Gifted Services Program Handbook





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*This handbook was developed in 2014 by Dr. Kelly Neylon, Gifted Coordinator, Woodridge School District 68*

**Philosophy**

Students who receive gifted services in Woodridge School District 68 will be provided direction, time, encouragement, and resources to maximize their potential. District staff members will work with parents, students, and community members to identify eligible students from all backgrounds. Woodridge 68 will offer these students the differentiated instruction and support they need to thrive and succeed.

#

# Definition of Gifted Students

Students who are gifted perform, or show the potential for performing, at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience or environment. These students exhibit high performance capacity in intellectual ability, creativity, leadership, and/or a specific academic field. Gifted students can be identified in any cultural group or within any economic stratum and require special instruction, services and/or activities not ordinarily provided by the general education program.

**Program Goals**

* Provide coordinated, continuous district-wide gifted education program.
* Provide a differentiated, enriched curriculum for identified students which develop problem solving abilities, high levels of thinking, reasoning abilities; and provides for individual growth.
* Provide for the mastery of the basic skills in social studies, science, and math at a pace and depth appropriate to the capacities of individual learners.
* Develop high levels of student skills in English language arts including oral, written, research skills and methods.
* Develop high levels of math skills including problem solving.
* Provide appropriate staff development for faculty and administration in the areas of identification, characteristics of identified students, and instructional delivery to those students.
* Provide information and support services to parents of students receiving gifted services.
* Evaluate the program services systematically.

# Identification Process

Identifying students for gifted services includes using multiple criteria and multiple measures. Quantitative measures used in Woodridge School District 68 include: Cognitive Abilities Test 7 (CogAT), Propensity score from ECRA Group, iReady Scores. Qualitative measures include Home and School Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) and Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS). Additional options are Planned Experiences and Teacher’s Observations of Potential in Students (TOPS) for EL students.

There are four steps for identification and an appeals process.  The following steps occur in grades 2 and 6 in the spring of each school year.

##

## **Nomination**

Parents, peers, staff or community members may nominate a student in grades 3, 4, 5 & 7 for gifted services evaluation by completing a nomination form (Appendix A). Nomination forms are available from the gifted coordinator, gifted specialist in each building and on the district website.  Completed forms should be given to the building gifted specialist.

## **Screening**

Students nominated *and*students in grades 2 & 6 will take the Cognitive Abilities Test 7 (CogAT 7).  Students in grades 2 & 6 with CogAT or propensity scores that meet or exceed a statistically significant level will continue through the identification process. All nominated students will continue through the identification process. Students who are nominated and those 2nd & 6th graders with a statistically significant score on CogAT or Propensity will be the screening pool. These students will continue through the identification process.

## Profile Forms

Information gathered about nominated students will be entered on a profile form (Appendix B). In order to remove bias, this form is fill-able. It can be found in Appendix B and on District Share in the Gifted Services file. This form will be saved by 6-digit student identification number by school and grade. The identification panel will use these forms during identification.

## **Review**

Data collected on screened students will be reviewed and evaluated by the Identification Panel consisting of district staff members trained in gifted education. The panel will determine appropriate placement for gifted services. Information regarding the Identification Panel may be found on page 7 of this handbook.

## **Placement**

Parents and students receive a letter of notification from the gifted coordinator regarding identification of need and placement for gifted services. Gifted services are described within this handbook.

## Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)

The Cognitive Abilities Test, CogAT, measures the cognitive development of students in three areas. The test reflects the most up to date research on how to best measure cognitive abilities and learning styles.

* Verbal, which measures students’ ability to reason with verbal concepts
* Quantitative, which measures students’ ability to reason with quantitative symbols and concepts
* Nonverbal, which measures students’ ability to reason with geometric shapes and figures

## Propensity Score

The district uses the ECRA Group to develop propensity scores. Propensity scores synthesize all of the prior test score data into a single measure that reflects how a student is expected to perform on the current year’s assessments.

## Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)

The SIGS is a norm referenced rating scale designed to assist in identifying students for gifted services. The rating scale is completed by teachers and parents of students nominated and in the screening pool. The SIGS will be online and emailed to parents of nominated students. If needed, hard copies are available.

## Norms

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC.org), Dr. Carolyn Callahan (Callahan, 2012), and other researchers in gifted education, suggests school districts use local and subgroup norms to ensure that under represented populations are included and receive gifted services. Woodridge School District 68 uses local norms for CogAT, Propensity and iReady scores. National norms are used with the SIGS.

#

Appeals

Parents or staff may appeal the identification panel’s decision by completing the appeal form (Appendix B) and returning it to the gifted coordinator. The appeal committee will consist of the gifted coordinator, district administrator, and a district parent. The appeal committee will review all pertinent information and notify parents by mail. The decision of the appeal committee is final.

Move-Ins

Students who move into the district are evaluated by the gifted specialist, the classroom teacher, and the principal for temporary placement in content blocks. These students also move through the identification process during the spring.

# Previously Identified Students

Students previously identified as needing gifted services are reevaluated in grade 6 before moving to the junior high school. This will be completed through the identification process described within this handbook.

# Identification Panel

The Identification Panel is comprised of teachers, administrators, psychologists, and specialists. The majority of these individuals have received training by completing the Illinois State Board of Education’s Gifted Education Seminar. The Identification Panel reviews and evaluates the data collected on screened students and determines appropriate placement for gifted services.

Rationale

Dr. Callahan’s evaluation report (page 16) regarding identification suggests the following:

* Create profile form (NOT a matrix)
* Use local norms, and specifically use local norms for low income & minority students
* Create an identification & placement review panel comprised of
	+ Gifted coordinator
	+ School administrator
	+ Psychologist
	+ Gifted specialists
	+ Classroom teacher
	+ Math specialist
	+ Language arts specialist

Woodridge 68 will have the following:

* School administrator
* Psychologist
* Gifted specialists (2)
* Classroom teachers (2)
* Math specialist
* Junior high gifted specialists - 6th grade identification only (2)

Procedures

1. One person writes on original (white) profile forms. This person keeps the initialed originals and places these in file folder. All others in the group will review colored copies.
2. Each individual reviews profile form for each student.
	1. Individuals may make notes on copies of form, indicating your recommendation.
3. The group and individuals compare each student to norms for peer group. If a student has more than one peer group, compare to one peer group completely. Then compare to other peer group. Is there a difference?
4. The group discusses the information on profile form.
5. The group will determine if there is a **preponderance of evidence** indicating a need for gifted services.
6. One individual completes *Section Three: Placement* on original (white) form.
	1. Indicate *yes* or *no* for placement in gifted services at elementary or junior high levels. Specifically indicate Globally Gifted at the elementary level; per content area (ELA/SS, Science, Math) at the junior high level.
	2. Provide an explanation for recommendation.
	3. If typical placement is not recommended, the group will indicate suggestions on *Section Three: Placement*.
	4. Indicate date.
	5. Initial by one member.
	6. Place initialed original (white) in folder (Completed Profile Forms).
7. All colored copies are shredded.
8. If the group is unable to come to consensus, another group will evaluate the information.
9. Another group, and the gifted coordinator, reviews all profile forms.

# Gifted Services

## Elementary Services

At the elementary level, students will be identified as Globally Gifted. Gifted services occur both in the classroom and in the Differentiated Engagement Block (DEB). Within the classroom, students receiving gifted services have differentiated opportunities provided to them by the classroom teacher and the classroom teacher collaborates with the gifted specialist to provide these services.

Students identified as Globally Gifted receive services in the classroom and in DEB. Identified students in grades 3-6 will see the gifted specialist during a 50-minute content block of Advanced Social Studies and Science. Students in grades 3 & 4 will also meet with the gifted specialist during the 30-minute DEB block for additional skill-building opportunities.

Students identified as needing math services in grades 3 & 4 receive enrichment opportunities within the math classroom setting. If a student shows a need, they may be accelerated in math and placed in the next grade level math class. Fifth grade students receiving gifted services may move to the sixth grade classroom for math and receive differentiated math instruction in that classroom. Sixth grade students receiving gifted services in math may move to the 6th grade advanced math class taught by the gifted specialist.

## Junior High Services

Students at the junior high are identified as needing services in Advanced Math, Advanced ELA/Social Studies (an integrated course block), and/or Advanced Science. .

Students identified as needing gifted services in math receive service though the gifted math class. The gifted math teacher provides instruction for these students and collaborates with the ELA/SS and science teachers during interdisciplinary units.

# Roles of the Gifted Specialists

Elementary gifted specialists serve as both teacher of students needing gifted services and as a resource for teachers. The gifted specialist will work with the 3rd & 4th grade students during DEB. The gifted specialist will see 3rd & 4th grade students together and 5th & 6th grade students together. These two content blocks will include interdisciplinary units developed by the gifted specialists.

The elementary gifted specialist will teach the 6th grade advanced math class. This class consists of students who require gifted math services and other students identified as needing advanced math services by the district math specialist.

Elementary gifted specialists also serve as a resource for the classroom teachers. They collaborate with teachers to help them differentiate within all curricular areas. They will collaborate with teachers who have the cluster of gifted students in their classrooms as well as others who may request assistance.

Elementary gifted specialists will also provide staff development for faculty and administrators in the areas of identification and instructional practices for gifted students. Gifted specialists will also work with grade K-2 teachers to deliver PETS (Primary Education Thinking Skills) to help identify and develop talent. Additionally, they may also work with K-2 teachers to use the Kingore Observational Inventory (Kingore, 2007). The gifted specialists may also work with bilinigual K-2 using TOPS observational tool. Planned experiences are sets of high-level, open-ended activities designed specifically to elicit and diagnose gifted behaviors. Teachers complete the planned experiences with the gifted specialist to provide equal opportunities for advanced behaviors to emerge.

Junior high gifted specialists will provide instruction to identified students. They will also serve on the Identification Panel to identify students from sixth grade.

All gifted specialists will maintain identified students’ records in the student information system, Skyward.

Additionally, all gifted specialists will deliver information to parents of students receiving gifted services. This will include information about student performance and needs as well as program information.

All gifted specialists are responsible for preparing necessary forms for identification and completing Student Growth Plans.

# Exit Procedures

If a teacher, student, and/or parent feel a child has been misplaced in the gifted services program, a problem solving meeting should occur. The members should include parent, principal, classroom teacher, gifted specialist and gifted coordinator.

At the problem solving meeting, members will discuss the following:

What is the problem?

Why does teacher/parent/child feel child is misplaced?
What actions have been done to help solve the problem?
What actions could still/should be done?

Determine what the action plan is and when the next meeting should be scheduled.

At the follow up meeting, members will answer the following:

What were the results of actions?
Does the teacher/parent/child still think misplacement occurred?

What additional actions should occur?

If exiting the gifted services program is determined to be in the best interest of the student, a timeline will be developed by the team. This will include discussions with the student and progress monitoring schedule.

# Acceleration

The Woodridge School District 68 Board of Education has a policy titled *Programs for Gifted Students* (Policy 6310). This policy does not specifically state the use of acceleration, also known as double promotion or grade skipping. However, acceleration does meet the needs of some gifted students and requires specific guidelines and procedures. The following guidelines and procedures allow for those times that student’s needs would be best met with acceleration.

##

## Guidelines

Many high-ability students possess unique academic, cognitive and social needs. Acceleration is an empirically validated educational intervention for high ability students (Colangelo, Assouline, & Gross, 2004). The research consistently demonstrates the academic benefits to some students and allows the conclusion that most students are not negatively affected in the social-emotional domains. Accelerated students feel academically challenged and socially accepted, and they do not fall prey to the boredom that plagues many highly capable students who are forced to follow the curriculum for their age-peers (Colangelo, N., Assouline, S., & Gross, M., 2004).

Whole-Grade Acceleration is an intervention that moves students through an educational program at rates faster, or at younger ages, than typical. It means matching the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum to the readiness and motivation of the student. All acceleration requires high academic ability. The student’s motivation, social-emotional maturity, and interests must be considered when making decisions about acceleration. The student whose level of achievement and ability significantly surpasses same age group peers is an example of one who might be considered for whole-grade acceleration.

The guidelines and procedures described in this document are not intended to increase the number of requests for acceleration. Rather, they are for the exceptional situation in which on-going classroom accommodations for students with advanced ability are not sufficiently differentiated to make school a challenging place for the individual student to learn.

Classroom teachers in kindergarten through second grades will work with gifted specialists to develop talent within their classrooms. Gifted specialists will provide planned experiences to uncover talent in typically underserved populations.

Students of high ability should be observed a minimum of four times by the gifted specialist upon the request of the classroom teacher, parent, and/or principal. These observations may be completed using PETS or the Kingore Observational Inventory. The results of the observations will be included in the documentation for acceleration.

## Procedures

**Step 1 – Request for Acceleration**

After reading over the guidelines, a parent, teacher, and/or principal may complete a meeting for Acceleration. A meeting will be scheduled with parents, gifted specialist(s), gifted coordinator, principal, and psychologist.

**Step 2 – Observations and Data Collection**

Once the request is completed the building gifted specialist will observe the student a minimum of four times during different times of day. The Kingore Observational Inventory may be used for these observations. The results will be included in the Acceleration documentation. Additionally, the student’s planned experiences will also become part of the documentation. Data from iReady and other assessments, including classroom assessments, may be collected and included in the documentation.

**Step 3 – Child Study Team Formation**

Once the observations are complete, the team meets to further discuss the child’s needs. This team should include

* Classroom teacher
* Gifted coordinator
* Building Gifted specialist
* Social worker
* Psychologist
* Principal
* Parent/Guardian(s)

The team will evaluate the observations and assessments. If it is decided upon by the team that acceleration should be considered, the team will request permission from the parent to complete the Iowa Acceleration Scale, which includes individual achievement and aptitude testing.

**Step 4 – Iowa Acceleration Scale & Individual Testing**

The Iowa Acceleration Scale will be used to determine if acceleration is an appropriate intervention for the student. The team will complete the appropriate portions of the Iowa Acceleration Scale.

**Step 5 – Determination & Next Steps**

The team will meet to complete the Iowa Acceleration Scale and review individual testing. Using all the data, the team will determine if acceleration is an appropriate intervention for the student. The following should be kept in mind:

* Only “Excellent” candidates will be accelerated.
* Acceleration should take place at natural transition points.
* Accelerated students may be placed with the identified gifted students in the new class.
* An effort should be made to combine students who have been accelerated.

If accelerated, the student may be identified as receiving gifted services and the student services team will prepare a Student Growth Plan and a transition plan. The transition plan will include a timeline for implementation of acceleration including dates for classroom visits and for progress monitoring.

If not accelerated, the student services team will prepare a differentiation/enrichment plan. The classroom teacher, gifted specialist and principal will work with the child’s classroom teachers to ensure an appropriate level of challenge for the student.

Documentation of the above is provided to the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and also placed in Skyward and the child’s cumulative file.

**Program Evaluation**

The gifted services program will be internally evaluated annually. The evaluation will include interviews with the gifted specialists at the elementary level and junior high level as well as with principals. Student data will be evaluated to determine if adequate individual growth is evident.

Evidence from gifted specialists regarding collaboration with classroom teachers will be shared with the team. This information will assist in determining next steps for collaborating with staff on differentiation.

ECRA Group will provide local norms for iReady and propensity for each subgroup each year.

Every five years, new local norms for the CogAT will be developed. This requires all students grades 2-7 complete the CogAT. The norm information will be requested from Pearson as part of the data package.

**Appendix A**

**Woodridge School District 68**

**Gifted Services Nomination Form**

NOMINATIONS DUE TO SCHOOL OFFICE or POSTMARKED BY:

Date:

Student’s Name: Date of Birth:

Grade (please circle): 3 4 5 7 School:

Parents/Guardians:

Address:

City: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code:

Parent email:

Phone Numbers: (Home) (Mobile)

Name of Nominating Party:

Contact number:

Relationship to Student:

Has student been nominated or evaluated for gifted services in Woodridge before?

 Yes No If yes, school year:

Please describe below the specific talent you think this student demonstrates and the reasons for this nomination. Use the reverse side of this form or additional paper if necessary.

Signature of Nominating Party: Date:

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Date Received:

Received by:

6-digit student ID:

**Please return this form to the school office or mail to:**

Leslie Loboda, Gifted Coordinator

7200 Janes Avenue, Woodridge, Illinois 60517

# Appendix B

**Woodridge School District 68**

**Example Gifted Services Profile Form**

**SECTION ONE:** STUDENT INFORMATION

Student ID:      Ethnicity:

Student Name:       IEP Status:

Date of Birth:       IEP explanation:

Grade Level:  Current LEP Status:

Gender:  Past LEP Status:

Social-Economic Status:  Home Language:

Nomination Type:

 **SECTION TWO:** DATA

|  |
| --- |
| **iReady Scores (Achievement)** |
| Reading September      January      May       | Math September      January      May       |
| **Propensity (Achievement)** |
| Reading Propensity      | Math Propensity      |
| **Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (Qualitative)** |
| *School Rating Scale (SRS)*Standard ScoreGeneral Intellectual Ability:     Language Arts:     Math:     Science:     Social Studies:      | *Home Rating Scale (HRS)*Standard ScoreGeneral Intellectual Ability:     Language Arts:     Math:     Science:     Social Studies:      |
| Teacher comments from SIGS:      | Parent comments from SIGS:      |

**SECTION TWO:** DATA (cont’d.)

|  |
| --- |
| **CogAT (Aptitude)** |
| Scaled Age ScoreVerbal:      Quantitative:     Nonverbal:     Composite:       |
| **Observations & Anecdotal Information** |
| Kingore Observation InventoryDates:      Observer:      Behaviors Observed:       |
| Planned Experiences1. Title:     1. Score:     2. Title:     2. Score:     3. Title:     3. Score:     4: Title:     4: Score:       |
| Information from Nomination Form:       |

**SECTION THREE:** PLACEMENT

IDENTIFICATION PANEL USE ONLY

Student ID:

Recommendation for gifted services: Elementary Globally Gifted

Jr High Advanced ELA/SS

Jr High Advanced Math

Jr High Advanced Science

Explanation:

Identification and Placement Review Panel Date:

Upon identification for gifted services, the gifted coordinator, home school gifted specialist and, when possible the classroom teacher, will develop section four, a student growth plan. The plan will include one or more goals in identified areas and an additional social emotional goal. The goals will be evaluated quarterly and an end of year review will be completed. The growth plan will be revised each school year.

**SECTION FOUR:** STUDENT GROWTH PLAN

Student:

Student ID:

GOAL #1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Area of Identification |  |
| Goal |       |
| Indicators of Success |       |
| Approaches & Responsible Parties |       |
| Strategies for Differentiation  |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 1Date:      |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 2Date:      |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 3Date:      |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 4Date:      |       |

GOAL #2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Area of Identification |  |
| Goal |       |
| Indicators of Success |       |
| Approaches & Responsible Parties |       |
| Strategies for Differentiation  |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 1Date:      |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 2Date:       |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 3Date:       |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 4Date:       |       |

**SECTION FOUR:** STUDENT GROWTH PLAN (cont’d.)

Student:

Student ID:

GOAL #3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Social Emotional Goal |       |
| Indicators of Success |       |
| Approaches & Responsible Parties |       |
| Strategies for Differentiation  |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 1Date:       |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 2Date:       |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 3Date:       |       |
| Goal Progress Quarter 4Date:       |       |

**Year End Synopsis:**

**Completed by:**

Date:

# Appendix C

**Woodridge School District 68**

**Gifted Services Acceleration Documentation**

Student Name:

Child Study Team Members:

Academic Performance

*Please indicate dates and scores*

Reading: STAR/Early Literacy

Math: STAR Math

Other academic information:

Observations

Completed by:

Observations:

Planned Experiences:

Additional Data

Recommendation

IAS To Be Completed by:

Determination

Date:

Discussion: