- Anindita Dasgupta
- Jolynn Gamble
- Claire Parmenter
- Aynash Toleu
- Jessaca Veneman

### **Highlands**

- Nadjua Baker
- Mahesh Johari
- Dan Stocker
- Erica Wattson

### **Normandale**

- Erin Eldridge
- Kirsten Horstman
- Colleen Mahin
- Kruti Shukla

### **Teaching and Learning**

- Jody De St, Hubert
- Jennifer Jouppi
- Debra Richards

### **School Board**

- Janie Shaw

Further information about the review process can be viewed in the attached Talent Development Universal Screener Presentation.

Based on outcomes of the review process, the Talent Development Assessment Design Team recommends the next steps of implementation to be:

- Universal screening of all 2nd grade students utilizing the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) full battery in Fall of 2023.
- If the CogAT is successful based on identified success measures, consider adding the CogAT in grade 4
- Curiosity Lab teachers administer the CogAT to increase the rate of reliability and diminish responsibility for grade 2 teachers
- Scores reviewed by a team (administrator, dean, TD teacher, school psychologist, literacy coach, ADSIS teachers) to understand strength-based perspectives about the student
- Scores utilized by TD teachers as part of a comprehensive TD screening portfolio that includes multiple assessments to determine correct instructional matches
- Scores utilized to determine strength areas for each and every student for classroom instructional purposes

### **The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)**

CogAT tests are group administered assessments that measure students' learned reasoning abilities developed through in-school and out-of-school experiences. The CogAT tests measure three cognitive domains, Verbal, Non-verbal, and Quantitative reasoning. The CogAT is a measure of a student's potential to succeed in school-related tasks. It is not a measure of general intelligence or IQ.

Approving the recommendation to add the CogAT to the Edina Public School Assessment Plan will provide information to view students from a strengths'-based perspective, highlight exceptional potential and hidden talent among all populations, and enhance the Talent Development identification portfolio.

- CogAT [Presentation](#) from Pearson
- Surrounding Districts Information [Document](#)