

Jasper School District

Handbook of Policies

For

Gifted and Talented

Education

Revised 2008

Jasper School District

Policy on Gifted and Talented

PHILOSOPHY

The Jasper School District is committed to an educational program that recognizes the unique value, characteristics, needs, and talents of the gifted child.

The program for the gifted, talented, and creative is based upon a continued commitment to foster the full development of human potential. We recognize that the gifted possess extraordinary abilities to think creatively and critically and that each one's cognitive and affective needs can best be met by provision of a differentiated learning environment. Such an environment should develop within the student a desire for intrinsic learning which will help to foster excellence and a sense of individual responsibility to the school and community and to realize that his/her contribution to self and society.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Jasper School District is aware that a working partnership between school personnel and other members of the community will benefit a gifted and talented program. We encourage community involvement in a variety of ways. Some of the methods are listed below.

- Newspaper coverage of gifted and talented happenings, events, competitions, rewards, etc.
- Open house for parents and community
- Parent/Teacher conferences scheduled twice a year
- Invitations for parents to watch plays, productions, competitions, etc
- Gifted and Talented handbook given to each new parent
- Events published on calendar that is sent home
- Evening meeting opportunities for parents of gifted students
- Letters and memos to parents concerning happenings, events, competitions, etc.
- Opportunity for parents to evaluate program
- Use community people as resources for learning
- Parents and community members included on an advisory committee for gifted education
- Share resource library with parents and community members

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development is based on local educational need of the gifted students. A written plan follows:

1. School Personnel Policy for
 - A. teachers' meetings and staff/board development in-service training
 - B. acceptance of approved staff development activities in lieu of college credit
 - C. staff development policy
2. Gifted and Talented Program plan for secondary teachers' certificate of participation in the Secondary Content Training.
3. Secondary staff development on the differentiated curriculum for gifted students in the regular classroom.
4. AP and Pre-AP summer institute.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities to increase knowledge of the education of gifted and talented students are provided for school board members, school district administrators, teachers and support staff on a continuing and regular basis through:

1. Materials shared with classroom teachers.
2. Workshops, in-services, classes
3. Meetings
4. Information about gifted students and program options

PERSONNEL

Jasper School District acknowledges that persons who teach identified students in homogenous groups or persons who administer/coordinate a program for gifted students in kindergarten through grade twelve **must** hold current Arkansas teaching certification, pass appropriate state approved assessments, and meet performance standards as set by the State Board of Education through the Arkansas Department of Education Professional Licensure department for add-on endorsement in gifted education and administration.

PERSONNEL

A process for selection of administrators/coordinators and teachers of the gifted are clearly defined and established.

Teacher Selection

The gifted and talented teachers, building principal, and superintendent of the Jasper School District will interview candidates for this position. All interviewees will use the characteristics listed below. They are important in considering a candidate for a teacher of gifted and talented children because of the special nature and needs of gifted and talented students. These characteristics are to be considered by the Jasper School District as they relate to program goals and objectives when hiring this position.

Personal Characteristics

- Displays a genuine concern for gifted and talented students, their education and their special needs.
- Enthusiasm for Gifted and Talented programming
- The ability to be flexible in time, pace, materials, instructional patterns, etc.
- Good sense of humor
- Accepting of diverse ideas and behaviors
- Possessing a high degree of professionalism
- Willing to accept the individuality of each student
- Skillful in public relations and sensitive in dealing with students and parents
- Possesses boundless energy

Professional Characteristics

- Valid Arkansas teaching certificate
- Gifted and Talented Teaching certification or in the process of acquiring one
- Recognized by colleagues as an outstanding teacher who displays qualities of innovation, creativity, and sensibility
- Willingness to attend workshops and conferences related to gifted and talented education

PERSONNEL

Job Descriptions for developed for administer/coordinator and teachers of the gifted.

Responsibilities of the Gifted and Talented Resource Teacher for Grades Kindergarten through Sixth

- Serve as a resource to teachers of the gifted and talented students, counselors, and administrators
- Meet on a regular basis with students in a designated area for resource room activities.
- Assist in on-going identification procedures.
- Teach curriculum units and conduct group activities
- Research, design, write and prepare appropriate educational activities for identified students.
- Periodically review and evaluate the progress of students in the program
- Coordinate and develop resources which may be used by classroom teachers
- Participate in conferences with parents and/or students involved in the program
- Provide parents and teachers with information concerning opportunities for talented and gifted primary age children outside the regular school setting
- Work regularly with school personnel to increase awareness of the needs of gifted and talented students
- Assist in an annual evaluation of the program
- Meet with the gifted education coordinator and/or other gifted education staff personnel on a weekly basis

Responsibilities of the Gifted and Talented Resource Teacher for Grades Seven Through Twelve

- Serve as a resource to teachers of the gifted and talented students, counselors, and administrators
- Provide resources materials and activities beyond that normally found in the school
- Disseminate information concerning opportunities for talented and gifted students
- Provide opportunities for gifted and talented students to participate in a variety of learning opportunities involving higher level thinking and reasoning
- Provide students with information concerning programs, workshops, and special opportunities available to gifted and talented students

- Work regularly with school personnel to increase awareness of the needs of gifted and talented students
- Assist in on-going identification procedures
- Assist in an annual evaluation of the program
- Meet with the gifted education coordinator and/or other gifted education staff personnel on a weekly basis.

Responsibilities of the Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Education

- Coordinate all personnel assigned to the gifted and talented education program. Meet weekly with the gifted program staff members to promote continuity throughout the kindergarten through twelfth grade program.
- Integrate services provided through the gifted and talented education program at all levels of instruction.
- Serve as a resource to the staff in the gifted program, classroom teachers, building administrators, district administrators, parents, and the community in regard to gifted and talented programming.
- Compile information about the gifted and talented program as needed for district and state reports.
- Compile screening and referral information regarding students.
- Maintain records of identification from year to year.
- Assist educational resource room teachers in providing educational activities for students identified as gifted and talented.
- Plan and coordinate district in-service activities related to gifted education.
- Monitor the progress of the district program on a periodic basis and communicate strengths and weaknesses to the Superintendent and to Board of Education.
- Implement an annual evaluation process of the program.
- Participate as needed in conferences with parents, students, teachers, and/or administrators.
- Communicate with other schools when identified students transfer into or out of the school district.
- Prepare a yearly budget and compile information necessary for funding proposals.
- Disseminate information to faculty members, parents, and civic groups regarding the gifted program and act as a liaison between the gifted program, school personnel, and the community.

PERSONNEL

Regularly scheduled time is provided for administrators/coordinators and teachers of the gifted to perform duties other than direct services to identified students. (The equivalent of five periods per week is recommended.)

7.01, 7.02

IDENTIFICATION

The process for identifying students has several stages which are clearly stated, uniformly implemented, and communicated to the entire school staff.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

Identification of students in the Jasper School System will be a continuous process that includes both formal and informal input and will come from a variety of sources. The purpose of careful and comprehensive identification procedures is to find and serve as many students as possible who need special programs to develop their exceptional abilities. It is important to identify students with potential for outstanding achievement. The emphasis in identification procedures should be on student need for specialized services. It is recognized that GT students may express themselves in many ways, and may emerge at certain times and under certain conditions. It is desirable that all screening instruments be as fair as possible. A comprehensive identification plan should be based on the best available research and recommendations of experts in the field. It must take in to account the local student population and should ensure inclusion of potentially gifted and talented students from all cultural and economic backgrounds. Students nominated for GT program must be a representative of the entire student population in terms of race, sex, and economic status.

The identification process will be based on a case study approach and will follow these steps:

I. Nomination Steps (Standard 7.01, 7.02)

A. Teacher nominations

1. Staff development on characteristics and identification of GT request is made annually for teacher nominations.
2. A request is made annually for teacher nominations.

B. Parent/Community nominations

Awareness of the program is provided at the public meetings held at the school each year. Parents and community members will be aware that he/she has the right to nominate self or peer for the program.

C. Peer/Self nominations

Awareness of the program is provided at the first student assembly program held the first week of school.

D. Standardized Test Nominations

School-wide standardized achievement/ability tests are screened each year to bring any student of high ability and/or achievement under consideration for the program.

E. Transfer Student Nominations

Transfer students, after confirmation of participation from previous school, will be evaluated and considered for participation, but not automatically placed.

F. On-going Nomination Process

Although nominations are formally requested once a year, nominations will be accepted at any time during the school year

II. Student Assessment (Standard 7.04)

The following instruments will be utilized in selection of students for participation in the Jasper GT Program.

A. Objective Assessment—At least two instruments that include standardized mental ability tests and creative ability tests.

1. Current standardized test
2. Otis-Lennon School Ability Index
3. SAT where applied
4. SLOSSEN IQ
5. Williams Test of Divergent Thinking
6. Raven's Matrix
7. Grade Equivalency

B. Subjective Assessment—At least two instruments

1. Behavioral Checklist

A. Parent/Student Inventory

B. Renzulli Scale

2. Nomination forms

3. Cumulative student grades

4. Student interviews/previous work of student

III. Confidentiality, Communication, and Maintenance (Standard 7.06)

- A. Student information is kept in files with access limited to staff concerned with the education of the student and to parents of the student.
- B. Student information which would be educationally useful is communicated to the appropriate instructional staff.
- C. Student data and placement decisions are kept on file for at least five years or for as long as needed for educational decisions.
- D. Procedures used in the identification process are non-discriminatory with respect to race, cultural or economic background, religion, national, origin, sex, or handicapping conditions.

IV. Student Placement (Standard 7.03, 7.05, 7.07)

Placement will follow these guidelines: (1) anyone is eligible for nomination, (2) placement is based on potential, and (3) interest and willingness to invest time and energy are critical factors. Student placement decisions are based on multiple criteria. No single criterion or cut-off score is used to include or exclude a student.

A. Identification Selection Committee

- 1. A committee chaired by a trained specialist in gifted education and including administrators, teachers, and/or counselors collects and analyzes data, maintains appropriate records, and makes professional decisions on placement of students. Jasper School District will have five personnel that includes the campus GT teacher, a counselor, a principal and three teachers that are appropriate for the student being evaluated.
- 2. Members of the committee are made aware of the local identification policies and procedures and the nature of the program.

B. Selection Process

- 1. The selection committee uses an approach that considers all student information collected in order to make its decisions.
- 2. No single criterion or cut-off score is used to exclude a student from placement.

C. Parent Notification and Consent

1. Students identified for program participation

A. Parents are notified by letter and e-mail of their child's selection for program participation and provided with a parent consent form, which offers the opportunity to request additional information about the program, if needed, before making a decision.

B. Students are placed in the program upon receipt of a positive response on the parent consent form and a conference with parent(s).

2. Students not identified for program participation.

Parents of any child nominated for the program are notified by letter and e-mail of the committee's decision.

D. The decision of the screening committee will not only be to parents but teachers of the nomination student, principal, and counselor so that each one can make contributions to student's portfolio.

1. Nominated students who demonstrate emotional and social problems will be referred to the counselor.
2. The GT campus teacher will conference regularly with the classroom teacher and furnish information concerning identified students' performances, strengths, and weaknesses, while in the program.
3. Principals and teachers are given schedules of GT classes and rosters of students attending those classes.
4. An Identification Profile will be used for each student and placed in his/her portfolio. This portfolio will be helpful to GT teachers and classroom teachers during conferences.

V. Appeals of Placement Decisions (Standard 7.08)

A. If a parent/guardian/student disagrees with placement committee's decision, he/she should contact the GT coordinator or campus GT teacher and present his/her concern. If the GT coordinator or teacher cannot recommend a satisfactory change to the placement decision, he/she will be asked to make a signed written appeal that contains the following: a short statement of their disagreement and any additional information that might be helpful in a review of the placement decision.

B. A placement committee meeting will be scheduled within ten school days of receiving the written appeal. The parent/guardian/student will be requested to attend this meeting. If the person(s) remains in disagreement with the selection committee after it has reviewed the placement decision

he/she should appeal, in writing, within ten school days of the placement committee's review to the Superintendent of Jasper School District.

- C. The Superintendent will review the placement decision and consult with the head of the GT personnel at OUR Cooperative and/or a counselor, and/or a psychological examiner to do further testing and to conduct an extensive case study at which the parents will be responsible for the additional cost of testing and consulting. The person(s) consulted will make a recommendation to the Superintendent who will make the final decision of student placement.

VI. Annual Review of Student Placement (Standard 7.09)

Identification of GT students is an ongoing process extending from school entry through grade 12. At the end of the year the GT campus teacher will look at student progress. Recommendations for temporary removal of exit from the program can be if there are individual student cases that warrant such action.

A. Exit Policy

1. The screening committee will annually review students placed in the GT program. Teachers, parents, and/or students may request that a student placed in GT program, be reviewed at any time during the school year. If exiting from the program best serves the educational interests of the student, then services may be discontinued. An exit request can be made by student, parent, or teacher.
2. The review request should be made through the GT campus teacher and building principal.
3. A conference will be held with the principal, parents, the teacher(s), and the student to discuss further participation in the program.
4. The committee will then make a recommendation and/or decision on the review request.
5. If one of the parties is not satisfied with the final decision of the placement committee, the party may follow the appeal procedure.

IDENTIFICATION

A committee chaired by a trained specialist in gifted education and including administrators, teachers, and/or counselors collects and analyzes data, maintains appropriate records, and makes professional decisions on placement of students.

IDENTIFICATION

The identification process yields information obtained through a variety of procedures and from multiple independent sources.

IDENTIFICATION

Student placement decisions are based on multiple criteria. No single criterion or cut-off score is used to include or exclude a student.

IDENTIFICATION

Instructionally useful information about individual students obtained during the identification process is communicated to the instructional staff regardless of final placement decision.

IDENTIFICATION

Identification of gifted and talented students is an ongoing process extending from school entry through grade twelve.

PROGRAM GOALS/OPTIONS

Program is systematically developed, with long range goals that are coordinated to guide the development of gifted students from the time they are identified through graduation from high school.

LONG TERM GOALS

- To identify at every and in every school those abilities and needs of each gifted child.
- To help each participating gifted child become aware of and accept his/her unique characteristics and gain a realistic and healthy concept of himself/herself-including strengths, weaknesses, area of needed improvement and potentials.
- To provide learning alternatives which are appropriately styled to encourage individual growth at varying levels of abilities, interest and needs.
- To maintain competency of professional staff by encouraging and supporting participation in gifted education workshops, seminars, conference, and university courses.

SHORT TERM GOALS

- To emphasized individual success and excellence in academic, social, and physical realms.
- To foster support, cooperation and understanding of the program within the administrative and teaching staff.
- To support and assist parents in recognizing, understanding and providing for the needs of their talented and gifted children.
- The student will be provided with opportunities to interrelate and communicate with individuals like/unlike oneself and to share his/her unique talents and products with them.
- The student will be provided with opportunities to operate at higher levels of thinking utilizing advanced or accelerated content for certain sustained periods of time.

PROGRAM GOAL/OPTIONS

A table of organization is developed which clearly delineates roles, responsibilities, and coordination procedures.

Table of Organization

- Jasper School District Board of Education
 - Superintendent
 - Curriculum Coordinator
 - Building Principal(s)
 - School GT Coordinator(s)
- School Campus GT Teacher(s)
 - Classroom Teacher(s)
 - Campus Counselor(s)
 - Parent(s)
 - OUR GT Chairperson

PROGRAM GOALS/OPTIONS

Identified students' placement in program options is based on their abilities, needs, and interests, and resources of the district.

PROGRAM GOALS/ OPTIONS

Administration arrangements are used which promote interaction among gifted students and both their intellectual and chronological peers.

PROGRAM GOALS/ OPTIONS

A minimum of 150 minutes a week direct instruction must be provided during the regular school day.

None of the instruments or procedures used in the identification process of gifted / talented students are discriminatory with respect to race, culture, or economic background, religion, national origin, sex or handicapping condition.