

## **Spencer Community Schools Challenge Program For Gifted/Talented Students**

Challenge is a name given to PK-12 gifted/talented programming in the Spencer Community Schools. Gifted programming is required by the Iowa Department of Education accreditation standards, and program plans are submitted as part of their Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) in accordance with Iowa Code 257.43. Gifted/talented programming is also state funded under the requirements of Iowa Code 257.46.

### **Spencer CSD: Definition of Gifted and Talented**

Gifted and talented children are those identified as possessing outstanding abilities that are capable of high performance. They require appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs beyond those provided by the regular school program. Gifted and talented children include those children with demonstrated achievement or potential ability, or both, in any of the following areas or in combination:

General intellectual ability

Creative thinking

Specific academic aptitude –LA, Math, Social Studies, and Science

### **District Vision Statement**

The Spencer School District is a cornerstone of the community. Working together, the entire community provides a dynamic, child-centered education where students feel included, respected, and valued.

Students are challenged to think independently, inquire creatively, and advance intellectually. Students develop the character and confidence to make a difference in a changing world.

All students will develop maximum knowledge and skills to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

### **District Mission Statement**

All students will develop maximum knowledge and skills to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

### **Philosophy Statement**

The Challenge (gifted/talented) program of the Spencer Community Schools incorporates the district standards and benchmarks at a rate and level commensurate with the identified student learning abilities. Some strategies used to assist students in achieving may include independent study, classroom adaptations, curriculum compacting, acceleration, enrichment, and mentors.

Valid and systematic identification, including multiple selection criteria, are used in identifying gifted/talented students from the K-12 student population. To ensure that a qualitatively differentiated program is provided, gifted and talented education shall include curriculum to meet both the cognitive and affective needs of students. Support services, including materials and staff, will be provided.

The Challenge Program facilitators/teachers and the classroom teachers plan and provide differentiated programming for those students who have needs beyond the existing grade level curriculum. The Challenge program is designed to assist these students in reaching their greatest academic potential/cognitive needs and fulfilling their affective needs so that they may “develop maximum knowledge, skills, and abilities in becoming lifelong learners and responsible citizens”, as the district’s mission statement promises.

We want to ensure teaching for learner differences through the following:

- Understanding needs of each student
- Planning purposefully for needs of each student
- Tapping into learners’ interests
- Challenging students appropriately
- Instructing with flexibility
- Providing resources according to students’ needs
- Adjusting pacing, providing flexible groupings, and allowing for acceleration

### **Program Standards**

Program standards were developed using the National Association of Gifted Education and these standards as a guide.

#### **1. Learning and Development:**

Educators, recognizing the learning and developmental differences of students with gifts and talents, promote ongoing self-understanding, awareness of their needs, and cognitive and affective growth of these students in school, home, and community settings to ensure specific student outcomes.

#### **2. Assessment:**

Assessments provide information about identification, learning progress and outcomes, and evaluation of programming for students with gifts and talents in all domains.

#### **3. Curriculum planning and Instruction:**

Educators apply the theory and research-based models of curriculum and instruction related to students with gifts and talents and respond to their needs by planning, selecting, adapting, and creating culturally relevant curriculum and by using a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to ensure specific student outcomes.

#### **4. Learning Environments:**

Learning environments foster personal and social responsibility, multicultural\* competence, and interpersonal and technical communication skills for leadership in the 21st century to ensure specific student outcomes.

## 5. Programming:

Educators are aware of empirical evidence regarding (a) the cognitive, creative, and affective development of learners with gifts and talents and (b) programming that meets their concomitant needs. Educators use this expertise systematically and collaboratively to develop, implement, and effectively manage comprehensive services for students with a variety of gifts and talents to ensure specific student outcomes.

## 6. Professional Development:

All educators (administrators, teachers, counselors, and other instructional support staff) build their knowledge and skills using the NAGC/CEC Teacher Standards for Gifted and Talented Education and the National Staff Development Standards. They formally assess professional development needs related to the standards, develop and monitor plans, systematically engage in training to meet the identified needs, and demonstrate mastery of standard. They access resources to provide for release time, funding for continuing education, and substitute support. These practices are judged through the assessment of relevant student outcomes.

## *Program Description*

The Challenge program is designed to provide learning opportunities from each of the following four components to best meet the needs of individual learners:

Academic extension/Enrichment activities assist the student in dealing with the main thread of curriculum in greater breadth and depth.

Acceleration/ Curriculum

- early entry into the academic area, acceleration of content material, or in some cases, whole-grade acceleration.
- transcending basic information and pursuing the information with more complexity and higher levels of abstraction.

Personal development is provided by counseling/guidance and special activities that allow students to deal with their giftedness and conflicts that may arise as a result of their giftedness.

Collaboration between classroom teachers and gifted/talented teachers supports the modification of curriculum and/or implementation of instructional strategies beneficial for delivering curriculum to gifted students.

Mentorships provide students an opportunity to explore career interests in greater depth.

### Target Population

Spencer Community School identifies in the areas of general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, and creativity. The target population is those who possess outstanding abilities or talent beyond age and grade-level peers and/or are capable of high performance, require an appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs that go beyond those provided by the general school program.

### Program Goals

1. To help students gain an understanding of themselves, their abilities, and giftedness
2. To provide an extensive learning environment which will enable each child to fully develop his/her intellectual and creative abilities through challenging instructional activities

3. To provide for the development and utilization of students' thinking abilities, creativity, research skills, and problem-solving techniques
4. To help students accept responsibility for self-directed learning
5. To help students recognize and develop their cognitive and affective skills and promote awareness of support services for these skills
6. To provide students with additional extended learning opportunities, support, and resources to enhance their education

### **Student Learning Goals**

1. To gain an understanding of his/her abilities, giftedness, and affective needs
2. To develop his/her cognitive and affective abilities, talents, and skills
3. To develop and utilize problem solving and critical thinking abilities
4. To be a self-directed, independent, life-long learner

### ***K – 12 Indicators for Identification***

The following assessments/indicators listed *may be used but not limited to* identify students:

ITBS: 97% or higher (NPR) in specific curriculum area

ITED: 97% or higher (NPR) in specific curriculum area

Course/Class Grades

I-ELDA (ELL)

MAP: RIT Score

CBA: i.e. end of book test

CogAT: SAS 127 or higher 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade scores focusing on score discrepancies

Renzulli Rating Scales: Learning, Motivation, and Creativity

Teacher, parent, peer or self referral (self referral in HS only)

Dynamic Inventory of Early Literacy Skills

Basic Reading Inventory

Torrance Test of Creativity

Iowa Acceleration Scale

BESTS / Explore (85%+ NPR)

PSAT/SAT

Demonstrated skill, ability, or talent

Other achievement and aptitude tests such as end of unit test, teacher made tests, etc.

## *Overview of Elementary GT Identification*

### **GRADES K-3**

In the primary grades cumulative data will be collected for students recommended as potentially gifted based upon a teacher/parent referral and a minimum of one subjective and one objective assessment source. Parents of students qualifying for talented and gifted services/differentiation will receive written notification of program services.

### **GRADE 4-6**

At 4<sup>th</sup> grade level, data will be compiled of students scoring at the 97%+ on the ITBS, CogAT (SAS 127+), the MAP Assessment, and those with teacher/parent/peer referral. Classroom teachers will complete a Renzulli Rating Scale for students they refer as demonstrating outstanding abilities and are capable of high performance. Student data is evaluated by an advisory team (Possible members: teachers and administrators). Parents of students qualifying for talented and gifted services/differentiation will receive written notification of program services.

### **OPTIONS**

Once identified, students, parents and teachers will develop a Personal Education Plan based on student needs that will include but not limited to the following:

- Academic Enrichment
- Academic Acceleration
- Affective Group (meets regularly)
  - Identified students will meet regularly for affective group activities. The activities will assist the students in better understand themselves and their abilities as well as developing a deeper understanding of others. These identified students will continue with affective activities as they progress through their schooling.

## *Elementary Student Identification Process (5/10)*

### **Grades K-6**

#### **Areas of Identification:**

- General Intellectual Ability
- Specific Academic Aptitude
- Creativity

#### **Instruments for Identification: If developmentally appropriate**

Subjective: Teacher/Parent Nomination

G/T teacher observation

Objective: 97% (NPR) ITBS

CogAT (SAS 127+ as available)

\*MAP Reading/Math

\*Renzulli Rating Scales

\*BRI reading assessments

(\* Assists with identifying Twice Exceptional and ELL)

CBA

DIBLES

I-ELDA

BRI

#### **Procedures:**

##### **Phase I: Screening**

- On a continual basis, classroom teachers will be asked to refer potentially gifted/talented students.
- Parents/students may also nominate a potentially gifted by completing an Identification Form
- GT teacher will annually review district test data to identify students who qualify based on objective test criteria
- Previously ID students from another program will automatically qualify for the Challenge Program.
- Additional indicators may be used on an individual basis.

##### **Phase II: Diagnostic Assessment/Screening**

- Assessment data will be compiled on all nominations by GT teacher
- Student data is evaluated
- List of identified students is created

##### **Phase III: Placement / PEP**

- Parents and students are notified that their student qualifies for differentiation opportunities
- Personalized Education Plan (PEP) is completed for each identified student with the classroom teacher and GT facilitator working co-operatively upon initial ID and reviewed annually. Parent meetings will be held at each grade span.
- PEP is written with the educator, parent and student

***Elementary(K-6) Quick Reference Guide for Personalized Education Plans***

<b>Elementary</b>	
Cognitive Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acceleration /Curriculum Modification</li><li>• Subject specific/whole grade</li><li>• Horizontal or Vertical Course or Grade Acceleration</li><li>• Summer camps and other extended learning opportunities</li><li>• Extension of classroom curriculum</li></ul>
Affective Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Affective Pull Out Groups</li><li>• Field Trips</li><li>• Contests and competitions</li></ul>
Collaboration and consulting with classroom teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom and G/T teachers work together to provide the appropriate level of instruction commensurate with students' abilities</li><li>• Collaborative/consultative teaching models</li></ul>

## ***Overview of Middle School (GRADES 7-8) GT Programming***

Students will continue to be identified on an on-going basis. Identified students will meet regularly for affective group activities to enhance their social/emotional growth through the middle school years. Communication about learning opportunities such as extension activities, contests, competitions, and summer camps will be given.

As indicated by a student's Personal Education Plan (PEP), curriculum options such as differentiation or acceleration may be implemented. Each identified student will have a personalized learning goal.

Students not identified in elementary may enter the middle school Challenge Program by meeting the criteria as defined below.

### **Areas of Identification:**

- General Intellectual Ability
- Specific Academic Aptitude
- Creativity

### **Assessments:**

Subjective: Teacher/ Parent/ Student Nomination

G/T teacher observation

Objective: ITBS (97% NPR) Rdg, Math, or Science

Cognitive Abilities (SAS 127+)

Renzulli Rating Scales (Learning, Motivation, and Creativity)

MAP Reading/ Math

Torrance Test of Creativity (verbal and/or figural – 120+ Average)

Teacher Assessments

End of Course/class Assessments

Data will be compiled of students scoring at the 97% (NPR) and/or CogAT (SAS 127+), as available, and those with teacher/parent/peer/self referral. Classroom teachers will complete a Renzulli Rating Scale for students they refer as demonstrating outstanding abilities and are capable of high performance. A team will review the data for consistency of high ability. Parents of students who reflect both a need and qualify for talented and gifted services/ differentiation will receive written notification indicating the level services recommended.

## *Middle School Quick Reference*

<b>Middle School</b>	
Cognitive Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summer Learning Opportunities Information</li><li>• Academic activities</li><li>• Contests/competitions</li><li>• Extended Learning Activities</li><li>• Acceleration</li><li>• Curriculum Modification</li></ul>
Affective Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Affective groups – all identified Challenge 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be placed in affective discussion groups to meet on a regular basis throughout the school year.</li><li>• 1:1 counseling or small group counseling</li><li>• Contests and competitions</li></ul>
Collaboration and Consulting with classroom teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The middle school Challenge coordinator will collaborate with the classroom teachers to differentiate curriculum for identified students in areas of strength.</li><li>• Student events and conference coordination</li><li>• Collaborative/consultative teaching models</li></ul>

## ***Overview of High School GT Programming***

The Challenge program at the high school involves opportunities in cognitive and affective growth based upon interests, and needs.

### **METHODS OF IDENTIFICATION:**

**SUBJECTIVE:**            **Self, peer or teacher nomination.**

**OBJECTIVE:**           **General Intellectual ID:**  
97% (NPR) or better in at least two of the three core areas of reading, mathematics, and/or science.  
MAP Test

**Core Area ID**  
The student fulfills two categories Challenge application.  
The areas are two standardized test score in a single subject showing 97% (NPR).  
MAP  
Display an authentic assessment of specific ability, talent, or aptitude.  
Targeted interests and/or high motivation may be considered.

**All identified students will have Personalized Education Plans (PEP).**

### **Student at Risk**

Students possessing high ability but may have identified disabilities, life challenges, underachieving, or are “twice exceptional,” and therefore, may be considered at risk. These students may be recruited for involvement in hopes that adequate academic challenge and/or affective support will assist the student towards school success.

## *High School Quick Reference*

<b>High School</b>	
Cognitive Programming	Seminars Acceleration Special Interest Groupings Contests/competitions Summer learning opportunities communicated Academic activities - independent studies, enrichment, curriculum adjustment Subject-specific or interest-based curriculum materials - college search/resume/college essay, standardized test preparation, Curriculum modification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Concurrent classes</li> <li>▪ Curriculum compacting</li> <li>▪ Unit adaptations</li> <li>▪ Adaptations for summer learning/coursework</li> <li>▪ Pre-requisite adjustments</li> <li>▪ Independent study</li> <li>▪ Post-secondary options</li> <li>▪ Dual credit</li> <li>▪ Iowa AP on-line academy</li> <li>▪ On-line courses</li> </ul> In-class teacher differentiation Mentorships
Affective Programming	G/T reading materials Test preparation Seminars 1:1 Counseling or small group counseling College/Career planning Alumni and community mentors Extended learning opportunities Individual learning opportunities
Collaboration and consulting with classroom teacher	Enrichment activities Curriculum compacting Unit adaptations Possibility of unit pullout Student events and conference coordination Specialized testing Course telescoping Collaborative/Consultative teaching model

## *Acceleration Guidelines*

Some gifted and talented students may be so advanced in knowledge and clearly operating at an intellectual level beyond that of their peers that educational acceleration is a realistic and desirable alternative to normal grade level work. These students are capable of learning at a faster pace and in greater depth than their age cohorts. Spencer Schools will use the Belin Acceleration Scale. The web site is:

[http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/resources/policy\\_guidelines/Acceleration%20Guidelines%20short.pdf](http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/resources/policy_guidelines/Acceleration%20Guidelines%20short.pdf)

### *Criteria*

A student being considered for early entrance, grade skipping, and/or grade subject acceleration should meet all of the following criteria and follow the implementation procedures.

- Student should demonstrate superior skills two (2) grade levels above his/her current grade placement
- Student should demonstrate a high degree of persistence/motivation.
- Student should demonstrate superior intellectual abilities/talents.

### *Procedures*

1. Referral to the principal by parent or teacher for consideration
2. A recommendation that the child have completed at least three (3) weeks in the present grade.
3. A child study team will review the child's academic, emotional and social behavior. This team may consist of the classroom teacher involved, building principal, parent/guardian, counselor and the gifted education coordinator.
4. The Iowa Acceleration Scale may be a tool used for assessment.
5. A conference will be held with the above team to share information and reach a decision on the appropriate placement of the child.
6. Following the conference, the written report will be placed in the student's cumulative and GT folder.
7. Parents/guardians make final decision based upon the information that has been gathered.
8. Follow-up to Acceleration: Immediately after the child study team recommends acceleration, a personal educational plan will be written for the student. All acceleration programming will be on a trial basis. The plan will include as follows:
  - a. a description of the placement and growth goal
  - b. a plan and schedule for monitoring the student's progress

The child study team will hold a conference following the placement for the purpose of assessing the student's progress. The team will recommend the following:

- a. that the student continue in the current placement
- b. that the student be returned to the previous placement
- c. that the student be moved to a more accelerated placement
- d. that the student be provided with alternative curricular adjustments

## *Acceleration Options*

Early Entrance to School: A gifted student who shows readiness to perform schoolwork enters kindergarten or first grade one year earlier than the usual beginning age.

Grade Skipping: The student is moved ahead of normal grade placement. This may be done during an academic year or at the end of the year.

Subject Acceleration: The student is placed for a part of the day with students at more advanced grade levels for one or more subjects without being assigned to a higher grade. This may involve a student moving between buildings daily or weekly. In this case, teams from both buildings need to plan appropriate programming.

Curriculum Compacting: The regular curriculum of any or all subjects is tailored to the specific needs of a student. Through the use of pretests, the student's previously mastered skills and content are determined and instruction focuses only on mastery of deficient areas resulting in reduced amounts of drill and review. The time saved may be used to move faster through the curriculum or to pursue alternate activities.

Grade Telescoping: A student's progress is organized to shorten the time. Work is mastered at a faster pace. This shortens the time for completion of middle school or high school.

Concurrent Enrollment: A student attends classes in more than one building level during the school year (e.g. high school for part of the day and middle school for the remainder.)

Concurrent Classes: A student simultaneously attends two classes during the same period. (Example: taking two foreign languages at the same time)

Post-secondary Enrollment: The student, after successfully completing all course work in a subject offered by the district, enrolls in classes at a postsecondary institution while still attending high school.

Advanced Placement: The student takes courses with advanced or accelerated content (usually at the secondary level) in order to test out of or receive credit for the completion of college-level work.

Mentorships: The student is placed with a subject matter expert or professional to further a specific interest or proficiency, which cannot be provided for within the regular educational setting.

Note: Acceleration options are not limited to the above programs.

Notes: PEP on file in the G/T office in each building