

Gifted Program Overview & Curriculum Handbook



Concordia R2 Schools

204 SW 11th St.

Concordia, MO 64020

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2023 - 2024

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Introduction:

Rationale for Gifted Program

Recognition of the special needs of gifted students has a longstanding tradition in Missouri. Over a quarter of a century ago, the General Assembly passed legislation that recognized the needs of gifted students and authorized financial support for gifted programs. The legislation stated, “School districts are expected to provide programs of instruction suitable for the full range of student ability, from handicapped and disadvantaged learners through those who are academically advanced.”

More recent acknowledgement of the importance of addressing gifted students’ learning needs is found in the Standards of the Missouri School Improvement Plan, which states, “Each district identifies gifted and talented students at all levels and provides them differentiated instruction suitable for their levels of intellectual, physical, and social maturity.”

Our district’s philosophy focuses on helping every child learn and develop his or her individual potential. For students who come to school with advanced knowledge and unusual learning capacity, we aim to provide a curriculum that is differentiated and matched to students' unique learning characteristics. Those characteristics include the capacity to handle content at an advanced level and pace, the ability to explore areas in significant depth, the tendency to ask and struggle with difficult questions, and the desire to use leadership abilities to make a difference in the world.

Curriculum for gifted students is specifically designed to challenge academically advanced learners and provide experiences that require critical thinking, problem-solving, independent study skills, communication, and persistence in the face of challenges. When engaged in high quality gifted services, students will develop their unique abilities, maintain their passion for learning, and have the opportunity to contribute to the strength and spirit of our schools, district and community.

Concordia R-2 Rationale

The gifted student possesses extraordinary abilities to think creatively and critically, and his or her cognitive and affective needs can best be met in a differentiated academic environment. The gifted classroom allows for the development of the unique potential of each student by providing challenge and acceleration.

Instructional Data

1. Gifted Education Contact:
 - a. Staci Hon - Gifted Teacher; shon@concordia.k12.mo.us
 - b. Theresa Christian -Superintendent; tchristian@concordia.k12.mo.us

2. Gifted Instructional Delivery Methods
 - a. CES: Grades K-6: Gifted Resource Room
 - i. Students will be excused from their regular classroom activities once a week to receive differentiated lessons and activities that promote communication, research, critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and other higher-order thinking skills.
 - b. CHS: Grades 7-12: Gifted Resource Teacher
 - i. Resources and assistance will be provided to students (and staff) in various ways. Meetings and check-ins will be held to provide various opportunities and resources that will promote communication, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and higher-order thinking skills.

Goals for Graduates

As a result of offering differentiated curriculum and personalized support, gifted students will have the opportunity to achieve district goals at the level commensurate with their talent. They will also be challenged to apply their knowledge and skills in complex and advanced ways so that they can continue to develop academically. These goals provide students with support and structure for

finding challenges in the school environment while encouraging students to achieve their maximum potential. Attaining these standards ensures that students will graduate from Concordia R2 District having a solid foundation of knowledge, skills, and competencies essential to lead productive and fulfilling lives as they continue their education, enter the workforce, and assume their civic responsibilities.

Program Goals

Goals to address in the gifted program's performance areas will include:

Students will:

1. acquire the knowledge and skills to gather, analyze, and apply information and ideas,
2. acquire the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom,
3. acquire the knowledge and skills to recognize and solve problems,
4. acquire the knowledge and skills to make decisions and act as responsible members of society.

Goals to address in the content areas:

Students will:

1. acquire a solid foundation in the disciplines of communication arts, mathematics, science, and social studies,
2. operate at advanced levels within these disciplines,
3. apply knowledge of disciplines to produce work that reflects individuality and creativity and is advanced in relation to other students of similar age and experience.

In the Concordia R2 School District, gifted students have the opportunity to achieve district goals at the level commensurate with their talent. Students are also challenged to apply their knowledge and skills in complex and advanced ways so that they can continue to develop academically. The overall goals of the gifted program are to:

- provide challenging learning experiences beyond the regular curriculum
- develop and promote high level thinking and problem solving skills

- develop creative expression
- provide opportunities to develop self-awareness, autonomy, and self-direction
- provide opportunities for sharing and exchanging ideas in a supportive environment

Evaluation and Revision Process

Evaluation of the gifted program and its curriculum is an on-going process. An evaluation committee collects and reviews information to determine program strengths and areas for improvement. Surveys are used to obtain feedback from parents, students, and/or staff regarding the program's effectiveness. In addition, district data on student achievement is analyzed, student and staff accomplishments are noted, and developments in gifted and general education are reviewed to help determine recommendations for gifted program enhancements.

Identification Procedures

The following procedures are to be followed when considering a student for placement in the Concordia R-2 Gifted Program. The placement process is two fold, including a screening phase and an identification phase.

Screening

- Teachers in the gifted program will annually screen NWEA test scores for students who may be eligible for placement. (Other screening instruments may be used upon need)
- A screening meeting consisting of a gifted teacher, special services director or administrator, and grade level classroom teacher(s) will take place for each student that is referred.
- The following criteria must be met by a student for further evaluation for the gifted program:
 1. 90th percentile or above in 2 out of 3 core areas on NWEA

2. Consensus of committee that student should be evaluated further

*Screening Instruments: The tools used to screen for potential gifted qualifications include, but are not limited to, NWEA, MAP, EOC, and Successmaker.

Identification

- Students must meet the following criteria for placement into the Concordia R-2 Gifted Program:
 - Full Scale IQ Score of 125 or higher on one of the following:
WISC-III, Leiter, Stanford-Binet, or Toni III (other populations 120)
 - Team recommendation of need

Placement

Once all evaluation instruments have been completed, the screening and identification committee will meet again to evaluate results and determine if a student is eligible for placement.

Students must meet 2 out of 3 of the Evaluation Instruments for identification and placement into the program.

The 3 Evaluation Instruments are:

- **NWEA (or other) scores**
- **Full-scale IQ score of 125 or higher (required)**
- **Team recommendation of need.**

Referrals

Parents, classroom teachers, or another school official can refer a student for placement in the gifted program. Referral can occur any time during the school year.

If a student has previously been referred/ tested for the gifted program without admittance, a new referral can be started one year after the previous IQ test date.

Curriculum & Objectives

Curriculum Alignment

Curriculum offered to gifted students needs to be developmental, with skills introduced at the appropriate level for each student. At any grade level, the focus of gifted curriculum alignment is on skills that can be applied to all content areas and to success in later life. Examples of such process skills are information gathering and processing, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, reasoning, decision-making, and the ability to communicate effectively. These performance skills are consistent with the Missouri Learning Standards. Gifted students can be expected to learn and apply these skills at an earlier age and at a more advanced level than their grade-level peers.

Performance Skills Objectives

The gifted program curriculum encourages independent and self-directed learning and is designed to meet the academic and affective needs of students. Using an interdisciplinary and multicultural perspective, learning activities emphasize the higher level cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. At any grade level, the focus of the gifted curriculum alignment is on performance skills that can be applied to all content areas and to life-long success. Performance skills for the gifted program include: affective, communication, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, and research.

AFFECTIVE

Students will develop the ability to understand what gifted means; develop strategies to strengthen personal capabilities, interpersonal and group process skills, and life skills.

COMMUNICATION

Students will develop the ability to plan, create, and present verbal, visual, and written information in order to share thoughts and ideas with others.

CREATIVITY

Students will develop the ability to use fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration.

CRITICAL THINKING

Students will develop the ability to use critical/reflective thinking focus on deciding what to do or believe. This includes supporting ideas with facts and/or logic and explaining relationships.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Students will develop the ability to sense a problem exists, define the problem, analyze the problem, use problem solving strategies, and determine and assess possible solutions.

RESEARCH

Students will develop the ability to gather, organize, analyze, and apply information.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Included on the following pages, a scope and sequence of gifted program performance skills for grades K-6 has been developed in the key areas targeted by the gifted program's curriculum.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE OF PERFORMANCE SKILLS

Performance Skill 1: Affective Needs: To understand what being gifted means; to develop strategies to strengthen personal capabilities, interpersonal and group process skills, and life skills.

Objectives:

Gifted students will be able to:	By the end of Grade 2:	By the End of Grade 4:	By the end of Grade 6:
Understand Gifted	The student will develop a personal definition of “gifted”.	The student will analyze giftedness as it relates to self.	The student will analyze ethical issues related to giftedness.
Strengthen Personal Capabilities	The student will gain comfort with personal capabilities.	The student will develop self awareness and an understanding of self efficacy.	The student will analyze personal learning and thinking styles.
Interpersonal and Group Process Skills	The student will develop social skills.	The student will authentically articulate feelings. The student will effectively communicate in a group setting.	The student will develop communication skills relating to personal, family, and school issues.
Life Skills	The student will demonstrate ethical behavior.	The student will develop decision-making skills.	The student will develop short term and long-term goals relating to self.

Performance Skill 2: Communication: To develop the ability to plan, create, and present verbal, visual, and written information in order to share thoughts and ideas with others.

Objectives:

Gifted students will be able to:	By the end of Grade 2:	By the End of Grade 4:	By the end of Grade 6:
Plan a Message	The student will follow a teacher-directed plan.	The student will create, review, and revise a plan to develop an outcome. The student will be aware that the outcome should relate to an audience.	The student will initiate the development of a plan for his/her self-selected projects and activities. The student can work from the plan.
Create a Message	The student will develop a verbal or visual presentation.	The student will develop a written, verbal or visual message/presentation.	The student will independently determine a format to develop quality written, verbal, and/or visual messages or presentations. The student will create a presentation on a topic, theme, or issue using authoring software.
Present a Message	The students will share ideas verbally using good eye contact and appropriate body language and strong voice	The student will share ideas in writing (using organized, complete sentences that are error free), verbally (using eye contact, appropriate body language, good voice) or visually, (using appropriate visuals). The student will use technology to enhance the presentation	The student will develop paragraphs that clearly explain ideas; uses many good verbal presentation skills; and develops quality visuals that clearly explain ideas. The student plans the presentation for an audience. The student will use technology to impact the audience's understanding of the topic

Performance Skill 3: Creativity: To develop the ability to use fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration.

Objectives:

Gifted students will be able to:	By the end of Grade 2:	By the End of Grade 4:	By the end of Grade 6:
Develop fluent thinking	The student will develop the ability to produce ideas.	The student will demonstrate the ability to produce ideas and accept the ideas of others with teacher guidance.	The student will actively listen to and accept the ideas of others and build on those ideas.
Develop flexible thinking	The student will develop the ability to speculate on a situation.	The student will demonstrate the ability to speculate on and/or adapt a situation or idea with teacher guidance.	The student will actively speculate on and/or adapt a situation or idea.
Develop original thinking	The students will develop the ability to create or invent new ideas.	The student will demonstrate the ability to envision new ideas with teacher guidance	The student will actively envision new ideas.
Develop elaborate thinking	The student will develop the ability to embellish existing ideas.	The student will demonstrate the ability to embellish existing ideas with teacher guidance.	The student will actively refine existing ideas.

Performance Skill 4: Critical Thinking: To develop the ability to use critical/reflective thinking focused on deciding what to do or believe. This includes supporting ideas with facts and/or logic and explaining relationships

Objectives:

Gifted students will be able to:	By the end of Grade 2:	By the End of Grade 4:	By the end of Grade 6:
Use Facts and Logic	The student will distinguish between statements that can be proven and statements that reflect personal beliefs or judgments.	The student will use facts to elaborate on and/or support ideas.	The student will find appropriate factual ideas and use statistical data to support and defend ideas.
Reasoning	The student will determine an answer based on a fact and draw a logical conclusion.	The student will use steps to answer or formulate ideas. The student will distinguish relevant from irrelevant information.	The student will identify and explain ideas and/or answers using sequential and logical categories. The student will choose relevant information to support original ideas.
Explain Relationships	The student will have the ability to see and extract the most powerful reasons, or results for a given event or action. The student will reflect on his/her outcomes.	The student will use information to explain a cause/effect relationship and/or action/consequence relationship. The student will use reflection to support and/or change ideas.	The student will identify patterns to develop new ideas by determining several possible cause/effect relationships, and/or action/consequence relationships. The student will independently reflect on work to improve or change ideas.

Performance Skill 5: Problem-Solving: To develop the ability to sense a problem exists, define the problem, analyze problem and solution interactions, and determine and assess possible solutions.

Objectives:

Gifted students will be able to:	By the end of Grade 2:	By the End of Grade 4:	By the end of Grade 6:
Recognize a Problem	The student will recognize a problem with teacher questioning.	The student will identify a problem and define the parts of a problem.	The student will identify a problem, determine its parts, and recognize the smaller issues of the problem
Use Problem Solving Strategies	The student will know at least two different ways to solve a problem.	The student will use an appropriate problem solving strategy when faced with a new problem.	The student will use multiple problem solving strategies and knows when to use each one.
Develop a Solution	The student will develop a creative solution to a problem.	The student will develop a creative and realistic solution to a problem.	The student will determine two or more possible creative and realistic solutions to a problem. The student will know how to choose the best solution and can explain his/her reasoning.
Relate Ideas	The student will explain how two or more ideas interact.	The student will explain why it is important to look at the interactions between ideas.	The student will determine how one idea or solution interacts with and impacts the problem and other possible solutions.

Performance Skill 6: Research: To develop the ability to gather, organize, analyze, and apply information.

Objectives:

Gifted students will be able to:	By the end of Grade 2:	By the End of Grade 4:	By the end of Grade 6:
Gather Information	The student will identify and use data from books and other available sources. The student will be aware of protocols for gathering information.	The student will identify and use data from books, Internet sites and other available sources such as charts or surveys. The student will follow protocols when gathering information.	The student will initiate data retrieval through the use of technological sources, charts, surveys or graphs, and other available, reliable resources. The student will independently follow appropriate protocols for gathering information.
Organize Information	The student will organize relevant information.	The student will organize information from several sources.	The student will organize information from several sources into relevant, useful forms.
Analyze Information	The student will determine which information is useful.	The student will determine which information is useful to develop an outcome.	The student will provide explanations about the usefulness and validity of information.
Apply Information	The student will use data to develop outcomes.	The student will use accurate information to develop his/her own idea or create a presentation.	The student will use multiple sources of accurate information to develop his/her own idea or create a presentation.