

Talented and Gifted Program

Parent Handbook

Jamestown Public School District #1

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Jamestown Public School District's Mission Statement

"Engaging students with challenging and innovative experiences to prepare them for future success."

Jamestown Public School District's Vision Statement

Jamestown Public Schools supports a safe, educationally rigorous and collaborative environment. Our vision is to prepare students for tomorrow's challenges by practicing skills such as collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. We believe all students should have personalized, authentic experiences that integrate with the community for meaningful learning. As an essential contributor to the growth of our student's intellectual, social, and personal well-being, we will positively impact our community and society.

The Talented and Gifted Program

The Talented and Gifted (TAG) Program is designed to offer academic opportunities and educational services to students in grades 2-5. These students, because of their academic aptitude, require additional academic services beyond which is offered in the regular classroom and curriculum.

Philosophy

Jamestown Public Schools is committed to providing learning experiences for all learners that build on their individual strengths and optimize their abilities. The potential of students who have been identified as talented and gifted need to be recognized and addressed. These students exhibit unusual performance and capability in intellectual and/or creative endeavors. They may also demonstrate a strong sense of task commitment. We recognize that gifted students possess superior abilities and/or potential and are, therefore, a unique segment of the student population. If gifted students are to develop their abilities and/or potential, they need ongoing and varied educational opportunities to extend their learning.

Definition of Gifted Learners

Gifted learners are: students, children, or youth who give evidence or show potential of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific fields.

Qualifications of a North Dakota Talented and Gifted Teacher

North Dakota requires that teachers of the talented and gifted complete a 17 credit gifted and talented endorsement in addition to holding an elementary teaching license.

Importance of the Talented and Gifted Program

- Identifies students in need of intellectual, academic, and creative acceleration and enrichment.
- Provides services to enhance students' unique abilities, talents, interests, and personal/social emotional needs.
- Offers students opportunities to aspire to reach high academic achievement.
- Stimulates talented and gifted students' intellectual and creative curiosity.

Curriculum

Students participating in the TAG Program meet one hour per subject a week at their home schools. Students learn an alternative curriculum, separate from that in their regular classroom, while maintaining core curriculum skills in the classroom.

Goals

The goal of JPS Talented and Gifted Program is to provide a differentiated, enriched academic environment for students with advanced learning abilities. Therefore, the Talented and Gifted Program goals are to:

- provide new and challenging learning experiences that may not be included in the regular curriculum.
- develop advanced and abstract understanding of knowledge beyond regular grade level expectations.
- develop reasoning abilities as well as critical, creative, and problem-solving skills.
- develop critical thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application.
- develop competency in sharing ideas, information, and products in a variety of ways.
- help students become more independent learners.
- enable gifted students to interact with and challenge other students who have similar abilities and interests.
- work in a variety of settings that help develop independence as well as skills to work cooperatively with adults and peers.
- participate in projects that reflect the supplemental learning acquired in the pull-out program.

Identification Tools

Students in second through fifth grade are eligible to qualify for the Talented and Gifted Program through the following criteria:

- To measure academic progress, the FastBridge assessment program is used. FastBridge is an academic benchmark assessment is given to all students, grades K-5, 3 times each year.
- Student portfolios put together from the classroom teacher that include work examples, conversations they had with the student, and anything else that applies.
- Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS) help determine students' strengths in the areas of learning, motivation, creativity, mathematics, and reading. The SRBCSS is given to students who are teacher recommended or those who score high on standardized tests.
- Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students(SAGES) it is a group administered ability and achievement instrument used to identify students who are gifted in academics and reasoning.
- Parent Questionnaire provides insight from parents on 14 general types of interests or activity areas.

Identification Process

1. The classroom teacher will collect examples of student work, conversations they had with the student, and anything else that applies to helping the TAG teacher understand what the general education teacher is seeing.
2. The classroom teacher will fill out the SRBCSS checklists for each student who scores in the 95th percentile or higher on the FastBridge assessment or was recommended by the classroom teacher.
3. The classroom teacher, talented and gifted teacher, and/or the building administrator will analyze each student's checklist.
4. Qualified students will then spend time (usually 4-8 hours) individually and/or in a small group with the talented and gifted teacher to determine eligibility for the program.
5. If a student is not identified through the FastBridge assessment or the SRBCSS checklists the parents may fill out the Parent Questionnaire. If the questionnaire indicates talented and gifted attributes, the SAGES-2 may then be administered to the student with parent permission. The SAGES-2 will determine if the student is eligible for the program.
6. Parent/Guardian approval will be needed for admission to the program.

Classroom Work

When students are in the talented and gifted classroom, these students are exempt from work completed at that time in the regular classroom.

Requirements of Classroom Grades

It is of utmost importance that students are succeeding in the regular classroom and that classroom work comes before TAG. If a student's grade does drop below a B in the academic area in which he/she is being pulled out for TAG, the student will take a break from TAG until the grade is up to an A or B. For example, if a student is in TAG for math, we will only look at their math grade in the regular classroom. This policy can take affect any time throughout the year. The classroom teacher will notify the TAG teacher of low grades. We want to make sure that TAG is not taking away from classroom work and making it a struggle for your child to succeed.

Dismissal and Appeal Process

When a student is identified as talented and gifted, he/she does not automatically carry that distinction with them throughout elementary school. Each student who is identified will be reviewed every year to establish whether or not they should continue to receive services. Parents will receive a letter at the beginning of each school year stating the student's status in the TAG Program.

In cases where a student is not showing adequate growth, is unable to accomplish work, or wishes to part ways with the Talented and Gifted Program for some reason, he/she may be dismissed. In the future, re-admission into the program is possible, even if a dismissal occurs. If any stakeholder (parents/guardians, teacher(s), student, administrator(s)) disagrees with the dismissal of a student from the TAG program, he/she can make an appeal. The appeal process is initiated by sending a letter directly to the Talented and Gifted Coordinator, Luke Anderson, stating the nature of your concern. Upon request, the SAGES-2 will be administered to the student with parent approval. If the student passes the SAGES-2, he/she will then be readmitted to the program.