

Gifted Annual Plan

School Year 25-26

Purpose and Directions

The purpose of the Gifted Education Annual Plan is to align efforts and targets to improve gifted student achievement and growth. It fulfills the obligations for accountability as defined within the Exceptional Children Education Act (ECEA) for the Gifted Education Annual Plan. This plan fulfills the necessary components of the UIP Addendum for gifted and will be posted by CDE in connection with the district UIP. An AU shall submit an annual plan no later than April 15th in order to receive AU gifted education funds for the next fiscal year.

Directions:

To fulfill requirements set forth in ECEA, each AU must identify 1 to 3 major improvement strategies annually. BOCES or Multi-District AUs may set improvement strategies for entire AU or individual districts. Based on AU identified program elements within the CPP or through the GEM process, each year the AU will identify a priority performance challenge, develop a major improvement strategy, and establish annual target(s) identified to shift practice and improve gifted student performance. Complete plans address all key requirements for each target.

Major Improvement Strategy 1 (Required)

Select the program element your annual plan will address.

Definition of “Gifted Student”

Provide the evidence and rationale for the selection of this program element.

This can include reflection from last year's target(s), integration of feedback from monitoring, alignment to district/BOCES priorities, measurement of success of the previous actions, [data analysis](#), policies and procedures, and/or research, etc.

Establishing a Foundation Through Communication

Communication will be the cornerstone of Englewood Schools’ commitment to building a sustainable and impactful gifted education program. Clear, consistent communication will be used to define, share, and reinforce our district’s vision for identifying and supporting gifted learners across all levels—classroom, school, and district.

By effectively communicating the characteristics of gifted students, educators will be better equipped to meet both their academic and affective needs. This also empowers all staff to make informed referrals for students who demonstrate potential but are not yet formally identified. The gifted coordinator will begin developing communication systems that promote a shared understanding and commitment to gifted education among educators, administrators, and the broader community.

During the Colorado Department of Education’s Gifted Education Monitoring (GEM) visit, Englewood was encouraged to embrace a “slow burn” approach—building sustainable systems that grow over time through strong communication, strategic collaboration, and stakeholder engagement. The GEM team emphasized that lasting systems rely on strong personnel, shared ownership, and clarity of purpose, all of which stem from intentional and transparent communication.

To implement these insights and feedback in 25-26 Annual Plan, Englewood will take the following action steps, centered around re-defining and communicating gifted education priorities:

1. Define the Mission and Communicate It Widely

Develop a clear, concise one-page overview or short video to articulate the district’s vision and goals for gifted education.

Share this message consistently with all stakeholders—teachers, administrators, families, and community partners—to ensure alignment and understanding.

2. Identify, Train, and Recruit Collaborators

Identify site-level and district-level staff who are passionate about or interested in gifted education.

Personally invite and train collaborators, including classroom teachers, gifted facilitators, administrators, and community members.

Communicate the purpose and benefits of involvement as both a leadership opportunity and a way to enhance student outcomes.

3. Foster Collaboration Through Shared Leadership Structures

Launch a Gifted Leadership Team to meet regularly using collaborative planning tools (Google Workspace, Teams, etc.).

Maintain a clear purpose for each meeting, rooted in the communicated mission, to build momentum and distribute leadership in a meaningful way.

4. Monitor Communication and Engagement

Use feedback loops (surveys, exit slips, informal check-ins) to evaluate the effectiveness of communication and training.

Adjust messaging and strategies based on data to keep engagement relevant and responsive to needs.

5. Celebrate and Recognize Contributors

Publicly acknowledge the efforts and growth of collaborators through newsletters, district meetings, thank-you notes, and recognition awards.

Use celebrations as a communication tool to reinforce shared values and foster a culture that prioritizes gifted education.

The decision to focus on communication in Year 1 is rooted in reflections on past efforts, insights from the 2024–2025 GEM visit, and current district data and priorities. Clearly defining and communicating who gifted students are—those with advanced cognitive abilities, creativity, high achievement, intrinsic motivation, and unique social-emotional traits—is essential to designing effective support systems. Englewood aims to build a culture of commitment rather than mere compliance by emphasizing the importance of personalized learning plans, student voice, and meaningful enrichment opportunities. This approach will support capacity building at the classroom, school, and district levels through targeted training, collaboration, and data-informed leadership conversations. Ultimately, strong communication will unify stakeholders and lay the foundation for sustainable gifted education practices.

Determine the student performance priority this program element will address.

What is the current state of student performance this plan aims to address?

The student performance priority of this program element will address defining “Gifted Students,” building capacity at various levels, and understanding who gifted learners are with the long term goal of improving equitable identification and support of gifted learners to enhance academic growth and engagement. By prioritizing communication, Englewood Schools seeks to build a shared understanding of giftedness across all levels—classroom, school, and district. Clear and consistent communication will lead to more accurate referrals, inclusive identification practices, and the development of learning experiences that are aligned with students’ unique strengths and needs. When educators, families, and leaders are unified around a common vision for gifted education, students are more likely to be appropriately challenged, feel understood, and remain engaged in their learning. This foundation will help ensure that gifted students, including those from underrepresented populations, are supported in ways that foster both achievement and personal growth.

Set anticipated annual target(s) including action steps and timeline for implementation with specific benchmarks and dates.

For the 25-26 Annual Plan, the primary annual target is to establish a district-wide understanding and shared language around the definition, characteristics, and needs of gifted learners through clear, consistent, and strategic communication. During the fall, Englewood Schools will develop core messaging tools, including a one-page overview of the district's mission and vision for gifted education, a short explainer video, and a "Gifted Truths" communication piece to address common misconceptions. These materials will be shared widely through newsletters, social media, school websites, and at back-to-school events and staff meetings. Efforts will also be made to ensure accessibility by translating key documents into the primary languages spoken in the community.

By mid-year, the district will conduct targeted professional development sessions in schools to help educators recognize gifted characteristics, especially in underrepresented populations, and expand their understanding beyond test scores to include traits like creativity, motivation, and leadership. Family engagement nights will also be held to support parents in understanding giftedness and how to advocate for their children.

Simultaneously, the district will activate its Gifted Leadership Team and recruit 1–2 educators per building to serve as gifted liaisons, helping to champion and sustain consistent messaging and communication practices within their schools.

In the spring, the focus will shift to monitoring the impact of these communication efforts. Feedback will be gathered through surveys, informal check-ins, and analysis of referral and identification trends. Successes will be celebrated by recognizing individuals and schools demonstrating strong communication and collaboration efforts. The year will close with a reflection and progress report to inform 26-27 annual planning. Indicators of success will include increased educator confidence in identifying and referring gifted learners, more diverse and representative referrals, and greater stakeholder engagement in gifted programming. This foundational work will help ensure that all stakeholders have a clear, unified understanding of gifted learners and how to support them effectively.

Explain how meeting this target will improve gifted student performance.

What is the desired state of student performance once this target is met?

Meeting this communication-focused target will directly improve gifted student performance by ensuring that educators, families, and school leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of what giftedness looks like and how to support it effectively. When teachers can recognize a broader range of gifted characteristics—including creativity, leadership, problem-solving, and motivation—they are more likely to identify and refer to diverse students who may otherwise be overlooked. This can lead to earlier and more accurate identification, allowing students to receive appropriate academic and affective support sooner. With consistent messaging and professional development, educators will feel more confident in differentiating instruction, personalizing learning plans, and providing enrichment opportunities aligned to students' strengths and needs. Additionally, increased family engagement and awareness will foster stronger partnerships and advocacy, reinforcing support beyond the classroom. Ultimately, building a shared language and understanding across the district creates a more inclusive and responsive learning environment, allowing gifted students to thrive and reach their full potential.

Identify who is responsible for implementing this years actions steps and the roles/decision making authority of each.

Identify who is responsible for implementing this years actions steps and the roles/decision making authority of each area below:

1. **Responsible Person(s):**
2. **Accountable Person(s):**
3. **Consulted Person(s):**
4. **Informed Person(s):**

1. Gifted Coordinator-Dr. Amanda Ortiz-Torres
2. Executive Director of Student Services- Callan Ware
3. Gifted Facilitators, 1 at each building site
4. CDE GEM Team and Metro Gifted Administrators

Identify the measures used to assess the success of the proposed action(s).

To assess the success of the 25-26 Annual Plan actions the following measures will be used to evaluate progress in redefining giftedness and establishing a shared understanding among stakeholders. The first priority is Definition Communication, assessed through feedback from educators, parents, and community members, with a goal of achieving at least 70% consensus on the district-wide definition of “gifted.” Baseline Communication Data will be established through a comprehensive audit of current identification practices and support services, with a summary report outlining key strengths, gaps, and inconsistencies in how giftedness is currently communicated and understood.

To build knowledge and consistency, Foundational Training Completion will be tracked—targeting at least 10% of instructional coaches and classroom teachers per year—with pre- and post-evaluations used to measure growth in understanding of gifted characteristics and referral practices. The district will also monitor its progress toward integrating a talent development framework, focusing on how well communication and professional development are influencing classroom application. Finally, ongoing feedback loops—including surveys, exit tickets, and focus groups—will provide continuous insights from educators, gifted facilitators, and stakeholders. These measures are designed to ensure that communication is not just an action step but a foundational tool for cultural change, leading to a more accurate, inclusive, and responsive gifted identification and support system across Englewood Schools.

Determine Alignment to district/BOCES priorities.

In what ways is this work convergent with other priorities within district/BOCES? If this work is divergent, what opportunities are there to connect with other work/departments/priorities so it isn't a stand alone initiative?

This communication-centered work around redefining and supporting gifted learners is highly convergent with other priorities within the district, aligning with broader initiatives focused on equity, student engagement, personalized learning, and educator capacity building.

First, it directly supports the district's commitment to equity and inclusion by ensuring all stakeholders understand the diverse characteristics of giftedness, which helps reduce bias in identification and opens access to underrepresented students. Clear and consistent messaging allows for more equitable referrals and services, particularly for students from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds.

Second, the emphasis on shared language and stakeholder engagement complements district goals around family and community partnership, as it invites families and community members into the conversation about student potential and learning needs, enhancing transparency and trust.

Third, this work supports personalized learning and whole child development, another core district focus, by equipping educators to recognize and respond to individual strengths and needs. Gifted learners often require differentiated instruction, and this initiative will help educators tailor experiences to maximize student growth and engagement.

Finally, this initiative enhances professional learning and leadership development, aligning with Englewood School District's efforts to strengthen educator effectiveness and instructional quality. By building a network of trained collaborators and leaders across levels, the district is investing in sustainable systems that benefit not only gifted students, but all learners.

Major Improvement Strategy 2 (Optional)

Major Improvement Strategy 3 (Optional)

Assurances

Annual Plan Assurances

In accordance with the Exceptional Children's Education Act, the AU shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding the gifted education annual plan.

Assurances for Administrative Units (AUs) regarding submission of annual plans for gifted education:

- Administrative Units (AUs) are required to submit an annual plan to the Department, which serves as an addendum to the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) specifically tailored to gifted education.
- The annual plan shall include a detailed action plan outlining specific strategies geared towards achieving predefined targets for improving gifted student performance.
- Administrative Unit Gifted Education Directors of Record are responsible for submitting the Gifted Education annual plan.
- The annual plan must be submitted no later than April 15 each year.
- District UIP teams have different timelines and deadlines. Therefore, coordinating services and resources requires collaboration between the district UIP team and AU Gifted Director of record in order to be aligned with improvement planning practices to meet state board rule.
- AUs must submit the annual plan before receiving gifted education funds.
- In alignment with state board rule improvement planning requirements, the Gifted Education Annual plans will be posted publicly in conjunction with district Unified Improvement Plans.
- Personally Identifiable Identification (PII) is not included in any part of the annual plan.

I, as the Gifted Education Director of Record, acknowledge I have read and understand the above assurances.

AU Gifted Education Director of Record Name

Amanda Ortiz-Torres