Let’s Talk: What Makes for a High Quality Gifted and Talented Program and Services?

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Program Components Might Include...

- Program Philosophy and Mission
- Goals
- Definition
- Identification Procedures
- Staff Development
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Program Development/Continuum of Services
- Student and Program Assessment

OK....What Do You Want to Talk About?

Download the presentation from:
http://tinyurl.com/j9dfvfy

Develop a Philosophy and Mission Statement for Highly Capable

Quality programs reflect the philosophy established for the highly capable programs and the philosophy of education in the school district. They typically have mission statements to communicate the purpose of the services offered.

Quality services are integrated into the school day.
Sample Key Points for Mission Statements
Jonesville School District

- Ensure that each child has equal opportunity to receive a suitable program of educational experiences.
- Recognize that some students possess, or are capable of possessing, extraordinary learning ability and/or outstanding talent.
- Represent all socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds.

Sample Services for Mission Statements
Smithville Board of Education

- It is essential to provide diverse, appropriate, and ongoing learning experiences and environments that incorporate the academic, psychological, and social needs of students.
- It is our responsibility to provide students with educational alternatives that teach, challenge, and expand their knowledge, while simultaneously stressing the development of independent and self-directed learners who continuously generate questions, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and ideas.

Various Service Delivery Options

1. General Education Classroom-Based Services/Programs
2. Accelerated Services/Programs
3. Unique Highly Capable Services/Programs
4. Non-Traditional Services Programs

Services are administrative structures that may indicate content and curriculum, but does not dictate instruction.

Lessons Learned About Educating the Gifted and Talented: A Synthesis of the Research

- Gifted learners need daily challenge in their specific area of talent
- Opportunities should be provided on a regular basis for gifted learners to be unique and to work independently in their areas of passion and talent
- Provide various forms of subject-based and grade-based acceleration to gifted learners as their educational needs require
- Provide opportunities for gifted learners to socialize and to learn with peers
- For specific curriculum areas, instructional delivery must be differentiated in pace, amount of review and practice, and organization of content presentation

BEING WILLING TO WORK AT SOMETHING FOR WHICH SUCCESS OR HIGH ACHIEVEMENT IS NOT GUARANTEED!!!

Musicians improve their technique when they perform with other highly skilled musicians. Students improve their arguments when engaged in discussions with other students who challenge their ideas and assertions. It is not always easy, however, to put yourself into situations that require you to work on the edge of your existing competencies and many students steer clear of these, preferring to continue doing what they are good at and confident they will succeed at.

Parents and teachers help children discern reasonable risks to take in terms of opportunities to grow and improve significantly, identify ways to prepare for the challenge, and facilitate reflection of the outcome afterwards. Getting comfortable with risk-taking is critical to enabling a child to reach the highest levels of performance he or she desires.

WORKING ON THE EDGE OF ONE’S COMPETENCE

TOTAL SCHOOL CLUSTER GROUPING MODEL

1. Specific, effective, researched application of cluster-grouping
2. Involves all children and all teachers
3. Focuses on gifted education and talent development as the basis for all classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>30 students in two classrooms</th>
<th>Group 1: High Achieving</th>
<th>Group 2: Above Average Achieving</th>
<th>Group 3: Average</th>
<th>Group 4: Low Average</th>
<th>Group 5: Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class A</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goal: To provide students challenging curriculum to ensure continuous growth and enhance student engagement.

Total School Cluster Grouping (Gentry & Fugate, 2013)

- Student achievement increased among all students in the cluster-grouped school.
- Mathematics, reading, and total battery scores on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills improved for two entire graduation years of students between second and fifth grades.
- Students who began with lower total achievement scores than comparison students ended with significantly higher scores.
- More students in the treatment group were identified as above average or high achievers.
- Professional development is a key component.


**Research-Based Benefits of Cluster Grouping**

- Gifted students regularly interact with their intellectual and age peers
- Curricular and instructional differentiation is *efficient, effective, and likely* when a group of high achievers is placed with a teacher who has skills and knowledge
- High expectations maintained in all classrooms
- Full-time services for gifted students without additional costs

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**UNIQUE HIGHLY CAPABLE SERVICES/PROGRAMS**

- Self-contained Classroom
- Pull-out Program
- Specialty Online Courses
- Other

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**Self-Contained Classrooms**

Students are identified based on specific criteria and grouped together for a majority of their academic subjects.

Assumptions: The students are alike. The reality is that students are different and will require the same pedagogical strategies needed in the general education classroom.

Advantage: Higher qualified teachers

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**WHAT IS ACCELERATED LEARNING?**

District policies for:
- Early entrance to Kindergarten
- Grade skipping when deemed most appropriate option for the student
- Dual enrollment
- Ability to take advanced coursework out of grade level

- Advanced Placement (AP)
- Concurrent/Dual Enrollment
- Credit by Examination
- Early Entrance to Kindergarten, Middle School, High School, or College
- Grade Level Placement
- Honors
- International Baccalaureate (IB)
- Online Courses for Subject Acceleration
- Running Start
- Subject-based Acceleration

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**Option** | **Number of Studies** | **Academic ES**
--- | --- | ---
Early entrance to school | 68 | .49
Subject acceleration | 21 | .59
University-based programs | 11 | .23
Distance learning | 3 | .33
Cross-graded classes | 15 | .45 (.46)
Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate classes | 22 | .29
Dual enrollment | 36 | .32
College in the schools | 4 | .29
Mentorships | 15 | .57
Grade skipping | 32 | .40 (.56)
Grade telescoping | 28 | .45
Nongraded or multigrade classes | 20 | .43
Credit by examination | 13 | .59
Early admission to college | 37 | .35
Full-time ability grouping | 32 | .49 (.33)
Performance grouping | 16 | .34
Within-class grouping | 9 | .34
Cluster grouping | 13 | .62
Peer-tutored dyads | 5 | 0.00
Like-ability cooperative groups | 3 | .26
Curriculum compacting | 13 | .83 (.26)
Credit for prior learning | 15 | .56

Non-Traditional Services and Programs

- Mentorship
- Collaborative Partnership with Industry or Higher Education
- Cooperative Arrangement with ESD
- Cooperative Arrangement with Other Districts
- Academic Competitions
- Summer Enrichment/Acceleration
- Before/After School Services/Program

Not all students require the same service. You should base services on student needs.

Continuum of Special Services

How many of these special services apply to your elementary school (ES), middle school (MS), and high school (HS)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>HS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Classroom Enrichment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Compacting, Modification, and Differentiation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Talent Portfolio</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual and Small Group Conferences/Advisories</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent and small group investigations of real problems</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Magnet and Charter Schools</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>School Within a School</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Schools</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within Class Grouping by Skill Level</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Graded Cluster Grouping</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Within or Across Grade Pull-Out Groups by Targeted Abilities and Interest Areas</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade Level or Across Grade Level Advanced Classes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrichment Clusters</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Placement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Honors Classes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Designed Courses or Independent Study</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Enrichment Programs: Young Writers, Saturday Programs, Summer Programs, Future Problem Solving, Odyssey of the Mind, Destination Imagination, Math League, Science Fairs, MATHCOUNTS, etc.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Options: Internships, Apprenticeships, Mentorships</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration Options: Early Admissions, Subject Acceleration, Grade Skipping, College Classes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What educators and psychologists recognize as giftedness in children is really potential giftedness, which denotes promise rather than fulfillment and probabilities rather than certainties about future accomplishments.

How high these probabilities are in any given case depends much on the match between a child’s budding talents and the kinds of nurturance provided.

Harry Passow, 1985
Linking Student Needs and Program Goals

- Design, develop, and implement high quality curriculum that is supported by research based models appropriate for gifted students.
- Ensure that curriculum for gifted students is aligned with and extends the regular classroom curriculum.

Cognitive & Affective Outcomes of Pull-Out Programs (Gubbins, 2013)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Environments</th>
<th>• Program teachers and classroom teachers work collaboratively to ensure that gifted and talented students are involved with challenging curricula in both learning environments.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Cognitive Benefits    | • Students respond positively to challenging curricular options.  
|                       | • Students make achievement gains in relevant content areas. |
| Affective Benefits    | • Students interact with other students with similar interests.  
|                       | • Students are challenged to work at high levels.  
|                       | • Students interact with their intellectual peers and develop social connections through their program involvement. |
Cognitive & Affective Outcomes of Acceleration (Colangelo, Assouline, & Marron, 2013)

**Academic Effects**
- Accelerated students scored almost one grade equivalent above bright, non-accelerated students
- Strong academic outcomes of various forms of acceleration
- Attainment of advanced degrees, production of scholarly work, and professional contributions

**Social Effects**
- Positive academic, psychological, and social outcomes for grade skipping
- Early entrants to school adjust well academically and socially
- Early entrants to college recalled positive social effects
- Positive effects for students who radically accelerate

An effective communication initiative in gifted education is a plan to share information about all aspects of programs and services among the group of constituents, including parents, students, teachers, administrators, counselors, board of education, and central office personnel.

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PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**District Level Professional Development**

1. Increase collaboration at the district and site level to create opportunities and resources to ensure differentiation for the highly capable is guaranteed
2. Teachers as trainers
3. Building leads to facilitate differentiation
4. Peer coaching and lesson study
5. “Differentiation Specialists” at the site and district level
6. Integration of the serving highly capable with the requirements in the teacher evaluation process and other district initiatives
About Professional Development

1. Cautionary tale...label the service not the child.
2. Professional development is really about collaboration. What might we do and what seems to work!
3. Know that programs should be student-centered based on their needs not ours.
4. Students identified for services are not the same, therefore not all students need identical services.

All teachers want to know: Who, What, and How....

Keep This In Mind

6 SECRETS of Professional Development

1. Assess group needs-What are you doing now that is working?
2. Start the conversation around real students; the place of understanding the student’s profile.
3. The place of motivation may be finding out where the child is socially and emotionally.
4. Narrow in on a content-How may we improve what we offer?
5. Work on plans of action.
6. Bring in the experts or go to them.

What professional development should be offered to educators (teachers, administration, and counselors)?

- Characteristics, academic and social needs of gifted learners (on-going basis for newly hired teachers)
- Referral and identification process and procedures, and services provided
- Development and emergence of gifted behaviors in all subgroups of the general population
- Meeting the needs of twice exceptional student
- Use of instructional resources/strategies along with specific examples of effective use of differentiation for advanced learners
- Specific training for Cluster teachers

What professional development should be offered to parents?

- overview of the program services
- topics parents/guardians have identified as areas of interest to them (characteristics of gifted behaviors, social and emotional needs, and opportunities for enrichment (camps, competitions, etc.)
- resources for providing challenge and locating opportunities to develop interest
possibilities exist for professional development?

- Local coordinator/ESD provides training
- Conferences
- University Specialty Endorsement/Master’s Degree/Summer Institutes
- SENGinars (http://sengifted.org/programs/senginars)
- Professional Learning Communities

Members of an advisory committee play an important and necessary role in the development of successful gifted education services. This group of stakeholders offers expertise, perspective, time, and commitment which creates program ownership that increases the likelihood that a program will be of high quality, and ensures the program longevity.

Guiding Questions for Discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In reflecting upon the MISSION &amp; PURPOSE of our District’s Gifted Program, what do we perceive as our top needs?</th>
<th>What do we think needs to be changed and/or implemented to more appropriately meet the needs of each identified gifted student?</th>
<th>What do we think are the greatest barriers and/or challenges needing to be addressed in order to achieve our MISSION/PURPOSE?</th>
<th>What and/or where do we have our greatest support and/or resources?</th>
<th>What ACTION ITEM is needed to address each issue/need?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

References


When you have a solid program for the gifted the whole system gets better!
Excellence breeds excellence!!!!