Gifted/Talented 3-Year Plan

Kendrick Joint School District #283

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A. PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT:

Please describe how your school/district mission, vision, core values relate to the education specifically of gifted students. Include information on the following:

a) How do gifted children's needs vary from the general population in your district?
b) How do approaches to teaching gifted children employ best practice?
c) How do approaches to teaching gifted children relate to Idaho Core Standards?
d) Other pertinent information

Kendrick School District mission statement is "Preparing today's students for the challenges of tomorrow." Further, "the district believes that each student is a valued individual with unique intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs. Student growth and learning is a top priority for our school. We are responsible to help each student strive for excellence and instill a desire to reach his or her fullest potential…" When we meet the need students who are capable of "more and greater" than the general student population we can have assurance of meeting this challenge. Educators of the gifted understand the effects of gifts and talents on an individual's learning. That is, they understand the influences of diversity factors, academic and affective needs, idiosyncratic learning patterns, beliefs, traditions, and values on an individual's inclination to learn and commit to being skillful and versatile in using this understanding to provide meaningful and challenging learning.

As with students in the general population, as well as among the special education population, teachers who teach the gifted and talented demonstrate strategies that provide optimal learning opportunities for their students. Teachers use known techniques to modify the lesson (or unit) using appropriate strategies, adjusting content and pacing to differentiate for students who are gifted and talented. Educators (of the gifted) actively create and shape learning environments that support the unique characteristics and needs of all learners (including gifted learners).

Educators use knowledge of curriculum and instruction and knowledge of needs and characteristics of all learners to align, design, develop, and select curricula, using state academic common core standards in content areas to design differentiated learning plans, given the diverse

backgrounds of their student populations. They also use assessment to make decisions regarding learning progress.

Just as teachers need knowledge and skills in working with special needs students, they also strive to learn more of gifted education, since gifted students are part of general education classes. Teachers play a significant role in student development, showing responsiveness to individual learner needs and for knowing about the learner as an individual.

B. DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS:

"Gifted and talented children" means those students who are identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performing capabilities in intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership areas, or ability in the performing or visual arts and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities.

a) Intellectual: Intellectual – as evidenced by superior aptitude for a) understanding facts, concepts, generalizations and their relationships, b) identifying patterns, c) verbal and nonverbal reasoning, d) spatial perceptions, and e) developing and evaluating ideas. Goal: To help students expand their intellectual abilities and interests, and their modes of responding to their environment. Students will: Reason, identify patterns and evaluate ideas and products; Solve puzzles, play chess, use computer programs, etc.; participate in spatial perception activities (designing and building); and develop research skills.
b) Academic Area: Specific Academic – as evidenced by superior ability in mastering skills and concepts in one or more curriculum areas. Goal: To help students pursue academic interests in depth. Could include compacting the curriculum and providing opportunities for students to accelerate. Students will: explore topics of interest more in-depth; participate in activities that enrich and extend content areas; and/or study multiple disciplines that have broad-based issues.
c) Creativity: Creativity – as evidenced by superior abilities in a) fluency, flexibility, originality elaboration, b) divergent thinking skills, and c) problem solving strategies. Goal: To provide a wide range of opportunities and experiences to allow individuals to experiment, take risks, be creative (fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration) within the curriculum. Students challenge existing ideas and produce "new" ideas; and work on open-ended tasks, group or individual projects>
d) Leadership: Leadership – as evidenced by a variety of superior characteristics, including a) responsibility, b) rapid insight into cause-effect relationships, c)interpersonal intuition, and d) ability to motivate performances of others. Goal: To help students fulfill their potential as leaders in our society. Students will: participate in school organizations; volunteer and meet needs of community; lead a group of people; and develop self-understanding and assist others in the process.
e) Visual and Performing Arts: Visual and Performing Arts – as evidenced by a superior aptitude for demonstrating, typically through exhibition or performance, aesthetic, critical, historical and production aspects of dance, music, theater or the visual arts. Goal: To provide opportunities nad experiences to allow G/T students to develop their

abilities in specific areas (painting, sculpture, film, dance, the theater, music). Students will: perform in musical and theatrical productions; take lessons and strive toward excellence in specific artistic domains; and/or study historical, aesthetic and critical accounts in specific artistic domains.

C. PROGRAM GOALS:

Please describe the current status of gifted education in you district and you goals for improvement in the coming three years. How might professional development assist personnel improve their delivery of gifted education? What options for gifted students need expansion? What needs might you identify in you district regarding the gifted program? In what ways will improved instruction in gifted education relate to best practice in general for district personnel?

Kendrick Joint School District (Kendrick Jr/Sr High School and Juliaetta Elementary School) includes staff members who currently work hard to find ways to differentiate the curriculum and provide learning at students' optimum learning levels. There are also times when teachers have so much on their plate that it is difficult to consistently plan for differentiating lessons.

Goals for improvement include more differentiation of instruction. While teachers have ideas, it is difficult to practically employ it in the classroom, between helping with behavior of some students, assisting low functioning students and classroom management. Differentiation in the classroom will become a greater focus of professional development, since it has application for all types of students…those who need simpler (most special needs students are now served in the classroom), those who need more complex challenges (gifted and talented). And those who need different styles of learning (i.e. kinesthetic learners). Best practices show that teachers can use differentiation to drive home learning for all types of learners.

D. PROGRAM OPTIONS:

Elementary: (K-6)
Elementary students who are gifted-talented receive services in the classroom in the form of differentiated instruction, as teachers can incorporate that into their instruction.

Some students who need individualized math at a higher level than his/her classmates, for instance, have opportunity to take an online math class that provides challenge at their achievement level (typically upper elementary). Some student's needs are met by working on projects that further develop a subject that class has been studying.

There are also opportunities to meet with others who are also gifted to plan and carry out volunteer projects (in the past they have planned a science fair, mentored younger students, and read to kindergarten students).

Students at the elementary and early junior high school have taken more advanced math (if that is their area of strength) via computer program that teaches them at their optimum pace.

Beyond these opportunities students at both buildings have social get-togethers (lunches or breakfasts) to discuss projects and volunteering their time, as a group and individually.

Junior High/High School: 7-12
Students at the secondary level have opportunities to take advanced or above-grade level classes (i.e. Algebra I, as an eighth grader), or take an online (IDLA or college class) in a subject, sometimes getting both high school and college credit. In addition students may take a dual credit class taught by Kendrick teachers (Advanced Math/Calculus, Advanced English, etc.). While Advanced Placement Exams and credit are not offered at Kendrick high School, many of our students qualify to take a higher level of English in college because they score high enough on their ACT tests (that they don't have to take freshman English).

E. IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES:

Screening Processes:

a) Teacher referral
b) Parent referral
c) Other referral means
d) Types of screening testing (list specific screening tools)
e) Eligibility
f) Criteria for Placement in gifted programs

- Standardized test scores are screened. When students have advanced scores at 2-3 grade levels advanced, they are flagged as possible candidates for further assessment.
- Some referrals come from the classroom teacher or from a parent
- Checklists are completed by the parent and a teacher
- If/when a student appears to be a candidate for further assessment, they could be administered an intellectual measure or an academic measure.
- When a student is referred for leadership, creativity or visual/performing arts there are ratings to complete, portfolios, and/or recommendations from professionals.
- If the referral is academic, then an individual achievement assessment is administered and scores in a standard area or a composite are to be at least in the 90th percentile to be considered.
- If the referral looks to be overall achievement or intellectual then an intellectual assessment is given and scores in a least the 90th percentile are sought and considered with other data: ratings, etc. If they don't qualify intellectually, they are sometimes given some academic assessments to determine an area of strength or giftedness.
- Tools include: Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fifth Edition (WISC-V), Woodcock Johnson IV Tests of Cognitive Abilities, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement, rating forms, referral forms

F. PROGRAM EVALUATION

a) Types of surveys administered in the district (e.g. attitudinal surveys given to parents, students, and district personnel) and how the results are used for improvement.

Kendrick Staff complete surveys for other programs, so it seems a good step to adjust on or more surveys to include Gifted/Talented attitudes and successes.

b) Longitudinal data tracking (e.g. how the district follows students through their educational career in the district and how they perform in secondary school and post-secondary school; drop-out rates of identified elementary gifted students when they reach secondary school).

There will be more gathering information from grades, leadership and classroom performance to determine how students fare when they transition from elementary to secondary; in addition, exit surveys and post-secondary interviews of Kendrick-Juliaetta Gifted-Talented students will be conducted to better address program needs.

c) Other means of evaluation

ISAT scores, Smarter Balanced Assessment and other district/statewide testing will be examined or tracked to see if trends are indicative of growth in the gifted/talented population.

Please rank your district's four (4) most pressing needs concerning gifted education: number in order of importance, with #1 having the highest priority:

1. Continue to provide opportunities to observe/study/research project learning and other differentiation of instruction

2. Professional development for general educators in GT best practice

3. Funds supporting gifted education

4. Resources, curriculum, consumable materials