

Middle School Gifted Education in Blue Valley Schools

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Gifted Education Eligibility



Education *Beyond* Expectations



In Kansas & Nationally

- Broad views of giftedness nationally
- Giftedness not included in federal IDEA law
- Continuum of approaches across the country, determined by each state
- Kansas on one pole of the continuum (with 7 other states)
 - State mandated services
 - Included in special education
 - Students have IEPs for gifted education
- Unintended consequences

Gifted Education Eligibility

- Problem solving process
 - Does the child have an exceptionality?
 - Because of an exceptionality, does the child need services outside of what can be offered in general education?
- Problem solving team
 - General education teacher
 - Special education/gifted education teacher
 - School psychologist
 - Counselor
 - Administrator
 - Other staff members as appropriate



Gifted Education Eligibility

- Problem solving team collects multiple data points
 - Student's response to interventions (class-wide, individualized)
 - Characteristics of giftedness consistently seen
 - Intelligence
 - Achievement
- Targets for testing
 - Intelligence—99th percentile
 - Achievement—98th/99th percentile
- Teams follow where the data leads
- Look for convergence of data points
- At the end of the process, the team includes parents for review of collected data, additional input, and decision making



Gifted Education Eligibility

- Students considered K-12
- Blue Valley Schools' process follows state regulations
- Districts in Kansas have freedom in some areas
 - Determine eligibility process
 - Identify standards of eligibility
 - Determine services
 - Determine service delivery methods



Gifted Education Eligibility

- What about MAP tests?
 - Demonstrate student performance with math and reading standards
 - Blue Valley's internal study of known IQ scores and MAP scores
 - Anticipated seeing correlations
 - IQ scores of wide range of students
 - MAP scores were scattered
 - Could not discern which students identified as gifted from MAP
 - MAP data offers general education teachers valuable information about each student's understanding of and ability with content standards
 - MAP scores are not included in the gifted education eligibility process.



Middle School Gifted Education Services



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Guided Discovery Class

- Primary service delivery through Guided Discovery class
- Guided Discovery paired with Physical Education, so it meets every other day
- Unique individual needs met through other contact with gifted education teacher
- Gifted education teacher provides ideas for strategies and resources for general education teachers to use for differentiation

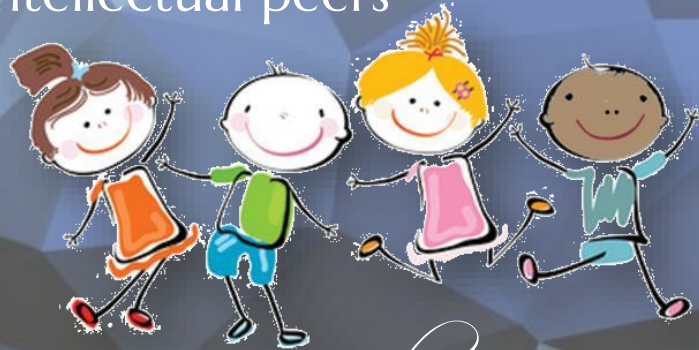


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Middle School Services

- Gifted education curriculum small group experiences
- Personalized support for the pursuit of IEP goals
- Transition support during 6th & 8th grades
- College and career readiness support and investigation
- Passion area research direction
- Social and emotional support for needs related to giftedness
- Interaction with intellectual peers



Education *Beyond* Expectations



Middle School Gifted Education Curriculum



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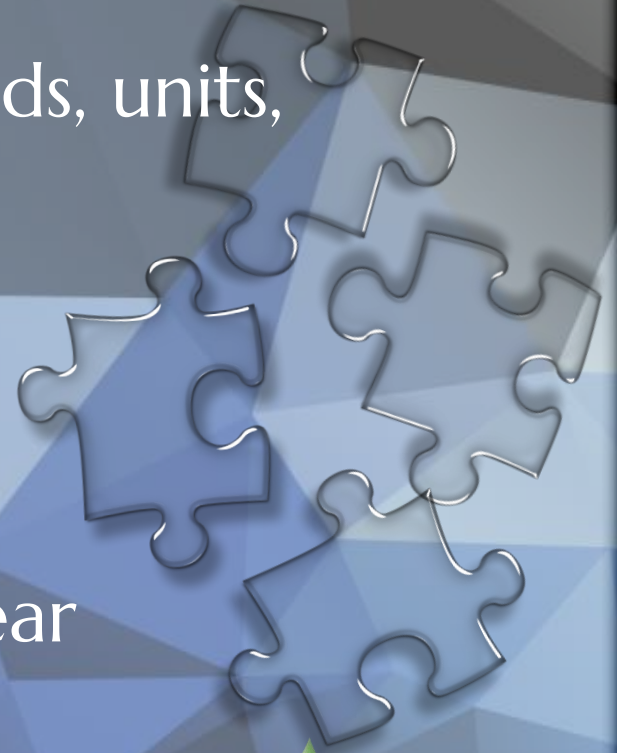
Gifted Education Curriculum

- Overarching Skill Strands
 - Critical Thinking Skills
 - Creative Thinking Skills
 - Problem Solving Skills
 - Research Skills
 - Leadership Skills
 - Social & Emotional Coping Skills
 - Technology Skills
- Skill strands consistent across schools
- Activities may differ among schools



Gifted Education Curriculum

- Collaboratively developed strands, units, activities
- Individually developed strands, units, activities
- Capitalize on the interests and passions of the students each year
- Small group and individualized experiences



Gifted Education Class

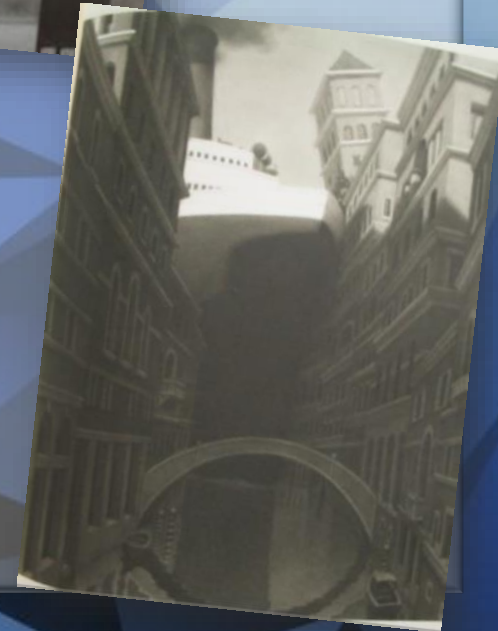
- Grade level time with gifted education teacher and other students identified as gifted
- Other needs met individually
- Half of the time on IEP goals; half of the time on curriculum elements
- Goals tied to skill development
- The art and craft of teaching



Middle School Sample Activities

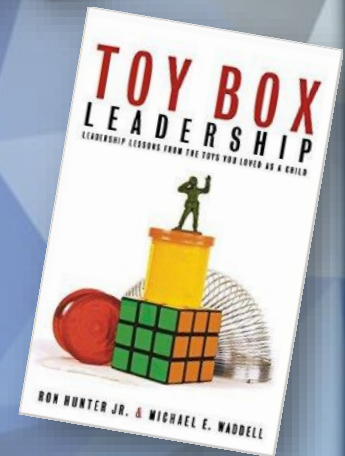
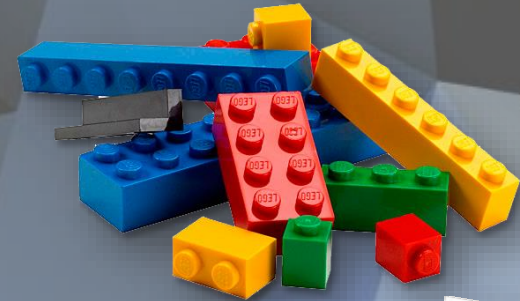
Six-Word Stories

- Started with Hemingway
- Students use images from *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick* as inspiration for a six-word story
- Write another six-word story related to their lives
- Emphasis on diction, syntax, critical thinking, creative thinking, communication
- Leads to creative writing unit



Middle School Sample Activities

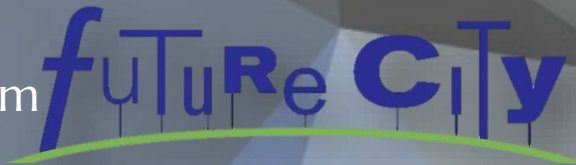
- Toy Box Leadership
 - Connects leadership traits with common childhood toys
 - Students use Legos to build a small structure
 - Discuss what it takes to make a secure structure—making connections
 - Address the importance of making connections and building relationships with the people you lead
 - Emphasis on leadership skills, social-emotional skills, communication
 - Part of study of Toy Box Leadership book



Middle School Sample Activities

Future City Planning with Design Thinking

- Generate ideas needed for solution to city problem
- Development of critical/creative thinking skills
 - Fluency—many ideas
 - Flexibility—variety of ideas
 - Originality—unique ideas
 - Elaboration—details, improving ideas
- Learning to consider innovative approaches to everyday situations from different perspectives, while focusing on empathy for human needs in the problem (design thinking)
- Emphasis on critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, research, communication, teamwork
- Part of the process for participation in Future City design competition

The logo for 'Future City' features the words 'future City' in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. A green line with vertical tick marks, resembling a city skyline, is positioned below the text.The logo for 'Design Thinking' consists of the words 'DESIGN' and 'THINKING' stacked vertically in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. A blue, swirling graphic element is positioned to the left of the text.

Education *Beyond* Expectations

The logo for 'Gifted Education' features the words 'Gifted' and 'Education' stacked vertically in a blue, sans-serif font. Below the text is a graphic of several overlapping, curved shapes in shades of green and blue. At the bottom, the words 'BLUE VALLEY SCHOOLS' are written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.

Potential Topics

- Wide range of potential topics

- Toy Box Leadership
- Six Word Stories
- Future City Design
- What If
- Coding
- Robotics
- Debate
- Communication & Listening
- Service Learning
- Inventions
- How Big is Big
- Mindsets
- Understanding Perfectionism
- Who Am I? Gifted Dossiers
- Many more



- Dependent on students' grade levels and interests

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Middle School Schedules

- Guided Discovery is a class during the school day
- Students in same grade in classes together
- Multiple sections for one grade level
- Part of the A/B school schedule
- Additional needs met individually
- Gifted education teachers attend PLCs for teams when possible
- Schedules built as part of the overall building master schedule



Extracurricular Activities

- Extracurricular activities typically specific to each school
 - Student interest
 - Adult sponsorship
- Commonly seen activities
 - Battle of the Brains
 - Various “bees” (spelling, geography, etc.)
 - Robotics
 - Interest driven school clubs (chess, books, etc.)
 - Science fair
 - Math tests/competitions
 - Writing contests
 - Student Council
 - Music (band, orchestra, choir)
 - Performing Arts (theater, yearbook, newspaper)
 - Sports (basketball, football, volleyball, track, cross country, possibly others)
 - Community service
- What to do if a club/activity does not yet exist



Gifted Education IEPs and Special Education Processes



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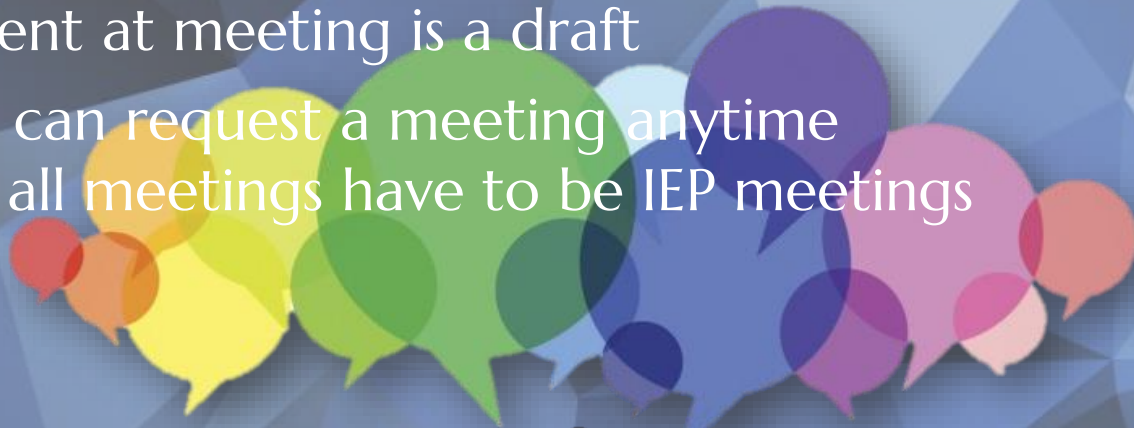
The IEP Team

- Makes decisions about the IEP
- Parents are part of the team
- Team members include
 - Student (when old enough to participate)
 - Parents/guardians/appointed adult
 - A General education teacher
 - Special education teacher
 - Administrator (or designee)
 - School psychologist (sometimes)



The Gifted Education IEP

- Annually reviewed document
- Details aspects of student's special education experiences
- Team decisions about content
- Document at meeting is a draft
- Parents can request a meeting anytime
 - Not all meetings have to be IEP meetings



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Required Elements

- Statement of Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
- Goals based on needs
- Gifted education services
- Parent concerns
- Placement conversation



More About IEP Goals

- Identify elements of PLAAFP to focus on for goal(s)
- Individually developed
- Goals written to develop skills
- Specially designed instruction of gifted education facilitates student work toward the goal
- Difference from special education for disabilities
 - Not focused on closing gaps
 - Expanding knowledge, removing ceilings, opening new interests, developing passion areas, etc.



The IEP Meeting

- Recommend teachers use an agenda
- Meeting includes required attendees
- Major areas of the IEP reviewed (not typically read verbatim)
- Parent concerns discussed
- Ideally the focus is on the conversation



The IEP Meeting

- All team members should participate actively
- Signing the IEP shows attendance
- Any consent items are included on a separate form (Prior Written Notice—PWN)



Consent Sometimes Needed

Consent Needed

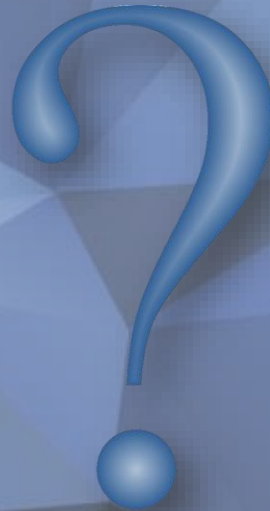
- Initial evaluation for gifted education
- Placement in gifted education (initial meeting)
- Changes in services (change of 25% or more)
- Changes in placement (not location)
- Reevaluation
- Ending services



Consent Not Needed

- Student goals
- Programs/curriculum used to act upon goals
- Specific people providing services
- Specific people to attend meetings (required roles must be present)

Questions?



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Contact

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