

**A Plan for the
Charleston Community Unit
School District #1
Gifted and Talented Education
(GATE) Program**



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Acknowledgement

After researching and studying best practices in gifted and talented education, the CUSD #1 Gifted and Talented Education Committee has revised the District's Gifted and Talented Education Plan. This plan was first implemented on January 5, 2009 and updated annually. CUSD #1 expresses appreciation to the following committee members for their assistance in creating this plan:

Jodi Cline (parent)	Melinda Mueller (parent)
Lou Conwell (CSE)	Deb Rincker (CO)
Susan Daniels (parent)	Todd Vilardo (CO)
Lauri DeRuiter-Willems (parent)	Tina Winings (CHS)
Diane Hutchins (CHS)	Nell Wiseman (CHS)
Lisa Killough (parent)	Bonnie Zavoral (CMS)
Brittany Meyer (JES)	

Introduction

The Charleston Community Unit School District #1, in an active partnership with parents and community, promotes excellence in a caring environment in which all students learn and grow. This partnership empowers all students to develop a strong self-esteem and to become responsible learners and decision-makers. The School District is committed to developing and using a visionary and innovative curriculum and a knowledgeable and dedicated staff (Board Policy 1:30).

The District's educational program seeks to provide an opportunity for each child to develop to his or her maximum potential. The objectives for the educational program are:

- To foster self-discovery, self-awareness, and self-discipline.
- To develop an awareness of and appreciation for cultural diversity.
- To stimulate intellectual curiosity and growth.
- To provide fundamental career concepts and skills.
- To help the student develop sensitivity to the needs and values of others and a respect for individual and group differences.
- To help each student strive for excellence and instill a desire to reach the limit of his or her potential.
- To develop the fundamental skills which will provide a basis for lifelong learning.
- To be free of any sexual, cultural, ethnic, or religious bias (Board Policy 6:10).

In support of the District's philosophy and educational objectives, this plan has been developed to help staff enact a program that provides opportunities for gifted and talented children to develop to his or her maximum potential.

To this end, Charleston CUSD #1 recognizes that gifted and talented children

- exhibit high performance capabilities in intellectual, creative, and artistic areas;
- possess an exceptional leadership potential;
- excel in specific academic fields; and
- have the potential to be influential in business, government, health care, the arts, and other critical sectors of our economic and cultural environment.

The District also acknowledges that gifted and talented children require services and activities that are not ordinarily provided by schools and that outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor (105 ILCS 5/14A-10).

Program Components

In accordance with Board Policy 6:130, the Charleston CUSD #1 Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Program has been designed in compliance with Section 14A-30 of The School Code. For a listing of these components, please refer to the [final page](#) of this plan.

Program Design

The Charleston Community Unit School District #1 GATE Program is designed in response to community needs. A committee of parents, staff, and administration meet annually to review the program.

Non-discrimination Notice

Eligibility for participation in the Charleston CUSD #1 GATE Program shall be determined solely through identification of a child as gifted or talented. The Charleston CUSD #1 GATE Program shall not condition participation upon race, religion, sex, disability, or any factor other than the identification of the child as gifted or talented.

Assessment Measures

The assessment measures used to identify gifted and talented children are as follows:

- *Measures of Academic Progress*
 - *A computerized, adaptive assessment of reading, mathematics and language.*
- *Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition*
 - *A brief, individually administered measure of verbal and nonverbal cognitive ability.*

Identification Method

Gifted and Talented Children Defined

The Charleston CUSD #1 GATE Program defines gifted and talented children as children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other children and youth of their age, experience, and environment. A child shall be considered gifted and talented in any area of aptitude, and, specifically, in language arts and mathematics, by scoring in the top 5% locally in that area of aptitude.

Identification Process

- Professional educators, parents, peers, students themselves, or community members may submit a nomination for the (GATE) Program. The nomination form can be obtained from each school's main office. (**Note:** As of January 2009, CUSD #1 students who were previously identified as **eligible** for gifted and talented services will **remain eligible** under this plan.)
- After receiving the nomination form, the school's principal will calculate an average of the student's top two percentile scores among that given year's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. Students whose average is at or above the 95th percentile on either the math or reading portions of the MAP assessment qualify for further testing as follows.
- The building principal will send a letter to the child's residence to request written approval from the child's parent/guardian to administer the *Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition*.
- If the parent or guardian refuses services by denying approval for further testing, then the school psychologist notes this on the *GATE Identification Matrix*, sends a copy of it to the assistant superintendent, and files the original in the child's cumulative folder.
- If parent/guardian approval is secured, then the school psychologist administers a *Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition*.
- The school psychologist completes a *GATE Identification Matrix* based upon the data collected from the *Kaufman* test.
- Students who score averages at or above the 95th percentile on either the reading or math portions of the MAP assessment **AND** meet the cut score on either the verbal or nonverbal portion of the K-BIT are considered **eligible** for gifted and talented services.
- The school psychologist sends a copy of each **eligible** child's *GATE Identification Matrix* to the assistant superintendent and files the original matrix in the child's cumulative folder.
- As students are identified as **eligible**, the assistant superintendent sends a letter to each **eligible** child's parent/guardian that identifies their child as gifted and talented in accordance with our district's identification process and includes information regarding available district gifted and talented services.
- A child who becomes eligible for gifted and talented services remains eligible for each subsequent year. Parents who no longer want their child to be eligible for gifted and talented services must notify the assistant superintendent in writing. In this event, the assistant superintendent will send a letter to the parent indicating that their child has been withdrawn from the gifted and talented program. The assistant superintendent will send a copy of this letter and the parent's letter to the child's school for inclusion into the child's cumulative folder. In the event that the child's parent, teacher(s), principal, and school psychologist unanimously agree that the child is no longer benefitting from receiving gifted and talented services, then gifted and talented services will be discontinued for that child. In this case, the school psychologist notes this on the *GATE Identification Matrix*, sends a copy of it to the assistant superintendent, and re-files the original in the child's cumulative folder. A child whose gifted and talented services have been discontinued remains eligible to enroll in advanced middle school and high school coursework in accordance with each school's course description booklet and prerequisite requirements.
- Note: Upon verification from the sending school, transfer students to CUSD #1 who were previously identified as eligible for gifted and talented services will automatically be considered **eligible** to receive gifted and talented services in CUSD #1.

Planned Programs, Curricula, and Services

Grouping Students

Students who are eligible for gifted and talented services are grouped and instructed in order to maximize the educational benefits that the children derive from participation in the program. All students are served by their general classroom teachers.

Curriculum Modifications

In addition to receiving instruction consistent with the district's established curriculum for their grade level, eligible students receive differentiated, engaged instruction that is based upon the eligible child's interests, gifts and talents. Classroom teachers plan learning activities that most closely meet the individual child's needs and talents.

Curriculum Options

Students in grades 7-8 are allowed to compete for specialized choral and band ensembles. A two-year algebra program is also offered to middle school students. Students in grades 9-12 have numerous honors and Advanced Placement courses from which to choose. These high school courses are grade-weighted and worth up to an additional .3 points in calculating a student's grade point average (GPA).

Higher-level Skills Attainment

The gifted and talented curriculum emphasizes higher-level skills attainment, including problem-solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, and research skills, as embedded within relevant content areas.

Appeal Process

Persons with complaints about curriculum, instructional materials, and programs should complete a curriculum objection form and use the Uniform Grievance Procedure. A parent/guardian may request that his/her child be exempt from using a particular instructional material or program by completing a curriculum objection form and using the Uniform Grievance Procedure.

Procedures for Annually Informing the Community At-large

Information about the District's gifted and talented program is updated annually and is posted on the CUSD #1 district website.

Methodology for Measuring Academic Growth

A *Gifted and Talented Record* is maintained in the eligible child's cum folder. The record sheet includes the gifted and talented opportunities in which the child participated during the year. Student academic growth is measured through the *Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)* assessment, district common assessments, individual teacher-made assessment tools, and state standardized testing. Results from these assessments and measurement tools, along with report cards, are delivered to parents during the academic year.

Procedure for the Collection of Data on Growth in Learning

As required for state funding, the District's assistant superintendent compiles assessment data on each child's growth and sends this data to the State Board of Education. Summary data is also included in an annual report to the District's Board of Education.

Program Supervisor

The district's assistant superintendent is designated as the supervisor responsible for overseeing the educational program for gifted and talented children.

Certified Teachers

Building principals assign students who are eligible for gifted and talented services to certified teachers who understand the characteristics and educational needs of gifted and talented children and are able to differentiate the curriculum and apply instructional methods to meet their needs.

Professional Development

All educators are encouraged to develop their knowledge and skills in the instruction of gifted and talented children through various professional development activities. Books and videos about the instruction of gifted and talented children are available in a professional development library, located in Room 118 at the District's central office.

Annual Report to the Board

The assistant superintendent presents an annual report to the district's Board of Education that outlines the status of the gifted and talented program.

Resources for Parents and Educators

American Association for Gifted Children	http://www.aagc.org/
National Association for Gifted Children	http://www.nagc.org/
Illinois Association for Gifted Children	http://www.iagcgifted.org/
Hoagies Gifted Education Page	http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/
Charleston CUSD #1 website	http://www.charleston.k12.il.us

Appendix

[GATE Identification Matrix](#)

[Gifted and Talented Record](#)

[Assistant superintendent letter to each **eligible** child's parent/guardian](#)

[Assistant superintendent letter to each **ineligible child's** parent/guardian](#)

[Assistant superintendent letter to each **discontinued** child's parent/guardian](#)

Permission Note for Testing

Student Name: _____ **Homeroom Teacher** _____

Gifted and Talented Education Program

Charleston CUSD #1

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child averaged at or above the 95th percentile on at least two of the *Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)* assessments recently given at school. This qualifies your child to receive additional testing to help us make a determination regarding your child's eligibility to receive gifted education services.

Please sign below and indicate your consent for one of our school psychologists to administer the *Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, 2nd Edition* to your child. Once this test is completed, you will receive additional information regarding your child's eligibility.

For more information about our district's gifted and talented education program can be accessed on the web at <http://www.charleston.k12.il.us/GATEProgram.htm> .

- I **do** give consent for a school psychologist to administer to Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, 2nd Edition to my child.
- I do **not** give consent for a school psychologist to administer to Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, 2nd Edition to my child.

Parent/Guardian

Date

Please return this form to your child's school's main office.

Thank you,

Building Principal

GATE Identification Matrix

This matrix is initiated by a school psychologist after receiving written approval (attached to this form) from the child's parent/guardian to administer additional testing to determine eligibility for gifted and talented services.

Student's name _____ Grade _____ School _____

Teacher _____ Date matrix initiated _____

Parent/Guardian contact information:

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

<u>Assessment Measure</u>	<u>Percentile/Score</u>	<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Cut Score</u>	<u>Met</u>
<i>Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)</i>				
Reading	_____	_____	95 th %tile	<input type="checkbox"/>
Math	_____	_____	95 th %tile	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, 2nd Edition (K-BIT)</i>				
Verbal	_____	_____	125	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nonverbal	_____	_____	125	<input type="checkbox"/>

Eligibility Determination

- Eligible - this student scored at or above the 95th percentile on either the reading or math portions of a MAP assessment **AND** met the cut score on either the verbal or nonverbal portion of the K-BIT.
- Ineligible - this student did not score at or above the 95th percentile on either the reading or math portions of a MAP assessment **AND** did not meet the cut score on either the verbal or nonverbal portion of the K-BIT.

A copy of this matrix was sent to the assistant superintendent on _____.

A copy of this matrix was sent to this child's parent/guardian on _____.

This matrix was inserted into the student's cum folder on _____.

- Discontinuation of services - this student's parent, teacher(s), principal, and school psychologist unanimously agreed on _____ that the child is no longer benefitting from receiving gifted and talented services.

A copy of this matrix was sent to the assistant superintendent on _____.

This matrix was inserted into the student's cum folder on _____.

Assistant Superintendent Letter to Each Eligible Child's Parent/Guardian

[Date]

[Parent/Guardian Name(s)]

[Address]

[City], IL [ZIP]

Dear [Parent/Guardian Name(s)]:

Congratulations! In accordance with our District's identification process, [student's name] is eligible to participate in the CUSD #1 Gifted and Talented Program. The gifted and talented curriculum emphasizes higher-level skills attainment, including problem-solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, and research skills, as embedded within relevant content areas. In addition to receiving instruction consistent with the district's established curriculum for their grade level, eligible students receive differentiated, engaged instruction that is based upon the eligible child's interests, gifts and talents. Classroom teachers plan learning activities that most closely meet the individual child's needs and talents. Various other in-school and after-school opportunities are also available for identified gifted students. In addition,

- A two-year algebra program is offered to middle school students;
- students in grades 9-12 have numerous honors and Advanced Placement courses from which to choose. These high school courses are grade-weighted and worth up to an additional .3 points in calculating a student's grade point average (GPA).

So that additional opportunities can be mailed to your home, requests are often received by our District office to release the names and addresses of gifted and talented students. Contact me if you would prefer that your child's name **NOT** be released as part of our District's gifted and talented roster.

For more information about our program and services, visit our website at www.charleston.k12.il.us, click on "Departments" and "Curriculum and Instruction." If you have questions about your child's eligibility or the program, your call is welcome.

Yours in Education,

Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent Letter to Each Ineligible Child's Parent/Guardian

[Date]

[Parent/Guardian Name(s)]
[Address]
[City], IL [ZIP]

Dear [Parent/Guardian Name(s)]:

[Student's full name] was recently nominated for the CUSD #1 Gifted and Talented Program. In accordance with our identification process, our staff administers standardized tests to nominated students and uses an identification matrix to determine eligibility.

While your child's scores did not meet the identification criteria and, therefore, is not currently eligible to receive formal services through our gifted and talented services, I want to ensure you that your child's education is important to us. Every child has unique talents and interests, and I encourage you to continue to encourage your child to explore these. In doing so, also continue to communicate with your child's teacher(s) about your child's talents and interests. I have enclosed a copy of your child's identification matrix for your review.

For more information about our District's Gifted and Talented Program, please refer to our District's website at <http://www.charleston.k12.il.us>. If you have additional questions or information about how we can best meet the learning needs of your child, I welcome your call.

Sincerely,

Assistant Superintendent

Enclosure: *GATE Identification Matrix*

Assistant Superintendent Letter to Each Discontinued Child's Parent/Guardian

[Date]

[Parent/Guardian Name(s)]

[Address]

[City], IL [ZIP]

Dear [Parent/Guardian Name(s)]:

My office recently received written notification that you no longer want your child to be eligible for gifted and talented services. You and your child's teacher(s), principal, and gifted and talented coordinator have all agreed that [student's name] is no longer benefitting from receiving gifted and talented services. This letter is to notify you that formal services of the CUSD #1 Gifted and Talented Program for your child have been discontinued.

While these services have been discontinued, [student's name] still remains eligible to enroll in advanced middle school and high school coursework in accordance with each school's course description booklet and prerequisite requirements.

Every child has unique talents and interests, and I encourage you to continue to encourage your child to explore these. In doing so, also continue to communicate with your child's teacher(s) about [Student's first name]'s talents and interests. If you have additional questions or information about how we can best meet the learning needs of your child, I welcome your call.

Sincerely,

Assistant Superintendent

Copy: Student's cum folder

Components

The Charleston CUSD #1 *Gifted and Talented Program*

- [Is designed in response to community needs](#)
- [Includes a non-discrimination notice](#)
- [Uses at least three assessment measures](#) to identify gifted and talented children (e.g. standardized achievement test scores, observation checklists, portfolios, current district assessments)
- Uses an [identification method](#) that [defines gifted and talented children](#) as “children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other children and youth of their age, experience, and environment. A child shall be considered gifted and talented in any area of aptitude, and, specifically, in language arts and mathematics, by scoring in the top 5% locally in that area of aptitude.”
- Has an [identification process](#) that is of equal rigor in each area of aptitude.
- Uses [assessment instruments](#) that are sensitive to the inclusion of underrepresented groups, including low-income students, minority students, and English language learners.
- Has a priority emphasis on [language arts and math](#)
- Has identification procedures that appropriately correspond with the [planned programs, curricula, and services](#)
- Uses a [fair and equitable decision-making process](#)
- Has a fair and impartial [appeal process](#) within the schools for parents or guardians whose children are aggrieved by a decision of the school regarding eligibility for participation
- Has [procedures for annually informing the community at-large](#), including parents, about the program and the methods used for the identification of gifted and talented children
- Has [procedures for notifying parents or guardians](#) of a child of a decision affecting that child’s participation in a program
- Has a description of how gifted and talented children will be [grouped](#) and instructed in order to maximize the educational benefits the children derive from participation in the program, including [curriculum modifications](#) and options that accelerate and add depth and complexity to the curriculum content
- Has an explanation of how the program emphasizes higher-level skills attainment, including problem-solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, and research skills, as embedded within relevant content areas
- Has a [methodology for measuring academic growth](#) for gifted and talented children and a procedure for communicating a child’s progress to his or her parents or guardian, including, but not limited to, a report card
- Has a [procedure for the collection of data on growth in learning](#) for children in a program for gifted and talented children and the reporting of the data to the State Board of Education (as requested by the ISBE)
- Designates a [supervisor](#) responsible for overseeing the educational program for gifted and talented children
- Shows that the [certified teachers](#) who are assigned to teach gifted and talented children understand the characteristics and educational needs of children and are able to differentiate the curriculum and apply instructional methods to meet the needs of the children
- Outlines a plan for the continuation of [professional development](#) for staff assigned to the program serving gifted and talented children
- Includes a plan for [annually reporting](#) its status to the Board