

Elementary Gifted Services

Overview of Curricular Domains & Goal Areas

Purpose

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education has defined the purpose of its regulations governing special education for gifted students (22 PA Code Chapter 16) as follows:

- a) This chapter specifies how the Commonwealth will meet its obligations to suspected and identified gifted students who require gifted education to reach their potential. It is the intent of the Board that gifted students are provided with quality gifted education services and programs.
- b) The Commonwealth, through the Dept. of Education, will provide general supervision of services and programs provided under this chapter.
- c) The Department will disseminate information about and promote the use of promising practices and innovative programs to meet the needs of gifted students.
- d) To provide services and programs efficiently, the Commonwealth will delegate operational responsibility to its school districts. Each school district shall, by directed service or through arrangement with other agencies, provide the following:
 - a. Services and programs planned, developed and operated for the identification and evaluation of each gifted student.
 - b. Gifted education for each gifted student which is based on the unique needs of the student, not solely on the student's classification.
 - c. Gifted education for gifted students which enables them to participate in acceleration or enrichment, or both, as appropriate, and to receive services according to their intellectual and academic abilities and needs.

Introduction to Elementary Gifted Services

WSSD Elementary Education programs follow guidelines in meeting the requirements of the State Board's regulations set forth at 22 Pa. Code Chapter 16 - Special Education for Gifted Students. The district recognizes that gifted students are considered to be "children with exceptionalities" under the Public School Code of 1949 and in need of specially designed instruction.

This overview reflects Wallingford- Swarthmore's continuing commitment to providing educational services appropriate for mentally gifted students that are consistent with their individual needs, outstanding abilities and potential for performing at high levels of accomplishment. Services for gifted students fit into the array of well-established special learning programs and opportunities available for *all* students attending district schools. Gifted services reflect a strategic combination of these special programs, as well as individually created opportunities for learning that are designed specifically to meet the needs of gifted students through the GIEP process.

Goal

The goal of WSSD's Gifted Education Services is to provide enriched learning experiences for gifted students that reflect individual differences, equal educational opportunity and desire for the optimal development of each child.

Gifted Education Services

Embedded in the Core Curriculum

Teachers at all grade levels differentiate instruction using guided reading, flexible grouping, and tiered assignments and a variety of other differentiation techniques. The Gifted Education Coordinator works with the GIEP team to design the appropriate program for each gifted students. The Gifted Education Coordinator works with the classroom teacher to monitor the appropriate implementation of these strategies within the general education classroom for students with GIEPS.

Curriculum Extensions

Curriculum extensions allow students to go beyond concepts taught in the general education curriculum and challenge students to look at key concepts from a variety of perspectives. Extensions might include more advanced mathematics problems, science and technology applications, higher level vocabulary instruction or analysis of literature from a historical perspective or from the perspective of a specific subgroup of people. These extensions may be part of classroom differentiation or part of additional learning experiences organized or directed by the Coordinator of Gifted Education.

Classroom Enrichment

Math The goal of the elementary math program is to meet the needs of students through a leveled grouping model with differentiation, compacting, and clustering in the regular classroom. Resources, consult, and collaboration may be provided by the coordinator for gifted education to support the advanced level math teacher with instructional design and planning. Students at the top of the class (grade) in math will be grouped and experience curriculum compacting in order to provide content acceleration and have greater opportunity for advanced problem-solving and enrichment within any given unit. By the end of the year, all students will have completed the grade level curriculum, but the advanced students will have had more extensive opportunities to develop higher-level problem-solving skills that support continued advancement and eligibility for future acceleration opportunities. Students in the advanced class may also cover some material not typically covered as part of the grade level program. Differentiation for individual students may still occur within the highest level grouping to meet individual needs for enrichment. Students with GIEPs may be clustered to provide opportunities to work together on advanced topics.

Gifted Teacher Support

In-class mathematics enrichment provided by the regular education teacher with support from the gifted support teacher may include pretesting of units, compacting, richer, deeper activities that involve complexity and depth in mathematical thinking.

Enrichment provided as pull-out, push-in, or differentiation during a limited number of math periods may include advanced grade level topics. This design should ensure that the child is not missing in-class instruction that may be needed. The program might include PA Math League, Math Forum, Math Olympiad or other highly challenging pull-out materials for grades 3-5.

Enrichment in advanced math topics during pull-out or push-in sessions with the gifted education coordinator may include advancement to the next grade level topics or to the next grade level for math instruction during the math instruction time.

Classroom Enrichment

Language Arts The language arts program includes access for all students to common themes and essential questions. Students reading at an advanced level may work with selections at a higher reading level than grade level peers. The goal of text selection will be to provide access to developmentally appropriate texts that achieve a balance of text complexity and conceptual complexity. Students are expected to explore and discuss complex themes, make connections across multiple texts, and develop text-based arguments to support opinions. Students will be challenged to develop higher level thinking and writing skills. Enrichment experiences will provide students with opportunities to create presentations and conduct research that engages student interest, utilizes creative skills, and fosters intellectual curiosity and independent application of learning skills. Students will have opportunities for independent and collaborative work that supports individual intellectual development as well as social development.

Support Tiers

In-class language arts enrichment provided by the regular education teacher may include pretesting of units, differentiated materials, compacting, providing richer, deeper activities that involve complexity and depth in critical thinking.

Enrichment provided as pull-out, push-in, or differentiation during a limited number of reading or writing periods may include advanced grade level topics. Teachers may use advanced grade level standards to expose students to higher level thinking and comprehension. This design should ensure that the child is not missing in-class instruction that may be needed. The program might include differentiated materials or higher level thinking extensions to grade level materials.

Some independent individualized projects may be designed to support specific areas of interest and intellectual development. Students may work under the guidance of the classroom teacher and Gifted Coordinator. Projects will allow enrichment in advanced areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and will promote independent learning and application of higher level skills. Projects may be cross-curricular or thematic, promoting connections in reading, writing and thinking across content areas, including social studies and science.