West Central Community School

Policy & Procedures for Talented and Gifted Students

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Mission Statement

The mission of the West Central Community School is to engage every student through collaborative relationships, exceptional teaching, and personalized learning experiences that lead to confident graduates ready for success in their chosen paths. As part of this mission, West Central Community School District will systematically identify and support students with exceptional abilities or potential in advanced intellectual skills and specific academic areas, following the guidelines set by Iowa Code.

State of Iowa's Definition of Giftedness

In accordance with [Iowa Code section 257.44](#), the West Central School District recognizes talented and gifted students as:

those identified as possessing outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance. Gifted and talented children are children who require appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs beyond those provided by the regular school program.

Talented and gifted children include those children with demonstrated achievement or potential ability, or both in any of the following areas or in combination:
a) General intellectual ability
b) Creative thinking
c) Leadership ability
d) Visual and performing arts ability
e) Specific ability aptitude

West Central Community School Definition of Talented & Gifted

Our school defines talented and gifted students as those in grades K-12 who demonstrate, or have the potential to demonstrate, exceptional achievement when compared to their peers of the same age by:
a) Exhibiting high-performance capability in general intellectual ability
b) Excelling in one or more specific academic fields.

Identification Procedures & Processes for Talented & Gifted Services

A. IDENTIFICATION - K-12 students who show an academic need for gifted services based on district-established criteria and aligned with state requirements.

1. Criteria:
    *CogA*T- given at the end of second grade & fifth grade to all students (CogAT is a cognitive ability test that needs to be a score of 115 or higher for consideration).
    ISASP - given during third through eleventh grade (the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress needs to be at 95% +).
    FAST - given three times a year from kindergarten through the eleventh grade (Formative Assessment Systems for Teachers needs to be above two grade levels of benchmark scores).
    STAR - given three times a year, first through fifth grade (STudent Achievement Results needs to be scored in the 97th percentile).
    a. A triangulation of the data needs to be analyzed.

2. West Central Community School (WC)also looks for students who are consistently scoring advanced in one or more subjects, as well as their classroom performance. Teacher/parent observation input using the [Renzulli Scales](#) and portfolios are considered when identifying students.
    a. The identification process is aligned with the State of Iowa as it relies on multiple measures.

3. Identification assessments will be:
    a. provided in a language in which the student is most fluent.
    b. responsive to students' economic conditions, gender, developmental differences,
       handicapping conditions, and other factors to ensure fair assessment.
    c. given consistently across grade levels.

4. Students will be invited to participate in the Talented & Gifted program via a letter to their families. If the response is in the affirmative, a personal education plan (PEP) will be created to address the specific needs of the student so they can best meet their potential.

B. APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES - WC will offer students a variety of learning experiences that feature:
- advanced content
- differentiated in depth
- complexity

- scope through adjustments to content, process, or product.
- Students will have opportunities to work independently, with other gifted peers, and alongside general education peers.

1. **Personalized Education Plans (PEPs)** will be developed by the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) team and tailored for each child to provide a framework for differentiated learning strategies. These PEPs will be written in conjunction with parent and teacher input and housed online and available to teachers. PEPs will be reviewed for each student annually. All members of the MTSS (...list titles) will have received training for Talented & Gifted students.
   a. Each PEP will address student-specific needs and could include a blend of services outlined in *Table 1: Talented & Gifted Instructional Types.*

Table 1: Talented & Gifted Instructional Types

	Ability Grouping Within the Classroom		Subject Area Acceleration		Grade Level Acceleration
	Cognitive Functioning- is processing and achieving well above many others at grade level (has 3+ peers at the same level) Learning Strengths- learns well in most subjects at school Learning Preferences- prefers to work at fast pace Personal Characteristics- academically motivated Interests/Attitudes- likes academic work even outside of school Book Interest- reads above grade level (has 3+ peers at same reading level)		Cognitive Functioning- is performing well above age peers in ONE specific area(s) Learning Strengths- performing more than two grades ahead in specific area(s) Learning Preferences- enjoys variety of delivery methods and challenges in that area Personal Characteristics- self-directed, independent, and motivated to learn Interests/Attitudes- strong passion in subject area with little time to pursue it outside of school Book Interest- reads widely and at advanced levels especially in specific areas		Cognitive Functioning- needs to learn more in a year than curriculum provides-more than two grades ahead all areas Learning Strengths- shows strengths in every academic area Personal Characteristics- independent and persistent Interests/Attitudes- likes academic work and has wide-ranging interests Book Interest- often reads books beyond age and "appropriately developmental" level
	Compacted Curriculum		Independent Learning		Ability Grouping in a Pull-Out Model
	Cognitive functioning- is achieving at substantially higher level in some subjects than most classmates Learning strengths- pre-assessment shows actual levels of mastery in subject(s) Learning preferences- willing to work alone or in small group on self-instructional tasks		Cognitive Functioning- is processing, achieving well beyond grade level in specific academic/curricular area Learning Strengths- strong in planning/organizational skills Learning Preferences- a variety of preferences can be successful Personal Characteristics- self-motivated, independent, motivated in area		Cognitive Functioning- is processing and achieving well above most others at grade level (less than two peers in classroom at same level) Learning Strengths- learns easily in most subjects Learning Preferences- prefers to work at fast pace alone or in a group Personal Characteristics- academically motivated,

Personal Characteristics- motivated to learn, persistent, independent Interests/Attitudes- has high interest in area to be compacted, boredom with routine learning Book Interest- reads deeply	Interests/Attitudes- strong specific interest Book Interest- reads deeply in specific interest area	comfortable with changes in routine, self-accepting Interests- likes academic work, even outside of school Book interest- reads widely and at advanced levels (less than two peers at same level)

b. If a student is consistently performing two grade levels above their chronological grade level in ALL subject areas, multiple sources of data will be analyzed to determine whether grade acceleration is appropriate. Subject-level acceleration is determined by availability.
  i. In kindergarten through eighth grade, the *Iowa Acceleration Scale, Third Edition* or the *Integrated Acceleration System* from the Belin-Blank Center will be used to organize data and guide to determination of whether the student is a candidate for whole-grade acceleration. A positive opinion of the sending teacher, receiving teacher, parents/guardians, and student are all requirements for grade acceleration.
  ii. In high school, students can take courses that fulfill graduation requirements as well as meet their acceleration needs.
  iii. When students are nominated for acceleration, the WC Acceleration form will be used to assess eligibility, plan services, determine responsibilities, and establish criteria for success.

C. STAFF DEVELOPMENT- Equips educators to identify, understand, and support Talented and Gifted students.
  a. Training will happen at least once annually and will be provided by the Talented and Gifted teacher to other staff members.
    i. Lead staff who are responsible for servicing these students obtain at least the minimum hours of training for educating talented and gifted students as mandated by the state of Iowa, holding the teaching endorsement for Talented & Gifted.
    ii. Teaching staff who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted students receive a minimum of six hours annually of professional development in gifted education.
*Administrators & counselors who have authority for program decisions have a minimum of six hours of professional development that includes the nature and needs of gifted/talented students and program options.

D. Program Evaluation- WC will annually evaluate the Talented & Gifted program by surveying all stakeholders (students, parents/guardians, & teachers). The evaluation data will be communicated to stakeholders & the school board to be addressed on evaluation statistics and improvement plans.

  1. IDENTIFICATION-
    ● Universal screenings (CoGAT, ISASP, FAST, STAR)

- Multiple measures (results of universal screenings and recommendations)
2. APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES-
    - Classroom observations
    - Lesson plan reviews
    - Student surveys
3. STAFF DEVELOPMENT-
    - Copy of agendas
    - Staff sign-in sheet
    - Completed pre- and post-surveys
4. SURVEY FORMS-
    - Students
    - Parents
    - Teachers
    - Administrators

West Central Community School District

Nomination Form for the Talented and Gifted Program

The mission of the West Central Community School District is to engage every student through collaborative relationships, exceptional teaching, and personalized learning experiences that lead to confident graduates ready for success in their chosen paths. As part of this mission, the West Central Community School District will systematically identify and support students with exceptional abilities or potential in advanced intellectual skills and specific academic areas, in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Iowa Code.

Parents/guardians and teachers should complete this form if they believe their child is performing well above grade level or demonstrating exceptional strengths or talents and would like their child's performance and achievement to be reviewed. Examine Table 1 below, which lists characteristics that are typically associated with bright and gifted learners. Because not every child exhibits all the traits listed, it is expected that the list describes the child well, but not perfectly. Please mark the appropriate description on each line. Once finished marking, complete the rest of the form and return it to the Talented & Gifted teacher or the classroom teacher.

Table 1: Bright Student vs. Gifted Learner

Bright Student	Gifted Learner
Knows the answers	Asks the questions
Is interested	Is highly curious
Is attentive	Is mentally/physically involved
Has good ideas	Has wild and silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, tests well
Answers the questions	Discusses with details
In the top groups	Goes beyond top group
Listens with interest	Has strong feelings/ opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences
Complets assignments	Initiates projects
Is receptive to instruction	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates a new design
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Technincian	Inventor
Good at memorizations	Good at guessing
Enjoys straightforward instruction	Thrives on complexity
Is alert	Is keenly observant
Is pleased with own learning	Is highly self-critical

Student Name _____   Grade: _____

Person Nominating Student: _____

Relation to Student: _____   Date: _____

Reason for Nomination:

After the TAG teacher receives this form, he/she will consult with the MTSS team to analyze test and performance data to determine what additional assessments are warranted and if the criteria for formal identification have been met. The results of the identification process will be communicated to parents through a letter.

Nomination Forms

Teacher and parent forms to nominate a student for the talented gifted program will utilize the SCALES FOR RATING THE BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SUPERIOR STUDENTS (Renzulli Scales). Please contact the school to receive a form.

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TAG Eligibility Determination Form

Student being nominated: _____

Student nominated by:_____

Date: _____   Grade:_____

Achievement Assessments

     ISASP: ELA _____   FAST Reading _____

     ISASP: _____   FAST Math _____

     ISASP: Science _____

     STAR Reading _____

     STAR Math _____

Ability Assessments

     CogAT: Verbal _____

     CogAT: Quantitative _____

     CogAT: Nonverbal _____

Other tests and data to consider

_____

_____

Consideration of other areas of talents or giftedness, including but not limited to:

Creativity-Please specify:

_____

Leadership Ability- Please specify:

_____

Visual/Performing Arts-Please specify:

_____

The selection committee notes (suitability, potential obstacles and how to mitigate, type of services are appropriate, explanation if no services are planned):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

The way(s) in which the student's needs may be met will include:

Ability Grouping Within the Classroom _____   Subject Area Acceleration _____

Grade Level Acceleration _____   Curriculum Compacting _____

Independent Learning _____   Pull-Out Programming _____

Survey for Students *(A Google form will be shared with students in the spring.)*

Please answer the questions to the best of your abilities. Results will be tabulated, and no individual data will be shared.

- What types of activities or projects in the TAG program have been most interesting or challenging for you?
- How often do you feel the work you do in the TAG program challenges you to think in new or deeper ways?
- If often or sometimes, what work challenged you?
- What are some skills you have gained through your TAG experiences (for example- problem-solving, creative thinking, leadership)?
- Are you given opportunities to work on topics or projects that match your personal interests or strengths?
- How do your regular classroom teachers support your academic needs as a gifted student?
- Are you provided with opportunities to explore advanced content or learn at a faster pace in your regular classroom?
- What strategies have your teachers used that have been helpful for you as a gifted learner?
- How comfortable do you feel sharing your ideas and abilities with your peers in TAG or in your regular classroom?
- Do you feel the TAG program helps you connect with other students who share your interests or abilities?
- If yes, how has the program helped you connect with others? If no, what could be done differently to increase connections?
- What social or emotional challenges, if any, have you experienced as a gifted student?
- What do you enjoy most about being part of the TAG program?
- What changes or improvements would make the TAG program better for students like you?
- If you could design a project, class, or experience for gifted students, what would it be?
- Additional comments:

Survey for Parents *(A Google form will be shared with parents in the spring.)*

Please answer these questions to the best of your ability. Data will be tabulated, and no individual data will be shared.

- How well do you understand the process used to identify students for the TAG program?
- Were you provided clear information about why your child was identified for the TAG program?
- If your answer was yes, with what information were you provided?
- Do you feel that the identification process is fair and inclusive?
- How satisfied are you with the educational opportunities your child receives through the TAG program?
- In what ways has the TAG program supported your child's strengths or interests?
- How does the school communicate with you about your child's progress in the TAG program? Is it satisfactory?
- Are you satisfied with the level of enrichment, acceleration, or other advanced learning opportunities?
- Do you have suggestions for enrichment, acceleration, or other advanced opportunities?
- Does the TAG program support your child's social and emotional needs?
- Do you have suggestions to improve the social and/or emotional support?
- What do you see as the greatest strengths of the TAG program?
- What concerns or challenges have you encountered with the TAG program?
- What additional support, resources, or opportunities would you like to see offered for your child through the TAG program?
- How can the school better partner with parents to support gifted students?
- Additional comments:

Survey for Teachers *(A Google form will be shared with teachers in the spring.)*

Please answer the questions to the best of your abilities. Results will be tabulated, and no individual data will be shared.

- How well do you believe the TAG program is meeting the academic needs of the students?
- If you answered somewhat, not well, or not all- what aspects need to be changed in order to meet the academic needs of the students?
- How well do you believe the TAG program is meeting the academic needs of the students?
- If you answered somewhat, not well, or not all- what aspects need to be changed in order to meet the SEL needs of the students?
- Are there aspects of the TAG program that are working well?
- Are there aspects of the TAG program that need improvement?
- Do you believe that the identification process that the school has in place is fair and equitable?
- If you answered disagree or strongly disagree, what are the improvements that can be made in order to make the identification of students fair and equitable?
- Do you feel that you have the resources needed to differentiate instruction for gifted students?
- If you answered somewhat or no, what resources do you feel are needed?
- Which of the following instructional strategies do you use?
- Do you feel that you have had sufficient training in order to meet the needs of advanced students?
- If you answered somewhat or no, in what areas would you want more training?
- In what other areas would you like to see professional development?
- Additional comments:

Survey for Administration *(A Google form will be shared with administration in the spring.)*

Please answer the questions to the best of your abilities. Results will be tabulated, and no individual data will be shared.

- How well do you understand the district's criteria for identifying talented and gifted students?
- How effectively does the TAG program align with the district's overall educational goals?
- How would you rate the level of collaboration between TAG staff and general education teachers in your school?
- What resources (e.g., materials, technology, instructional strategies) are available to teachers to support gifted students in their classrooms?
- What additional resources or support would improve your school's ability to meet the needs of gifted students?
- What specific areas of gifted education training do you believe your staff needs most?
- How well do you believe the TAG program in your school is meeting the academic needs of gifted students?
- How well do you believe the TAG program in your school is meeting the social-emotional needs of gifted students?
- What challenges do you face in implementing or improving TAG services in your building?
- What strategies or improvements would you recommend to strengthen the TAG program in your school?
- Additional comments: