



Gifted and Talented

Clarksville Public Schools 2017-2018

Handbook



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An Overview

Throughout the United States, there has been a call for America's students to master more complex skills and to demonstrate understanding of more sophisticated content. In response, states throughout the country have increased their expectations for student performance. However, while basic competencies are being raised, often there is little done to enhance services for more advanced learners. ***National Excellence: A Case for Developing America's Talent***, published by the United States Department of Education in 1993, notes that, "Most American students are encouraged to finish high school and earn good grades. But students are not asked to work hard or master a body of challenging knowledge or skills. The message society often sent to students is to aim for academic **adequacy**, not academic **excellence** (p.1)."

In order to provide high level learning opportunities in the Clarksville School District, our gifted program strives to go beyond the minimum and meet the academic and social-emotional needs of gifted learners through a variety of service options.



Clarksville School District

G/T Philosophy

The Clarksville School District has a long history of commitment to excellence. Part of the commitment to excellence entails helping every student meet his/her potential. Providing for the needs of gifted and talented students is a consequence of that goal. The Clarksville School district recognizes and supports the concept of differentiated curricula for students placed in the gifted and talented program.

Overall Program Goals

1. To expose students to areas of study beyond those prescribed in the regular classroom, especially in the areas of higher cognitive skills, decision making, critical and creative thinking skills, and in-depth research and inquiry into areas of personal interest.
2. To develop spontaneous, self-motivated, and self-directed learning where each child will accept and maximize unique gifts and talents.
3. To provide a learning environment which promotes intellectual challenges at a rate appropriate to each individual child and to whatever depth and extent of desire for each individual.
4. To encourage the student to develop a positive self-concept.
5. To encourage the development of an individual while insuring responsibility for self and society by cultivating skills of leadership.
6. To provide the students with the opportunity to interact with other gifted and talented students.
7. To provide opportunities to practice effective communication skills.
8. To provide hands-on experimental learning activities.
9. To provide a variety of cultural events that develops aesthetic value and an appreciation of the Arts.
10. To provide opportunities to practice self-evaluation and authentic assessment.

Overall Program Objectives

1. To identify all gifted and talented students K-12 by utilizing procedures and criteria established by our district which meet or exceed Arkansas Department of Education Guidelines.
2. To insure that the identification process and procedures provide for the nomination and selection of students from traditionally underserved populations.
3. Utilize differentiated educational experiences for all gifted and talented students by incorporating diverse intellectual stimulation and challenge.
4. Provide a wide variety of program options and instructional alternatives in content, process skills, product development and affective skills which are based on student strengths, learning styles and interests.
5. Provide unique opportunities for the students to interact with community members serving as mentors or resource persons.
6. Provide pre-service and in-service education for teachers/administrators and provide opportunity for participation in state, regional, and national conferences specifically related to gifted education.
7. Provide reference material related to gifted education to teachers/administrators.
8. To articulate and coordinate the LIGHTS program so that it is a functioning part of the total school instructional program by integrating the special program with the regular classroom, developing cooperation between classroom teachers and gifted education personnel.
9. To involve the community in programs for gifted and talented by inclusion on a District Advisory Council, through surveys, in-service, news media, and informational meetings.
10. Utilize written instruments, both subjective and objective for annual evaluation of the LIGHTS' program. Use all evaluation data to review and improve the LIGHTS' program so that it is more responsive to the needs of students.

BRIGHT CHILD

- Knows the answers
- Is interested
- Is attentive
- Has good ideas
- Works hard
- Answers the questions
- Top group
- Listens with interest
- Learns with ease
- 6-8 repetitions for mastery
- Understands ideas
- Enjoys peers
- Grasps the meaning
- Completes assignments
- Is receptive
- Copies accurately
- Enjoys school
- Absorbs information
- Technician
- Good memorizer
- Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation
- Is alert
- Is pleased with own learning

GIFTED LEARNER

- Asks the questions
- Is highly curious
- Is mentally and physically involved
- Has wild, silly ideas
- Plays around, yet tests well
- Discusses in detail, elaborates
- Beyond the group
- Shows strong feelings and opinions
- Already knows
- 1-2 repetitions for mastery
- Constructs abstractions
- Prefers adults
- Draws inferences
- Initiates projects
- Is intense
- Creates a new design
- Enjoys learning
- Manipulates information
- Inventor
- Good guesser
- Thrives on complexity
- Is keenly observant
- Is highly self-critical

A Checklist for Parents: TIPS

1. Do you answer your child's questions with patience and good humor?
2. Do you take advantage of your child's questions and expressions of interest to guide her into further learning and explorations?
3. Do you help your child develop physical and social skills as carefully as you encourage mental growth?
4. Do you help your child learn how to get along with children of all levels of intelligence?
5. Do you avoid comparing him with brothers and sisters or companions?
6. Do you show love to your child for her own sake and not for intellectual achievement?
7. Do you set reasonable standards of behavior for your child and then see that they are met?
8. Do you provide early opportunities for decision-making by your child, with follow-up of learning to evaluate decisions after carrying out whatever action was taken?
9. Do you try to find something specific to praise when she shows you work? (A generalized compliment means little to gifted children)
10. Do you help him find worthwhile and challenging reading materials and television programs?
11. Do you provide hobby materials and books?
12. Do you find places where your child can study and work at his hobbies?
13. Do you provide a place for your child to display work?
14. Do you let your child learn about and share in some of your hobbies and interests?
15. Do you take your child on trips to points of interest?
16. Do you help your child take advantage of lessons and activities offered by private groups or community organizations?
17. Do you teach your child how to budget time, organize work, and improve study habits?
18. Do you help your child make her own plans and decisions?
19. Do you give your child increasing independence as ability to handle responsibility increases?
20. Do you give your child household responsibilities and other tasks suitable to his level?

Here are some web-sites that are specific to parents' information about Giftedness. Resources that will assist in social/emotional needs

as well as academic and current laws and regulations concerning the Gifted.

<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/parents.htm>

http://childdevelopmentinfo.com/learning/gifted_children/

<http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources-parents>

Identification Procedures and Practices

The Clarksville School District contends that the appraisal of any student is a serious matter, and that it is best accomplished by following guidelines to insure the rights of each student. The following procedures will be followed in the identification of potential Identified LIGHTS' students.

1. All data collected on students will be in conformity with special education standards in regards to confidentiality.
2. Written consent must be obtained from parents or legal guardians if individual tests are administered. A letter describing the purpose of assessment procedures and the right to review information concerning test data must accompany the testing permission forms.
3. A special effort, through the use of multi-identification methods, will be made to identify students with characteristics which make them difficult to identify such as:
 - a. Minority groups
 - b. Underachievers
 - c. Culturally different or economically disadvantaged
 - d. Highly creative thinkers
 - e. Highly intellectually gifted
4. Identification will be based on multiple and specific criteria which includes both objective and subjective information.
5. All certified staff will be informed of the characteristics of gifted students and the identification procedures in both oral and written form.
6. Permission must be obtained from parents or legal guardians for students to participate in Identified LIGHTS.
7. If requested, individual consultation on identification procedures and the results will be provided to parents or legal guardians and students.
8. Identification procedures have been based on our local definition of gifted and have evolved from the philosophy, goals, and objectives established and updated by the Placement Committee and Advisory Committee.
9. The identification procedures are compatible with the definition of giftedness and comply with the Guidelines of the Arkansas Department of Education.
10. The Placement Committee will be composed of professionally qualified persons, including, but not limited to: an administrator, two classroom teachers, or one from each grade level or content area being considered, GT personnel, and a counselor, if available.
11. District-wide identification will be carried out in the spring, but new students, or a student for which new data has been collected, may be considered for and placed in the program at any time during the school year.
12. Staff or parents/legal guardians may appeal the decision of the Placement Committee by asking for and following the Appeals Procedure.

Program Offerings

General Enrichment Program

LIGHTS is an enrichment program for students in Kindergarten through sixth grade. The purpose of the general enrichment program is to teach all elementary students to learn independently and to help them acquire higher thinking skills as an extension of the regular classroom.

The course content, which compliments elementary frameworks, state standard (CCSS) and benchmarks, includes math, science, social studies, and communication skills. In addition, STEM has been infused into our curriculum. Affective skills are developed throughout the program to support the social/emotional well-being of the students.

The Kindergarten enrichment program has a main focus on creativity skills. Through various spoken and written exercises, the students are taught the terminology and practice of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Utilization of "Word of the Month" activities reinforce and develop good character traits.

First graders are introduced to thinking skills. They are taught divergent and convergent thinking and introduced to problem solving. Creativity exercises reinforce the knowledge and skills in creativity learned in Kindergarten.

Second graders concentrate on thinking skills. Through several resources, students practice the types of thinking and reinforce creativity skills.

Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth graders concentrate on learning decision-making and problem solving skills. Students learn and practice the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and are taught to analyze problems, define specific problems, determine causes, consider possible solutions, evaluate the solutions and make a decision and then take action on a decision and evaluate the results of the decision. Several resources are used to accomplish these skills. Extensions in regular classroom content areas are also used to support and reinforce the subject matter by collaborating with classroom teachers.

Third through Sixth grade Enrichment is dependent on staff and scheduling. K-2 Enrichment is required by law. Enrichment in 3rd-6th grade is optional if a pull-out or other program option is made available for the gifted and talented students. Clarksville School District realizes the importance of the Enrichment program and supports the program with staff and scheduling.

Junior High and High School students are given Pre-AP and AP course choices. The content courses are designed for students with skills and interests in each field of study. Pre-AP and AP courses have open enrollment. Students are aware before enrolling that the course work is rigorous. Content course teachers are informed of the GT students and are required to differentiate when needed. Teachers document the differentiations.

In addition, secondary students have monthly seminars with a certified gifted specialist. The focus of the seminars is social-emotional health, collaboration, and college readiness.

Program Offerings (cont.)
Identified LIGHTS
Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth Grade

Identified students receive services through a pull-out class each week with their identified peers for independent study and creative problem solving. In some cases, 45-55 minutes of gifted frameworks activities with their regular classroom peers is also included under the LIGHTS enrichment class for a total of 150+ minutes of instruction.

The five elements to Clarksville's Identified Gifted Program are:

- Creativity
- Problem solving
- Independent study
- Communication skills
- Affective or Personal growth

Students work as individuals to acquire research skills, do an independent study, and practice written communication skills. A broad topic is introduced to study in depth and breadth. As students accomplish the planning, developing, and presenting of their research projects, they acquire personal confidence in their ability to solve problems, and present a high quality project to a variety of audiences. Through choosing an area of broad topic, students are able to pursue interests they might not be able to explore in other classes or outside of school.

Additionally, students concentrate on creativity. In groups or as individuals, students develop creative presentations for an audience, according to the content and level of the project. Students combine materials and ideas in such a way as to create a unique presentation. Individuals with specific talents are encouraged to incorporate them into the presentations. Organizational skills and communication skills are vital.

At least two field trips are taken each year. The field trips support the course of study for the year, and/or prepare students for future areas of study. Affective skills are discussed and developed as students visit a public museum, attend a play or observe an historical or art display, eat at a restaurant, compete in competitions and interact with each other and adults throughout the experience. Additionally, students are exposed to experts that enhance the study and inspire the student to further research of their topic of interest.

GT students are evaluated on a regular basis to insure academic growth. The affective growth is also monitored. An end of the year evaluation will determine continued GT placement and services.

LIGHTS Appeals Procedure

1. A conference is held between the parents and the LIGHTS' Coordinator within two weeks of the notification of the decision made by the Placement Committee.
2. The LIGHTS' teacher and /or the LIGHTS' Coordinator should be notified by mail/e-mail of request for meeting. Please mail the attached form to:
LIGHTS' Program (Gifted and Talented Program)
Clarksville Public School
1901 Clark Rd.
Clarksville, AR 72830
Attn: Gifted Program Coordinator
3. The Coordinator should inform the Placement Committee of the appeal and should schedule a committee meeting to review the student's record.
4. The Coordinator then informs the Appeals Committee (if different from the Placement Committee) of the request and sets a hearing within seven days of the appeal.
5. The appellant is notified in writing and by phone of the meeting time and date.
6. The appeal is presented to the Appeals Committee by the appellant and the appeal is taken.
7. The Appeals Committee discusses and makes a decision. (Appellant is not present)
8. The appellant is given written notification of the committee's decision.
9. The Coordinator, the LIGHTS' teacher, members of the Placement Committee, Appeals Committee members (if different from the Placement Committee), the student's building principal, and the superintendent are given copies of the Appeals Committee's decision.
10. A copy of the appeal and decision of the Appeals Committee is placed in the student's folder that is secured in the Coordinator's files.

Clarksville Public School

Gifted Services Withdrawal/Probation/Suspension Form

Student _____	Date _____
School _____	Grade _____
Classroom Teacher _____	
LIGHTS' Teacher _____	

Please check the following (circle one) withdrawal, probation, suspension

- _____ Educational needs of the student are not met
- _____ Parent requests withdrawal
- _____ Student requests withdrawal
- _____ Inability to adjust to pull-out class with classroom responsibilities

Reason for Withdrawal

The following were in attendance at withdrawal/Probation/Suspension conference:

- _____ Parent _____ G/T Specialist/Coordinator _____ Counselor
- _____ Principal _____ Classroom Teacher(s) _____ Student

Specify the results of the conference:

Signatures of attendees:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Removal from Program

Every attempt must be made to place in the program only students who have special needs that can be met by the Gifted and Talented Program. However, a resource teacher, parent, or student may request exit from the program because of one or more of the following reasons:

- Lack of interest in the Gifted Program
- Parent request
- Emotional stress
- Student request

If problems arise, every effort will be made to work with the student to help correct the situation, whether temporary or permanent, such as help in time management. If it becomes necessary to remove a student from the program, the following procedures will be used:

If the resource teacher should request that a student be removed, he/she must present the reasons for removal to the exit committee. The exit committee will then decide if the student should receive special provisions, such as counseling, for a specific length of time. When the decision has been made, the program coordinator will meet with the parent to relate information. The parent may request a meeting with the exit committee to present information he/she feels was not presented. The exit committee will then make a final decision.

If the parent should request that a student be removed from the program, the student is removed because of NO parental permission for service.

If a student requests his own removal from the program, a conference must be held which includes the principal, resource teacher, parent, and possibly the counselor to determine the reasons for the request. At this time, decisions will be made as to what adjustments or special provisions might be necessary to encourage the student to continue in the program. Those present at the conference will make the final decision.

It must be remembered that students were placed in the Gifted and Talented Program because they had needs that could be met by the program. If a student is removed from the program, it should not be viewed by the student as a punishment, but simply as a case of where his needs could be best met in the regular classroom curriculum.

LIGHTS
GT Specialist Job Description

Gifted Education Specialist

Qualifications: Certification by the Arkansas Department of Education

Report to: Building Principals and Gifted Program Coordinator

Job Goal: *To act as facilitator and guide in assisting identified students to develop their potential growth and maturation in the cognitive and affective dimensions.
*To assist in the development of higher thinking skills in whole school Enrichment.

Plans with building principal and the program coordinator to meet the needs of gifted students.

Guides the learning process towards the achievement of established goals and objectives.

Maintains a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and employs instructional strategies appropriate to the characteristics, needs, interests, and abilities of the identified gifted students.

Uses a variety of processes to evaluate student progress with predetermined criteria.

Establishes and maintains effective relationships with students, staff, parents, and the community.

Attends professional meetings, in-service workshops, and local parent meetings.

Assists other classroom teachers by sharing materials and ideas.

Assists program coordinator in the identification process, evaluation process, and in the expansion and modifications of the total LIGHTS' program.

Evaluation of the LIGHTS teacher's performance will be in accordance with the provisions of the policy of the Clarksville School Board.

LIGHTS

Program Coordinator Job Description

Gifted Program Coordinator

Qualifications: Certification by the Arkansas Department of Education

Report to: Building Principal, Superintendent and School Board

Job Goal: The Program Coordinator shall coordinate with the Principals, the planning and supervision of a program to enhance the development of the individual potential of identified students to the fullest extent possible.

Coordinate the development, implementation, and expansion of a program for gifted students.

Coordinate the planning of in-service for district wide personnel and LIGHTS' personnel.

Organize and guide LIGHTS Advisory Committee meetings.

Interpret the goals and objectives of LIGHTS program to school personnel, parents, and community.

Maintain a permanent inventory of equipment and supplies purchased with Gifted and Talented money.

Assist in establishing and implementing procedures to identify and place eligible students in Identified LIGHTS, Pre-AP, and AP courses.

Assist in notifying parents of Identified LIGHTS students about conferences and be available for the conferences.

Provide handbooks and LIGHTS Frameworks to all teachers in Clarksville Public Schools, when requested.

Evaluate the modifications made by the regular classroom teacher and maintain a record on the (weekly, quarterly) documentation, if required.

Complete the Program Approval Plan which is required through the Arkansas Department of Education each October.

Evaluation of the LIGHTS Program Coordinator's performance will be in accordance with the provisions of the policy of the Clarksville School Board.