



## Administrative Unit

<b>Administrative Unit name:</b> Aspen School District Re-1 - 49010	<b>Region:</b> West Central	
<b>Name of Gifted Education Director/Coordinator:</b> Tom Heald	<b>Email:</b> theald@aspenk12.net	
<b>Director’s mailing address:</b> 235 High School Road, Aspen, Colorado, 81611	<b>Phone number:</b> 970.925.3760 x 4005	<b>Fax:</b> 970.925.5721

**Name of Superintendent:** John Maloy

12.02(2) Comprehensive Plan “...The program plan shall be implemented by all constituent schools and districts of the AU. ... The Department shall review all program plans for completeness. An AU’s program plan shall be deemed complete if it addresses all elements specified in Section 12.02(2)(a) through 12.02(2)(l) of these Rules”

**Directions:**

Write the administrative unit’s description of how it implements each element of the Program Plan and how the AU plans to improve or enhance each element as appropriate. Write how the AU Key requirements of each section of the plan are listed as they are described in the Rules.

## Procedures for Parent, Family and Student Engagement and Communication

AU Description: Aspen School District has implemented a variety of tools for communicating information about gifted services to stakeholders. The district website information was updated in 2013-14 and again in 2015-16. Webpages, brochures, emails and newsletters are methods used at each school to maintain communication with parents, students, staff, administrators and community members. click [HERE for our ASCENT/GT FOLDER](#)

AU Target/s:

1. Update district website to reflect changes in service options and personnel.
2. Continue to communicate with teachers regarding programming options and best practices.

## Definition of “Gifted Student”

We use the State definition:

"Gifted and talented children means those persons between the ages of five and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services. Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice-exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic and ethnic, cultural populations. Gifted



students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these **areas of giftedness**:

- General or specific intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities"

## Identification Procedures, Criteria for Determining Exceptional Ability (Giftedness) or Talent Pool, and Identification Portability

### AU Description:

Aspen School District has identification procedures in place, including a body of evidence that consists of both quantitative and qualitative measures.

#### Step 1: Screening

Body of Evidence (BOE) forms include assessment results (CogAT, NNAT, TCAP, Scantron, etc.) and classroom performance. Referrals may come from staff, parents, or students.

#### Step 2: Identification

The Response to Intervention (RtI) team and/or Ascent Team will review the BOE while making decisions regarding specific student services and interventions. Students are identified based on strengths.

#### Step 3: Develop and modify individual Advanced Learning Plans (ALP)

Advanced Learning Plans will be created based on strength areas for every student who has been recognized as needing specific services for challenge beyond the classroom.

#### Step 4: Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring includes evidence from classroom performance, achievement indicators, standardized testing results and demonstrated accomplishments. The ALP will be reviewed annually. In an effort to respond to students' individual needs, services may be altered as the child progresses through school.

The Early Access process is also in place to address identification of the young gifted learner.

#### AU Target/s:

Increase identification of minority and/or English language Learner students by 10% to better match district demographics, by Fall 2017.

## Advanced Learning Plan Content, Procedures and Responsibilities

### Comprehensive Program Design

#### Identified as "Both": Emphasis in Language

##### Advanced Students

##### Elementary School

Core reading curriculum

Differentiation:

Leveled Reading Groups: in class

##### Identified Gifted Students

##### Elementary School

Novel studies/ Socratic discussion

SEM

Interdisciplinary Group Projects



Leveled Reading Groups: between classes  
Developmental Spelling (some)

Differentiated Writing

Independent Projects

Collaborative writing and reading projects

Writing Competition

Subject Acceleration- Tier 3

**Middle School**

Novel studies/ Socratic discussion

Independent Reading

Battle of the Books

Interdisciplinary Group Projects

Independent Projects

Google Docs

Web Based Communication

Writing Competitions

Spelling Bee

Brain Bowl

History Day Competition

Model UN

**Services that may be lacking within the district**

**Elementary School**

Consistent Differentiated Spelling

Consistent Sharing students among classrooms

**Middle School**

Novel studies/ Socratic discussion

Independent Reading

Battle of the Books

Interdisciplinary Group Projects

Independent Projects

Collaborative writing and reading projects

Writing Competition

Spelling Bee

Brain Bowl

History Day Competition

Model UN

Subject Acceleration- Tier 3

**Services that may be lacking within the district**

**Elementary School**

Common Core Book List

Set of discussion-based texts (i.e. Junior Great Books) for each level.



Consistent differentiation across classrooms

**Middle School**

Consistent Cluster Grouping

Consistent differentiation across classrooms

Professional Development Strategies

**Identified as "Both": Emphasis in Math**

**Advanced Students  
Elementary School**

Math Investigations

Math enrichment- specialist

M3 Math

Math apps

Pull out: Slushies

**Middle School**

Go Math

Big Ideas

Pull out grades 5 and 6

Leveled Math grades 7 and 8

Brain Bowl

Math apps

Robotics

**Middle School**

Consistent differentiation across classrooms

Professional Development Strategies

Discussion-based texts for all classroom levels.

**Identified Gifted Students  
Elementary School**

Engineering and Robotics

Coding

Jr. First LEGO League

M2 and M3 activities

Subject Acceleration- Tier 3

**Middle School**

Go Math

Big Ideas

Pull out grades 5 and 6

Leveled Math grades 7 and 8

Brain Bowl

Math apps

Robotics and First LEGO League



Coding

Coding

5th Grade Science Fair

8th grade science fair- limited

Subject Acceleration- Tier 3

**Services that may be lacking within the district**

**Services that may be lacking within the district**

**Elementary School**

**Elementary School**

Consistent Sharing students among classrooms

Technology support

Consistent differentiation across classrooms

**Middle School**

**Middle School**

Targeting population effectively

Technology resource awareness

Science fair opportunities

**Identified as Both: Emphasis in "Other"**

**Advanced Students**

**Identified Gifted Students  
Elementary School**

**Elementary School**

Specials

Specials

Independent Projects

Choir

**Middle School**

**Middle School**

Explorations

Explorations

Choir and Music

Choir and Music

Media Club

Media Club

Theatre

Theatre

Independent Projects



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**Services that may be lacking within the district**

**Services that may be lacking within the district**

Consistent Staffing/ Funding for special subjects/explorations

Better connection with community music and arts experts. (AMF, Art Museum, Aspen Institute, Aspen Film Fest, etc. )

**STEAM Programming Continuum**

Grades 2-3

Simple Machines (LEGO sets)

We Do Robotics

Wild Animals

Amazing Mechanisms

Play Soccer

Adventure Stories

Jr. First LEGO League

Aeronautics

We Do Robotics

NXT simple palate and challenges

EV3... intro

Grades 3-4

Jr. First LEGO League and demo

Non-competitive FLL

Programming- Hopscotch/Tynker

Aeronautics

FLL Competition

Intro to Robotics

Grades 5 and 6

Coding: Scratch

Engineering the Future



	Aeronautics
	Science fair- 5th Grade FLL Competition
	Advanced Robotics
Grade 7 and 8	Coding linked to Common Core
	Aeronautics
	Science fair opportunities A K-12 continuum for robotics beyond grade 8 that is consistently staffed
Services that may be lacking within the district	Define district STEAM initiative
	Staffing for all students or just targeted population?

**AU Target/s:**

1. Develop a district-wide framework for programming to include expectations and guidelines for cluster grouping, acceleration, "regular" curriculum differentiation, and extra-curricular opportunities by Fall 2017.
2. Create a specific district-wide professional development plan to address teachers in need of training regarding differentiation for gifted learners, by Summer 2017.

**AU Description:**

Aspen School District uses Advanced Learning Plans (ALP's) for all students identified as gifted, beginning in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and continuing through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

A team of parents, students, teachers and administrators develop goals for each ALP. Each plan is reviewed annually for goal attainment and revisions. Plans are housed within the Alpine Achievement System which aids in analysis of student performance and allows for continual monitoring of progress.

**AU Target/s:**

Continue to review and evaluation of programming through the 2016-17 school year in order to refine and improve overall delivery of services and results for students, by Fall 2017.

## Programming

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**AU Description:**

The Aspen School District is committed to providing quality education for gifted students through the Ascent Program. The philosophy of the Ascent team is to revisit services to ensure that our current faculty and community resources address the unique needs of each child. Rather than design a static program, we examine student needs and develop services that best suit available staff, resources, and our population. The responsibility for meeting the needs of high achieving students rests with the entire staff. The adaptability of our resources allows the district to concentrate services where needs are greatest.

**Instructional Strategies**



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***To provide the best possible educational opportunities for gifted children, the Aspen School District advocates a variety of best practices.***

**Differentiation:** A means of addressing the particular strength areas and promoting the continual growth of students in a classroom environment.

**Cluster Grouping:** Small groups of students are placed together according to their identified strength areas in a mixed ability classroom.

**Flexible Pacing:** A form of acceleration in which the pace of the material presented and/or expected to be mastered is adjusted.

**Curriculum Compacting:** A systematic procedure for modifying or streamlining the regular curriculum .

**Guided Independent Study:** A process through which student and teacher identify problems or topics of interest to the student, plan a method of investigation and identify a product to be developed.

**Acceleration:** Acceleration offers standard curricular experiences to students at a younger-than-usual age or lower-than-usual grade level. .

**Collaborative Teaching:** A specialist supports the regular classroom teacher to deliver more challenging instruction.

**Enrichment/Extensions:** These activities may include seminars, workshops, competitions and participation in national events.

### **Draft framework in progress**

#### **Vision and Mission Statements**

##### **Vision**

Students will apply their skills and knowledge to a variety of meaningful problems to foster well-rounded development including self-confidence, communication, and leadership.

##### **Mission**

Students are intrinsically motivated and engaged in learning to create meaningful and purposeful projects through collaboration.

**Intrinsic motivation and engagement is developed when students engage in project based learning where the outcome is not pre-determined by the teacher. Students problem solve to find an open ended solution.**

##### **Autonomy:**

Choice within an assignment: Differentiation

Choice as a group: Project Based

Choice as an individual: Independent Projects

Classroom environment is student-centered as students work on a variety of tasks at their appropriate level.

##### **Mastery**

Skills learned within the classroom

Skills built upon by Ascent instruction: pre and post tests

Skills taught within Ascent: STEM skills (robotics and programming), problem solving skills, teamwork skills

Classroom environment is more teacher-centered, with an initial lesson, demonstration and modeling, and then student practice. A presentation or completion of a task may substitute for a post-test to demonstrate mastery.

##### **Purpose**

Students will be able to apply the skills that they have in meaningful and creative ways, demonstrating:.

Flexible thinking

Divergent thinking

Working with a team





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Students will partner in their own learning by making individual choices within a framework that they understand

Students can identify real-world or authentic applications for their learning.

Classroom environment is student-centered as students work on a variety of tasks at their appropriate level.



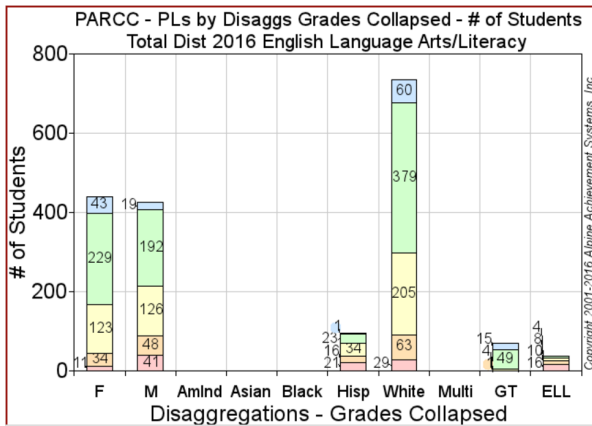
Aspen School District’s overall achievement and historical growth is strong, with each identified area either meeting or exceeding state expectations. Graduation rate is very high and dropout rate is very low. The district as a whole has been accredited with distinction each year. Given the low numbers in any of the sub-groups for the district population in general, it is difficult to make generalizations about performance of very few students in any of the categories.

**Goals:**

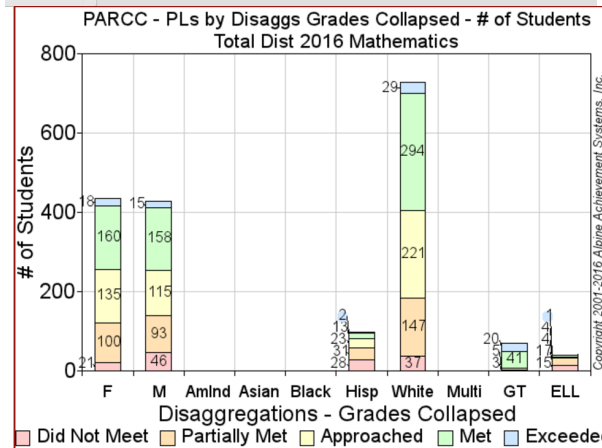
- By 2017, improve percentages of gifted students scoring in PARCC at the MET or EXCEEDED level as follows:

ELA - 80% at Met or Exceeded: 64/69 in 2016 = 92.7%

Math - 80% at Met or Advanced: 61/69 in 2016 = 88.4%



2-16.pdf



## Personnel

**AU Description:**

Aspen School District has identified personnel to serve as the district coordinator for gifted programming, two full time teachers of gifted students, and a third teacher is currently completing course at UNC toward her licensure in GT - estimated completion date is December 2016 and will come on line in 2017-18. Professional development and coaching are provided at many levels, from individual teachers to the entire district. Administrators and evaluator designees use the Colorado Teacher Evaluation System to address quality standards regarding differentiation for gifted learners.

**AU Target/s:**



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1. Create clearer, more precise and descriptive job descriptions for those hired as teachers of gifted students, by Spring 2017.
  2. Provide one additional teacher of gifted students to be shared between elementary and middle school levels - timeline dependent on funding.

## Budget

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### AU Description:

Aspen School District uses local funds to provide salaries and benefits to two full time teachers of gifted students (one at the elementary school and one at the middle school), as well as numerous International Baccalaureate teachers at the high school level. All teachers are also provided with a budget for classroom supplies as well as curriculum materials as needed. The district has allocated more than \$90,000 for professional development throughout all schools and this includes on-site training as well as travel to local, regional, state and national conferences and/or workshops.

### AU Target/s:

Complete GT licensing for 1 teacher

Provide budget for additional gifted teacher's salary and benefits.

## Reports

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This has yet to be completed for 2016. The current addendum reflects 2014.

## Record Keeping

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### AU Description:

Aspen School District uses Alpine Achievement Systems to track student progress on ALP's. Specific district and school goals are reported on the UIP addendum provided to the state in April, 2014.

### AU Target/s:

Improve use of Alpine Achievement Systems to monitor student growth and progress and redesign opportunities based on data.

## Procedures for Disagreements

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### AU Description:

Aspen School District has specific policies for resolution of disputes in all areas of student, parent and staff concerns.

AU Target/s: Continue appropriate use of district policy to address dispute resolutions.

[ASCENT/GT Folder](#)

## Monitoring

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### AU Description

The Aspen Board of Education has Results Monitoring in place for all content areas - Results for the previous year are reported in the following fall and winter beginning with Academic Achievement. See [Aspen School District BOE Results Monitoring](#) and [Results Reporting/Targets](#)