



Administrative Unit

Administrative Unit name: Larimer R-3, Park - 35030	Region: North Central	
Name of Gifted Education Director/Coordinator: Joe Frey, Gifted Education Coordinator	Email: joe_frey@estesschools.org	
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Name of Superintendent: Sheldon Rosenkrance

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

Parents are informed about access to identification procedures through the following means:

- Gifted Ed Handbook
- Gifted Ed Family Nights (typically two per year--one in the fall (September); one in the winter (January))
- Individual contacts
- Gifted Ed Newsletters

Ways to educate parents/families about giftedness or parenting gifted students are done through:

- Gifted Ed Family Nights (typically two per year--one in the fall (September); one in the winter (January))
- Individual contacts
- Affective and Academic goals created together by students and parents

Parents are informed about student progress through:

- Gifted Ed Family Nights (one of which is focused on student performance data).
- Send home letters to parents displaying student performance on NWEA MAP.

Programming Options:

High School

- Honors Classes
- Advanced Placement Classes
- Concurrent Enrollment



- Advanced exploratory or elective classes
- Ability or achievement grouping

Middle School

- Honors Classes
- Academic exploratory or elective classes
- Alternative assignments, products, pacing, materials, content
- Ability or achievement grouping
- "Push-In" activities in various classes

Elementary

- Pull out classes for advanced curriculum in Literacy, Math, and STEM.
- Ability level grouping.
- Alternative assignments, products, pacing, materials, content
- Possible "push-in" classes and/or activities

Concurrent enrollment options at the HS currently include:

- Lit 115 through Front Range Community College
- Eng 121/122 through Front Range Community College
- Culinary courses ProStart 1 & ProsStart 2 through Metro State University

College & career planning is conducted chiefly through counselors at the High School & Middle School. This is done in a variety of ways, including interest inventories, college visits, career days, and various college/career planning activities done through individual classes (such as guest speakers, career training opportunities, etc.).

Communications to parents and families are done in English and Spanish. The Gifted Ed Handbook is on the district's website in both English & Spanish, and communications to parents and families (Newsletters, emails) are done in Spanish to those parents who need it.

Parental involvement is encouraged through various manners:

- Gifted Ed Family Nights
- Parents with special experiences/skills as classroom presenters/resources
- Involvement/Attendance in the classroom as desired

Definition of "Gifted Student"

Definition of Gifted:

"Gifted and talented children" mean 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 children represent all cultural, ethnic, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds and may demonstrate both gifts and disabilities. 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 Cognitive Ability
- Specific Academic Aptitude



- Creative Ability
- Leadership Ability
- Specific Talent Aptitude

On the importance of the definition:

It is important to understand the definition of *gifted* when learning about *gifted identification*. Without understanding the meaning of gifted, one cannot determine indicators to identify gifted learners. The definition serves as the basis for the implementation of all other program plan elements.

On the reference to special populations:

Note that the definition refers to "abilities, talents, and potential," and that it calls for "special provisions to meet their educational needs." The definition also is inclusive of "twice exceptional students" and students from all "socio-economic and ethnic, cultural populations." This is significant in the definition because the way a society understands "gifted" is not independent of the society's culture or values. It is vital to our gifted program that our district is inclusive of special populations because, although students in these populations might not demonstrate their potential in the traditional ways we see from some students, it does not mean that they can not be "gifted." In order to identify students in these special populations, it is important to understand the special characteristics of giftedness and how these characteristics might translate and manifest themselves in different types of students.

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

General Procedures for Identification

District procedures have been established using a multiple criteria assessment approach. This means that many sources of information are reviewed over a period of time before formally identifying a student as gifted/talented in one or more areas. Students who demonstrate certain markers, but not enough body of evidence will be placed on talent pool list. They may receive intervention services and support as available, but will not be formally identified unless a sufficient body of evidence is established. While criteria have been established for decision making, some of the data may be subjective in nature and some degree of imprecision in testing is always present. Thus, decisions should be made based on sound reasoning and data interpretation with a team approach to identification.

STUDENT SEARCH:

Screening

Standardized test scores for all students are screened for evidence of exceptionally high levels of performance on achievement tests. All second grade students take the CogAT in the spring, to ensure equal and equitable access for students of all populations. This process along with nominations yields a list of nominees based on 85% score or above, from which the Gifted Ed. Coordinator will begin the GATHERING BODY OF EVIDENCE process. Determinations will be made within 30 days after a referral has been received.

NOMINATION/REFERRAL

The initial stage of identification consists of a call for nominations, along with characteristic information of gifted students. This will generally occur in the spring, ***but can be done at any time and grade level***. Parents, teachers, counselors, community members and students are invited to



submit the names of students they view as potentially gifted or talented using characteristic sheets available. They are asked to indicate what they believe to be the student's particular strength area(s). Information is published about this process in both English and Spanish. Efforts will be made to increase understanding of giftedness throughout the community to enhance the effectiveness and scope of this process. Giftedness exists within all sub-groups of the population, and continuous attempts to refine the process in the school district will be made so that children identified as gifted reflect the diversity of the local community in terms of gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. The goal is for every parent and teacher to have opportunities to nominate students for Gifted Education services if they see the need.

COLLECT BODY OF EVIDENCE

The next stage in the identification process is to secure additional information that will aid in determining the youth's talents or giftedness and his or her programming needs. Appropriate data shall be gathered in the following four categories: Intellectual Ability, Achievement, Behaviors/Characteristics, and Demonstrated Performance. The assessments used include CogAT, NWEA MAP, PARCC, CMAS, and other supporting academic assessments. Identification in the talent areas is being developed and will use portfolio and demonstration reviews.

REVIEW BODY OF EVIDENCE

A student's body of evidence based on the suspected area(s) of exceptionality is reviewed by the Gifted Education Coordinator and a team of select teachers familiar with the student. Some students do not perform well on standardized tests but may show evidence of exceptional ability in other ways. This is often true for those who are twice- exceptional (both gifted and learning disabled), second language learners, and children from low-income backgrounds. In these cases, team judgment is necessary and further evidence may need to be gathered. Students are not denied services or identified on the basis of performance on any single score or instrument. Rather, those evaluating the data are looking for *sufficient evidence* of exceptional talent or ability to warrant special programming or services. This review is an *ongoing process*, and a student is not formally identified until a sufficient body of evidence is collected. Gifted identification recognizes and delineates exceptional strengths and potential in learners so that appropriate instructional accommodations and modifications can be provided.

IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

A student is formally identified as gifted/talented when data collected over a period of time suggests that he/she matches the definition of a "gifted child", and the following questions are answered in the affirmative:

- Is the student's skill level/ability much above that of peers the same age?
- Does the student require intense or sustained resources, adaptations, or acceleration beyond those generally available in the regular classroom setting in order to demonstrate continued progress commensurate with his/her ability?
- Does the information available from multiple sources of data indicate the presence of giftedness as defined by state and district guidelines?
- If students meet the district criteria according to the review team, the student's name and supporting data will be sent/gathered to the district Gifted Ed. Coordinator for final review and to be added to the district database. All newly identified gifted students are entered into the Gifted Education data base by the district coordinator. "Yes" letters do NOT go home to parents until this final review step has been completed.
- The team may also decide that a student does not qualify, or that enough information is not available to make an informed decision. In the latter case, the student is placed on a "Talent Pool" list and reviewed again the following year as more information becomes available. Their profile



sheet should go into the cumulative file. When doubt or uncertainty exists, continue collecting data as student is monitored in the Talent Pool activities. The Gifted Ed. Coordinator will send a letter to go home to the parents communicating the results of the identification, and invitation to develop and review the student's ALP.

PROGRAMMING MATCH

Approximately 3-5% of the student population is formally identified as gifted in any given strength area, though many additional students may participate in programs for advanced learners. Student data is used to match students to appropriate programming. Services for all identified students seek to ensure that they continue to make growth commensurate with their ability in their strength areas, and to perform at advanced and distinguished levels. Programming match is set in the student's Advanced Learning Plan and may include advanced and/or interdisciplinary classes, differentiated instructional techniques, or other targeted services. Services may also include content area or grade level acceleration, mentoring, and affective (counseling) support services. Staff, parent, student and community all share responsibility for encouraging and supporting the student's continued growth in his/her identified strength areas.

PERIODIC REVIEW

School personnel periodically review student performance and progress to determine if the identification process was sound, and if the student has continued specific educational needs for gifted education programming. Students should not be re-evaluated to re-identify the student as gifted, rather the critical issue is determining if the student is reaping reasonable benefit from gifted programming. If students are not reaping reasonable benefit from gifted programming students may be put on an inactive status until further review. This review is undertaken at least at benchmark years (usually at grades 5 and 8 and possibly 10), but sometimes on an annual basis.

Borderline or Gifted Ed. Talent Pool Students:

In some cases, a student will have *borderline* scores. Because funding is associated with identification, the district **will not make exceptions** for students who show continuously borderline scores; however, students will be placed in the Gifted Ed. Talent Pool, which is communicated to teachers each year. The Gifted Ed. talent pool is also communicated in the transition years from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school. Because of this communication, teachers can differentiate according to the needs of the advanced or high-achieving student. Being in the talent pool simply means that the Gifted Ed. Coordinator will continue to look for evidence in the student's performance for gifted identification. This does not necessarily mean additional assessments will be given. There is no time limit for the talent pool. Students in the talent pool may or may not have an Advanced Learning Plan, but they still might receive differentiated services depending on the school and the services provided at that school. Students can be removed from the talent pool if the Gifted Ed. Coordinator sees that not enough other supporting evidence is evident after one year.

Portability

The Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA) requires that a student who moves from one district in Colorado to another district in the state retains his/her gifted identification. This concept is referred to as "portability."

Portability means that a student's identification in one or more categories of giftedness transfers to any district in the state. Gifted programming must continue according to the receiving district's programming options. Portability of identification is a part of the student's permanent record and Advanced Learning Plan. AUs will determine the process and procedure used to ensure the



appropriate and timely transfer of a student's Advanced Learning Plan that includes the student's gifted identification profile (body of evidence). The transfer process may include secure electronic file transfers or mailing of the student's record to the new district/school. When a student transfers from one district to another, it is important that the sending district include gifted education records with all other student records sent to the receiving district. Names and contact information of AU Gifted Directors/Coordinators may be found on the CDE Gifted Education website.

Administrative units are encouraged to have a process to notify the appropriate gifted educator in a district of a newly enrolled gifted student. This may occur with a review of an incoming student's records and through the registration process when parents indicate their child has a gifted identification.

The rule for gifted portability means districts shall develop identification processes that are aligned to identification procedures defined by the Colorado Department of Education. Common guidelines support a universal and consistent practice for recognizing students with exceptional ability and potential.

Districts are responsible for selecting appropriate tools that will support identification of students from underrepresented populations. Although rules require portability, districts have the autonomy to select the specific instruments and procedures that will be utilized for gifted identification. These assessment tools may vary across districts but the criteria do not vary. If the receiving district's gifted review team determines the previous district identified the student using criteria not aligned to state guidelines, the rule for portability does not apply. If this is the case, it is the responsibility of the receiving district to consult with the former district, parents and students to re-evaluate the identification determination.

The rule for portability does not apply to students moving into Colorado from another state. However, the receiving school should review the student's records for evidence of giftedness, and then determine whether additional assessment is necessary to confirm if the student meets Colorado criteria for gifted identification. Districts should also be aware of the parameters within the Military Compact Agreement for identified gifted students moving to Colorado as a result of a military transfer.

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children created legislation to ease school-to-school transfers for military children. The intent of the Compact is to minimize the disruption in education when a military child is forced to move as a result of a transfer or deployment. The Compact states: *The receiving state school shall initially honor placement of the student in educational programs based on current educational assessments conducted at the school in the sending state or participation/placement in like programs in the sending state. Such programs include, but are not limited to: 1) gifted and talented programs; and 2) English as a second language (ESL). This does not preclude the school in the receiving state from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student.*

A body of evidence should consist of quantitative and qualitative measures to determine if a student meets the criteria for gifted identification and to build a student profile of strengths and interests. Quantitative assessment provides numerical scores or ratings that can be analyzed or quantified. Qualitative assessment provides interpretive and descriptive information about certain attributes, characteristics, behaviors or performances. The former is considered objective, while the latter is considered subjective.

Transfer of the body of evidence for identification and ALP is sent to the new district upon request. For incoming students, if the body of evidence is incomplete, consultation with former district and parents will be made to confirm portability guidelines have been met. If information is incomplete, the student will be re-evaluated using AU procedures.



While some of the data in a body of evidence will be used to meet the **criteria** for gifted identification, other data or information may be used to build a learner profile for the purpose of developing appropriate programming options. Criteria are the rules for evaluating a level of exceptionality for identification assessment. The 95th percentile ranking and above describes the rule for demonstration of exceptionality on a norm-referenced standardized test.

Distinguished/advanced performance levels may describe exceptionality on qualitative tools, portfolios, performance assessment, and criterion-referenced tests.

Criteria are not cut-off scores. Typically, cut-off score terminology is used in reference to practices that eliminate students from access to further identification assessment because a single test result or score did not provide evidence at the exceptional level. Colorado does not adhere to cut-off score practices. Review teams should continue to explore additional data to reveal student strengths. A variety of measures are contained within a body of evidence. A measure is the tool; a metric is the numeric result of using that measure. A cognitive test is an example of a measure that assesses general intelligence. This test provides a metric to express a level of cognitive ability, not academic achievement.

Advanced Learning Plan Content, Procedures and Responsibilities

Advanced Learning Plans are created annually for every student who has been identified as Gifted in Estes Park School District. In addition, talent pool students who choose to participate in the goal-setting process may do so as well. Affective goals and academic/achievement goals are created in conjunction with the student, parent(s), teacher(s), and any other staff to which it may be applicable. Achievement goals typically focus on the student's strength area; some add additional goals in other areas as well.

Estes Park School District uses Enrich to document our ALPs at the elementary and middle school levels; College in Colorado is used for ICAPs at the middle school level for ALPs that are combined with ICAPs; Naviance is used at the High School for ALPs that are combined with ICAPs.

The Enrich format has a student profile, areas for achievement goals, progress monitoring of those goals, and then another area for recording affective goals for enhancing personal, social, communication, leadership, and/or cultural competency and progress monitoring associated with those goals. In addition, program experiences or programming options promoting college and/or career preparation/readiness are recorded. A description of supplemental curriculum, activities, specific strategies, and extended or expanded opportunities that support those student goals is included. Goals are written and aligned with tiered classroom instruction and supplemental programming. Then there is a section for parent/family partnership, and a record of parent contact. Methods used to help achieve student goals are documented in the progress monitoring portion of the ALP.

ALP's are managed within Enrich, the AU's cumulative record system. Information concerning the ALP is shared with teachers and parents, particularly with the goals and progress monitoring.

Information is typically shared with teachers in their PLC groups (elementary has grade level PLC's; Middle School and High School have both grade level PLC's and Content/Department PLC's.

Information is typically shared with them in their department-level PLCs.

One target for improvement for this year concerns the area of ALPs. Our goal is to make the ALPs more valuable, through more frequent check-ins with students and increased progress monitoring and sharing of information with teachers/staff. Having students more involved in the whole process, particularly the progress monitoring, should make this more meaningful to the student. In addition, moving to standards-based goals will help align students learning directly to academic targets.

Better scheduling for the Gifted Ed Coordinator will allot more time to work directly with teachers and students in this area.



ALP progress monitoring is shared at parent teacher conferences in the fall (end of 1st quarter) and spring (end of 3rd quarter). Parent involvement/contact is included in the progress monitoring portion of the ALP.

Review of new students' eligibility for Gifted Ed is done within the first 45 days of their enrollment, and parent contact is made within the first 60 days.

ALPs are created in conjunction with the student & parent. Teachers provide feedback as to what they think would be key areas to focus on for the students, then parents and students work together to create affective and academic goals for that year.

Elementary students utilize ALPs. ALPs are blended with ICAPs at the High School, and this year will be done in this manner at the Middle School as well.

Particular focus is placed at the 5th/6th grade years and the 8th/9th grade years as those are transition years for the students moving into new buildings (Elementary to Middle School, Middle School to High School).

We are transitioning towards standards-aligned goals for students in their academic goals.

The Gifted Ed. Coordinator works with identified students who are struggling and/or underachieving during advisory times which will be available for both the Middle School and the High School. For Elementary students, the Gifted Ed. Coordinator is able to meet with underperforming/struggling students along with classroom teachers to develop a problem-solving plan.

Programming is articulated across grade levels through:

- grade level transition meetings
- subject scope and sequence
- monitoring individual needs by the Gifted Ed. Coordinator.

Programming

Programming has been an area of improvement for Estes Park School District, particularly at the Elementary level. With the addition of another part-time Gifted Ed teacher last year (and now this year), this has allowed for additional programming which had not been allowed for previously.

Programming for Gifted Education at the Elementary includes:

- Pull-out Literacy (replacement) classes for grades 3-5
- Pull-out Math (enrichment) classes for grades 3-5
- Combining STEM enrichment into the Math pull-out classes
- Other offerings for K-2 as scheduling allows (typically focused on math and/or affective)
- Various push-in opportunities

Programming at the Middle School includes:

- Honors classes for Language Arts & Math
- Subject-level acceleration, particularly for math
- Various elective courses for Language Arts, such as Creative Writing, Communications, and Drama
- STEAM classes for Science & Math
- Various independent studies and online courses.

Programming at the High School includes:

- AP courses in Composition, U.S. History, Human Geography, Biology, Physics, Spanish, Statistics, and Calculus
- Pre-AP courses in English I, English II
- Concurrent enrollment options for English and ProStart



- Upper-level Science electives Astro Physics, Sports Medicine Academy, STEM, Chemistry, and Anatomy, in addition to AP Biology and AP Physics.
- Honors Geometry, Honors Earth Science
- Independent Film I and Film II
- Jazz Band, Major 13 (Choir)
- Various independent studies and online courses.

Through the various courses and programming options, as well as differentiation in the classroom, students receive the opportunities for differentiated instruction in their areas of giftedness.

Professional Learning Communities serve a key role in providing collaborative opportunities and support for students. PLC's at the elementary work on a grade level basis. PLC's at the Middle School and High School levels are both grade level PLC's and Department/Content based PLC's. Curriculum improvement/alignment is a focal point for the Department PLC's; student progress monitoring is done more on the grade level PLC's. The Gifted Ed Coordinator, as well as other staff (counselors, support staff) works with these PLC groups for monitoring student progress, ALP development, addressing affective needs, establishing and monitoring goals, etc.

Evaluation and Accountability Procedures

As outlined in the UIP addendum, gifted student performance is measured through state and local measurements. PARCC data is used as the state assessment, and then NWEA is the local assessment. Estes Park School District uses for monitoring performance in Reading, Language Use, Math, and Science.

Affective growth is monitored through progress monitoring with the ALP process. Students utilize various affective measurement scales to help self-evaluate.

Gifted student achievement and growth data is disaggregated for reporting.

Self-evaluation of the Gifted Ed program is done in a variety of ways. This includes feedback from parents and teachers, review of student performance data, and addressing programming needs as they may vary from class to class and year to year. Stakeholders are kept informed through Gifted Ed Family Nights, Gifted Ed Newsletters, district data, and various individual and/or group contacts.

Personnel

Estes Park School District employs a Gifted Ed Coordinator, a position which is 50% Coordinator and 50% Teaching. In addition, the past two years the District has been able to employ a part-time Gifted Ed teacher through the Universal Screening and Personal Grant to assist in programming needs. Gifted Ed pullout Literacy & Math/STEM classes are taught at the Elementary in conjunction with these two positions, as well as two Middle School STEAM classes. Middle School and High School programming also includes various upper level courses (honors, AP courses, concurrent enrollment).

In addition to teaching, the Gifted Ed Coordinator is also responsible for managing the program plan, ALPs, and identification/progress monitoring of students. Professional development is also provided to teachers to enhance differentiation for all students. The Gifted Ed instructors are highly qualified in the areas in which they teach. Grant funding for personnel is allotted strictly to the qualified part-time teaching position. Professional development for this year is focusing on implementing Depth & Complexity to support all teachers in differentiation.

Personnel are encouraged to enhance their skills with information sent out concerning professional development opportunities available to staff, particularly through local universities.

Paraprofessionals are not funded with gifted grant funds and are not sole instructional providers.



Budget

An annual budget is submitted to the state showing state funding and AU contributing funds. This is submitted by the Gifted Ed Coordinator in conjunction with the Director of Business Services. State funding is used for salaries of licensed/endorsed staff and materials to support Gifted Ed programming.

Estes Park School District is its own AU.

The AU supports Gifted Education through contributing funds to support the salary of the Gifted Ed. Coordinator.

Reports

Estes Park School District:

- has a current UIP Gifted Addendum on file with CDE.
- complies with the requirements of accreditation in regards to Gifted Education.
- has a budget proposal on file through the data management system.
- Has accurate records for the Data Pipeline annual reporting--this is done in Infinite Campus, and done in conjunction with the District Data Manager, and includes the number of students identified by grade level, gender, ethnicity, F & R lunch, areas of giftedness, and twice exceptionality.
- Has our percentage of students who are identified for Gifted Education.
- Has qualified personnel in the content areas in which they are teaching.

Record Keeping

Estes Park School District:

- Has accurate financial records kept in conjunction with the Director of Business and the Gifted Ed Coordinator.
- Has an inventory for equipment purchased.
- Has ALPs kept as part of the students' cumulative record. ALPs are done in Enrich; ALPs combined with ICAPs are done in College in Colorado (Middle School) and Naviance (High School). These records are maintained, retained, and destroyed by the Gifted Ed Coordinator, and held to state law and FERPA regulations regarding privacy.

Procedures for Disagreements

Procedures for Disagreement:

Procedures for disagreement refers to instances where the decision *to* or *to not* identify a student for gifted services is not agreed upon by different parties. For example, parents might not agree with the school's decision to not identify a student. In this case, an inquiry must be made to the Director of Student Services. When the inquiry is made, it is important to submit a referral form and a written description of the nature of the circumstances. Also include a profile sheet with all the student's scores you have gathered. Do not *just* complete the ID Profile with scores that qualify. All scores are needed in this scenario. The Director of Student Services will make a recommendation, and the **school** will communicate with parents about the decision.

When letters go out for student identification, the procedures for disagreement is also attached.

In disputes regarding gifted identification:



1. Contact the Gifted Ed. Coordinator.
2. If a decision cannot be made at the school level, the Gifted Ed. Coordinator will contact the District Gifted Ed. Director.
3. The District Director will make a recommendation to the school and parents. If the decision is not agreed upon at that time by parents.

If a parent wishes that their child not be identified, they need to communicate to the Gifted Ed. Coordinator, who will provide them with a form to fill out. That form should be submitted to the Gifted Ed. Coordinator, who will ensure that a copy is placed in cumulative folders and that the identification is removed from the student information system.

These procedures are also found in the Gifted Ed Handbook, which is posted on the district's website in English and Spanish.

Monitoring

Estes Park School District:

- Complies with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding the program plan, identification procedures, and special education services for gifted students.
- Monitors annual and comprehensive plans through the role of the Gifted Ed Coordinator.
- Monitors annual enrollment and performance reports.
- Most recently completed a CGER in October 2015.
- Has a timeline and improvement plan in place to continue to improve the program and correct areas of non-compliance.