



GIFTED EDUCATION

Revised March 2023

QUEST

Quest is the Quality Use of Exceptional Students' Time. It is a gifted education class that is offered for qualifying students in the third through seventh grade pullout program in the Rolla Public Schools.

Defining Gifted

According to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the State of Missouri, gifted students are identified as, "those students who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could be best served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade-level curriculum." (Section 162.675.RSMO)

Third through seventh grade students who have been identified for the gifted program need enrichment or differentiated instruction more suited to their intellectual ability, reasoning ability, and creative thinking.

Philosophy

The Rolla Public School District recognizes the need for individual students to realize their maximum academic potential. The district also recognizes that academically gifted students need a safe and nurturing environment which encourages creativity, risk-taking, and flexible thinking. A learning environment that allows the gifted student to interact with their intellectual peers can best meet the needs of the students.

Mission

The Rolla Public School District's mission is to provide in partnership with the community, the best educational opportunities possible for our students through commitment to excellence in personnel, facilities, curriculum and instruction. For students who come to school with advanced knowledge and unusual learning capacity, that potential can be compromised without offering a curriculum that is differentiated and matched to students' learning characteristics. Those characteristics include the capacity to handle content at an advanced level and pace, the ability to explore areas in significant depth, the tendency to ask and grapple with difficult questions, and the desire to use leadership abilities to make a difference in the world. The Rolla School District promotes a multi-disciplinary environment that challenges gifted and talented students to attain their maximum potential.

Is My Child Gifted?

Gifted and talented children are by virtue of outstanding abilities those identified by professionally qualified persons as being capable of high performance. These children require differentiated educational programs and or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society. -U.S. Office of Educational Report to Congress

Although gifted children come in all shapes and sizes, they typically share many common characteristics. The vast majority of children will possess most if not all of the following:

- Question critically
- Learn rapidly and easily
- Show curiosity and originality
- Have a keen sense of humor
- Offer several solutions to the same problem
- Have wide range of interests
- Are challenged by new ideas
- Read constantly (can comprehend at levels beyond their grade level)
- Have superior written or spoken vocabulary
- Are persistent
- Are imaginative
- Set high standards for themselves
- Apply learning from one situation to different ones
- Have talent(s) in art, music, writing, drama, and or dance

Classroom Expectations for the Gifted Child

- Students may challenge traditional ways of doing things; experimenting with “the rules.”
- Students may rush through work, have numerous mistakes, and leave complete sections unfinished.
- Students will have strengths and weaknesses throughout the subject areas.
- Students may ask more questions rather than providing answers.
- Students may have a storehouse of information about a variety of topics which they can recall quickly.
- Students may set unrealistic goals and will be harder on themselves than anyone else if the goals were not met.

Myths about Gifted Students in the Regular Classroom

Gifted students are **NOT** always:

- Talented in every academic subject.
- Happy, secure persons who love going to school.

- Going to be straight “A” students.
- Teacher pleasers.
- From wealthy, well-to-do families.
- Appreciative of the “gift” they have been given.
- Able to restrain the desire to talk or be disruptive in class.
- Tolerant of tasks that seem irrelevant.
- Neat and organized.

Identification Procedure

Students are formally identified for gifted services in grades three through seven. The guidance office is responsible for the testing and placement of students into the gifted program. The identification procedure begins in second grade with all students participating in a universal screening process.

Universal Screening

All students are screened in 2nd grade utilizing the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Students who score in the 90th percentile and above will be further evaluated for the gifted program. Any student new to the district, who wasn’t screened in 2nd grade, will be screened at the beginning of their 4th grade year.

Evaluation

In compliance with guidelines from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, students must meet eligibility criteria in three of the following four areas in order to qualify for gifted services. At Rolla Public Schools, the General Mental Ability (IQ) is a required area.

1. Academic Achievement: Score at or above the 90th percentile on NWEA or MAP assessment in both reading and math.
2. Reasoning/Creativity: Students must score a quotient of 125 (95th percentile) or better on the Gifted Evaluation Scale (GES).
3. Documented Evidence: Teacher Input Form; Portfolios of student work; Formal observations by people knowledgeable of the characteristics of gifted students.
4. WISC-V: Full Scale IQ equal to or greater than 124 (95th percentile) or General Ability Index (GAI) equal to or greater than 124.

Testing Timelines and Communication

When students are identified for further testing to determine eligibility for gifted programming, their parents/guardians are notified, and permission for further testing is obtained. Parents/guardians will be notified if their student qualifies for gifted programming.

Placement

Once a student qualifies and is placed in the gifted program, he/she may remain in the program each year as long as the minimum eligibility criteria are met. Students who move into the district prior to the beginning of the fourth quarter can be tested. If the student qualifies for the elementary or middle school gifted program, they will be placed if space is available. No testing or placement will occur in the fourth quarter.

Parent Notification

Parents will receive a letter informing them of the status of their child's placement in the program. Parents will have the opportunity to meet with the counselor to review their child's scores. They may at that time make the decision to place their child or decline. Parents and students will be invited to an orientation program to learn about the QUEST program.

Re-evaluation Process

Families or school personnel may request, through their school counselor, for a student to be re-evaluated through our identification process.

The following must be true before scheduled:

- A minimum of 6 months have passed since the student's last CogAT screening
- A minimum of 12 months have passed since the student's last WISC test
- After a second evaluation process is completed and placement decisions have been determined, the opportunity for additional evaluation for gifted services is closed.

Transfer Students

The Transfer Student Policy for Rolla Public Schools will follow DESE Guidelines for Gifted and Talented Programs. Students who transfer to a school with a gifted program shall be placed in the receiving district's program if all of the following conditions are met:

- The student must previously have been placed in a gifted program in a Missouri school.
- The areas addressed by the two programs must be similar: i.e., both are general academic programs; both are fine arts programs; or both are specific academic programs.
- The student meets or exceeds the selection criteria established by the receiving school for placement in its gifted program.
- The student and parents agree to such placement.

Generally, transfer students will be placed in the district's gifted program only if all of the above criteria are met; however, the district will make exceptions as required by law or policy (for example, foster care students or transfer students in the household of an active duty member of the military).

Students who transfer from out of state will be evaluated on an individual basis. There is a possibility out of state transfer students will need to participate in the district screening and testing process. If your out-of-state student was not previously identified as gifted, transfer students will participate in the gifted screening and testing process/schedule, according to their current grade.

Probationary Period

A review of pertinent information will be used to make a decision concerning probation.

A student may be put on probation for any of the following reasons:

1. Unacceptable level of performance in the regular classroom which may include:
 - a. Cumulative classroom grade average that drops below 80%.
 - b. Student receives D's or F's in regular classroom work.
2. Unacceptable level of performance in the gifted classroom.
3. A student on probation will remain in the QUEST program while he or she addresses the performance issue. The probationary period will last until the next progress report or grade card is generated. At this time a conference will be held to determine if the student has rectified the problem.

Withdrawal

A student may be withdrawn from the gifted program due to:

1. Student/parent recommendation.
2. Gifted program teacher or principal recommendation.
3. Probationary period not showing improvement in performance on items 1 and 2 above.

A review of the pertinent information will be used to make a decision concerning withdrawal. The building principal and counselor will assist the gifted education teacher in making each decision.

Referral

Upon teacher or parent referral for students in grades three through seven, available achievement test scores will be examined and must meet the required criteria in order for the student to be further assessed.

Program Goals

Goals for the individual student

- Explore talents, interests, and ability areas
- Develop skills and abilities supporting lifelong learning
- Recognize, accept and celebrate the differences among individuals
- Grow in awareness of the potential to use their talents to make a positive contribution to the world

Goals to address performance areas

Students will:

- acquire the knowledge and skills to gather, analyze and apply information and ideas
- acquire the knowledge and skills to communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom
- acquire the knowledge and skills to make decisions and act as responsible members of society
- acquire the knowledge and skills to recognize and solve problems creatively

Goals to address content areas

Students will:

- acquire a solid foundation in the discipline of communication arts, mathematics, science, and social studies
- operate at advanced levels in one or more of these disciplines
- apply knowledge of disciplines to produce work that reflects individuality and creativity and is advanced in relation to other students of similar age and experience

Program Objectives

Thinking Skills

Students will:

- develop creative thinking skills
- develop critical thinking skills
- develop problem solving skills
- develop logical thinking skills

Social Development

Students will:

- work cooperatively with teachers and peers
- organize materials and manage their time
- develop understanding of self as a gifted learner

Communication Skills

Students will:

- Communicate effectively in oral, visual, and or written modes

Risk Taking

Students will:

- demonstrate a willingness to try new things
- take leadership roles
- accept and learn from failure

Research

Students will:

- use technology effectively
- find information independently

Curriculum

Curriculum for gifted students is specifically designed to challenge academically advanced learners and provide instruction that focuses on critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, independent study skills, communication, information processing, persistence in the face of challenges, and lessons about the unique social emotional needs of gifted students. In order for students to master these skills, an integrated curriculum, differentiated lessons, and technology will be utilized. To implement the curriculum effectively a supportive physical and emotional environment must be put in place. This environment will nurture individuality, promote self-confidence, and enhance student learning. When engaged in this type of curriculum, students will develop their unique abilities, maintain their passion for learning, and have the opportunity to contribute to the world around them.

Homework Policy

A successful homework policy for academically gifted students involves parents, classroom teachers and the students working toward a common goal. QUEST students are responsible for continuing achievement in the regular classroom. Gifted students must demonstrate understanding of the concepts presented and classroom teachers need to extend timelines and or decrease assignment length for students who attend the gifted class. If a student is struggling with keeping up with the classroom work load, the gifted program teacher, classroom teacher, and parents need to meet in order to devise a plan to help the student remain successful.