

CUTTER MORNING STAR SCHOOL DISTRICT

GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY HANDBOOK

RULES AND REGULATIONS PROGRAM APPROVAL STANDARDS



ACADEMIC AND CREATIVE EDUCATIONAL (ACE) PROGRAM

**CUTTER MORNING STAR
GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

4.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A key element in any successful program for students is the continuing communication and mutual support among the school staff, and administration, the parents, the students, and the community. This can be accomplished by having an active parent group and annual parent meetings. To enhance our curricula, parents and community members are solicited as mentors, coaches, resources, and audiences for student product/projects presentations and academic competitions. The Cutter Morning Star School District Gifted and Talented Educational Program are committed to promoting parent and community communication and involvement.

4.01

The parents and community are informed about the GT program and activities through media, meetings, and the newsletter, *Our "EAGLES" Soar!* Evidence of information to interested parties is collected and filed.

4.02

Parents and community members are notified of the annual district meeting, as well as building level meetings. This gives the parents/community members the opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, and gain information about our program. Meeting agendas will be kept on file.

4.03

The Gifted and Talented Education Advisory Council is comprised of a representative from the community, a parent, a student, a building administrator, the GT Coordinator/Teacher, and a regular classroom teacher. The advisory council is an effective tool in helping the program service the needs of gifted students. The coordinator will keep on file the list of members of said advisory committee, sign-ins, and the minutes from each meeting. Members will serve for two years on a rotating basis. The Council will meet each semester and assist in compiling Program Evaluation that leads to program improvement.

5.00 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

5.01

The School District will provide ongoing and continuous opportunities for growth in the area of Gifted and Talented by organizing a flexible and varying program to meet the individual needs of the school personnel. Areas of training appropriate for the entire school staff are provided as needed: (1) characteristics and needs; (2) identification procedures; (3) teaching strategies; (4) creativity; (5) utilization of community resources; and (6) program evaluation.

The GT Coordinator will be responsible for staff development through formal sessions, faculty meetings, handouts, and professional literature. The coordinator will also make arrangements for consultant services and provide information about regional and state workshops and conferences. Training for the teacher of the gifted will be provided as needed.

Less formal staff development will be encouraged by adding books and journals on gifted education to the school's professional library; placing reprints of pertinent articles in teacher boxes; presenting short, specific classroom demonstrations and teaching techniques at regular building level faculty meetings as needed; and sharing gifted students' projects and accomplishments with all staff.

Members of the Identification committee shall be instructed on the following: (1) instruments used in the identification procedures; (2) shall receive a packet on the responsibilities of the committee; and (3) identification procedures will be explained at committee meetings.

5.02

The GT Coordinator and GT Teacher will attend yearly the following: regional, state (AGATE) and national (NAGC) workshops and conferences that provide staff development opportunities as pertinent workshops and programs through the school year in an on-going process. The GT Coordinator and GT Teacher shall attend workshops focusing on teaching strategies, creativity, social/emotional needs, curriculum differentiation and program evaluation that can be communicated with other program coordinators to assess the program.

The staff will be encouraged to attend staff development sessions provided by the Dawson Educational cooperative, which are conducted by professionals with special training in gifted education.

Opportunities to increase knowledge of the education of gifted and talented students will be provided for school board members, school and district administrators, teachers

and support staff on a continuing and regular basis. The GT Coordinator will inform the administrator of activities and procedures of the GT program as needed. Documentation of staff development kept on file will include certificates of attendance, rosters, and programs.

All teachers teaching gifted students in secondary content, Pre- AP strategies in classes and teachers teaching AP classes will have the required training by the College Board Advanced Placement workshops, participate in an Additional Licensure Plan (ALP) Process or core teachers must attend the one day workshop on "Teaching the Gifted in Secondary Content," before each school year. AP teachers will have successfully completed the AP course audit process yearly.

6.0 PERSONNEL

6.01

Personnel teaching the homogenously grouped identified students must hold current Arkansas teaching certification with an add-on endorsement for gifted education, and meet performance standards as set by the state of Arkansas. The GT Coordinator will keep all certificates and transcripts on file.

6.02

The GT Coordinator/Administrator must hold current Arkansas teaching certification with an add-on endorsement for gifted education, and meet performance standards as set by the state of Arkansas. If the GT Coordinator is also serving as the GT Administrator, the GT Administrator will have an add-on license in educational administration. The GT teacher of the gifted and talented must hold a current Arkansas teaching certificate and must have completed eighteen graduate hours in the field of gifted education. If the teacher is hired lacking 18 hours, that teacher will take six hours each year in order to meet program approval and funding standards (due in 3 years).

6.03

The selection of administrators/coordinators/teachers of the gifted is conducted in accordance with Cutter Morning Star Employment Policies and Practices. Qualities such as ability to be flexible of time, pace, materials, instructional patterns are considered. They should be accepting and supportive of diverse populations and ideas and be sensitive to the uniqueness of each gifted child.

6.04 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

GT Coordinator/Administrator

The GT Coordinator/Administrator is responsible for planning and administering the GT Educational Program in consultation with teachers, administrators, and parents. These duties include the following:

- A. Coordinate the development, implementation, and expansion of a program for gifted students with Superintendent.
- B. Coordinate with principals to implement a differentiated curriculum, Pre-AP and AP classes and in planning in-service training for staff.
- C. Prepare materials and develop curriculum for teaching the gifted
- D. Supervising testing and evaluation for gifted students
- E. Testing and evaluation processes for the gifted program
- F. Facilitating special projects and events with the gifted program
- G. Program documentation
- H. Interpret the goals and objectives of the program to school personnel, parents and the community; supervising all communication to stakeholders.
- I. Maintain a permanent inventory of equipment and supplies purchased for gifted education.
- J. Assist in establishing and implementing procedures to identify and place eligible students in the GT program.
- K. Assist in scheduling and coordinating operational mechanics of the program.
- L. Supervising mentor ships and other out-of-school learning experiences
- M. Chair, organize, and guide GT Advisory Council & Identification meetings
- N. Provide aid and advice through classroom visits, development or revision of curriculum, course guides and handbooks, and providing needed supplementary materials.
- O. Conducting Staff Development regarding gifted and talented education
- P. Give assistance in the planning and conducting of parent orientation meetings
- Q. Assume responsibility for compliance with the requirements of the Arkansas Department of Education; prepare the Annual GT Program Approval Report
- R. Managing the Cutter Morning Star Gifted and Talented budget with regards to staff development, purchased and contracted services, purchased equipment/supplies/materials, and miscellaneous project and contest cost.
- S. Request needed supplies and materials to assure completion of established goals and objectives
- T. Attend professional meetings (regional, state, and national) and in-service workshops; Assume responsibility for continuing own professional growth.

6.04 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

GT Teacher

The GT teacher(s) at Cutter Morning Star are responsible for duties that include the following:

- A. Plan with building principal and GT Coordinator a program to meet the individual needs of GT students.
- B. Whole group enrichment for grades K-3 and portfolio records
- C. Testing students for identification grades 4-12
- D. Direct instruction to identified students grades 4-12
- E. Record maintenance of all identified GT students
- F. Guide the learning process toward the achievement of established goals and objectives.
- G. Maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and employ instructional strategies appropriate to the characteristics, needs, interests and abilities of identified gifted students.
- H. Serve as a facilitator to bring resources, community mentors, and students together; work with parents, administrators and teachers.
- I. Use a variety of processes to evaluate the program and student progress with predetermined criteria; assisting in program documentation.
- J. Attend professional meetings and in-service workshops
- K. Assist in preparing information to acquaint parents and others with activities of the GT program; assisting in the communication process.
- L. Use a variety of teaching strategies that effectively incorporate higher conceptual levels in the areas of content, process development, product development, and affective skills.
- M. Encourage group discussion, independent thinking, and self-directed learning techniques.
- N. Provide opportunity and instruction in creative thinking development e.g. fluent, flexible, original, and elaborate thinking; risk taking, curiosity, imagination, alternative approaches; sponsor special projects and events.
- O. Assist other classroom teachers by the sharing of ideas and materials, demonstrating teaching techniques appropriate for the gifted, and sharing information on the nature and needs of the gifted; documentation of curriculum delivery.
- P. Assist in all stages of the identification process, evaluation process, and program expansion and/or modification.
- Q. Keep abreast of current research and new development related to the field of gifted education.

Administrators/coordinators of the gifted will be provided regularly scheduled times for administrative duties other than direct services to identified students. A copy of all schedules will be kept on file by the coordinator.

7.00 IDENTIFICATION

7.01

The process for identifying students has several stages. Announcements are made throughout the school district in each building, through newsletters/news paper and through the district web site. School personnel/teachers/parents/ and students are provided with an identification process including characteristics of the gifted. Nomination forms can be obtained from the principal's office in the respective buildings in the district or from the GT Coordinator. Nominations are an on-going yearly process.

Data collection is from a variety of sources. Nominations are accepted from teachers/school personnel/parents/ and students. Data collection may include current standardized test scores, the Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test (NNAT), SAGES 2 Test, grade point average, teacher/parent checklist/nomination form, enrichment portfolio evaluation, Williams Test of Divergent Thinking and Feeling Test (CAPS), and the Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI).

All current data is used to determine the placement of a child according to the appropriate program options.

7.02

Identification procedures are clearly stated and disseminated to teachers in grades K-12.

7.03

After data is collected and compiled, a selection committee of 5 educators (Building principal, counselor, two classroom teachers, and the GT Coordinator) collects and analyzes data, maintains appropriate records, and makes professional decisions on placement of students. The GT Coordinator chairs the committee.

7.04

The identification process yields information obtained through a variety of procedures from multiple independent sources (at least two objective measures/at least two subjective measures). The list of instruments and procedures used in the identification

process may include current standardized test scores, the Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test (NNAT), SAGES 2 Test, grade point average, teacher/parent checklist/nomination form, enrichment portfolio evaluation, Williams Test of Divergent Thinking and Feeling Test (CAPS), and the Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI).

7.05

The placement committee uses a blind-screening process. Student placement decisions are based on multiple criteria. No single criterion or cut-off score is used to include or exclude a student. Transfer students, after confirmation of participation and test data from their previous school, will be evaluated and considered for participation, but not automatically placed until after the identification committee has reviewed the student records. If the committee does not have enough data or the student is transferring from out of state the student will be re-tested before being placed into the CMS GT Program.

7.06

It is the objective of the Cutter Morning Star School District to insure that the gifted and talented identification procedures are non-discriminatory with respect to race, culture or economic background, religion, national origin, sex, or handicapping condition. Identification procedures are in place to insure a level entrance to the gifted program.

7.07

After the decision of the selection committee is made, parents, teachers, students, and school personnel are notified in writing of the selection results.

7.08

Parental involvement is a vital part of the identification process. Parent permission is required for individual testing. Parents receive written notification of placement results. Written permission for a student's participation is required which may include field trip forms, and photography/media forms. Procedures for Appeal of Placement include conference with program coordinator, parents, and building administrator/counselor if deemed necessary. In the event a parent wants to appeal the Identification Committee's decision concerning his/her child the following procedures will be followed: (A) Procedures for filing appeals: (1) Appeals by a parent should be in writing and submitted to the Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator. (2) This appeal should be dated and signed. And (B) Procedures for handling appeals: (1) an exit policy is in place and the exit procedure will be followed. A student voluntarily exiting the program may re-enter within two years. After two years, the student must go through formal identification again. All appropriate parties will sign off on the exit papers.

7.09

Identification of gifted and talented students is an on-going process extending through grades 12. Review of students' placement is annually. If the review results indicate the program is not meeting the needs of the student, a conference between the GT

Coordinator and the parent will be conducted to discuss the student's removal from the program or a semester academic probation. Records of all placement decisions will be kept in files of the Gifted and Talented Program. Records are kept for a minimum of five years or for as long as needed for educational purposes.

8.00 PROGRAM OPTIONS

Gifted children are those of high potential or ability whose learning characteristics and educational needs require qualitatively differentiated educational experience and/or services. Possession of these talents and gifts, or the potential for their development, will be evidenced through an interaction of above average intellectual 1) intellectual ability, 2) and task commitment and/or motivation, and 3) creative ability. They have needs for differing amounts of homogenous grouping, and at various stages of development their interests differ. No single program option can ever meet all the needs of all gifted children. Direct program services will meet for a total of 150 minutes per week during the regular school day.

The Cutter Morning Star GT Program currently meets the needs of the gifted population through the following program options:

- K-3 - Whole Group Enrichment – 30 minutes
- 4-6 - Pull-out Program – 150 minutes
- 7-12 - Pre-AP, AP Classes, College/Voc-tech
Academic seminars/special projects/teams

8.01

The GT Program is systematically developed, with long-range goals that are coordinated to guide the development of gifted students from the time they are identified through graduation from high school. Our goals are as follows: (1) To expose students to areas of study beyond those prescribed in the regular classroom, especially in the areas of higher cognitive skills, decision making, critical and creative thinking skills, and in-depth research and inquiry into areas of interest, (2) To provide a learning environment which promotes intellectual challenges at a rate appropriate for each individual child and to whatever depth and extent of desire of the individual, (3) To provide the context in which the student can develop the attitudes and skills necessary to interact acceptably and comfortably with others, (4) To encourage the student to develop a positive self-concept and to develop responsibility for self and a changing society, and (5) To provide the students with the opportunity to interact with other gifted and talented students and resource people. Evidence is kept on file.

8.02

A table of organization/district hierarchy is developed which clearly delineates roles, responsibilities and coordination procedures. A copy of the table of organization is on file.

8.03

Identified students' placement in program options is based on their abilities, needs and interests, and resources of the district. Evidence of student assessment data utilized to determine placement in program options as indicated on profile sheet and kept on file. Refer to 8.0 for the outline of program options.

8.04

Administrative arrangements are used which promote interaction among gifted students and both their intellectual and chronological peers. A copy of the master scheduled by campus/building indicating secondary options with grade levels noted are kept on file.

8.05

A minimum of 150 minutes a week direct instruction must be provided during the regular or school day. A copy of the program schedule is on file.

9.00 CURRICULUM

9.01

The Cutter Morning Star ACE Program follows a curriculum that can extend or replace the regular curriculum based on what is appropriate with the child's specific needs in mind and consist of a continuum of differentiated curricular options, instructional approaches, and resource materials. The curriculum will be broad in scope and multi-disciplinary in nature. The following process skills will be developed: critical and creative thinking, development of research skills of acquiring, interpreting, reporting and communicating information, product development, affective skills, and develop technology skills. Evidence is furnished in a written curriculum authored by educators of the gifted in the Dawson Cooperative District and documented with the Gifted Curriculum Matrix.

9.02

The ACE Program Curriculum is differentiated in content, process, and/or product. Evidence is furnished in the written curriculum, differentiated pacing guides, and products which will allow individual student growth.

9.03

The ACE Program Curriculum has a designed scope and sequence to assure continuity. The GT Scope and Sequence spans grades K-12 and addresses cognitive and affective needs of the gifted students; with a Gifted Curriculum Matrix for documentation.

10.0 EVALUATION

The purpose of program evaluation is to provide accurate, timely, and relevant information to decision-makers for improving program options offered gifted students. The program evaluation is to provide information so that modifications and adjustments can be made in the program and to examine overall program effectiveness. The evaluation plan will contain procedures for assessment in both program options and student progress.

10.01-10.03

The GT Program Evaluation plan includes questionnaires that will be evaluated annually and provide data based on program objectives and on the following components of the program: identification, program options, program goals and objectives, curriculum, community involvement, program expenditures, and the evaluation process/plan. Along with these questionnaires workshop evaluations will also be used to evaluate Staff Development.

Information collected through questionnaires will be disseminated and used to make decision about the GT Program. From this report, the district is able to determine if the goals and objectives of the program are being achieved; if students are being effectively served; and the kinds of program modifications that should be made.

10.04

The following evaluation instruments will be used in the evaluation process:

- 1) Advisory Council Focus Group
- 2) Student Questionnaire
- 3) Parent Questionnaire
- 4) Teacher K-12 Questionnaire
- 5) Administrator/Principal/Counselor/Board Member Questionnaire

10.05

The information from each instrument will be tabulated and analyzed by the GT Coordinator. A narrative showing the strengths and weaknesses of the gifted program will be written and a summary of the report will be available to anyone requesting this information. Modifications that are to be implemented will be addressed annually.

10.06 – 10.07

Student evaluation will consist of the following: Student Annual Assessment form from regular classroom teacher focusing on student progress with attention to mastery of content/self growth and student self-evaluation surveys to show perceived growth skills (research, independent learning, creative and critical thinking) as well as data analysis. Students who are participating in the gifted program will have student transcripts and permanent records as well as advanced content courses documented and student evaluation results will be reported to parents.