

Achieve Community Charter School

534 Clinton Ave | Newark, NJ | 07108

973-556-7070

Gifted and Talented Programming

Introduction

Students will be identified for acceleration under the network's gifted model. This model is for students who demonstrate advanced academic skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication in the language arts and mathematics subject matter areas. The students may show skills in developing innovative products that reflect individuality and creativity at an advanced level when compared to his/her/their peers. The goal is to offer differentiated instructional opportunities for maximum growth every school year. All teachers work closely with students, parents, and administrators to ensure challenging opportunities to maximize student achievement.

Definition of Giftedness

The NJDOE defines gifted students as: Those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities. For the network, giftedness is guided by the principles of differentiation of instruction by the classroom teachers. Differentiated instruction is a way of teaching that allows teachers to customize their instruction, activities and assessments to meet the needs of all learners. All teachers are required to differentiate instruction within their classrooms and to leverage the built in structures within the academic model to accelerate learning for all students.

Screening & Identification

The identification of gifted students is an ongoing process extending from grades kindergarten through twelve and is built into the regular academic program. Data gathered from standardized academic assessments and network administered assessments are used to identify a student as gifted. Once identified for the gifted program, students are not required to go through an annual qualifying process unless students demonstrate difficulty with the program of service provided. No single criterion or score is used to exclude a student from being identified. Identification procedures will be analyzed annually to avoid any type of discrimination. In keeping with the state mandate that every district Board of Education shall adopt policies and procedures to identify the intellectually gifted and talented students enrolled in its public schools and provide such students with an appropriate educational program opportunity pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A: 8-3.1(a)(5) and district philosophy to provide inclusionary programs for all students. Students will be nominated for the academically talented program according to the

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multiple identification criteria summarized below. At the current time, English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (Math) are the two content areas offered to gifted students.

- Grades K-8 Criterion (ELA and Math):
 - MAP percentile results in ELA and Math to determine competence in those subjects
 - Interim assessments in ELA and Math to determine local achievement in standards
 - STEP Assessment (grades K-3)
 - State Assessment (NJSLA) Results (grades 3-8)
 - Teacher inventory of learning and motivation characteristics to determine task commitment

Implementation Timeline

- Spring 2021 - students complete end of year assessments; data is analyzed and gifted students are identified based on identified criteria; students and families are identified to be enrolled in the program (pending in person test administration)
- Summer 2021 - all teachers received professional development in Gifted and Talented programming, including strategies outlined in program components. Teachers will also receive a list of those students identified as eligible for gifted and talented programming
- Fall 2021 - teachers integrate gifted student enrichment in the general education classroom to those students eligible for the program. Principals conference with students and families identified as eligible for gifted and talented programming

Program Components

The network/school will provide a continuum of services for the gifted learner, designed to address specific needs and levels of giftedness from Kindergarten through grade 12. Gifted programming options are provided during the regular school schedule.

- **Kindergarten through Grade 1**

Students identified as gifted learners in the primary grades will receive enrichment programming in the general education classroom. Extensions will include adjustments to the curriculum for students who have already mastered grade level material that

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enhance critical and creative thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving strategies through small group instruction and individualized online platforms.

- **Grades 2-8**

Students in elementary and the middle grades will receive enrichment programming in the general education classroom. Enrichment programming may include critical and creative thinking, logical reasoning, and problem-solving strategies. Learners will have the opportunity to engage in non-graded learning environments, both traditional and virtual, that offer differentiated content that incorporates advanced, conceptually challenging, in-depth, distinctive and complex content for gifted students. Students identified as advanced learners in grades 4-8 may engage in both independent and group enrichment programming during Independent Learning Time periods

- **Differentiated Instruction**

All general education classrooms will provide differentiated instruction to ensure that all students meet their highest potential. Differentiation will consist of carefully planned, coordinated learning experiences in ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science that extend the core curriculum, combine the curricular strategies of enrichment and integrate instructional strategies that engage learners at appropriate levels of challenge.

School Based Coordinator

Each principal will identify a school based Gifted and Talented Coordinator who is responsible for:

- Reviewing eligibility criteria for students, based on established timeline
- Developing Gifted and Talented plan for each eligible student, including specific goals
- Professionally developing teachers in differentiation strategies and enrichment within the general education classroom
- Monitor the performance of students identified as gifted

Notification of Acceptance and Participation

When a student has been identified as gifted or talented, the Principal and/or the coordinator may:

- Conference with the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) on the goals of the student's program and secure the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) cooperation and permission for the student's participation in the program,

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- Interview each selected student for additional information about the student and for guidance in establishing an enriched educational program for the student,
- Confer with the student's teacher about a proposed educational program for the student, and
- Prepare and present to the parent for approval a written educational plan for the student.

Complaint Process

Any person or group with a legitimate interest in Achieve Community Charter School may present a request, suggestion, or complaint concerning the Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act Program.

The complaint shall include: the name, address, and contact information of the complainant. Letters should identify at least one criterion from the information pertaining to the Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act (A4710)

Complaints regarding the district's adherence to the conditions outlined in the law shall be submitted to the building principal. All complaints shall be reviewed according to established procedures. In those cases in which satisfactory adjustment cannot be made by the principal or the staff, those complaints shall be referred to the Chief School Administrator and then the Board for resolution. If the complaint is not resolved it will then be sent to the executive county superintendent alleging that noncompliance has occurred within one year prior to the date that the complaint was submitted.