



## Administrative Unit

<b>Administrative Unit name:</b> Larimer R-1, Poudre - 35010	<b>Region:</b> North Central	
<b>Name of Gifted Education Director/Coordinator:</b> Caitlin Sahimi	<b>Email:</b> csahimi@psdschools.org	
<b>Director’s mailing address:</b> 2407 Laporte Avenue, Fort Collins, Colorado, 80526	<b>Phone number:</b> 970-490-3076	<b>Fax:</b>

**Name of Superintendent:** Dr. Sandra Symser

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

Poudre School District uses a variety of methods for communication about gifted program information. Websites, print materials, email, letters, and information nights are some methods by which the community has access to information.

Note: The Poudre School District website is undergoing major changes during the 2016-2017 school year and will be fully updated prior to the end of the school year. Some links and information below may change, but an addendum will be submitted once the changes are complete.

The PSD Website (<http://www.psdschools.org/academics/curriculum-subject-areas/gifted-and-talented>), managed by the district Gifted Curriculum Facilitator, is updated regularly. Parents, teachers, and any other stakeholders are encouraged to look to the website for important and up-to-date information specific to identification, Advanced Learning Plans, the Gifted Advisory Board, school gifted programs, opportunities for parent education, and opportunities for gifted learners. Each school is encouraged to have their own gifted website with specific school information as well as links to the district gifted website.

The website for identification (<http://www.psdschools.org/academics/curriculum-subject-areas/gifted-and-talented/identification%20>) provides an overview of the identification process, which describes the screening and referral process. The gifted identification criteria as well as the "body of evidence" recommended by the Colorado Department of Education are also described. The general screening process used for identifying students in math and reading is described, as well as the referral process for all other areas of identification. For K-2 gifted identification, parents are



encouraged to contact the school's gifted site coordinator for more information about the referral and identification process, as it is different than the process and criteria for grades 3-12. The referral form, also available in Spanish, is available to anyone who might request it from the gifted site coordinator.

The **Parent** portion of the district gifted website

(<http://www.psdschools.org/academics/curriculum-subject-areas/gifted-and-talented/parents>) has information directly related to Advanced Learning Plans, Parent Opportunities, Program Options, Resources, and Frequently Asked Questions. This portion of the website focuses on the information parents need to know in order to be active participants in the gifted education program. This site has a running list of educational opportunities for parents. The list includes not only present offerings, but past offerings as well. This page is also useful for new gifted site coordinators as it has a lot of introductory level information that is important for a new gifted site coordinator to know. Some presentations that are given in the district regarding gifted education are recorded and linked to this website as a future resource for parents. Other presentations are shared verbally through PowerPoint and notes. In this way, even if a parent misses the actual presentation, they can still have access to the important material. The Parent website also maintains current information about SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted) Parent Support Groups, which are run throughout the year. These groups provide information to parents about how to support their gifted learners' social and emotional needs.

**Gifted By School: Individual School Websites**

<http://www.psdschools.org/academics/curriculum-subject-areas/gifted-and-talented/gt-school>

In a site-based district that offers "school choice," as PSD does, it is important that the community has information about different programs and curricular models at each school. Parents and teachers from within and outside of PSD ask "what does each school do for gifted?" Ideally, there should be a centralized location on the website that can address this common question. On the district website is a page that links to each individual school's gifted website. Some websites are much more up-to-date than others. Some websites also offer much more information than others. When parents have access to information about what a school is doing for gifted, they can make a better decision of where to send their gifted child, whether it be to the neighborhood school or through the school choice process.

**Gifted Services Templates**

Every school has developed a list of services that they provide to their gifted learners. These templates are all found on the PSD gifted website and are often provided to parents as a way to get a brief overview of programming options around the district. All schools make site-based decisions about how the needs of gifted learners are met. A standardized template is used for this communication, and the template gives each school the opportunity to describe acceleration, gifted classes, enrichment opportunities before and after school, content extensions available for gifted learners, differentiated instruction in the regular classroom, and how gifted learners are grouped for learning. These services templates will be posted on the district website. Not only do they serve a need for communication to stakeholders about the many different options available in our district, but they are also a form of self-evaluation for schools.

**Parent Information Nights**

Parent information nights are offered on an as-needed basis on a variety of topics, from identification to Advanced Learning Plans, programming, and early access information.

**Parent Education Opportunities**

Another way our gifted program communicates with stakeholders is through parent education opportunities. Most recently, we have brought in Jenny Hecht to speak to parents about the social and emotional needs of gifted learners. In the recent past, we have also brought in Jim Delisle and encouraged parents to attend parent night at the annual CAGT conference.

**ALP Collaboration with Parents and Students**



Each school in PSD is required to approach the ALP process through collaborative efforts between teachers, students and parents. The gifted site coordinator or teacher organizes these efforts, however, it is recognized that the gifted site coordinator might not *know* each gifted student, so systems for this work are set up by site. For example, some elementary schools might write ALPs at parent/teacher conferences, while others might work with students to write the ALP and then send home for parents for feedback. Each school tries to include parent(s), student, and teacher in the process so that each stakeholder is aware of and has an opportunity to be part of the creation or evaluation of the plan. In August, communication is sent to parents regarding the schedule for ALPs at their child's school (each school has a different system in place). In December, formal communication about the ALP is required for each school, though many parents have been given an opportunity for feedback before December. Communication to parents and student is also required at the end of the year. This final communication is focused on an evaluation of the effectiveness of the ALP.

### **Professional Development and Staff Presentations**

Educators in Poudre School District have many opportunities for professional development in the PSD Gifted Program. Each fall, all gifted coordinators participate in a full-day of training that includes information about identification, ALPs, programming options, and the technology used for identification and ALPs. New site coordinators are offered additional assistance both one-on-one and in small groups, particularly at the beginning of the year.

Staff presentations can be focused on a variety of topics and are based on needs and requests by the site. Also, the district gifted identification specialists work with teams and schools to make sure everyone is aware of new identification procedures, as well as the referral process. Identification specialists update each site every year regarding identification procedures.

### **ALP and Identification for Staff and Gifted Site Coordinators**

All information regarding ALPs and gifted identification for staff and gifted site coordinators can be found on a central website available to PSD staff only. On this site, all letters and documents that are sent home throughout the year, information about writing ALPs, rubrics, and more can be found on this site. Through the use of Google Drive, this space is meant to be a collaborative work environment.

### **Parent Email Listserv**

The district gifted facilitator has created a Gifted Parent Listserv for direct communication with the parents of gifted learners and any interested stakeholder. Information about upcoming opportunities for both parents and students is sent out on the listserv. All parents of gifted learners are on the listserv. An option to opt-out of the list is available to parents who do not want receive emails.

### **Concurrent Enrollment**

Poudre School District offers many opportunities for concurrent enrollment. Students can take classes at both Colorado State University and Front Range Community College. All concurrent enrollment work goes through the Director of Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness and the Career and Technical Education Coordinator.

### **Future Steps:**

- The district gifted facilitator will work with the Professional Development department to provide training to all new hires and new teachers in PSD.
- The district gifted facilitator will work with the new Post-Secondary Work Force Readiness Director to coordinate concurrent enrollment efforts for gifted learners.
- The district gifted facilitator will provide training to administration so that they can disseminate the information to each school.
- The district will collaborate annual efforts to bring in a guest speaker for both parents and staff on a variety of topics related to gifted learners.
- The district gifted facilitator will make SENG training a priority to bring back regular parent support groups.



---

### AU Target/s:

1. Poudre School District will provide more easily accessible professional development to teachers and administrators, as measured by a growth in participation from classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators.
2. Poudre School District will clarify and enhance its concurrent enrollment opportunities for gifted learners.

---

### Definition of “Gifted Student”

Poudre School District has adopted the state definition of a gifted learner.

"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

This definition serves as a guideline for all identification and programming decisions in Poudre School District.

---

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

#### Body of Evidence:

Poudre School District utilizes the suggested Body of Evidence recommended by the Colorado Department of Education. Below is an example of indicators used most commonly by PSD to determine gifted identification. Other measures are used in some circumstances. Certified school psychologists can also perform individualized cognitive assessments in some cases. All students in grades K-2 who qualify for gifted services have had an individualized cognitive assessment administered. PSD follows state guidelines for identification of gifted learners in all four areas - Academic Aptitude with a Cognitive Score, Academic Aptitude without a Cognitive Score, Talent Aptitude, and General Intellectual Ability.

Below is a description of the most commonly used assessments that build a body of evidence.

#### Achievement

- CMAS/PARCC - Exceeds Expectations
- MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) - 95<sup>th</sup> percentile
- STAR - 95<sup>th</sup> percentile

#### Behavior Characteristics

- SIGS (Scales for Identifying Gifted Students) - 95<sup>th</sup> percentile

#### Intellectual Ability/Aptitude

- CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) - 95<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Torrance Test of Creative Thinking - 95<sup>th</sup> percentile



- TOMAGS
- KBIT

### **Demonstrated Performance**

- Academic Portfolios
- Portfolios in Visual and Performing Arts, Music, Leadership, and Dance
- Performance Tasks with observations
- Work Samples

### **Description of Poudre School District's Identification Process:**

**Screening:** All students take the CogAT during the winter/spring of their second grade year. The screening process for both math and reading begins once CogAT results are back, and continues at least twice a year through the end of fifth grade. In a collaboration with the PSD assessment coordinator and the gifted identification specialists, students are flagged on a spreadsheet that contains all test scores that they might have within a two-year time period. Scores are broken apart based on the area in which a student might be identified. For example, for a reading identification, a student might have CogAT, MAP, PARCC, SIGS, and STAR scores available. Scores in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher are highlighted so that the gifted identification specialist can work with the site coordinator to identify the student.

Screening continues at the secondary level on a semi-regular basis if data suggests that a student's body of evidence shows potential towards a gifted identification. At the high school level, data spreadsheets are provided but students are not screened like they are in grades 3-8.

**Referrals:** A student may be referred for consideration for any state-recognized area of gifted identification in grades K-12. A parent, student, or educator may refer a student for consideration for gifted identification by requesting a referral form from the gifted site coordinator. Existing evidence is reviewed, and next steps are determined by a team of gifted identification specialists, as well as the district gifted facilitator. Determinations based on a referral are made within 30 days of submission.

**K-2 Identification:** K-2 identification is based on referrals. The criteria is higher for K-2 identification. As a screener before cognitive testing can be administered, there must be a total of 3 indicators of 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or a qualitative equivalent that span the areas of behavior characteristics, achievement, and performance. If there are 3 qualifying indicators during the screening, a cognitive assessment is administered by a certified school psychologist. A cognitive score of 98<sup>th</sup> percentile is required for K-2 identification.

### **Gifted Identification in General Intellectual Ability**

Students who do not meet criteria in the more traditional pathways can be identified as general intellectual ability. This process of identification goes through the team of identification specialists, as the process typically looks different for each student. While students must end up with at least one cognitive score in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher, they often do not come in with that score. A body of evidence is developed using teacher ratings scales, multiple years of consistent achievement score, EL status and growth on ACCESS testing, other cognitive scores, and more.

### **Gifted Identification in Visual and Performing Arts, Music, Dance, and Leadership**

Students wishing to be identified in this area go through a pre-screening process that involves the submittal of normed rating scales. If it is determined that a student can move forward beyond the pre-screening process, a portfolio is developed and presented to a team of educators qualified to make a determination of giftedness in the area in which the student wishes to be identified.

### **Gifted Identification in Creativity:**

Approximately one-third of our elementary schools screen students for identification in creativity. Schools that do not screen can use the referral process to identify their population. Creativity screening and referrals use SIGS, the Torrance, CogAT, and portfolios to identify students.

As of October Count 2015, the following is a representation of the population of students identified gifted in Poudre School District:



Area of ID	Totals
Creativity	200
General Intellect	9
Leadership	5
Mathematics	2608
Reading	2136
Science	8
Visual Arts	5
Writing	2

Grade	Totals
K	0
1	3
2	4

The following is a chart that compares the demographics of the GT population with the entire PSD student population.

Sub-Group	Gifted Population %	Gifted Population Total	PSD Population %	PSD Population Total
Female	45.58%	1516	48.32%	12846
Male	54.42%	1810	51.68%	13738
Free/Reduced	11.00%	366	35.18%	9352
504	4.48%	149	3.62%	962
IEP	0.75%	25	7.74%	2057
ELL	5.44%	181	11.00%	2924
Hispanic	4.81%	160	18.20%	4838
American Indian/Alaskan	0.21%	7	0.52%	139
Asian	5.47%	182	3.02%	804
Black/African American	0.39%	13	1.22%	325
White	84.58%	2813	73.38%	19508
Native Hawaiian	0.09%	3	0.14%	37
2 or more races	4.45%	148	3.51%	933
<b>Total</b>	<b>3326 Students</b>		<b>26584 Students</b>	

While great strides have been made in recent years towards the identification of underrepresented populations, we recognize that we must do more to provide equitable access to gifted programming this population.

Below are the ways that PSD offers more equitable opportunities for gifted identification:

- Alternative indicators for ELL students (ACCESS growth and achievement as well as growth on standardized tests as compared to proficiency level) are used in identification decisions for English Language Learners (General Intellectual Ability).
- Professional development in gifted identification, which includes a focus in identifying gifted students in historically under-represented populations, is provided as an option for all PSD educators. Many PSD educators took advantage of this during Summer Institute 2016.



- Spanish directions are provided during CogAT administration.
- The use of behavior rating scales as well as the development of qualitative measures in the gifted identification process provides opportunities for a more diverse population to be identified.
- Identification procedures and referral forms are translated into Spanish.
- All elementary teachers and many secondary teachers are aware of the identification process and their roles in the referral process due to site visits, trainings, and staff presentations.
- The gifted identification team works closely with the Department of Language, Culture, and Equity to find students that might not show up on general screening.

**Gifted District Identification Team:**

In order to support schools in their efforts towards the identification of gifted learners, a team of identification specialists is in place at both the elementary and secondary level. At the elementary level, three 50% positions share the workload of all thirty elementary schools. In addition, a 50% secondary identification specialist supports all middle and high schools. The ID specialists work on both screening and referrals. One member of the identification team is a licensed school psychologist and is able to provide cognitive testing on an as-needed basis.

**Communication and Parent Involvement:**

The following are methods used by PSD to ensure that parents and community stakeholders are aware of the gifted identification process. Parent participation is supported and encouraged.

- Gifted identification handouts for parents
- Back-to-school events as requested by school sites
- Staff presentations and site professional development
- District Professional Development
- District and school gifted and talented websites (documents translated into Spanish)
- Presentations and reports to principals and cabinet-level district administration as well as the District Advisory Board
- Parents of students who are identified gifted receive an informational packet about the identification process, gifted learners' academic and affective needs, parent education opportunities, services at their child's school, and ALPs.
- At the elementary level, a gifted identification specialist is assigned to each school to make sure identification procedures are consistent and meet district expectations.
- A website for gifted site coordinators is managed by the district gifted facilitator so that gifted site coordinators have access to all resources, forms, and documents electronically.

**Identification and Individual Programming:**

Identification profiles are completed for each student who is identified as gifted in PSD. The profile shows strengths and talent areas, and it is used in determining goal-writing focus of the ALP. Student profiles are stored on a shared server and a copy is also placed in student cumulative folders.

**AU Target/s:**

1. Poudre School district will continue efforts to increase the numbers of minority, F/R, EL students identified for gifted services.
2. Finalize process for identification of students gifted in dance.

---

## Advanced Learning Plan Content, Procedures and Responsibilities

**Advanced Learning Plan**

- All gifted students have an Advanced Learning Plan written each school year. Students have a goal in their area(s) of identification, as well as an affective goal. Communication with parents takes place in August, mid-year, and in May. The process of writing the ALP each year is collaborative with teachers, parents, and students. The ALP is stored using a program called Enrich



(elementary and middle school), and ALPs look like all others intervention plans developed for different types of learners. All plans in Poudre School District are stored in Enrich. Each plan has a SMART goal with a measure in the student's area(s) of strength, and then interventions/services are listed that support goal achievement in the area of strength. In the 2016-2017 school year, schools are aligning most goals to standards, though not all. All ALP goals will be aligned to standards starting in the 2017-2018 school year. Parents receive a letter in August describing the ALP collaboration and communication process at their child's school. Before or by mid-November (Thanksgiving break) parents have an opportunity to either participate in writing the ALP or (in most secondary schools, this is the case) provide feedback on the plan. All finalized plans are communicated home by December (winter break) at the latest, although, most plans have been in place and have been implemented far before that date. Most schools use fall parent conferences as an opportunity to share ALPs with parents. Then, in May, schools send information home about ALP goal progress and provide information about next year's ALP and how the plan might look. The collaborative ALP process that has been implemented in PSD allows schools to discover the strengths, interests, and needs of each student and adapt programming accordingly. Because PSD encourages professional development in gifted education, many teachers, who are part of the ALP writing process and implementation of the plan, have opportunities to learn more about gifted learners' needs and therefore provide appropriate services based on best practices and an understanding of giftedness. High schools follow the same process as elementary and middle schools, but students are given the opportunity to write their own ALPs in collaboration with the site coordinator and classroom teachers. High Schools use Google Forms to write and share ALPs, as this is a much more effective process for programs with large numbers.

- Affective goals are written and aligned to the personal and social competencies, as outlined by NAGC. Goals are most commonly aligned to CDE health and wellness standards.
- Each ALP has the following components:
  - Student assessment and identification information
  - SMART goal(s) in area(s) of strength for each year, aligned to standards
  - Measures used to determine goal achievement
  - Record of interventions/GT services
  - Notes (i.e. student interests, parent collaboration, plan effectiveness, etc.)

The following are the components of a gifted program.

**Differentiated Instruction:** There is an expectation in PSD that instruction will be differentiated based on individual needs. There have been many collaboration opportunities over the past several years to train teachers in best practices related to differentiation. Some of them include: book studies, Lynn Erickson concept-based learning training, in-school differentiation overview, Depth and Complexity, and more. Differentiation is a school board priority for the 2016-2017 school year, so it is being discussed an improved regularly.

**Social/Emotional Support:** All schools have counselors who support the social/emotional needs of all students, however, counselors are encouraged to participate in professional development that focuses on the specific needs of gifted learners. Student discussion groups are in place in some elementary, middle, and high schools. Also, teachers, through professional development, are encouraged to understand these needs as well to offer support in academic settings. The ALP process allows schools to determine the affective needs of gifted learners and adapt programming accordingly.

**Delivery of Services (structure):** Because each site is different, this can look different from school to school. Some schools implement cluster-grouping and ability grouping to meet the academic needs of gifted learners. Accelerated classes in math are available and some elementary schools, and all middle and high schools. Some elementary schools offer pull-out enrichment in language arts and math, and some middle schools offer gifted-only or gifted priority language arts classes. Honors, pre-AP, AP, and IB coursework is available at all secondary schools.



**Options for curriculum and instruction:** As a district of choice, there are many curricular models available throughout the district. Acceleration is an option for math at all levels. Honors, pre-AP, AP, and IB coursework are available at all secondary schools. IB, Core Knowledge, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and Project-based learning are a few of the curricular options available in the district. All teachers are expected, through the MTSS process, to offer differentiation for all levels of learners, including gifted learners.

**ICAP and the ALP:** For high school students, the ALP is combined with the ICAP. Students develop SMART goals for their ALP goals and it is available for viewing at all times by parents, students, and teachers. When the high schools implement ICAP SMART goals in the coming years, there is a plan to combine the expectations of the ALP SMART goals with the ICAP goals.

**Whole-grade acceleration** utilizes the MTSS Student Success Team process adopted by Poudre School District. The Iowa Acceleration Scales are used to determine best placement decisions for students. Parents and teachers are included in this process. Achievement scores, ability scores, and social and emotional needs and characteristics are considered before a decision is made. Per district policy, the principal at a school site has the final decision. The suggested protocol is part of the resources all gifted site coordinators receive at the beginning of each school year.

**Content acceleration** most often occurs in math. A body of evidence is gathered according to best practices. An end-of-the year assessment is given, and achievement scores on MAP and PARCC are reviewed. This process is available to all students, and the district has vertically aligned all math coursework from 4<sup>th</sup> grade through graduation so that students can accelerate.

**Course pathways** are available for viewing on the PSD website.

**Post-secondary** plans start in 6<sup>th</sup> grade with the ICAP. While PSD is still using parts of Naviance, we are looking into a new system for ICAP moving forward. Post-secondary options are available to high school students through concurrent enrollment and the opportunity to take college level coursework while still in high school. Tuition is paid by the district if the course counts toward high school graduation.

**Transitions:** Before the end of each school year, gifted site coordinators proactively communicate with next year's teachers and/or school in order to make sure the transition for gifted students is smooth. The ALP has a place for notes, and that provides another method for creating positive transition practices. The ALP is housed in a system that communicates directly with the student information system so that at the start of each year, ALPs are transferred to the student's new school, if applicable. ALPs can be accessed by any educator at the student's school. All student achievement and testing data is accessible through Enrich, which is the system that houses the ALP.

#### **AU Targets:**

- The gifted facilitator and site coordinators will continue to build capacity in the implementation of standards-aligned ALPs.
- The PSD Curriculum and Gifted Department will work alongside the Director of Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness to build relationships with community resources and CSU in order to offer more opportunities for internships, mentorships, and enrichment using community resources.
- Poudre School District will communicate expectations for gifted services to all school sites.
- Each school will annually communicate in writing the services for gifted learners that are available at the school site. This will be posted on the district GT Website.

#### **Advanced Learning Plan**

- All gifted students have an Advanced Learning Plan written each school year. Students have a goal in their area(s) of identification, as well as an affective goal. Communication with parents takes place in August, mid-year, and in May. The process of writing the ALP each year is collaborative with teachers, parents, and students. The ALP is stored using a program called Enrich (elementary and middle school), and ALPs look like all other intervention plans developed for different types of learners. All plans in Poudre School District are stored in Enrich. Each plan has a



SMART goal with a measure in the student's area(s) of strength, and then interventions/services are listed that support goal achievement in the area of strength. In the 2016-2017 school year, schools are aligning most goals to standards, though not all. All ALP goals will be aligned to standards starting in the 2017-2018 school year. Parents receive a letter in August describing the ALP collaboration and communication process at their child's school. Before or by mid-November (Thanksgiving break) parents have an opportunity to either participate in writing the ALP or (in most secondary schools, this is the case) provide feedback on the plan. All finalized plans are communicated home by December (winter break) at the latest, although, most plans have been in place and have been implemented far before that date. Most schools use fall parent conferences as an opportunity to share ALPs with parents. Then, in May, schools send information home about ALP goal progress and provide information about next year's ALP and how the plan might look. The collaborative ALP process that has been implemented in PSD allows schools to discover the strengths, interests, and needs of each student and adapt programming accordingly. Because PSD encourages professional development in gifted education, many teachers, who are part of the ALP writing process and implementation of the plan, have opportunities to learn more about gifted learners' needs and therefore provide appropriate services based on best practices and an understanding of giftedness. High schools follow the same process as elementary and middle schools, but students are given the opportunity to write their own ALPs in collaboration with the site coordinator and classroom teachers. High Schools use Google Forms to write and share ALPs, as this is a much more effective process for programs with large numbers.

- Affective goals are written and aligned to the personal and social competencies, as outlined by NAGC. Goals are most commonly aligned to CDE health and wellness standards.

**ICAP and the ALP:** For high school students, the ALP is combined with the ICAP. Students develop SMART goals for their ALP goals and it is available for viewing at all times by parents, students, and teachers. When the high schools implement ICAP SMART goals in the coming years, there is a plan to combine the expectations of the ALP SMART goals with the ICAP goals.

**Transitions:** Before the end of each school year, gifted site coordinators proactively communicate with next year's teachers and/or school in order to make sure the transition for gifted students is smooth. The ALP has a place for notes, and that provides another method for creating positive transition practices. The ALP is housed in a system that communicates directly with the student information system so that at the start of each year, ALPs are transferred to the student's new school, if applicable. ALPs can be accessed by any educator at the student's school. All student achievement and testing data is accessible through Enrich, which is the system that houses the ALP.

#### **AU Targets:**

- The gifted facilitator and site coordinators will continue to build capacity in the implementation of standards-aligned ALPs.
- The PSD Curriculum and Gifted Department will work alongside the Director of Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness to build relationships with community resources and CSU in order to offer more opportunities for internships, mentorships, and enrichment using community resources.
- Poudre School District will communicate expectations for gifted services to all school sites.
- Each school will annually communicate in writing the services for gifted learners that are available at the school site. This will be posted on the district GT Website.

## Programming

---

#### AU Description:

- Poudre school district is made up of 53 schools, 4 of which are charter schools. Each school makes decisions about gifted services based on funding, resources, and the needs of the student population. Tier II and Tier III interventions for gifted are determined by the school. The process of



writing Advanced Learning Plans, which is collaborative and inclusive of students and parents, might generate new needs for services. In the process of writing the ALP, a school can determine what services are needed for areas of giftedness with fewer numbers (for instance, leadership). For more extreme interventions (such as whole-grade acceleration), a team from the school works with the district gifted facilitator to make decisions best for the student.

- While each school might be different in terms of gifted services, PSD does promote school choice. In this sense, the student and parent community have quite a lot of options for gifted programming if they are able to attend their school of choice.

**The following are common services offered in Poudre School District. Not all services are offered at each school.**

#### **Elementary Schools:**

- **Enrichment:** Enrichment extends the curriculum. The structure in which it is offered is sometimes a "pull-out" setting once or multiple times per week
- **Acceleration:** Acceleration has many different meanings. It can exist as either replacement curriculum with the content of a higher grade-level or a mixture of the current grade level and the next grade level's content.
- **In-class Differentiation:** This service is offered by teachers within the classroom setting. Teachers pre-assess and adjust the curriculum as needed in order to create respectful tasks for advanced learners. Some strategies might include accelerated pace, choice in content, open-ended projects, more complexity and depth, etc. It is important to consider that differentiation should not result in MORE work for a gifted learner.
- **After school enrichment opportunities:** Some of these might include activities like Lego Robotics, Math Counts, Math Olympiad, or Odyssey of the Mind. These should not be the only services a school offers for advanced learners, however, they are a great addition to the menu of options.
- **Cluster Grouping:** This practice allows schools to "cluster" gifted learners in one classroom so that the teacher can effectively differentiate for a larger group of students. This is an example of a structure for providing differentiation or other gifted services.
- **Social and Emotional Interventions:** Some elementary schools offer "GT Discussion Groups" in which a counselor or trained teacher gathers GT students to discuss issues that affect their social/emotional well-being. Some of these issues might address peer relationships, academic and achievement expectations, perfectionism, post-secondary preparation, challenge, etc.

**Middle Schools:** Middle school programming is very similar to elementary school, with an increased focus on career and post-secondary readiness. Several middle schools cluster identified students into homeroom classes, math classes, and language arts classes. Below are some examples of services at PSD middle schools.

- **Advanced Coursework:** Courses labeled Honors, IB, or Pre-AP are courses that are designed to meet the needs of advanced learners. While these courses are not exclusively for gifted learners, they do serve a role in the menu of options a school offers gifted students. A good question to ask is "What is the qualitative difference between this advanced course and the regular course?"
- **Accelerated Math:** PSD offers students to accelerate into one of two pathways in math: a compacted model beginning in fourth grade, and a compacted model beginning in seventh grade. A large body of evidence is used to determine placement into these two pathways.
- **Extended Learning Opportunities:** Some middle schools offer gifted services through the Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) time that is built into the schedule. In these situations, courses that are more complex or rigorous are offered to gifted learners either in an area of interest, or in a structure that allows gifted students to pursue an area of interest in a more in-depth manner. The titles of these ELO's vary by school.
- **Gifted Class:** Some middle schools offer a "Gifted and Talented" class that replaces the regular course. For example, students might take a "Gifted Language Arts" class if they are identified gifted in Language Arts.



- **Social and Emotional Interventions:** Some middle schools offer "Gifted Discussion Groups" in which a counselor or trained teacher gathers gifted students to discuss issues that affect their social/emotional well-being. Some of these issues might address peer relationships, academic and achievement expectations, perfectionism, post-secondary preparation, challenge, etc.
- **In-class Differentiation:** This service is offered by teachers within the classroom setting. Teachers pre-assess and adjust the curriculum as needed in order to create respectful tasks for advanced learners. Some strategies might include accelerated pace, choice in content, open-ended projects, more complexity and depth, etc. It is important to consider that differentiation should not result in MORE work for a gifted learner.
- **After school enrichment opportunities:** While these are excellent options for students to pursue an area of interest at deeper levels, these should not be the only services a school offers for advanced learners. They are, however, a great addition to the menu of options.
- **Career and Postsecondary Readiness:** Schools offer field trips to college honors programs, bring in speakers, and offer mentorship opportunities.

#### High School:

- **Social and Emotional Interventions:** Some high schools offer "Gifted Discussion Groups" in which a counselor or trained teacher gathers gifted students to discuss issues that affect their social/emotional well-being. Some of these issues might address peer relationships, academic and achievement expectations, perfectionism, post-secondary preparation, challenge, etc.
- **In-class Differentiation:** This service is offered by teachers within the classroom setting. Teachers pre-assess and adjust the curriculum as needed in order to create respectful tasks for advanced learners. Some strategies might include accelerated pace, choice in content, open-ended projects, more complexity and depth, etc. It is important to consider that differentiation should not result in MORE work for a gifted learner.
- **After school enrichment opportunities:** While these are excellent options for students to pursue an area of interest at deeper levels, these should not be the only services a school offers for advanced learners. They are, however, a great addition to the menu of options.
- **Advanced Coursework:** AP and IB courses offer a higher level of rigor for gifted learners. These course, while they are not a "gifted program" are a great component to a school's *overall* GT program, which should include options for students to learn at advanced and rigorous levels.
- **Career and Postsecondary Readiness:** Schools offer field trips to college honors programs, bring in speakers, and offer mentorship opportunities.

#### AU Targets:

- Work alongside the district team who is coordinating a district-wide social and emotional curriculum to infuse resources for gifted learners within the adopted materials.
- Refine the process by which students can take online courses for high school credit.
- Develop partnerships within the community to build mentorship opportunities specific to gifted learners.

## Evaluation and Accountability Procedures

The PSD gifted facilitator is working with the assessment coordinator to develop new targets, which will be identified and considered on the UIP addendum. Since all PARCC data is not out yet, we will work on these goals through the winter and will update the program plan once the data is available. Prior year's goals have been met. The plan moving forward is to align goals to PARCC data instead of MAP, since we are not using MAP across the board like we were in the past.

Prior year's AU SMART Goals:



By the 2015-2016 school year, PSD students identified gifted in Language Arts will, as a group, score a median growth percentile of 63, which is considered to be at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in the state of Colorado.

*and*

By the 2015-2016 school year, students identified gifted in Language Arts will, as a group, consistently score an average of 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or above on Reading MAP (NWEA).

Progress has been made towards each target, although neither has been met. Scores tend to remain stable or trend slightly upward over time. Although overall scores show that PSD is quite close to reaching both goals set, we need to work with individual schools to look at their scores in relationship to these goals to determine their progress towards meeting the goals for their gifted learners. In addition, as we transition from TCAP to CMAS, we cannot compare the tests any longer to get a median growth percentile. As a result of this change, moving forward, we will look at CMAS and ACT as two targets for growth in gifted learners.

In addition to goals on the UIP addendum, schools look at data for gifted learners each year and develop site improvement plan goals based on the data they receive. A team of parents, teachers, and administrators from each building spend time going through the data to make these decisions. Every two years, PSD sends out a survey to all parents of gifted learners. This evaluation opportunity allows both schools and the district as a whole to evaluate programming options, communication, identification processes, and more. Data is shared school by school and is also disaggregated at the district level to look for trends. Starting in the 2015-2016 school year, we developed an optional student survey as an opportunity to gather feedback from students on their thoughts regarding ALPs, programming, and more. Several schools participated in this survey and have also used the results extensively. The next time the survey goes out, which will be in the 2017-2018 school year, all schools will be required to survey both students and parents.

In addition to schools looking at data to make informed decisions regarding their gifted population, the PSD Gifted Advisory Board also goes through the data each year to look for trends and make suggestions for next steps at the district level. Many of the parent representatives on the committee also serve on their school accountability committees, so they are able to report the information back to their schools as well.

Affective growth is measured in two ways in Poudre School District. Data is collected on both the student and parent surveys in regards to opportunities for meeting the affective needs of gifted learners. In addition, all ALP goals are required to be measurable. Schools measure affective goals in a variety of ways, from written reflections to rubrics and more.

#### **AU Targets:**

- Develop goals alongside director of assessment to be used in the gifted UIP addendum.

## Personnel

Poudre School District employs a district-level gifted curriculum facilitator who oversees the management of the program plan, professional development activities, all state-level reporting, budget management, and much more. The district gifted facilitator has a master's in Gifted Education, a master's in Curriculum and Instruction, as well as a principal license. The district also employs four 50 percent Gifted Identification Specialists (all of whom have a master's degree) to support schools in the screening process, referrals, and K-2 identification procedures. Two specialists have an endorsement in gifted education, one is a licensed school psychologist. Currently the district, as a whole, devotes 14.58 FTE units toward staffing that is directly devoted to Gifted and Talented students. This number does not include the numerous teachers who teach advanced or accelerated coursework at the elementary level, as well as accelerated, pre-AP, honors, or AP/IB teachers at the secondary level. It also does not include classified staff who support certified site coordinators with ALPs and in working with students.



Each school has a Gifted Site Coordinator who manages identification, ALP's and communication with parents, teachers and administration at the site level. This site coordinator might be a counselor or teacher, and staffing percentages are left to schools to decide based on student-based funding. School receive additional money for each student attending the school who has an ALP. This amount is approximately one tenth of the total student funding for each student. The gifted site coordinator may or may not actually offer gifted services as a gifted teacher. In some cases, *multiple* teachers offer gifted services. In core-academic areas, highly qualified teachers teach gifted learners. The site coordinator attends the required gifted site coordinator training each August as well as the quarterly meetings required by the district. At the elementary level, GT Site Coordinators receive a \$500 stipend. At the secondary level, GT Site Coordinators receive an \$800 stipend. It is required by the assistant superintendents that all sites maintain a certified teacher or counselor who is the gifted site coordinator.

Some para-professionals offer enrichment opportunities to identified gifted students, but para-professionals do not offer replacement curriculum for gifted students as the primary educator of gifted services.

Administrators are provided with a list of interview questions and look-fors when hiring gifted education teachers. Sometimes the district Gifted and Talented Curriculum Facilitator is invited to be part of the interview process.

Currently in PSD, there are approximately 20 educators who either have or are pursuing their endorsement or master's in gifted education. The district gifted curriculum facilitator provides information for all PSD employees on the district website and through district emails about opportunities for advanced degrees and endorsement opportunities in gifted education. The district Gifted and Talented Curriculum Facilitator works with the University of Northern Colorado and Regis University to promote and communicate information nights for prospective students.

In addition to encouraging a master's in gifted education or endorsement in gifted education, the district gifted curriculum facilitator also coordinates a variety of opportunities for teachers of gifted learners to gain expertise in working with gifted students. The following opportunities are not required, (except for the required site coordinator Training) but they are highly encouraged for all teachers, counselors, or administrators who work with gifted learners. These opportunities are communicated to district administration as well as principals.

- Required Gifted Site Coordinator Training: This provides an overview of gifted education in PSD as well as training in identification and ALP management. The ALP and Gifted Identification handbooks are used as resources.
- Online professional development led by teachers with masters or endorsement in gifted education: PSD offers online PD courses (offered through the state) each semester. Fostering Creativity, Affective Guidance, The Gifted Reader, Thinking Skills, and The Gifted Learner are all courses that have been and will be continued to be offered each semester.
- Summer Institute: Courses during summer institute have included topics such as in-depth studies, concept-based curriculum and tiered-lesson designs, and developing measures for ALPs.

**AU Target/s:** Poudre School District will offer more targeted professional development, with options for courses that are more easily accessible, such as online modules, book studies, and face-to-face sessions.

## Budget

---

Poudre School District matches and exceeds the state funding received by the Colorado Department of Education each year. This year PSD received \$258,606.00 for gifted funding, and an additional \$35,048.72 from the Universal Screening grant. The main funding grant is used to employ the district gifted curriculum facilitator, as well as fund identification procedures, professional development, and parent education opportunities. Smaller grants are provided to each school (\$800 for



---

elementary schools and \$3000 for secondary schools) to provide for materials for gifted students and gifted programs and professional development at the site level. Poudre School District funds approximately \$150,000 additional funds in staffing and materials, as well as approximately \$330 to each school for each student identified as gifted and talented in PSD. This is part of the student-based budgeting formula used for funding schools in PSD. The use of these funds is determined at a site level. October count data is used to determine funding. Overall, PSD contributes approximately \$975,000 each year to gifted education. The Universal Screening grant is used to fund our second grade CogAT screening, as well as part of the gifted facilitator's salary.

**AU Targets:**

- Work with schools to ensure that all grant money they receive is spent by the end of each school year.

## Reports

---

The Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) Gifted Addendum was submitted with the PSD UIP and is on file at the Department of Education. This plan is written primarily by the gifted curriculum facilitator, who receives feedback from many stakeholders during the process. Gifted site coordinators, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, as well as the gifted advisory board are all asked to provide feedback to the plan. All other required reports, including the annual budget, are also on file with CDE.

In addition to the required reports, the gifted curriculum facilitator works directly with the Informational Technology department in PSD to ensure that all annual reporting is completed on-time and accurately. Below is a report of students broken out by sub-group. While PSD does not currently have an Early Access plan, one will be submitted for the 2017-2018 school year.

Approximately 12.5% of the PSD population is identified gifted. While this is higher than the state average, it is representative of the greater Fort Collins community.

## Record Keeping

---

All financial records are kept in accordance to PSD guidelines. The department secretary for the gifted program works alongside the finance department to ensure that funds are spent and managed according to guidelines. In addition, the gifted facilitator and department secretary works with schools to ensure funds are spent properly.

All funds spent at the district level are reported out monthly to keep track of both the budget as a whole and to ensure that they are being spent properly. Sites do receive some funding from the state grant, and all expenses from that funding are recorded on a spreadsheet that is maintained and reported out by the district gifted facilitator.

While ALP documents are not currently part of a student's cumulative record, their CogAT scores, as well as a one-page identification profile are found there. In addition, all ALP records are stored in Enrich so that they can be reviewed from year to year. Records are maintained within Enrich until a student leaves the district or graduates.

All individual records comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. No records are shared via email unless they are sent via encryption, which allows them to be shared easily and accurately with parents. All records requests go through our district records department.

## Procedures for Disagreements

---

The following information describes the procedure in Poudre School District for dispute resolution: In disputes regarding gifted identification:



1. Contact the gifted site coordinator at your child's school.
2. If a decision cannot be made at the school level, the site coordinator will contact the district identification team.
3. The district identification team will make a recommendation to the school and parents. If the decision is not agreed upon at that time by parents, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment will review the decision and make a final call.

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

In disputes regarding gifted programming:

All programming decisions are made at the site level. The principal at each school site has the final determination regarding gifted programming for a student. It is recommended that you speak to your child's teacher first. Contact the gifted site coordinator or an administrator only after you have addressed your concerns with the classroom teacher. Communication from the principal or gifted site coordinator regarding a decision will be made to the referring party either in person or in writing.

**AU Target/s:**

- Modify district policy regarding students receiving high school credit for courses other than math and foreign language arts at the middle school level.

## Monitoring

The gifted program is currently in compliance with all required plans, as well as applicable state and federal laws regarding gifted education. Poudre School District is prepared for its next state review.

**AU Target:**

- PSD will work to develop a process for follow-up should there be any areas of non-compliance in the next CGER.