

Policy Number:

342.3

Title:

Gifted and Talented Program

Upon recommendation of the District Administrator, the School Board shall employ or, if already employed, designate the licensed employee who is assigned to coordinate the District's gifted and talented program (the "Coordinator"). The Coordinator shall have primary responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day implementation and the ongoing development, evaluation, and revision of the District's plan for gifted education for students in all grades, and he/she shall be under the supervision of the Director of Student Services.

The Coordinator shall not implement substantive amendments to changes in the District's plan for gifted education without first obtaining the approval of the District Administrator. If the District Administrator determines that a proposed change to the District's plan fundamentally alters the nature of the District's program for gifted education, the District Administrator shall present the proposed change to the Board for approval prior to implementation. Further, if any such change to the plan necessitates an amendment to an approved District budget (or to the Board's proposed budget if the budget for the school year in question has not yet been formally adopted), then the administration shall obtain advance Board approval of the change to the plan, and the related budget amendment(s).

Annually following the conclusion of each school year, or at such other times as may be directed by the District Administrator or the Board, the Coordinator shall prepare a written report concerning the status of the District's program and plan for gifted education. In connection with this report, the Coordinator shall assess the extent to which the District's identification and referral process for gifted education could be modified to be more responsive to students within different demographic subgroups. This assessment shall begin with an initial determination as to whether particular demographic subgroups are numerically under-represented, or overrepresented, within the program relative to the total student population. While such a determination is not conclusive as to causation or meaning, it is an important place to start the analysis.

The following are the Board's expectations for the District's program and plan for gifted education:

1. Notwithstanding the designation of a specific Coordinator, all licensed employees have some responsibilities with respect to gifted and talented education. All such employees are expected to work collaboratively to identify and meet student needs and to implement and improve the District's program for gifted education.
2. The plan shall include expressly stated goals that are aligned with state law, administrative rule, professional standards, research, and effective practice.
3. The plan and program shall provide for the identification and, as needed, further assessment or evaluation of students who may require educational programming, services, or activities based on identified exceptionalities in specific academic areas or in the other categories/capabilities that are addressed in the plan.

4. The identification and referral process within the plan and program shall allow for and encourage identification and referral based on multiple measures and multiple sources of information.

5. The plan and program shall recognize that giftedness can emerge or be first identified at different ages; and, therefore, the plan or program shall not preclude initial identification based solely on a student's age or grade.

6. Where the District determines that the general curriculum is not educationally appropriate for the student, the primary focus should be on providing the student with different curriculum, assignments, services, activities, or opportunities that are intended to facilitate the student's further growth and development in light of the student's identified exceptionalities and his/her educational needs. Secondly, the District may consider the extent to which programming modifications could be structured to meet other needs of the student (e.g., needs related to social and emotional development). The purpose of the program for gifted education is not to simply assign the student more work to complete in addition to the work that is already expected of other students.

7. The plan and program shall provide an opportunity for parental participation in the identification and referral process, and in determining any individualized programming for the student.

In meeting its obligation to provide gifted education, the District is required and challenged to identify and provide programming for students for whom there is demonstrated evidence of extraordinary capabilities and for whom some aspect(s) of the District's standard curriculum and regular programs may be inappropriate. At the same time, it is the Board's expectation that the District's standard curriculum and educational programs will be sufficiently adaptable, and cover a sufficiently wide span of rigor, such that they will be appropriate for, and adequately challenge, many students who are very intelligent, creative, hard-working, and resourceful, as well as many students who consistently demonstrate above-average performance. This expectation for the standard curriculum is aligned with the Board's foundational belief that all students have (1) a tremendous aptitude and capacity to learn; (2) valuable talents, skills, and abilities that should be nurtured and celebrated; and (3) unique educational needs and interests. Keeping this foundational belief in mind, the District will consider and may implement individualized curricular and program modifications or other individualized interventions for any student.

LEGAL REF: Wisconsin Statutes Section 115.997(5)(b), Section 118.15(1)(d), Section 121.02(1)(t)

Policy Adopted: March 21, 2016