

Talent Identification for Pikes Peak (TIPP)

OCTOBER 2017



TIPP UPDATE

TIPP Participating Districts/BOCES

- Academy D20
- Cañon City
- Cheyenne Mountain D12
- Colorado Springs D11
- Falcon D49
- Fountain-Fort Carson D8
- Harrison D2
- Lewis-Palmer D38
- Widefield D3
- Pikes Peak BOCES
- Ute Pass BOCES

TIPP is supported through the multiple collaboration of participating districts, BOCES and funds from the Pikes Peak Regional Gifted Grant

TIPP Assessment Day

Where can you find twenty-one (21) different school districts coming together on a Saturday to support students in the Pikes Peak region, even though their district does not have a student representative? The answer is the unprecedented and unique event known as the *Talent Identification Pikes Peak (TIPP) Assessment Day*.

Gifted education administrators and teachers representing school districts in

Colorado Springs, Pikes Peak BOCES, Ute Pass BOCES and Cañon City spent the last two years collaborating to develop a process and procedure to support the gifted identification of students in the areas of leadership, performing arts and dance. Work continues as this group of professionals design protocols for the addition of visual arts, instrumental and vocal music for the February 24th regional assessment day.



Pikes Peak District and BOCES administrators and teachers at TIPP Assessment Day

The Law

Since 2007, state statute has defined the **domains** of giftedness in Colorado. These include identification of students in the areas of general intellectual, academic aptitudes and talent aptitudes. The talent areas include: performing and visual arts, dance, vocal and instrumental music, leadership, creativity and psychomotor. In 2014, new legislation was introduced to ensure a student's gifted identification was

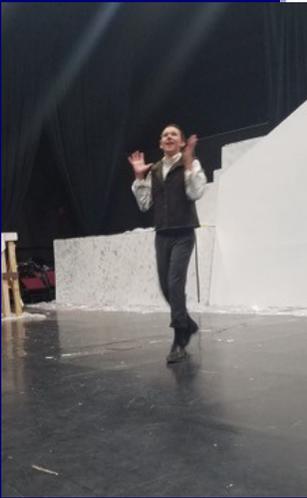
“portable.” This means if a student is identified in one district in Colorado and the student moves to another Colorado district, the receiving district must accept the student's identification. This new law created the need for districts to use similar criteria in the identification process, especially in areas such as the Pikes Peak region where students often move from one neighboring district to another.

Talent Identification

Until last year, area districts struggled to determine a reasonable and equitable process to identify students in the talent domains. One challenge of talent identification is the lack of quantifiable assessment tools. Determining “giftedness” in these areas often requires a subjective judgment or evaluation. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) provides guidance to districts in terms of the criteria that may be used for talent identification, but allows districts to be autonomous in the processes and procedures that are developed.

State criteria suggest using a **body of evidence** to make a formal gifted determination. Criteria include qualifying data in at least three of these categories:

- Cognitive assessment score;
- Norm-referenced test score;
- Norm-referenced or research-based observation scale;
- Top finisher is a state/nationally sanctioned contest or competition; and/or
- “Juried” performance.



Performing arts student

“...Wow, this is so much more than I was expecting. From the facilities, to the organization to the food! I appreciate that so many districts collaborated for such a professional experience. It makes me realize that my daughter’s dancing is appreciated by the schools.”

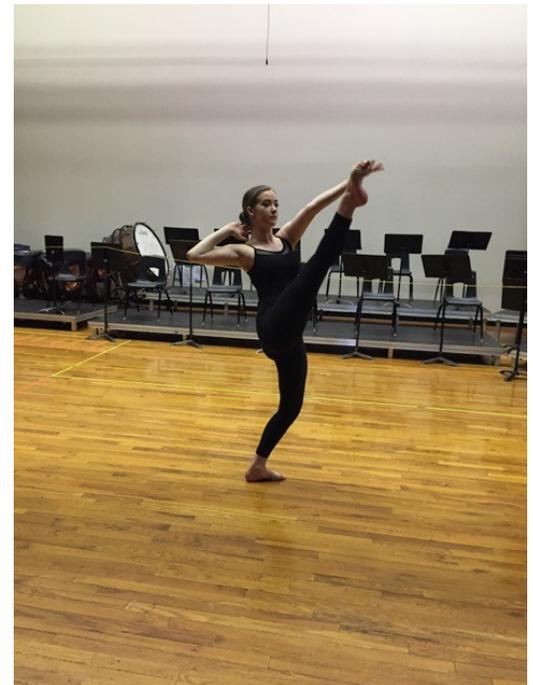
Parent

Talent Assessment

A **juried** or adjudicated performance means bringing together multiple experts in the field to evaluate a student’s portfolio, resume and/or presentation. The presentation venue must be held in a location conducive to the talent area being assessed. The term “assessment” is used rather than “audition,” because data collected are used for the purpose of individual gifted identification.

For example, a dancer can only perform on specific types of flooring and most districts do not have certified dance floors. Therefore, a district may have to incur the cost of renting a dance space for a student’s dance performance.

Then there is the added challenge of finding experts in the field, contacting them and perhaps needing to pay them for their service. Districts, whether big or small – urban or rural, found they lacked the time, expertise and resources to provide students with this type of assessment opportunity.



Dance student

Leaders Join Together

In the Pikes Peak region, a state gifted education grant provides area gifted education leaders with the opportunity to meet 4-8 times a year, participate in professional development offerings and have access to gifted education resources. While attending one of these network meetings, area professionals decided that it was in the best interest of children to join together to develop a talent assessment process that was equitable, fair and provided students attending any school in the region with the opportunity to perform in front of a panel of experts. The data collected from this day would be the last missing piece to support talent identification.

This is not only a cost- and time-saving benefit to districts, but also ensures identification portability. Districts establish the criteria for students they invite to the assessment day and make the final gifted determination. Regional grant funds are used to help support the assessment day costs, while districts volunteer to provide a location and bring other necessary materials to the event.

Extensive feedback is collected from the adjudicators and participants on how to continuously improve the assessment protocol. Gifted leaders meet monthly to refine and further develop the process.

“We will only know what exists in the creative caverns of the mind if we take the time and have the patience to listen and lure the imagination out of the next generation and into the world! The Pikes Peak Gifted Identification Program for the Performing Arts is providing the key to unlock that door for the next generation in our community!”

Judge for Performing Arts

Fall TIPP Assessment Day

On October 21, the second planned assessment day was hosted by Cheyenne Mountain School District. Specific audition requirements were developed by the committees of gifted educators to include research-based evaluation rubrics, interview questions and specific instructions as to what the student was required to demonstrate during the assessment process. Committees also established criteria for the selection of expert judges. These judges are community members willing to give of their time in order to support the passions of students.

An example of the audition process for performing arts includes providing the student with a choice of pre-selected scripts to prepare a monologue that is presented to the judges. The second component of the audition is to have the student complete a improvisational task that requires the student to think on his/her feet and change or adapt the presentation as judges ask the student to reflect different emotions or representations of the character or story. The final component is an interview where a student

is asked to reflect on his/her performance, consider strengths and areas of improvement and share future performing arts goals.

The scoring rubrics are then put in a sealed envelope and given the district’s gifted administrator. Judges do not influence the individual identification decisions. They provide their expert opinions on characteristics they observe and objectively rate students using field-tested protocols.



Interview for Performing Arts

Why Identify in Talent Areas?

A common concern that is often shared about talent identification is, “Why do we need to identify students in these areas if we don’t provide classes or instruction in these areas or the student is already successful without an identification?” Let’s use dance as an example. Few schools offer dance in their curriculum. Identifying a student in dance does **not** mean the school is now responsible for providing formal instruction in dance, nor is the school required to pay for dance classes and competitions the student chooses to participate in outside of the school setting. The benefits of dance identification include the student now being able to add the designation to their resume for admission into highly selective dance colleges or be considered for a coveted dance scholarship. Additionally, the student’s Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) may be written to define the accommodations a student may need to be granted. For example, some students may

require more time to turn in assignments when there are extended absences as a result of traveling to sanctioned events. Or, the ALP may define the graduation credits a student may earn from experiences that happen outside the school setting as a result of time-intensive dance classes and nationwide competitions. A district may choose to provide a physical education or performing arts credit to the formally identified dance student.

Research continually proves the benefits of imbedding an arts education into the curriculum for **all** students. Schools recognize the importance of strengthening student creativity and leadership. When students demonstrate an **advanced ability** or **potential** in the talent domains, just like our academic achievers, they too deserve to have access to an educational **plan** that supports their abilities and allows them to pursue their passions.

“As mentors, coaches and educators, we want to believe we are the ones expanding the horizons of our students. That could not be more wrong. As a judge, I realized it’s the maturity, talent, insight and creative depth these students share that completely changes our perspective. It’s students like these who are teaching us, teaching me. And it’s time we stop and let them have the stage.”

Judge for Dance

Pikes Peak Gifted & Talented Education

Gifted education is supported in the state through eleven regional systems funded by annual state categorical funds from the Colorado Department of Education. Gifted Education Regional Consultants (GERCs) serve as leaders and facilitators of technical assistance and professional development for successful implementation of the AU’s gifted program plan. Throughout the year, GERCs provide a layered continuum of supports to AUs that include: network meetings, regional trainings, assistance with state reports, guidance

throughout the AU’s Colorado Gifted Education Review (CGER) process and individualized AU support as requested. Additionally, regional grant funds are used to purchase educational resources for AUs, pay for an AU’s attendance at state conventions and support regional teacher, student and parent events.

For questions about gifted education or TIPP, please contact the Pikes Peak GERC, Diane Cassidy.

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of Learning**