

MEMO

To: Superintendent Gina Butters, Board President Paul Widdison, WSD Board Members

From: Heather Neilson, Curriculum and Instruction Director

Date: February 10, 2025

Subject: Gifted and Talented Program Participation and Goals for 2024-2025

Utah Board Rule R277-707-3 outlines the requirements for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to apply for Enhancement for Accelerated Students Program funds. This rule mandates that LEAs establish clear procedures for identifying and supporting students who would benefit from Gifted and Talented (G&T) services, ensuring:

- Equitable identification practices
- Increased participation among underrepresented students
- Parent engagement in the identification and support process
- Professional learning opportunities for educators

Weber School District has aligned its Gifted & Talented (G&T) program with these expectations and strives to create an inclusive and challenging learning environment for high-ability students.

Participation Goals

For the 2024-2025 school year, Weber School District aims to:

- Establish a baseline measurement of Gifted & Talented program participation among students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, with the goal of increasing participation by 2%.
- Expand access to enrichment opportunities such as VEX Robotics, the Storytelling Festival, and the STEM Olympiad.

Student Identification Tools and Strategies

To strengthen the identification process, the district will:

- Hire a Gifted & Talented Teacher Leader to support identification and collaboration with educators.
- Train educators to recognize gifted traits in diverse students.
- Train educators to correctly use the Scale for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS).
- Research and select a screening tool to implement universal screening for placement in the accelerated mathematics program in 2025-26.

Increasing Participation Among Underrepresented Students

To improve equity and access, the district will:

- Offer flexible testing options with alternative scheduling and accessible locations.
- Introduce enrichment activities in lower grades to foster early identification and engagement.
- Provide multilingual resources and workshops on the identification process and program benefits.

Services for Gifted and Talented Students

The district will offer:

- Comprehensive identification for Gifted & Talented programming using multiple criteria, including teacher recommendations, standardized assessments, and classroom observations.
- Open-access enrichment opportunities and extracurricular activities for all students.
- Equitable access to STEM and enrichment activities, with focused support for under-resourced schools.
- Continuous data reviews to refine policies and address equity gaps.

Professional Learning

Educator training will include:

- Identifying giftedness in diverse student populations.
- Strategies for differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- Funding support for educators pursuing a Gifted and Talented Endorsement.

Use of Gifted & Talented Funds

Weber School District will allocate Enhancement for Accelerated Students Program funds toward:

- Professional development for teachers
- Identification and support for underrepresented students
- Salaries and benefits for teachers supporting gifted programs
- Instructional resources and assessment tools
- Travel and participation in enrichment competitions
- Supplies, materials, and equipment for gifted education initiatives

Weber School District's Gifted & Talented plan reflects a steadfast commitment to ensuring all high-ability students have access to rigorous learning opportunities, regardless of background. Through equitable identification practices, targeted support for underrepresented students, and ongoing professional learning for educators, the district strives to create an inclusive environment where gifted learners can thrive. By continuously reviewing data, refining policies, and engaging families and communities, Weber School District will uphold its dedication to excellence and equity in gifted education, empowering students to reach their full potential.