

Cedar Unified School District #25 Gifted Education Program Design

Stanford University Pre-Collegiate Studies, DISCOVER Problem Solving, and
International Baccalaureates Schools.

Arizona Department of Education - Definition of a Gifted Student:

A gifted pupil is one who is of lawful school age, who due to superior intellect or advanced learning ability, or both, is not afforded an opportunity for otherwise attainable progress and development in regular classroom instruction and who needs appropriate gifted education services, to achieve at levels commensurate with the child's intellectual ability.

Further, we define a gifted child as one who learns more quickly and is capable of a higher level of work than his or her peers in one or more of:

- the **Nine areas of Multiple Intelligence identified by Howard Gardner:** *logical-mathematical, linguistic, visual-spatial, body-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and existential.* We recognize students may simultaneously be gifted in a certain area or areas, and challenged in other areas by disabilities, exceptionalities, or the process of English language learning.
- and **DISCOVER Problem Solving - The DISCOVER Projects (Discovering Intellectual Strengths and Capabilities while Observing Varied Ethnic Responses) under the direction of Dr. C. June Maker at the University of Arizona.** *Dr. Maker had been analyzing various new theories of intelligence, the most notable of which was Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. She also had been studying groups of gifted children, as well as successful scientists who had overcome disabilities, to isolate factors contributing to exceptional success. She eventually determined that the most important component of exceptional success was the superior ability to solve complex problems. The DISCOVER Projects were created to study, categorize, and measure a broad spectrum of "problem solving strategies" used by various age groups of differing ethnic, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Dr. Maker has worked closely with and continues to work in collaboration with Harold G. Begay, Ph.D. in this area of gifted education since 1990. Dr. Begay has been recognized and honored by the AZ State Department of Education and the Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented as the Administrator of the Year for his work and commitment to gifted education. Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented (AAGT) is a nonprofit organization of educators, parents and community members working together to better meet the unique needs of our gifted and talented students in Arizona.*

Philosophy and Purpose of Gifted Education:

As a Professional Development School, the purpose of our **Cedar Unified School District Gifted Education Program** is to empower gifted students to reach their full potential. In order to accomplish this we effectively address these areas:

- Identification of giftedness of students at all grade levels
- Initial assessment of the needs of individual gifted students in both Navajo and English languages
- Placement in accelerated learning environments that are principally technology-based.
- Provision of differentiated instruction to meet individual student needs
- Ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of this differentiated instructions for individual gifted students and effectiveness of the program as a whole.

Program Design and Goals:

Provide direct opportunities for gifted students through pullout and advanced technology based coursework courses from *Stanford University Pre-Collegiate Studies, The Stanford International Institutes, the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE), DISCOVER Problem Solving, and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Schools Mission, Philosophy, and Practices*. This interactive mosaic enriched, engaging educational model and environment, as a theoretical Educational Enrichment (E²) model by Dr. Begay, is provided to all qualified students.

E² provides differentiated instruction for all students within individual classrooms to meet the learning needs of gifted learners.

Train all teachers about the unique needs of gifted students.

“Gifted students are gifted all day, not just for a small segment of that day”, therefore, our Gifted Education Program will provide instruction during the regular school day and during extended class time such as university-based summer school and field trips that achieves the following goals:

- Starts where the student is academically and accelerates the pace of instruction.
- Differentiates instruction, in pace and content, in the gifted student’s classroom to meet the student’s needs.
- Provides opportunities and flexibility for the gifted students to develop and practice higher order thinking skills in an enriched environment.
- Assists gifted students in achieving grade-level skills in all basic academic areas while continuing to excel in their areas of giftedness, as evidenced through multiple assessment modalities.
- Develops each gifted student’s research skills and the ability to organize information obtained through research into meaningful concepts and relationships.
- Allows for in-depth learning of a self-selected topic within an area of study using individual goal setting.
- Develops a positive mindset toward self and learning.
- Integrates content and process learning exhibited through product development.
- Provides opportunities for gifted students to develop speaking and communication skills by sharing with an audience in concert with the *International Baccalaureate (IB) Schools Mission, Philosophy, and Practices*.

- Encourages gifted students to become increasingly responsible, creative and independent learners.
- Develops in gifted learners an awareness about their own giftedness and their relationship with others.
- Establishes a beneficial healthy relationship between students, teachers, and parents.

Grouping and Delivery of Services:

Kindergarten through Grade 2 Students:

- Students are clustered based on academic performance levels within the regular classroom. In Language Arts accelerated students may advance to a grade level or two above their chronological age based on skill acquisition and readiness.
- Students are clustered based on math achievement within the regular classroom. Accelerated students may advance to a grade level or two above their chronological age based on skill acquisition and readiness.
- In all classrooms students are taught using higher-order questioning techniques.
- All students are placed in appropriate reteach or project based enrichment opportunities each month based on skill acquisition this takes place in the extended day.
- Where appropriate, students are tested in oral Navajo articulation and advanced orality in the Navajo language.

Grade 3 through 5 Students:

- Students are clustered based on academic performance levels within the regular classroom. In Language Arts accelerated students may advance to a grade level or two above their chronological age based on skill acquisition and readiness.
- Students are clustered based on math achievement within the regular classroom. Accelerated students may advance to a grade level or two above their chronological age based on skill acquisition and readiness.
- In all classrooms students are taught using higher-order questioning techniques.
- All students are placed in appropriate reteach or project based enrichment opportunities each month based on skill acquisition this takes place in the extended day.
- .Where appropriate, students are tested in oral Navajo articulation and advanced orality.

Grade 6 through 8 Students:

- Students are grouped in content driven courses.
- Students are clustered based in academic performance levels within the regular classroom. In Language Arts accelerated students may advance to a grade level or two above their chronological age based on skill acquisition and readiness.
- Students are clustered based on math achievement within the regular classroom. Accelerated students may advance to a grade level or two above their chronological age based on skill acquisition and readiness.
- In all classrooms students are taught using higher-order questioning techniques.

- All students are placed in appropriate reteach or project based enrichment opportunities each month based on skill acquisition this takes place in the extended.
- Where appropriate, students are tested in oral Navajo articulation and advanced orality. .

Grades 9-12 (In the event that the district institutes a ninth (9th) grade):

- Students are grouped in content driven courses.
- Students are clustered based on academic performance levels within the regular classroom. In Language Arts accelerated students may advance to a grade level or two above their chronological age based on skill acquisition and readiness.
- Students are clustered based on math achievement within the regular classroom. Accelerated students may advance to a grade level or two above their chronological age based on skill acquisition and readiness.
- In all classrooms students are taught using higher-order questioning techniques.
- All students are placed in appropriate reteach or project based enrichment opportunities each month based on skill acquisition this takes place in the extended.
- Where appropriate, students are tested in oral Navajo articulation and advanced orality. .

Curriculum and Instruction

Our gifted program provides enriched curriculum and accelerated pacing within the regular classroom environment and through honors programming. We focus on an enriched core courses environment that includes art and music.

Our curriculum is mapped and vertically aligned to provide enrichment, extended learning, honors and college coursework that is applied in flexible grouping situations. Teachers will be well-trained in flexible grouping where honors curriculum is adhered to.

In conjunction with Beyond Textbooks, we utilize an Assessment Technology Inc. product called Galileo to test for competency both pre- and post-instructional sequences. The following table applies to all grade levels k-12 and provides information on specific objectives for gifted learners within various content areas:

Content Area	Specific Objectives in Differentiation
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show skill in using advanced mathematics concepts and theories. • Demonstrate higher order thinking skills while solving problems by using equations, written explanations, and oral articulation. • Demonstrate the ability to write or solve equations based on a variety of story problems. • Actively engage in investigation with hands-on materials in the discovery of mathematical concepts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move fluidly from the concrete to the abstract in mathematical experiences. • Develop deductive and inductive reasoning skills. • Integrate mathematical processes with investigation in other subject areas. <p>Curricular Materials: Stanford University, DISCOVER, and IB schools advanced educational materials and resources.</p>
Communication Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop creative writing ability including awareness of styles, genres, observation and imagery. • Read critically in order to evaluate written material for content and style as well as appreciation of literature. • Develop listening skills than enhance learning and social relationships as well as oral and written communication. • Develop skills in writing research papers and taking essay exams. • Communicate meaningfully through dance, music, art, and drama, at school plays, art shows, and other presentations. • Learn about different cultures of the world including their dances, songs, literature, and artwork and recognize common interests and values, in particular Native Indigenous populations such as the Ainu people of Japan who are the original inhabitants of Hokkaido and its adjacent areas (including the Kurile Islands and Sakhalin Island) and the Indigenous peoples of South America, Ecaudor and Bolivia. <p>Curricular Materials: Stanford University, DISCOVER, and IB schools advanced educational materials and resources.</p>
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice inquiry method of learning scientific concepts • Apply scientific method in scientific investigations • Work independently as well as collectively during research and investigations • Develop the ability to integrate various scientific concepts into a composite whole • Develop the ability to practice the process of science, i.e.: classify, predict, infer, hypothesize, control and manipulate variables, and experiment. <p>Curricular Materials: Stanford University, DISCOVER, and IB schools advanced educational materials and resources.</p>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a proficiency with a variety of computer software programs such as power point, excel, Microsoft word, publisher

	<p>and use them to synthesize products within various disciplines, or products that integrate elements of various disciplines with sponsorship from SONY Corporation of Japan..</p> <p>Curricular Materials: Stanford University, DISCOVER, and IB schools advanced educational materials and resources.</p>
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop research skills using primary and secondary sources, geographic information, and mathematics skills in social science investigations. • Work independently as well as collectively in research and investigations. <p>Curricular Materials: Stanford University, DISCOVER, and IB schools advanced educational materials and resources.</p>

Identification of Gifted Students

Referral Process:

We identify gifted students by looking at the whole student, not at just one assessment or percentile scores on standardized tests. We are looking for evidence that a student is capable of higher level work than his/her peers or learns more rapidly than his/her peers. Further, we keep records to verify that we are serving underrepresented populations and ELL students at a representative rate.

We screen students for giftedness by examining the following indicators:

- DISCOVER Creative Problem Solving based on NSF Research, “Cultivating Diverse Talent in STEM” (CDTIS), from the University of Arizona where Dr. Begay was one of the Co-PI.
- Norm referenced assessment results which place a student in the 97% or above and can include students between the 94 and 97 percentiles.
- Scores on state approved intelligence tests such as Cogat, Non-verbal Ability test, if requested by parent/s and/or teachers.
- Student grades
- Student, teacher and parent observation input
- Student work portfolios
- Personal interviews
- State Assessment scores
- Performance levels on advanced coursework
- Gifted characteristics checklists

The referral process is multi-faceted and includes:

- Recommendations from parents/staff
- Review of records and answers on student transfer documents
- Transfer students are immediately placed in gifted coursework.
- Announcements/newsletters to parents
- Referrals from counselors, administrators or support staff
- In-service training for all staff and parents
- Program description provided to all stakeholders

Testing/Identification:

- Testing is made available all year long

Communication with Parents and Staff Regarding Referral Process:

- Provided through letters to parents and through student handbooks
- Communicated during informational meetings with parents and staff

Eligibility Determination:

- Communicated through letters
- Communicated in meetings with teacher, parent and administrator
- Focused on data

Social and Emotional Development

The social and emotional needs of gifted learners are addressed in the following ways:

k-2nd grade levels:

- Opportunities exist for grade skipping, flexible grouping, and acceleration by content area
- Provide common learning groupings for English Language Arts and Math
- Provide parent support groups, when requested
- Provide training for teachers
- Plan for experiential learning

3rd-5th grade levels

- Buddy-mentor teaching experiences exist between intermediate and primary students.
- Gifted students are encouraged to participate in leadership opportunities within the classroom and within the school
- Opportunities exist for grade skipping, flexible grouping, and acceleration by content area
- Provide common learning groupings for English Language Arts and Math
- Provide parent support groups, when requested
- Provide training for teachers

- Plan for experiential learning

6th-12th grade:

Students receive direct and indirect services for academic, career, and personal/social development from teachers and counselors in the areas of:

- Study skills
- Stress management
- Self-awareness
- Goal setting
- Career development
- Decision making
- Social skills
- Post-secondary planning

Further, the needs of gifted learners are met through:

- Learning and study groups
- Workshops for teachers regarding developmental needs of gifted students
- Parent nights, when requested and appropriate
- Easy processes for referrals for counseling and other services
- Placement in advanced courses when students are ready to advance
- For upper grades, student exchange program
- EOY Student Projects Presentation Conferences

Professional Development

Professional development for all staff to differentiate instruction for gifted students within the classroom is provided through instructional coaches and annual instructional strategy training from DISCOVER, Stanford University P-CS/SII/SPICE and IB. Our gifted program depends upon continuously educating our entire teaching team on the attributes, needs, and instructional strategies for gifted learners. Our staff practices a ***Growth Mindset Theoretical Model*** which is applicable for the challenged learner and the gifted learner. We have a District focus on enhanced enriched instruction and individualized learning opportunities for all students. Our instructional coaches and principal is led by the Superintendent who are responsible for attending training and providing professional development for all staff as is relates to gifted education, individualized instruction, gifted testing, limitations of standardized testing for gifted, differentiation of instruction, and best instructional practices for gifted learners. An additional focus and emphasis is on applying gifted learner teaching and learning practices for ALL students using Renzulli's SEM.

Cedar Unified District provides:

- Professional development for all staff
- Funding for attendance at relevant conferences

- Advanced instructional materials
- Training for differentiated learning
- Instructional coaches who work with teachers to develop appropriate lessons and strategies for advanced learners
- Support for staff who are working toward obtaining gifted endorsement
- Reteach and Enrichment training for all staff using Beyond Textbooks model which Dr. Begay has employed in K-12 curriculum and instruction with other school districts since 2010.
- Professional development in Differentiation.

Training Feedback:

- Teachers are required to utilize training and implementation of their training in their personal learning plans.

Parent and Community Support and Involvement

- The school is responsive to parent requests for information and for testing of their children.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in the development of an individual learning plan for their gifted students.
- Parents are welcome partners on field trips and in the classroom.
- Parents are invited to events which showcase the accomplishments of their children.
- Community members are invited to participate as classroom volunteers and to attend showcase events in the school.
- Community members are invited to serve as mentors to gifted students.
- Parents are provided information about the program philosophy through parent nights at each school.
- The gifted scope and sequence is available upon request at each site.
- Parents of gifted students are encouraged to become members of school site councils and advisory councils where relevant gifted items are on the agendas.
- Program assessment is done through individual feedback opportunities and annual surveys.

CUSD #25 Gifted Education Program Assessment

Program assessment is completed annually to review the academic achievement of students, placement of graduates in post-elementary opportunities, and student participation in programs. Adjustments are made, if necessary, to facilitate appropriate numbers of students receiving high-quality services.

The following data sources are utilized in the program assessment:

- Parent, teacher, student surveys
- AZMERIT scores

- Student Participation in IB Schools educational conferences

Data Review Process:

- Student standardized scores are compared to Galileo results and classroom grades following BT model.
- The results of gifted students are analyzed in comparison to non-gifted student scores
- Observation in gifted classrooms
- Data is reviewed to determine program effectiveness

How do we know if it is working?

- Positive feedback from students
- Students/parents choose to remain in the program during the following school year
- Students stay in the school district
- Students participate in class and extra-curricular activities with enthusiasm
- Students continue to score well on a variety of formal assessments
- Program demographics mirror district demographics
- Students have met individual learning, social and emotional goals

Budget

In addition all trainings and additional coursework costs are provided by the district through the M&O, Title I, Title II, and Impact Aid budgets. Teachers across the district who provide differentiated instruction within their classrooms are provided training opportunities paid for by the district through the Title II budget and Impact Aid. In addition, the instructional coaches are funded mainly through M & O funds and are available daily to all teachers. The district bears the costs related to advanced coursework and gifted through the M & O budget.

Staffing ratios in advanced coursework significantly lower than the staffing ratios in other classrooms. The average is 4:1.