



Administrative Unit

Administrative Unit Name: Uncompahgre BOCES - 64200	Region: West Central	
Name of Executive Director: Tammy Johnson Name of Lead District Gifted Education Director: Michelle Barkemeyer	Email: mbarkemeyer@ridgway.k12.co.us	
Director's mailing address: PO Box 728, Ridgway, CO 81432	Phone Number: 970-626-2977	Fax: 970-626-2978
Submission Date: 10/15/2016		

Number of Districts within Administrative Unit:	
Member District	Superintendent Name
Norwood R2-JT	Dave Crews
Ouray R-1	Scott Pankow
Ridgway R-2	Susan Lacy
Telluride R-1	Michael Gass
West End RE-2	Mike Epright

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

The Uncompahgre BOCES and its member districts employ a variety of strategies to ensure communication with parents, teachers, and the community at large. Although comprised of five distinct districts, we share several common threads:

- All districts and the Uncompahgre BOCES have websites to help communicate important information about gifted education to the public. The websites contain information (or links to information) regarding identification, programming, gifted student characteristics, and resources for parents and teachers. All of the above listed information is also included in the online and print versions of our parent handbook.



- Programming options are described in the parent handbook found on the UnBOCES gifted web page. This handbook is also available in print.
- Lists of suggested resources, both print and online, are also provided in the parent handbook. This list provides a wealth of information for those parents wanting to learn more about their gifted child.
- Early access notification is advertised in local newspapers as well as in preschool buildings each spring.

Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) meetings are held for every identified student. At these meetings, parents and students are informed about programming options available in the district. These programming options are always matched to a particular student's strengths. Concurrent enrollment and/or AP classes are made available to those students who qualify. College and career planning is part of the discussion at ALP meetings beginning in the middle school years and continuing through high school.

While we currently work on translating materials into Spanish, the UnBOCES and many of the member districts have personnel available to act as translators when needed.

The UnBOCES also manages a secret Facebook page for parents in our region. This is a place where parents can find current information about gifted children and connect with one another.

Over the next four years, the UnBOCES will seek to improve communication with parents, teachers, and the community at large by:

- Updating all websites with current, easily accessed information. Websites will have information (or links to information) regarding Early Access to Kindergarten and 1st grade, general identification information and procedures, and programming options regularly provided by each district.
- Hosting parent groups and/or book studies each year to help parents learn more about their gifted child and to provide them with a venue to connect with other parents.
- Reporting progress toward ALP goal attainment will coincide with each district's regularly scheduled grade reporting (quarterly or triennially).
- Translating identification and Early Access documents into Spanish.

Definition of "Gifted Student"

The Uncompahgre BOCES and its member districts use the state definition of 'gifted student' as follows:

"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"

The above definition indicates the programming needs for both academic and social/emotional areas.



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

Over the past school year, all districts have re-examined their identification procedures to ensure they meet the portability guidelines provided by the state. Although different testing instruments may be used from district to district, the procedures for identification are the same. (All identification assessments utilized are found on the state's matrix, which ensures portability.)

Screening - All districts provide whole-class screening in grades 2 or 3. Some districts use a full battery assessment, while others use a screening tool. All districts are also screening at the 6th grade level. In addition to whole class screening with a cognitive assessment, review of achievement data is completed regularly to identify those students scoring at the 95th percentile and above to refer for identification, and to find those students who score close to the 95th percentile or show other signs of potential giftedness to include in a talent pool.

Referral - Based on the screening assessment results, achievement data, and/or written referral, a student may be referred to move on to the next step in the identification process. Students may be referred by a teacher or other staff member, parent/guardian, the student himself/herself, or any other community member. These referrals would automatically trigger the data gathering process.

Data gathering - Data is collected from many sources to aid in identification. Additional cognitive and/or achievement testing may be required during this step. Teacher and parent questionnaires help to identify gifted behaviors. Other classroom and 'outside of school' data is also collected to help present a complete picture of the student and his/her strengths. This data collection results in a body of evidence which is used to determine gifted identification eligibility. Gifted identification criteria includes those scores at or above the 95th percentile on a nationally normed assessment.

Gifted identification team meeting - A team of educators, which will include the gifted coordinator and may include classroom teachers, administration, counselors, and any other required personnel, will review the body of evidence and determine whether the child meets the criteria as set forth in state guidelines. No one data point will exclude any student from identification. In most cases, students need at least three pieces of qualifying evidence from at least two different categories (achievement, ability, behavior characteristics, or portfolio of work) to qualify for gifted identification. If qualified for gifted programming, the student will be identified in one of the five areas as set forth in the state definition. A determination or request for extended time for gathering additional data will be made within 30 days of the written referral.

If the team determines that a student does meet the criteria for gifted identification, written notification is sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) and placed in the student's cumulative file and arrangements are made to create an initial Advanced Learning Plan (ALP), during which identification questions are answered and the ALP creation process begins.

If the team determines that a student does not meet the criteria for gifted identification, notification is sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and placed in the student's cumulative file. Parents are welcome to meet with the district and/or BOCES coordinator to review and discuss the results of any assessments. The student may be placed in a talent pool which allows for the student to receive challenge in his/her strength area while continuing to add to their body of evidence. The student may be re-evaluated at a later date.

Appeal - If a parent feels that their child does meet the criteria, or that there is new information that needs to be considered, he/she will contact the principal in writing within 10 days of the decision. The principal will meet with the UnBOCES gifted coordinator and superintendent to review the case. The superintendent's decision is final.



New students to the district - Any new student who comes to the district with an ALP will be automatically transferred into the receiving district's gifted program if the student's records reflect that the child has met the requirements of portability. If records are incomplete, the receiving district will make attempts to gain needed information from the previous district and parents. If the records do not show that portability requirements have been met, the student may need to be re-evaluated for gifted identification. This review of records will take place within 45 days. Parents will be notified as soon as a decision has been made, but no later than 60 days from the student's enrollment date.

Over the next four years, the Uncompahgre BOCES will expand its testing resources to include multiple assessments within each category of testing - cognitive ability, achievement, behavioral characteristics. This variety will allow us to match students with the assessment which will best show their abilities.

Targets:

The UnBOCES will increase the identification of underrepresented populations to align with the percentages found in the general student population by selecting different assessment materials, educating staff on gifted characteristics, and utilizing a talent pool to provide challenge to students. The UnBOCES will utilize the state-provided rubrics to increase the number of identified students in the talent areas (creativity, leadership, visual arts, performing arts, musical abilities, and kinesthetic abilities).

Advanced Learning Plan Content, Procedures and Responsibilities

Advanced learning plans are created for all identified gifted students. This plan is a working document which is revised at least annually. ALPs guide students, parents, and educators toward setting goals for a student's education, resulting in a student who is prepared for whatever future path he/she may choose. Parents are notified and encouraged to attend meetings with their student, the student's teacher(s), the district's gifted coordinator, and other relevant school personnel. All Advanced Learning Plans (ALP) contain the following elements:

- Student profile - The student profile reflects the identification criteria that was met for identification, area of identification, student's strengths (both academic and affective), student's interests, and any other information that describes the whole student.
- Academic goal(s) in every identified area. (Standards-based.) These goals will include details regarding alternate curriculum, setting, activities, or specific strategies that will be used to support goal attainment. Teachers are encouraged to embed instruction within the daily curriculum or supplant curriculum that has already been mastered. ALP goals are NOT meant to be additional work, but rather different work to provide appropriate challenge.
- Affective goal(s) in either a strength or need area. (Standards-based) This goal will include details regarding strategies and activities that will be utilized to meet the student's personal, social, emotional, college/career readiness, communication, leadership, and/or cultural goal(s).
- Signature page - This will document participation in the ALP process by the district's gifted coordinator, teacher, parent(s)/guardian(s), student, and any other pertinent parties. While all parties are strongly encouraged to meet together to create the ALP, schedules may require input via telephone, email, or other means of communication.

ALP documents are provided to parents and are accessible to classroom teachers through each district's data management system or other process. Copies are also housed in a student's cumulative file to allow for easy transition among school levels as well as among districts for transfer students. Since most of our districts have a single gifted coordinator for grades K-12, the transition between levels is eased, as students know who to contact. In districts where this is not the case, the building



coordinators meet to discuss transitioning students. Information about any identified students is also relayed to the appropriate teaching staff.

Districts may choose to blend their ALP and ICAP for secondary students, ensuring that all of the above requirements are included.

Students are encouraged to fully participate in the development of ALP goals from Kindergarten through graduation. This participation ensures that our students have a voice in their educational planning.

Target: Over the next four years, teachers will become more instrumental in helping to write ALP goals as we move toward standards-based ALPs as they are the content experts. Our target in four years is to have all ALP academic and affective goals standards-based using either the Colorado Academic Standards or the National Association for Gifted Students (NAGC) standards. All ALPs will also have an area for progress monitoring based on the district's regular grade reporting schedule.

Currently, ALPs are the primary responsibility of the district's gifted coordinator. Parents/Guardians are notified of the intent to create/revise a student's ALP and are encouraged to provide input as to student strengths and attend the meeting with their child. Students are intimately involved in the creation of all ALP goals. Classroom teachers are also involved in the creation of the plan and implementation during the school day. Other school staff, such as administration and counselors, may also be involved. Guidance counselors are highly encouraged to be involved as ALPs must be considered when scheduling and planning for post-secondary opportunities. Once the document is created, copies are housed in the district's data management system as well as the student's cumulative folder. Districts without a data management system ensure that all teachers of the gifted student receive a copy of the ALP. Parents and/or the student also receive copies of the ALP. ALP progress is recorded at each grade reporting period (quarterly or triennially).

Target: Districts are working toward making ALP documents more accessible and utilized by teachers.

Programming

Many programming options are available to students in each of the various districts. Options are selected for each individual student based on their strength area and are noted in each student's ALP. All of the following are available at every grade level as required by specific students. Some options may require prerequisites. Such options include:

- **Accelerated content** - Student is moved at a faster pace through the curriculum than his/her age peers. This acceleration could be done through single subject acceleration, whole grade acceleration, compacting, or telescoping the curriculum.
- **Differentiation** - Within the regular classroom, the teacher works to provide instruction at the student's ability level.
- **Cluster grouping** - gifted students are grouped together in a general education classroom to allow for appropriate challenge academically as well as social interaction with other gifted students.
- **Independent studies** - Sometimes it may be necessary for a student to complete an independent study around a topic of his/her choosing. These studies are usually selected and structured by the student with support and guidance from a qualified teacher.
- **Mentorships** - Mentorships may be available to provide experience in a student's passion area from a professional in the field.
- **Pull-out classes** - Pull-out time is utilized for one of two different options: enrichment in a strength or passion area or daily instruction in a strength area.



-
- Push-in classes - The gifted specialist helps the general education teacher with differentiation within the general education setting.
 - Competitions or advanced clubs - These options are available in addition to above offerings and not as a stand-alone program.
 - Affective Discussion groups - Gifted students are able to gather together to discuss topics of their interest and receive strategies for coping with difficult topics such as stress, perfectionism, friendships, college planning, etc.
 - Concurrent enrollment* and/or Advanced Placement classes - While usually more rigorous than a traditional high school class, differentiation may still be needed in addition to these classes for many gifted students. These classes may be offered at an earlier age than for the general school population.

*Concurrent enrollment classes are classes where both college and high school credit are earned by taking a single class. These may be taken at school with a qualified instructor or online through a college's distance learning portal.

Target: Over the next four years, the UnBOCES will expand affective discussion groups to all districts for all ages.

Evaluation and Accountability Procedures

Since the state assessment is still in its beginning phases and does not include a growth score yet, districts are currently using their local assessments in addition to data received from state assessments. Many districts utilize NWEA Maps testing which provides a higher ceiling for our gifted students. Others use curriculum based measures to progress monitor growth for our gifted learners. Districts are moving toward reporting ALP goal attainment and/or progress at regular reporting periods - quarterly or triennially.

Affective growth and goal attainment are a priority in our BOCES for this school year. Growth and goal attainment are monitored through check-ins with a teacher and/or gifted coordinator, journal reflections, and/or discussion group participation. In addition to affective ALP goals, affective discussion groups will be held in the districts for our middle and high school students. The goal is to reach all of our gifted students and provide them with a forum to discuss their concerns and celebrations with their peers and to provide support and instruction for their affective development. All districts complete their own Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) gifted addendum which ensures our gifted students' achievement and growth data are analyzed and addressed through the planning process. Although gifted student achievement is disaggregated, small n numbers prevent the districts from reporting progress on public documents. Due to the small size of our districts, we routinely drill down to the individual student level when looking at our gifted student achievement and growth data in addition to monitoring our subgroups within the gifted population.

Our current self-evaluation includes an annual review by our gifted coordinators and administrators, students, parents, and staff.

Targets: Continue to monitor growth and achievement for gifted students, carefully monitoring subgroups within our gifted population. (Gender, Underrepresented populations, etc.)

Implement a yearly comprehensive review by requesting information from students, parents, and staff to direct our future year's program planning. This information would be shared with parents and the general public on the BOCES website.

Personnel



The Uncompahgre BOCES currently has a full time gifted coordinator who manages the program plan, provides professional staff development tailored to each individual district, and supports district coordinators. This BOCES coordinator is highly qualified with a Master's degree and CDE endorsement in gifted education. Most districts also employ individuals on a part-time basis to implement the district's gifted plan and provide both academic and affective support to gifted students and their teachers. Counseling is available through district counselors and community personnel. Our BOCES currently has four additional teachers who have earned their gifted endorsement in gifted education. Two of these teachers are currently serving as district gifted coordinators in Telluride and Ouray. The other two teachers are employed as full-time classroom teachers. Their knowledge of gifted learners benefits both their current students and their peers. Having endorsed teachers on grade-level teams and MTSS teams brings a gifted perspective to all meetings.

Professional development is available for staff through the BOCES coordinator as well as through the online modules provided by CDE. The CDE modules offer college credit through Adam's State University. The BOCES coordinator is currently working with Adam's State to provide college credit for some of the local professional development that is offered - depth and complexity classes, book studies, etc. The CDE modules offer various courses which focus on the needs of gifted learners in various content areas. Professional development provided by the BOCES coordinator is tailored to individual district and/or teacher needs around the topics of differentiation and/or affective needs. This year teachers will be provided Depth and Complexity training with the option of obtaining Adam's State credit for their work.

Gifted students are instructed in core academic areas by highly qualified teachers or teachers the districts have hired for those classes. In no circumstances are paraprofessionals used to provide instruction to gifted learners.

Target: The UnBOCES will continue to provide staff development to general education teachers in order to continue to build capacity within the member districts.

Budget

An annual budget is prepared and submitted to CDE reflecting both state funding and additional funding provided by districts. These monies are used in support of licensed staff who work with gifted students, programming supplies, and professional development for staff who work with gifted learners.

Target: 100% of districts will continue to report their gifted distributions for reporting requirements.

Reports

Districts in the Uncompahgre BOCES monitor and report individually through their data pipeline all items required by the state. Each district completes its own UIP with corresponding Gifted Addendum which requires each district to monitor and plan for gifted student achievement, growth, and growth gaps. Since our n values are usually too small to report out, the data is analyzed down to the student level.

Our budget is currently on file with CDE.

Target: 100% of member districts will continue to report student identification, achievement, and growth through their data pipeline and UIP addendum.

Record Keeping



Financial records for the Uncompahgre BOCES are managed by our business manager. District records are managed by individual districts. An inventory of all non-consumable materials purchased with state funds is maintained at the BOCES office.

Student ALP documents are managed within the individual districts. Copies are sent to the district coordinator for review. Although some districts currently utilize the same form, districts are free to use their form of choice as long as all required elements are present. ALP documents are maintained in a student's cumulative folder as well as on many districts' data management systems. All individually identifiable records are considered confidential and protected in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations. All gifted student records are maintained, retained, and destroyed in the same manner as other student records within each district.

Procedures for Disagreements

The procedures for disagreements regarding gifted identification or programming are as follows:

- Parent should first express concerns to the gifted coordinator in the district.
- If a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached, the parent notifies the building principal in writing of the concern and their wish for an appeal within 10 days of any notification.
- Principal notifies both the superintendent and the BOCES gifted coordinator to review concerns with the parent. During this time additional information may be gathered.
- Superintendent makes final decision after considering information gathered from all sources within 30 days of written request for appeal. Parent/guardian is notified in writing.

Should any conflict arise, any implementation of plans will be placed on hold until a final decision is reached. This procedure is published in the parents' handbook for easy access for any interested party.

Monitoring

Our AU is current with all reporting required by state and federal laws surrounding gifted education. The BOCES coordinator is responsible for monitoring all plans and ensuring compliance with said plans.

Gifted students' performance is monitored after every assessment cycle for district assessments and yearly, in the fall, for state assessments.