

Mountain Home Public Schools



Gifted and Talented Education GATE: An Overview

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MHPS Gifted Education Program and Practices

Gifted children are as different from each other as they are from other children. They need differing amounts of homogeneous grouping at various stages of development, and as their interests change. No single program option can ever meet all of the needs of all gifted children. One constant however, set by the State Department of Education, is that gifted education programs must be in place to meet with identified gifted students for a total of 150 minutes a week during the regular school day.

GATE is systematically developed, with long-range goals that are coordinated to guide the development of gifted students from the time they are identified through graduation from high school. There is consistency among the program's components and curriculum objectives. Evaluation procedures are based on the district's philosophy of education.

Program alternatives will include a combination of enrichment (experiences which supplement the regular curriculum), acceleration (activities designed to allow students to progress at a faster than average rate), and guidance (planned activities that promote understanding of the self and one's relationship to others). The Mountain Home GATE program strives to be innovative in designing programs that combine these elements in ways that best meet the needs of our gifted students.

In whatever form the program for the gifted is organized, there is a clear delineation of roles, responsibilities, and coordination procedures.
Grades K-2 MH Kindergarten and Nelson-Wilks Herron

A. Whole Group Enrichment: A licensed teacher of the gifted works with the classroom teacher to

design enrichment curriculum for the whole class. This option is considered long-term identification and therefore a portfolio should be maintained to document student(s) actions/responses. The delivery of services to students must be at least 30 minutes a week. The approved teacher of the gifted and the classroom teacher may organize teaching responsibilities as needed. Kindergarten Teachers have been trained in Talents Unlimited. Talents Unlimited Training (official 2-day workshop) is an Arkansas Department of Education ADE approved differentiation workshop.

Grades 3-7 Hackler Intermediate and Pinkston Middle School

Pull-out Programs and/or Gifted Education Resource Rooms

Gifted Education Resource Rooms Grades 3-7: Gifted students may participate in homogeneous classes in which they receive instructional services different from those normally provided in the regular classroom. They have the opportunity to work at the level of their abilities and in their area of interest or talent. Instruction is delivered by a licensed teacher of the gifted.

The recommended class size is 10-12 students.

Grades 7-9 Pinkston Middle School and Mountain Home Junior High

A. Pre-Advanced Placement Classes starting at grade 7: According to the College Board: Pre-AP classes are based on two important premises. The first is the expectation that all students can perform well at rigorous academic levels. All students are consistently being challenged to expand their knowledge and skills to the next level. The second important premise of Pre-AP is the belief that the middle and high school years can

provide a powerful opportunity to help all students acquire the knowledge, concepts, and skills needed to engage in a higher level of learning. **Class sizes are consistent with state standards.**

B. Special class/ Grade 8-12: Identified students will meet once a week with an approved teacher of the gifted for enrichment and affective needs. This class will help identified students to transition into advanced placement coursework in the absence of other program options. **Recommended number of students per period is 15-20.**

C. AP Courses:

According to the College Board: AP courses are taught by highly qualified high school teachers who use the AP Course Descriptions to guide them. The Course Description for each discipline outlines the course content, describes the curricular goals of the subject, and provides sample examination questions. AP teachers have the flexibility to determine how this content is presented.

D. College Board Advanced Placement:

Students have the opportunity to pursue college-level studies while still in secondary school through a high school preparatory course for a College Board Advanced Placement test that incorporates all topics specified by the College Board and Educational Testing Service on its standard syllabus for a given subject area and is approved by the College Board and Educational Testing Service.

Recommended class size is 17-20.

Extra Curricular Activities for GATE Students

Grades K

- Junior First Lego League
<http://www.usfirst.org>

Grades 1-2

- Chess Club (2nd grade)
- Junior First Lego League
<http://www.usfirst.org>
- Odyssey of the Mind

Grades 3

- Odyssey of the Mind
- Project Fair
- Spelling Bee
- Chess Club
- Science Fair at Melbourne Cooperative (CO-OP)
- Junior First Lego League
<http://www.usfirst.org>

Grade 4-8

- Project Fair
- National Geography Bee
www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee
- Future Problem Solving
www.fpspi.org
- Odyssey of the Mind
- Spelling Bee
- Quiz Bowl
- First Lego League
<http://www.usfirst.org>

Grades 6-7

- Literacy Fair at Pinkston Middle School
- Junior Olympic Engineering Competition
- Odyssey of the Mind

- Spelling Bee
- Quiz Bowl
- First Lego League
<http://www.usfirst.org>
- St. Jude's Math-A-Thon (in the spring)
- Near Space Balloon Satellite Launch

Grades 8-9

- Odyssey of the Mind
- Spelling Bee
- Quiz Bowl
- First Lego League Grade 8
<http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprogram/s/fll/default.aspx?id=970>
- First Robotics Competition Grade 9
<http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprogram/s/frc/default.aspx?id=966>
- Math competition Grade 8 (Algebra)

Grades 10-12

- Quiz Bowl
- First Robotics Competition
<http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprogram/s/frc/default.aspx?id=966>
- Arkansas Governor's School
- Arkansas Girls State
- Arkansas Boys State
- National Honors Society

Identification Process and Procedures Overview

The identification procedures for the GATE program were developed in accordance with the Arkansas Department of Education Program

Approval Standards. We meet or exceed the rules and regulations set forth by the Arkansas Department of Education.

Instruments and procedures used in this process are non-discriminatory with respect to race, cultural or economic background, religion, national origin, gender or handicapping condition.

Identification of students for our GATE program consists of **school-wide screening, nomination, assessment and placement.**

Screening

Standardized test scores are reviewed for the whole population annually.

Nomination

The guiding principles of the nomination process are as follows:

- A. Each student will be allowed the opportunity for consideration into the GATE program on an annual basis.
- B. Special efforts will be made to ensure the adequate representation of minority, underachieving, culturally diverse, as well as, creative students.
- C. Nominations may be made by parents or other family members, teachers, counselors, administrators, community members, peers or the student themselves.
- D. Students new to the district that were formally placed in a G/T program in another district will be retested if the testing data is more than two years old, or if different from the Mountain Home GATE Program testing.

- E. If a student has been nominated and has already been tested for the program, testing data will be used if the data is two years old or less. If testing data is more than two years old, the child will be retested for consideration.

*Students that transfer will only be provisionally placed in the program if the same or similar test measures were used. Otherwise, the transfer will be brought before the G/T Placement Committee before being placed in the program.

Windows of Nomination

The nomination window is as follows:

We accept nominations throughout the school year. The placement committee meets in December and May to make placement decisions.

Assessment

The assessment process consists of collecting and compiling data on students to facilitate decision-making for the placement of students in need of gifted education services.

Parental consent in writing of individual testing is required before any assessment can begin. Parents will be sent a letter from central office along with a brochure about the GATE Program. A procedure for placement decisions based on multi-criteria, including both objective and subjective data, with the stipulation that no single criterion or cut-off score is used to include or exclude a student.

Data collected will consist of at least two (2) objective assessment methods, and at least two (2) subjective assessment methods.

The placement decision will be made by a placement committee after consideration of the following three criteria:

1. The student's individual educational needs
2. The student's potential benefit from participation in the program
3. The student's performance on the assessment instruments

A PLACEMENT COMMITTEE comprised of at least five members of the following personnel will make the final decision:

- a) Specialist(s) in gifted education
- b) Regular classroom teacher
- c) Counselor
- d) Administrator
- e) GATE Director

The PLACEMENT COMMITTEE will utilize all the accumulated information available on each student. Any additional information requested by the committee will be obtained as soon as possible. (No one item will be considered a decisive factor in the placement of a student in the GATE program) The PLACEMENT COMMITTEE, after due consideration, will determine each child's status. The committee has three options to consider.

1. Placing the student
2. Probationary placement (reviewed at the end of the semester)
3. No placement at this time, the student will remain in the regular classroom.

Curriculum

In accordance with the Arkansas Department of Education Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards, the curriculum of the Mountain Home Gifted and Talented Education program 1) is an extension of the regular classroom, 2) is differentiated in content, process and/or product, 3) has a scope and sequence to assure continuity, and 4) uses materials and resources that are appropriate for differentiated learning.

Curriculum follows the Gifted and Talented State Frameworks:

Strand 1: Creative Thinking

- a) Fluency
- b) Originality
- c) Flexibility
- d) Elaboration
- e) Curiosity
- f) Imagination

Strand 2: Critical Thinking

- a) Analysis
- b) Synthesis
- c) Evaluation
- d) Problem Solving

Strand 3: Research/Independent Learning

- a) Select/Develop Topic
- b) Data Collection
- c) Organizing/Analyzing Data
- d) Presentation and Evaluation of Product

Strand 4: Communication

- a) Verbal
- b) Non-verbal
- c) Written
- d) Listening

Strand 5: Affective Development

- a) Self Concept
- b) Interpersonal Relations
- c) Personal decision Making
- d) Risk Taking
- e) Leadership
- f) Survival Skills

For information on how to get involved at the state level:

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Hillcrest Station
Little Rock, AR 72225
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