

Roosevelt Public School



GIFTED AND TALENTED CURRICULUM GUIDE

K-6

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August 27, 2009

Gifted and Talented Curriculum

By definition, gifted learners show evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities. (No Child Left Behind 2002)

Our Philosophy

The Roosevelt Public School District is dedicated to providing a dynamic learning experience that promotes academic excellence, develops high levels of responsibility and citizenship, and instills a true appreciation of diversity and a sense of community. Our commitment is to provide progressive educational programs ensuring that all students reach their highest potential as demonstrated through achievement of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. Our mission is to educate students to excel in a changing world.

Recognizing that a small portion of students are exceptional learners who require specialized learning experiences, the Roosevelt Public School District desires to provide opportunities to appropriately address the needs of these students. Gifted/academically superior students have learning characteristics and educational needs that require qualitatively differentiated educational experiences and services. The unique needs of each individual must be taken into account in the planning of their programs. The basic purpose of an enriched education program is to assist gifted/academically superior students in becoming self-directed learners who achieve excellence and reach their greatest potential. Therefore, the Bradley Beach program for gifted/academically superior students should broaden and improve learning experiences for the gifted student through the development of keener decision-making, problem solving, creative, critical and divergent thinking skills.

To implement this philosophy, our program explores and develops

- Enrichment as an integral part of the entire educational program.
- A safe environment with clear expectations and accepting attitudes that encourages risk-taking and exploration.
- An atmosphere that fosters individual confidence and responsibility.
- Diverse activities and assignments that extend learning beyond the regular classroom and address particular

interests.

- Classroom teacher training in the identification of gifted/academically superior students and in how to differentiate for gifted/academically superior students in the regular classroom.
- The use of current research and technical resources to update programs and enhance learning.
- Parent and community awareness and involvement.
- Continual identification of pupils with gifted/academically superior abilities in order to provide the appropriate educational services.

The Roosevelt Public School program for gifted/academically superior students will:

- Utilize a checklist to identify gifted/academically superior students.
- Support student responsibility, accountability, and eagerness for learning.
- Engage students in intensive learning experiences which extend classroom instruction.
- Differentiate curriculum and classroom instructional and programming.
- Encourage higher-order and critical thinking in the learning process.
- Integrate technology with the learning process.
- Provide opportunities for self-directed learning.
- Engage students in shared-inquiry.
- Enhance students' communication skills.
- Encourage students to analyze and extend abstract concepts.
- Provide opportunities for identified gifted/academically superior students to work collaboratively.
- Compact the curriculum by allowing students to show evidence of mastery through a pre-assessment and therefore, the students will not be responsible for the regular classroom work.
- Provide opportunities for more in-depth investigations of curricular concepts and skills.

The Roosevelt Public School District views students, staff, parents and community members as partners. Each member of the partnership shares responsibility to ensure access to learning opportunities so that each student's potential may be maximized.

The Roosevelt Public School District will provide enrichment opportunities for all students and specific opportunities for identified gifted/academically superior students through contracting and differentiated methods. The enriched curriculum will be delivered in the regular classroom at all grade levels.

The New Jersey State Law

On June 1, 2005, the state Board of Education readopted with amendments N.J.A.C. 6A: 8, Standards and Assessment for Student Achievement, which include specific requirements for gifted and talented programs. The regulations define gifted and talented students as:

Those exceptionally able students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modifications of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.

Key Points

- All public schools must have a board-approved gifted and talented program.
- Students are to be compared with their peers in the local school district.
- The regulations do not establish state-level criteria for giftedness nor do they require that specific tests or measures be used to identify exceptional students.
- Local school districts should ensure that the identification methodology used is developmentally appropriate, non-discriminatory, and related to the programs and services offered.
- N.J.A.C. 6A: 8-3.1(a) 5 requires local district boards of education to identify gifted and talented students and provide them with appropriate instructional adaptations and services.
- The identification process and appropriate educational challenges must begin in kindergarten and be reviewed annually through grade 12.
- The rules require district boards of education to develop appropriate curricular and instructional modifications for gifted students.
- Each curriculum framework developed by the Department provides general as well as content-specific information on gifted education (e.g., terminology, examples of appropriate practices). The frameworks can be accessed at www.state.njded/frameworks/index.html.

According to N.J.A.C. 6A: 8-3 (a)5, Roosevelt Public School identifies gifted and talented students and provides them with appropriate instructional adaptations and services.

Our Gifted and Talented Vision Statement

The vision of the Roosevelt Public School Gifted Education Program is to motivate, challenge and educate all learners to achieve their highest level of performance while contributing to their own positive development as individuals and as members of society. Roosevelt Public School takes responsibility for recognizing the needs of gifted learners and cultivating their interests. The Gifted Education Program will provide an environment in which high-level cognitive and socio-emotional processes are nurtured and developed as demonstrated through achievement of the NJ CCCS.

Our Program

The program for all students, including identified academically talented students is viewed as part of the individual students' total educational experience. Basic program assumptions include:

- The in-class-differentiated instruction will expose all students in the general education classroom to higher level thinking skills.
- The classroom teacher will incorporate differentiated lessons and use differentiated learning materials for the academically talented and implement those strategies into the total program.

The program is designed to enhance the personal and social development of the student. The program provides for academic enrichment and focuses on both process and content. By focusing on the students' strengths and interests, it is hoped that through a variety of challenging and enriching experiences students will develop a sense of curiosity that will lead them to become self-directed learners.

This vision of schools for talent development is based on the belief that everyone has an important role to play in societal improvement and that everyone's role can be enhanced if educators provide all students with opportunities, resources, and encouragement to aspire to the highest levels of talent development.

Program Components

The school-wide enrichment model addresses three types of enrichment services:

Type I Enrichment

Type I Enrichment centers on the needs of all students. **The major purpose of Type I Enrichment is to include within the overall school program carefully selected experiences that are purposefully developed to be motivational. Experiences and activities are designed to expose students to a wide variety of disciplines, topics, ideas, concepts, issues, and events that may or may not be covered in the general curriculum.**

Experiences and activities may assume a variety of formats based on the accessibility of resources and the support and interest of staff and students. In Roosevelt Public School this type of enrichment is an integral part of the classroom experience at all grade levels.

Type II Enrichment

The Type II skill is that “knowledge how” component of enrichment, the process skill(s) needed to pursue independent investigations. Teachers plan lessons and units of instruction to integrate higher level thinking skills into the curriculum and to conduct small group enrichment and/or interest clusters.

The five objectives related to Type II Enrichment are:

- To develop general cognitive skills such as creative problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making.
- To develop affective skills such as sensing, appreciating, and valuing.
- To develop and practice a variety of how-to-learn skills, such as note-taking, interviewing, classifying or analyzing data, drawing conclusions, etc.
- To develop advanced research skills, such as using computer software and on-line databases, researching directories, or reviewing abstracts.
- To develop written, oral, and visual communication skills, primarily directed toward having an impact upon appropriate audiences.

The above skills make Type II training valuable for both the gifted/academically superior students as well as the general population of students.

The goals of Type II training are to provide students with various learning opportunities designed to improve their independent learning skills as well as the quality of their personal assignments, projects, and research. Type II Enrichment also includes a broad range of affective training activities designed to improve interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and to foster cooperativeness and mutual respect among students.

Type II Skill Categories

- I **Cognitive Training**
 - Analysis Training
 - Organizational Skills
 - Critical Thinking Skills
 - Creativity Skills
- II **Affective Training**
 - Intrapersonal Skills
 - Interpersonal Skills
- III **Learning-How-To-Learn Training**
 - Listening, Observing, Perceiving
 - Note-taking and Outlining
 - Interviewing and Surveying
 - Analyzing and Organizing Data
- IV **Developing Advanced Research and Reference Procedures**
 - Preparing for Type III Investigations
 - Library Skills
 - Using Community Resources
- V **Developing Written, Oral, and Visual Communications**
 - Written Communication Skills
 - Oral Communication Skills
 - Visual Presentation Skills

Type II skills are infused in the content curriculum, taught explicitly, or embedded in a student's interest exploration or problem solving endeavor. Type II training helps students improve their academic achievement by showing them how to acquire and assimilate new content more rapidly and effectively, and these skills also have important transfer value to subsequent learning and the world of work.

This training can be offered as a result of observed student need, as a follow-up to a Type I exploration, as a result of expressed student interest, or within the parameters of a student's individual Type III investigation. Type II skills are necessary for the 21st century to become a producer and an inquirer.

Type III Enrichment

This level of enrichment consists of investigative activities and productions in which the learner assumes the role of inquirer by selecting and participating in investigations centered on real problems. **The purpose of Type III Enrichment is to create situations allowing the student to think, feel and acts like a practicing professional.**

The target participants are individuals students who demonstrate sincere interests in particular topics or problems and who show a willingness to pursue these topics at advanced levels of involvement.

Additionally, the students selected for the gifted/academically superior students will be asked to pursue identified investigations for specified goals. These investigations will provide extensions of already acquired content skills and will be delineated in a program plan for the student. These students will be required to keep a portfolio (collection) of their work.

There are five objectives of Type III Enrichment:

1. To provide opportunities in which students can apply their interest, knowledge, creative ideas, and task commitment to a self-selected problem or area of study.
2. To acquire an advanced level of understanding of the knowledge (content) and methodology (process) that are used within particular disciplines, artistic areas of expression, and interdisciplinary studies.
3. To develop authentic products that are primarily directed toward bringing about a desired impact upon a specified audience.

4. To develop self-directed learning skills in the areas of planning, organization, resource utilization, time management, decision making, and self-evaluation.
5. To develop task commitment, self-confidence, feelings of creative accomplishment, and the ability to interact effectively with other students, teachers, and persons with advanced levels of interest and expertise in a common area of involvement.

Key concepts include:

- Personalized “learning by doing”
- Real purpose applied to the production of a real product for a real audience
- Student’s role is transformed from lesson learner to first-hand inquirer
- A synthesis and application of content, process and personal involvement.

The student’s role is as a first-hand inquirer. The role of the teacher changes from an instructor and disseminator of knowledge to a combination of coach, resource procurer, mentor and, sometimes a partner or colleague. A “resource bank” of community members in as many fields as possible will be solicited to serve as mentors and provide our students with the opportunity for real, in-depth exploration. The enrichment teacher may arrange for mentors to collaborate with students working on Type III investigations. Major emphasis is on the development and application of a wide range of cognitive, affective, and motivational processes.

Research investigations include the following steps:

1. Deciding what to investigate.
2. Formulating hypotheses or exploratory questions.
3. Selecting a method.
4. Developing a research design.
5. Training in the selected method.
6. Collecting data.
7. Drawing conclusions from data.
8. Writing up what has been done.
9. Planning further research.

Ten steps for guiding students through a Type III are as follows:

1. Assess, find or create students' interests.
2. Conduct an interview to determine the strength of the interest.
3. Help find a question to research.
4. Develop a written plan.
5. Help locate multiple resources.
6. Provide methodological assistance.
7. Provide managerial assistance.
8. Help identify the final product and audience.
9. Provide feedback and escalate the process.
10. Engage the student in self-evaluation of the process and product according to appropriate criteria.

Finding and Using Community Resources

What are community resources?

- People
- Places
- Things

Community resources:

- Expand, extend, and enrich (though not replace) the regular curriculum and materials. They provide a variety of experiences and learning opportunities for students.
- Provide expertise the teacher may not possess.
- Make subjects more interesting, more fun, and more relevant to students' lives.
- Are easy to find, use, and afford. Using local residents and their skills is a very cost-effective way of providing Type I, Type II and Type III experiences.
- Are flexible. They can be used with an entire school, for the whole class, in small groups, and with individual students.

- Provide exposure and hands on experience with a variety of people, places, professions, materials and skills.
- Provide opportunities for students to work cooperatively with practicing professionals and enthusiasts.
- Allow students to develop information-gathering and problem-solving skills not always called for in the regular curriculum.
- Allow students to learn citizenship through first-hand experiences. The local community is the first level of citizen involvement.
- Give students an increased understanding of their community and a stronger sense of their roots. Young people today have been called the 'cut-flower' generation because they lack a sense of roots.
- Provide information to the community to increase understanding of giftedness, gifted education, and the local gifted program.

Resources:

- Speakers
- Demonstrators
- Tutors
- Mentors
- Guides for Independent Study Projects
- Discussion group leaders
- Coaches and Judges for academic and arts competitions, science fairs, etc.
- Chaperones for field trips

Differentiation and Schoolwide Enrichment

What is differentiation?

- Accommodating to student need
- Knowing where students are, where they need to be, and how to get them there
- Recognition, Articulation, and Commitment to plan for student differences in Interest, Learning Profile, and Readiness

The cornerstone of best practices in differentiation is high-end teaching and learning:

- Detailed and specific objectives to be addressed and mastered
- Varied and appropriate instructional models
- Flexible grouping
- Curriculum compacting
- Questioning techniques/High-level thinking
- Variety of materials and resources (novelty)
- Appropriate assessment

Getting ready for the instruction and assessment:

- Learning about the students from previous years' data, anecdotal notes, class profiles
- Interest Inventories
- Pre-Assessments
- Compilation of Community/School Resources
- Setting high expectations

Instructional models that support best practices in differentiation of instruction:

- Interdisciplinary/Thematic Instruction
- Curriculum Compacting
- Tiered Assignments
- Concept-Based Instruction
- Collaborative Teaching
- Group Investigation
- Guided Reading
- Literature Circles
- Problem-Based Learning
- Simulations
- Structured Academic Controversy/Debate

- Independent Study

Aspects of teaching that can be added to better meet instructional goals:

- Balancing skill and concept development
- Creating real-life learning situations; problem-centered instruction
- Embedding literacy into all content areas
- Featuring multicultural, multi-gender resources, examples, models
- Validating multiple learning pathways

Factors to Consider When Choosing the Best Mode of Assessment for Differentiation:

- Scope of Study
- Duration of Study
- Developmental Level of Students
- Student Needs
- School and Community Norms
- Instructional Strategies

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION

The Roosevelt Public School District believes that a multi-faceted student identification process is essential. Identification tools may include:

- Gifted and Talented Checklist - LEAP Profile (See attachment)
- Standardized Testing Scores (NJ ASK/PASS)
- Benchmark Assessments (DIBELS, 3-minute Reading Assessments)
- Observation by teacher
- Report card grades
- Student Grade Point Average (on previous year's performance)
- Student Portfolio Assessment (completed by student and teacher(s))
- Teacher or parent nomination

