

**GIFTED & TALENTED  
EDUCATION PLAN**

**SUNBURST PUBLIC SCHOOL  
DISTRICT #2**

*Approved by Sunburst Board of Trustees on  
September 15, 2010*

## **SUNBURST SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to provide a supportive environment with diversified educational opportunities which encourages students to become lifelong learners and productive citizens.

## **GIFTED & TALENTED PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

Sunburst Schools believes the Gifted and Talented child is an individual who, by virtue of outstanding abilities, is capable of high performance. The child possesses demonstrated or potential intellectual or specific academic abilities, leadership capabilities, creativity, or talent in the performing or visual arts. The child may need educational services beyond those being provided by the regular school program in order to realize his/her potential.

## **IDENTIFICATION PROCESS**

In accordance with state law (MCA 10.55.804), “schools shall provide educational services to gifted and talented students that are commensurate to their needs.” OPI has indicated that 1-3% of students nation-wide fit the definition of “gifted”, although we will strive to identify between 5-10% of our student population. Sunburst Schools will identify students in grades K-12 who are referred to the committee in a variety of methods.

- Teacher Referral
- Parents Recommendation
- Student Nomination (self or other)
- Other community member with knowledge of the students’ abilities

## **QUALIFICATION CRITERIA**

As many gifted and talented students may not be high classroom achievers, multiple methods of identification will be employed. These may include, but will not be limited to the following:

- MontCAS Scores
- DIBLES Scores
- Standardized Testing Scores (Explore, PLAN, ACT, PSAT, and IOWA Basics)
- STAR Reading Assessment
- Teacher Checklists (Purdue Academic Rating Scale)
- IQ Tests (Ravens and/or K-BIT)
- Other recommendations

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION—INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT

Methodologies of instructional management for Gifted and Talented students will include the following techniques:

### **Elementary:**

- Compacting—streamlining the regular curriculum to ‘buy time’ for enrichment, accelerated content, and independent study. Usually involves pre-assessment or pre-test of what the student has already mastered.
- Grade skipping—double promoting a student such that he/she bypasses one or more grade levels
- Cross grade/cross age grouping—Grouping children by their achievement level in a subject area rather than by grade or age level. Currently known as multi-age classrooms.
- Single subject acceleration—allowing students to move more quickly through the progression of skills and content mastery in one subject where great advancement or proficiency has been observed; other subjects may be at grade level.
- Independent study—structured projects agreed upon by student and supervising teacher that allow a student to individually investigate an area of high interest or to advance knowledge.
- Mentoring—Establishment of one-to-one relationship between student and outside-of-school expert in a specific topic area or career.

### **Secondary:**

- Compacting—streamlining the regular curriculum to ‘buy time’ for enrichment, accelerated content, and independent study. Usually involves pre-assessment or pre-test of what the student has already mastered.
- Grade skipping—double promoting a student such that he/she bypasses one or more grade levels.
- Independent study—structured projects agreed upon by student and supervising teacher that allow a student to individually investigate an area of high interest or to advance knowledge.
- Cluster grouping—identify and place top 5-8 high ability students in the same grade level in one class with a teacher who likes them, is trained to work with them, and devotes proportional class time to differentiating for them.
- Advanced placement courses—provision of course with advanced or accelerated content at the secondary school level, affording student opportunity to ‘test out’ or be given credit for completion of college-based courses.
- Dual enrollment/concurrent enrollment—allowing students to attend classes in more than one building level during the same school year.

- Mentoring—Establishment of one-to-one relationship between student and outside-of-school expert in a specific topic area or career.

## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION—INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY**

Teachers of students who are identified as gifted will employ the following techniques:

- Problem-based learning projects—providing students with unstructured problems or situations for which they must discover the answers, solutions, concepts, or draw conclusions and generalizations.
- Compacting—streamlining the regular curriculum to ‘buy time’ for enrichment, accelerated content, and independent study. Usually involves pre-assessment or pre-test of what the student has already mastered.
- Multi-modal delivery—combining two or three grade levels into one classroom and placing the brightest children as the youngest children in the class.
- Learning contracts—student and teacher jointly develop a contract for accomplishment of learning outcome(s); often involves a streamlining of regular class work.
- Accelerated pace of presentation—substantial increase in tempo of content presentation and acquisition.
- Conceptual discussions—high level discussions of themes, concepts, generalizations, issues and problems, rather than review of facts, terms and details.

## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION—CURRICULUM MODIFICATIONS**

The following curriculum modifications have been identified by the committee.

- Compacting—streamlining the regular curriculum to ‘buy time’ for enrichment, accelerated content, and independent study. Usually involves pre-assessment or pre-test of what the student has already mastered.
- Time-management training—training in how to make the best use of time available through prioritizing of academic and personal goals.
- Communication skills training—training in how to express oneself appropriately for full understanding of intention and acceptance of other perspectives.
- Service learning—provision of academic credit for student volunteer work on community and welfare projects
- Cultural enrichment in the Arts—providing knowledge and skills in art, music, theater, dance, creative writing, graphics, particularly the history, aesthetics, and criticism aspects of these art forms.

- Self-concept development—provision of activities, discussion for the development of self-awareness, self-confidence, and improvement of self-esteem.
- Subject integration/‘thematic approach’—uniting two or more disciplines and their content through a conceptual theme, such as ‘origins’ or ‘change’ or ‘friendship’.
- Group skills training—training in how to work and communicate as a member of a group, either as a leader or participant.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Differentiated Instruction
- AGATE Conference
- AP Vertical Teams
- Gifted & Talented Institute
- Brain-based learning
- Various other workshops available through the Golden Triangle Curriculum Consortium
- SpringBoard or other AP Training available through the College Board

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

- AGATE
- OPI—Debra Poole
- Private Consultants: Stephanie Smith, Sheila Youngblood, Alicia Moe
- MNCESR—Montana North Central Educational Service Region
- Answers Plus Consulting: [www.answersplusinc.com](http://www.answersplusinc.com)
- Carroll College Gifted Institute
- Peaks & Potential
- Destination Imagination
- Counselor’s Conference

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

- Committee Team Member
- Coaches
- Chaperones
- Instructors

## **TEAM MEMBERS**

- Gifted & Talented Coordinator—Mrs. Bloch
- Administration—Mr. Nau & Mr. Tharp
- Counselors—Mr. Hillstrom & Mrs. Linnell
- Elementary Teacher—Mrs. Walls
- K-12 Teacher—Tami Hauschulz
- Secondary Teacher—Mylynn Felt
- Secondary Teacher—Amanda Becker
- Parent Representative—Mrs. Tharp
- Board Representative—Mrs. Kearns

## **TIMELINE**

- Develop Plan—August 2010
- Present Draft Plan for Comment—September & October 2010
- Approve Plan—October 2010
- Implement Plan—Fall Semester 2010
- Update Plan—Fall Semester 2011