



Administrative Unit

Administrative Unit name: Northeast Colorado BOCES - 64103	Region: Northeast	
Name of Executive Director: Bret Miles Name of Lead District Gifted Education Director: Arlene Salyards (Director), Paula McGuire (Coordinator)	Email: pmcguire@neboces.com	
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Number of Districts within Administrative Unit:	
Member District	Superintendent Name
Akron R-1	Brian Christensen
Buffalo RE-4J	Robert Sanders
Frenchman RE-3	Steve McCracken
Haxtun RE-2J	Darcy Garretson
Holyoke RE-1J	John McCleary
Julesburg RE-1	Shawn Ehnes
Lone Star #101	Susan Sonnenberg
Otis R-3	Kendra Anderson
Plateau RE-5	Mark Collard
Revere	Sharon Green
Wray RD-2	Levi Kramer
Yuma - 1	Dianne Chrisman

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

Districts within NE BOCES vary on the opportunities used to present information within school buildings related to gifted and talented procedures, programming, and involvement. As the size of



each school varies from an average of 10 students per grade to an average of 60 students per grade, the need for different types of communication and opportunities are evident. Additionally, three of the twelve districts within the BOCES have a high ELL (hispanic) population, and the need for communication and materials in Spanish is necessary in these schools.

Currently, schools communicate about programming through parent-teacher conferences, one-on-one meetings at the request of parents or the school, website tools and access, and monitoring of ALPs.

This is happening in grades 3 -12 with classroom differentiation and enrichment. In grades 9-12 programming options are available, including concurrent enrollment, and college/career planning nights and ICAP.

Regional opportunities for engaging parents and families exist in three different formats: 1) A parent speaker is offered annually at the Regional Ultimate Celebration Event, hosted in Sterling for grades 3-6; in addition to student programming, parent speakers are offered on a variety of subjects. 2) Family Nights have been hosted in geographically central locations and presentation materials are offered from the Coordinator at the NE BOCES level to inform community members as well as parents about identification and programming procedures and options. 3) There is a link on the NE BOCES website for gifted and talented education where parents can access common forms, and find contact information for the GERC and GT Coordinator.

Targets:

1. The AU has found many materials to be outdated after the state's transformation and re-introduction of Identification and ALP procedures. This has left a need for updated communication materials to be developed and used both on website and in print form for all Districts.

Communication materials including identification brochures, common letters, and handbooks will be updated on the NE BOCES website by Spring of 2016, and will include materials in Spanish.

Districts may adapt these materials and/or link directly to them from their school website as best fulfills their needs.

2. Family Nights will continue to be offered on a school-by-school basis through Fall of 2020. These nights can be used to cover a variety of topics, including identification, ALP input and monitoring, programming ideas for parents, and resource sharing/networking. Schools can decide when to offer these, and the GT Coordinator will offer support as needed. **Parents of gifted children have the opportunity to be involved at the school, district, and regional levels through AU program activities.**

3. Districts within the AU will establish communication routines and timelines for gifted identification and programming that work for their District by Fall of 2020. These include, but are not limited to, GT team meetings, communication via letters/email to parents related to identification and/or the ALP for their student(s), and progress monitoring.

Definition of "Gifted Student"

The state definition for Gifted and Talented students is adopted and used by all districts within the BOCES.

"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



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- Specific academic aptitude
 - Creative or productive thinking
 - Leadership abilities
 - Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities

The AU uses the definition as a basis for planning and implementing identification and ALP procedures. It is also used as a baseline for bi-annual elementary and annual high school regional events that support different exceptionalities. While there are common identifications in math and/or language arts, the AU is low in identification numbers in the areas of Creativity, Leadership, and Visual/Performing Arts.

Targets:

1. The AU will provide training for GT School Coordinators on identification in Creativity and Leadership by Spring of 2016 and for Visual/Performing Arts by Spring of 2017. As a network group, after this training has been provided, it will be determined the best way to implement these strategies within the schools. As aptitude and achievement assessment materials are shared across the BOCES, effective and timely use of the materials will be necessary.
2. Training for teachers on the characteristics and identification for gifted and talented students will be continually through the Fall of 2018 using GT101 and online Moodle courses to build awareness in staff at all levels in all twelve Districts.

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

Northeast BOCES has provided identification training from CDE to all districts within the AU; along with GT School Coordinators, School Counselors and/or Administrators also took part in the training. All twelve Districts within NE BOCES currently implement a universal screening for students at the end of 2nd grade using the CogAT 7 online. This instrument also allows for Spanish-speaking students (the largest percentage of minorities within NE BOCES) to access the complete test in their primary language. Additionally, eight of the 12 Districts are also administering a second universal screening using the CogAT at the middle school level (grades 6-9). Two Districts administer the CogAT one more time at the entry to high school. Some Districts are implementing the use of behavioral scales (Gifted Evaluation Scales (GES) and/or Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)).

Identification in the categories of giftedness are determined by the 95th percentile, or exceptional ratings. Students in the talent pool continued to be monitored and are offered gifted programming. With the addition of areas of identification, GT coordinators will begin to use specific academic and talent assessments (quantitative and qualitative) to further identify students. The AU follows the statewide identification procedures to ensure portability for transfer of gifted information and receiving of student files. The timeline of ALP review in 45 days of enrollment and communication with the parents within 60 days is (or will be) implemented.

Referrals can be made by teachers, parents, and the student which be evaluated for further review within 30 days and a determination letter is sent to parents and is added to the student file. These procedures are included in a gifted student handbook provided by the district. Each district uses a team approach to evaluate and identify gifted students. To supplement teacher learning, training in the basics of gifted characteristics and identification is being offered to all Districts in a combined platform using live presentations paired with online follow up Moodle classes and quizzes. To date, three Districts have completed this GT101 training for at least a percentage of school staff.



Further education for all staff across age levels continues to be a need as teachers **need more education** to understand the needs and nature of gifted students. Extremely rural populations see a higher than average Alternative Licensure rate of teachers, who come into the classroom directly from the workforce and obtain their license through a one-year supplemental training at the BOCES level. As a result, these teachers have no background in gifted identification and education.

This has highlighted the even greater need to provide basic gifted training to all staff across all building levels.

Targets:

1. Each district will establish and coordinate a gifted identification team by Fall 2017 (or actively use the school Rtl team), with the lead being the GT School Coordinator, who attends regional NE BOCES meetings, as well as mandated State Trainings.
2. GT 101 will continue to be offered through Fall of 2018 or until all twelve Districts have offered this basic level training to their staff (or an identified gifted team). This offering will continue to use the Moodle online platform combined with live trainings to increase the partnership between the GT Coordinator at the BOCES level and the teachers at the school level.
3. In addition to GT101 offered at the District level, time will be allotted in the Alternative Licensure and/or New Teacher Induction programs to go over basic gifted characteristics and identification to meet the needs of this type of incoming teacher.
4. Brochures and letters for parent communication will be developed at the BOCES level and in use at all schools by Fall of 2017. Common identification profile forms, While these forms have existed in a variety of forms in the past, the need for updates is imminent. These are intended to provide a baseline understanding for Districts, and they may modify them as they see a need. Forms and documents will be posted on the NE BOCES website for easy access to parents and teachers.
5. Training from Riverside Publishing on how to effectively use and interpret test results for the CogAT 7 when evaluating ELL students will be provided by Fall of 2018. GT School Coordinators will be responsible for disseminating this information at the local District level.

Advanced Learning Plan Content, Procedures and Responsibilities

All identified gifted students have an ALP for the identified area, which includes a student profile. Each district has their own procedure to write ALPs, which the AU GT coordinator supports. Teachers and parents have a role in the ALP with the focus of the student taking the lead. Standards-aligned achievement goals and affective goals are developed along with specific programming to meet the needs of the student. Most often the programming consists of differentiation, enrichment, and curriculum extension of a based on tiered instruction or student initiative. Some Districts within the AU are currently using ICAP and/or Alpine to write and integrate ALP goals for students within their District. Other Districts are using a template developed by Regional Gifted consultants several years ago.

In general, GT School Coordinators are carrying the full responsibility for the writing, monitoring and updating of each student's ALP, with a few notable exceptions in some Districts. A transfer of ALP information to the next teacher occurs usually in the fall and is filed in the school cumulative file.

Consistent implementation of ALPs continues to be a challenge among most Districts. While ALPs have been written, they are often missing at least one primary element: monitoring, parent engagement, student interaction, or updating at the end of the goal cycle.

Targets:

1. Each district will establish a timeline that can be shared within District for development, review, and implementation of ALPs. They may use established parent-teacher connections such as parent-teacher conferences, back to school nights, or GT school nights to adapt to their school needs.



2. A bank of ALP goals will be developed at the Northeast BOCES level by Spring of 2018 that is available to all GT School Coordinators to give an idea of what standards-aligned goals look like and what types of goals may work for various ages. This will work in conjunction with the current spreadsheet of programming ideas that has already been developed to strengthen ALP content for each students based on strengths and interests.

Northeast BOCES has provided training from CDE to all GT School Coordinators on standards-aligned academic and affective ALP goals. In addition to School Coordinators, some Counselors attended this training as well. **The AU Gifted Coordinator will continue to be a vital resource in assisting each district in the development of student ALPs and procedures to implement them with integrity.**

Targets:

1. The ALP writing portion of GT101 offered to all schools will continue to be offered on a stand-alone basis to all schools through the Fall of 2018. When paired with the Moodle online class follow up and quiz, it is expected that participants will score at least an 80% to establish their understanding of what content ALPs should contain.
2. The AU will develop a spreadsheet for each school to use in an effort to track development, parent engagement, progress monitoring, and updating of student ALPs by Spring of 2017. This information will remain with the school for informational purposes. Additional support from the AU Gifted Coordinator will be available to encourage consistent tracking and ALP writing processes.

Programming

Student programming is written into the ALP to support student strengths and interests. Student data is reviewed to make sure the programming is effective for achievement and growth. Efforts are made to provide affective and guidance support, but this is usually done informally by the classroom teacher, who collaborates with the GT coordinator or parent.

Each District within the BOCES has unique opportunities for their gifted and talented students. The challenge for the GT School Coordinators has been to match the student aptitude and attitude (preferences) to the options available to the District. In an attempt to broaden the scope of offerings, a common spreadsheet has been developed at the NE BOCES level that lists a variety of programming options for students in these extremely rural Districts with costs that are either free or below \$100. **Each gifted student has the opportunity for programming in their identified area, but the intent is to collaborate across the AU to enhance options and meet specific needs.**

At the elementary and middle-school levels, **differentiation and enrichment** are the most commonly used form of programming, usually done outside of the regular classroom. Most often, across all levels, the gifted students are served inside the regular classroom and rely on differentiation from the teacher to accommodate higher-level needs. **There is some grade level or subject advancement to accommodate gifted learning.** The AU has supported the CDE initiative of **Depth and Complexity** with several districts participating in the trainings. As the capacity grows, the AU will be able to provide all teachers with these strategies.

The biggest strength across the high schools is the use of concurrent enrollment at the secondary level as it's related to high school/college level dualities. There is some opportunity within the AU for Advanced Placement and honors.

Articulation of programming is easier to accomplish as teachers are most often housed close together and can speak on a personal level about the student. However, it also means that information often is not written down and documented, causing issues when there is staff turnover.

Communication about GT students, their affective support needs, and specific ALP goals is primarily the responsibility of the GT School Coordinator in each District.

Targets:



1. By Spring of 2018, each District will use their own established acceleration policy to assist with programming options for their gifted and talented students. **While grade-skipping is most commonly thought of when addressing acceleration, several other forms of acceleration, including content acceleration, compacting curriculum, or telescoping will be encouraged for programming of gifted students in their areas of strength.**
2. Training in, and use of, Depth and Complexity icons and methods will continue to be taught and coached across NE BOCES through Fall of 2020. This methodology allows for the same content to be taught to all students in the classroom, including gifted students, but at varying levels of depth and complexity to challenge each unique learner. Each District will decide at what level they would like to incorporate Depth and Complexity, and support will be provided by the GT Coordinator and GERC as needed.
3. Mentorship options will be explored through a partnership and communication between the NE BOCES GT Coordinator and Sedgwick County Economic Development as they pursue program options provided by a grant that will benefit all schools in the Northeast BOCES area. Business mentorships are part of the grant proposal, and though not specific to GT, the opportunity will be discussed as to appropriateness and need as the mentoring program is established. It is expected that some mentorships will be available as early as Fall of 2017, but the program will continue to evolve through Fall of 2020.
4. The AU will develop a problem solving process to assist an underachieving gifted student. This process will be a collaboration of the AU districts.

Evaluation and Accountability Procedures

Districts within the AU use a variety of assessments to monitor growth and achievement for gifted students. The two most common assessments across all twelve Districts are NWEA (Northwest Educational Assessment) and the ACT for high school juniors. This will change to the SAT as of Spring of 2016 as the entire state of Colorado is moving to that assessment. **This data is reported in the UIP Gifted Addendum and evaluated for growth and development that will drive the action plan for the following year.** Training has been, and continues to be provided, at the NE BOCES level to assist teachers with understanding and utilizing the data from NWEA to maximize the impact of the test.

Affective growth is monitored by the classroom teacher and GT coordinator. Growth is most often referenced on the ALP, but a consistent measurement tool will be reviewed for use by all the districts.

High turnover of GT School Coordinators has made the process of program evaluation more difficult.

In response to this, the AU intends to use the DMS system and the built-in surveys and self-evaluations to have a model for monitoring gifted programs and communication within Districts.

Targets:

1. A common template for collecting gifted student growth and achievement will be developed by the GT Coordinator for NE BOCES and used twice per year by GT School Coordinators by Spring of 2016. With low numbers reported, it is difficult to disaggregate data for Unified Improvement Planning (also known as the "Annual Plan") purposes. Individual districts will regularly provide this information (GT School Coordinators) at the network meeting level to help promote common planning and goal setting. This information collection document will be compiled by the GT Coordinator at least once each year to allow schools to see overall targets and measure progress.
2. Each District within the AU will complete a self-evaluation every other spring (once every two years) beginning in the Spring of 2017, to be completed by the GT School Coordinator, with the assistance of the NE BOCES GT Coordinator. As part of this process, surveys that are already



developed within DMS can be used by the schools to get feedback from stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and students.

Personnel

The AU employs a half-time individual (GT Coordinator) responsible for management of the program plan, as well as planning of professional development and regional student programming. **This individual has an endorsement in Gifted and Talented.**

Additionally, each District contracts with a staff member to act as the GT School Coordinator which is funded by state gifted funds. **This person coordinates the gifted program at the district level, directs student Identification, ALP development and monitoring, and provides direction for gifted students. The coordinator attends network meetings and sometimes regional/state trainings.**

The AU collaborates with Northeastern Junior College, Adams State University, and CDE for professional development classes and training in gifted education. Additionally, each district has the option of allowing teachers to advance educationally with other colleges and universities. Every effort is made by all AU districts to have core academic subjects taught by highly qualified teachers. Paraprofessionals are not the sole provider of instruction for gifted students in the AU. Professional Development is offered through the AU GT Coordinator at the request of a district for training in GT101 (Characteristics, Identification, and ALP writing), CogAT online administration and use of test scores, and Depth and Complexity.

Target:

1. By Fall of 2019, the GT Coordinator will develop 15-minute "GT-bites" that can be used by the GT School Coordinators at District staff meetings, GT Team meetings, and/or with GT Student Groups ("lunch bunch" or "nerd camp"). The intent of these short PD-bites is to expand awareness of and implementation for gifted and talented identification and programming. They may take the form of computer presentations (downloadable), task cards, or pre-recorded sound bites. Schools will begin using these through the GT School Coordinator by Spring of 2020.

Budget

The AU receives state gifted funding each year, which utilizes is a flow-through process to distribute gifted funding to each of the 12 districts. Each district receives an equal \$5,000 with an additional amount based on total student enrollment. The district funds support the coordinator, programming and instructional supplies for gifted students, and professional development.

The AU (Northeast BOCES) gifted budget is supported by a 5-10% payback from each district.

This CASL (Center for Advancement of Student Learning) fund is used for teacher professional development, AU GT Coordinator support, and student activities. The AU budget does not exceed 20% for administrative, technology, or equipment cost.

The annual budget plan is submitted to the state each year and reflects State gifted funding and AU contributing funds.

The Universal Screening and Qualified Personnel Grant funds pay for allowed screening costs and the salary of the AU Gifted Coordinator.

There has been coordination with other AUs within close proximity regarding professional development. Time has been spent with GT School Coordinators and other school personnel in regional network meetings and on site at schools to standardize the reporting procedures for the



monies to be more clear about where gifted funding is being used (i.e., salaries, testing, resources/materials).

Targets:

1. The AU Gifted Coordinator, GERC, and GT School Coordinators will collaborate to discuss needs each Spring and determine what programs or resources may be most valuable to purchase at the AU level for all Districts to use.

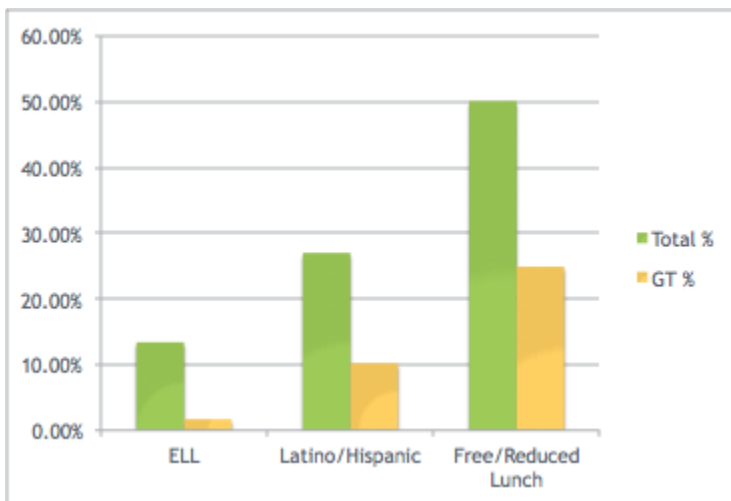
Reports

Northeast BOCES submits complete reports as required in a timely manner. **The annual plan within the Unified Improvement Plans with a Gifted Addendum are on file for each District with the AU.**

The Gifted Addendum has been written at the BOCES level by the AU Gifted Coordinator, and schools choose whether to adopt or modify this plan.

The AU has a budget proposal and required budget documents on file at the Colorado Department of Education.

The AU has submitted accurate records for the Data Pipeline annual reported of gifted education. Overall, the AU has an aggregated 3.8% of the student population identified for gifted programming. This number varies widely by District, from a low of 0.0% to a high of 8.3%. As a general rule, the AU is vastly under-identifying in the ELL, Latino/Hispanic, and Free/Reduced Lunch populations. The student population for ELL in the AU is 13.4%, but gifted identification is 1.7%; for Latino/Hispanic students, the total percentage is at 27.0%, and gifted identification is at 10.2%; and for Free/Reduced Lunch, the total percentage of students in the AU is 50.1%, but gifted identification is at 24.9%. These disparities are shown in the chart below.



District-specific information is provided to each GT School Coordinator to verify accuracy of information. Strategies already mentioned in Identification, Programming, and ALP sections are targeted to bring these numbers closer together. **Student achievement data is disaggregated each year to determine UIP targets and action plan.**

Targets:

1. Districts will be encouraged to write their own Gifted Addendum for the UIP (i.e., Annual Plan) by Spring of 2017. The GT Coordinator at the AU level will provide guidance and suggestions based on the individual data from each District appropriate to specific needs.



Record Keeping

Northeast BOCES Districts are in compliance with all record keeping requirements according to Colorado statute. Student records, including ALPs, are stored in secure district student data management systems. Records of the student **ALPs are a part of the student cumulative records**. Individual Districts follow policy on the maintenance, retention, transfer, and destruction of gifted student records according to District guidelines. Financial records are kept in accordance with principles of governmental accounting. Districts keep individual records of all equipment for which gifted funding was used in the acquisition of said equipment.

Procedures for Disagreements

The AU provides leadership for establishing Procedures for Disagreements disputes regarding gifted program elements. Each district has a specific policy that addresses disagreements concerning the identification and programming for GT students. If needed, the GT Coordinator at the Northeast BOCES level will intervene for interpretation and communication.

Targets:

1. Procedure for Disagreements will be described in all district Gifted Handbooks (or AU Gifted Handbook) posted on the Northeast BOCES website by Spring of 2017. The procedures will address all key requirements required by CDE.

Monitoring

Northeast BOCES adheres to applicable state and federal laws regarding the program plan identification, and special educational services for gifted students.

The AU is in compliance with all state requirements for monitoring the annual and comprehensive plans and will monitor enrollment and performance data to prepare for the Colorado Gifted Review. The AU is working to address areas listed in the Improvement Timeline from the last CGER.

Targets:

All districts will be asked to complete a self-evaluation once every two years beginning in the spring of 2017. This will help ensure readiness as well as awareness and timeliness of corrective actions as needed.