**Rector School District**

**Gifted and Talented Policy Handbook**

**Rules and Regulations**

**Program Approval Standards**

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**Lance Mabrey**

**GT Coordinator**

**PHILOSOPHY**

The Rector School District recognizes that gifted and talented students are a unique population, differing significantly from their peers in abilities, interests, and psychological maturity. They come from all walks of life and all socioeconomic levels with abilities and talents ranging across a wide spectrum of human achievement. We believe that gifted and talented individuals require special provisions, experiences, and services not provided for in the regular instructional program.

It is our purpose to seek out and identify these outstanding students and provide them educational experiences appropriate to their academic level. Therefore, we are committed to providing a program for identifying and meeting the needs and interests of our gifted and talented students based upon the guidelines and standards directed by the Arkansas Department of Education, Office of Gifted Education. Identification and placement are based on documented objective and subjective evidence of above average intellectual ability, creative ability, skills, products, and tasks commitment/motivation.

\*The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide in program development and implementation of the GT Program. Revisions will and should occur as teachers, students, parents, and administrative personnel interact and react to the programs and curriculum.

**4.00 Community Involvement**

A key element in any successful program for students is the continuing communication and mutual support among the school staff and administration, the parents, the students, and the community. This can be accomplished by having an involved parent group and parent meetings.

**4.01** The parents and community are informed about the gifted program and activities through newsletters, newspapers, school website, meetings, posters, parent/teacher conferences, email, phone calls, and flyers. Evidence of information to interested parties is collected and filed.

* 1. Parents and community members are notified of annual meetings. This gives the parents/community members the opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, and gain information about our program. Meeting agendas are kept on file.
  2. An advisory committee comprised of parents and community members is established each school year. The advisory committee is an effective tool in helping the program serve the needs of gifted students. The coordinator will keep on file the list of members of said advisory committee, sign-in sheets, and the minutes from each meeting.

**5.00 Staff Development**

**5.01** The Rector School District will provide ongoing opportunities for growth in the area of Gifted and Talented Education by organizing a flexible and varying program to meet the needs of the school personnel. Areas of training appropriate for the entire school staff will be provided, which include: (1) Characteristics and needs (2) Placement procedures (3) Teaching strategies

(4) Creativity (5) Utilization of community resources (6) Program

evaluation

The GT Coordinator is responsible for staff development through in-services, handouts, and professional literature. The Coordinator will also make arrangements to attend and promote state workshops and conferences. Training for the teacher of the gifted will be provided as needed.

Intermediate, Jr. High, and H.S. teachers will be trained in Pre-AP, AP, or Secondary Content for Gifted by the ADE. Educators serving the gifted are expected to attend training sessions and utilize higher order thinking strategies. New educators to the district will be asked to attend sessions offered at the end of the year or at the beginning of the next school year. Teachers certified in AP, should renew their certification within five years and submit AP certificate to the GT Coordinator.

**5.02** Opportunities to increase knowledge of the education of gifted and talented students are provided on a regular basis for school board members, school and district administrators, teachers, and support staff. Coordinator/teacher will be encouraged to attend state and workshops and conferences. The GT Coordinator will attend meetings sponsored by the Co-op, AGATE and/or AGGEA to keep updated in current trends and receive specialized training in gifted education. The Northeast Arkansas Educational Co-op Gifted Education Program also provides staff development sessions. Staff members will also be encouraged to attend sessions provided by educational cooperatives to assist with special training in gifted education.

Documentation of staff development kept on file will include certificates of attendance, rosters, and programs.

**6.0 Personnel**

Selection of personnel for our GT department will be under the supervision of our school administrators and school board.

Minimum standards must be met, recommended by the building principal to the superintendent of schools for final hiring procedures. Recommendation will be based on willingness to accept responsibilities.

**6.01** The person who will teach the homogeneously grouped placed

students must hold current Arkansas teaching certificate, pass appropriate state approved assessments, and meet performance standards as set by the State of Arkansas. Coordinators will keep all certificates and transcripts on file.

Educators trained in Pre-AP/ AP/ Secondary Content must receive appropriate training and submit certificate to the GT Coordinator.

**6.02** Personnel who administer/coordinate the program for GT students (K-12) must hold current Arkansas teaching certificate, pass appropriate State approved assessments, and meet performance standards as set by the State Board of Education.

The position demands that the coordinator/teacher be flexible, approachable, and generous with time and resources. In addition to time spent in planning the overall structure of the district gifted program and direct services to gifted students; the coordinator/facilitator(s) will perform a variety of duties that promote integration of the gifted program with regular education program.

These duties include:

a. Working with classroom teachers, counselors, administrators, and other personnel

b. Locating resources and preparing materials and methods for teaching the gifted

c. Developing an appropriate curriculum for teaching the gifted students

d. Arranging in-school and out-of-school experiences

e. Facilitating special projects and events within the gifted program

f. Attend workshops and conferences to keep informed of new rules, regulations, etc.

g. Compile screening and referred information regarding students and keep ongoing records of the students

h. Contact parents and staff about placement results

i. Supervise independent studies and mentorship

j. Conduct or arrange staff development activities

k. Meet with the Placement Committee and Advisory Board at least once a year

l. Prepare the Program Approval for the State Department of Education

m. Update policies and procedures for the gifted education department

n. Purchase and contract services and supplies for the local GT budget

**6.03** The selection of coordinator/teacher of the gifted is defined clearly. Qualities such as the ability to be flexible of time, pace, materials, and instructional patterns will be considered. They should be accepting of diverse ideas and populations. The coordinator of gifted children should possess a genuine concern for gifted children and youth.

All prospective employees must fill out an application form provided by the district, in addition to any resume provided, all of which information is to be placed in the personnel file of those employed. If the employee provides false or misleading

information, or if he withholds information to the same effect, it may be grounds for dismissal.

The Rector School District is an equal opportunity and shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability. In the event of an opening in a position at Rector School the superintendent and principals shall interview prospective employees that are certified in the respective fields and make recommendations to the board for hiring.

**6.04** The coordinator will assist identified students in developing their potential growth and maturation in the cognitive and affective domains by doing the following:

* coordinate curriculum at all levels,
* assist in selection and supervision of instructors of gifted children,
* develop and coordinate the student identification process, and
* interpret the Gifted/Talented Program to school, patrons, and the general public.

A written job description for administrator/coordinator and facilitator(s) will be kept on file.

**6.05** Administrators and teachers of gifted will be provided regularly

scheduled time for duties other than direct services to the identified students. Curriculum development and differentiated educational planning times will be provided for the G/T Coordinator and teacher to coordinate and align enrichment programs. Additional planning time will be allotted as needed for the program coordinator as aligned with district policies for departmental chair responsibilities. Building principals are encouraged to be flexible in scheduling to accommodate the demands of the Gifted and Talented Coordinator.

**7.00 Placement/Identification**

The purpose of careful and comprehensive placement procedures is to find and serve as many students as possible, within the size limit, who need special programs to develop their exceptional abilities. It is important to place students with potential for outstanding achievement. The emphasis in placement procedures should be on student need for specialized instruction. Referrals of students occur in second through twelfth grades. The local student population should ensure inclusion of potentially gifted students from all cultural and economic backgrounds. The list of

referred students must be representative of the entire student population in terms of race, sex, and economic status. Guidelines by the ADE, Office of Gifted Education must be followed during the placement process.

**7.01**The process for placing gifted students has several stages. Public announcements are in the local newspapers, posted in offices of elementary and high school, and emailed to faculty and staff. School personnel/teachers/parents/and students are provided with a placement process including characteristics of the gifted. Referrals are an on-going yearly process.

Placed students transferring from other GT programs whose criteria are equivalent to Rector’s may be immediately placed.

Students who drop out or are removed from the program may be nominated and go through the placement procedure again.

**7.02** After data is collected and compiled, a selection committee reviews and analyzes the data and makes professional decisions on placement of students. The gifted and talented coordinator chairs this committee. The list of committee members is kept on file.

**7.03** Data collection is taken from a variety of sources.

* Objective measures
  + Current standardized test scores
  + IQ test
  + Creativity test
* Subjective measures
  + Parent checklist
  + Teacher checklist
  + Grades/Test scores

**7.04** Student placement decisions are based on multiple criteria. No single criterion or cut-off score is used to include a student.

**7.05** It is the objective of the school district to insure that the gifted and talented placement procedures are non-discriminatory with respect to race, culture, economic background, religion, national origin, sex, or handicapping.

**7.06** After the decision of the selection committee is made, the information will be sent to all pertinent parties.

**7.07** Parental involvement is a vital part of the placement process. Parental permission is required for individual testing. Parents receive verbal and/or written notification of placement results.

Written permission for a student’s participation is required. Procedures for appeals include a conference with the program coordinator. A meeting with the placement committee will follow where a final decision will be made.

**7.08** The placement of gifted and talented students is an on-going process extending through twelfth grade. Review of students’ placement is made annually. An exit policy is in place and the exit procedure will be followed. All appropriate parties will be present for the conference. The Gifted and Talented Coordinator will keep all records of placement decisions and data on each student nominated and placed in the program. Records are kept for a minimum of five years or for as long as needed for educational decisions.

**8.00 Program Options**

The Rector School District recognizes that gifted and talented students are a unique population, differing significantly from their peers in abilities, interests, and psychological maturity. They come from all walks of life and all socioeconomic levels with abilities and talents ranging across a wide spectrum of human achievements.

It is our purpose to seek out and place these outstanding students and provide them educational experiences appropriate to their academic level. Therefore, the instructional content for gifted and talented must be different from the regular school curriculum, as well as interesting and challenging. The gifted and talented program assumes a multi-dimensional approach to the learning process, which challenges GT students to develop their abilities for personal fulfillment and the benefit of society.

Program options are as followed:

* K-1 Whole group enrichment
* 2-6 Pull-out program
* 7-12 Secondary content differentiation, pre-AP, AP, concurrent credit

**8.01 Program Goals**

The Rector School desires to have an effective Gifted and

Talented Program. The educational program is systematically developed with long-range goals to guide the development of gifted students for those who are potentially gifted in the elementary years and those who are identified until they graduate from high school. These goals continuously ensure proper educational growth of the gifted.

* To provide, in addition to the regular school curriculum, a differentiated curriculum for the identified students.
* To provide appropriately differentiated student experiences to meet the cognitive, affective, and social needs of the placed gifted students.
* Present subject content that is related to broad-based issues, themes, or problems.
* Integrate multiple disciplines into areas of study.
* Provide opportunities for in-depth learning of self-selected topics within areas of study.
* Provide for the development of productive, complex, abstract, and higher order thinking skills.
* Provide for the development of independent, self-directed learning skills.
* Provide for open-ended learning experiences.
* Provide for the development of innovative products using new techniques and materials.
* Encourage the development of innovative products using new techniques and materials.
* Encourage the development of a positive self-concept and self-esteem.
* Encourage the development of interpersonal skills.
* Encourage the development of group interaction.
* Utilize community resources and facilities.
* Provide for modification of curriculum organization, student placement, and/or instructional techniques.
* Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria.
* Provide for a variety of learning environments, which include fieldtrips, career involvement, cultural activities, mentorship, and community service.
* To evaluate program and compile short-term goals to promote growth in gifted education.

**8.02** A table of organization is developed which clearly delineates

roles, responsibilities and coordination procedures of the GT program. A copy of the table of organization is on file.

**8.03** Students’ placement in program options is based on their abilities, needs and interests, and resources of the district.

**8.04** Administrative arrangements are used which promote interaction among gifted students and both their intellectual and chronological peers.

**8.05** Placed students receive a minimum of 150 minutes a week of direct instruction and services by the gifted program during the regular school day.

**9.0 Curriculum**

**9.01** The Gifted and Talented curriculum extends or replaces the regular curriculum.

**9.02** Differentiated curriculum addresses the need of advanced content and appropriately differentiated teaching strategies to reflect the accelerated learning pace and advanced intellectual processes of gifted learners.

Curriculum objectives are carefully sequenced for continuity, while frameworks provide objectives to follow. Students are

expected to demonstrate an increase in ability in creative thinking, critical thinking, affective development, research/ independent learning, and communication skills. A variety of models are implemented to assure standards have been met. Some models utilized within the program include: Bloom’s Taxonomy of Higher Order Thinking, Krathwohl’s Taxonomy of the Affective Thinking, and Trefflinger’s Creative Problem

Solving. The program design for our gifted and talented students for kindergarten through twelfth grade is intended to provide a curriculum that is both differentiated and appropriated for the specialized needs of students who are advanced in their thinking and learning processes.

**9.03** Curriculum is sequenced for continuity. The scope and sequence will assure said continuity. Frameworks will be revisited each year to determine additions, deletions, or other necessary modifications.

**10.00 Evaluation**

The purpose of the program evaluation is to provide information so that modifications and adjustments can be made in the program and to examine overall program effectiveness. The evaluation plan will contain procedures for assessment in both program options and student progress.

**10.01** An overall evaluation is conducted each spring of the GT program. This evaluation process provides accurate, timely, and relevant information to decision makers for improving program options offered gifted students.

**10.02** Based on the results of the evaluation process, these changes will be made to improve program objectives offered to gifted students:

* Communication among principals, GT Coordinator, teachers, and parents will improve through written as well oral communication.
* Surveys, interviews, and focus group questions will be used to help advance and assist with the program improvements.
* A selection committee will address the district’s selection procedures and a blind consensus process will be used to assist with gifted and talented student identification.

**10.03** All components of the gifted and talented program are evaluated annually to assure compliance with ADE Program Approval Standards. Areas to be evaluated include:

* Student placement
* Staff development
* Program options
* Curriculum
* Community involvement
* Program expenditures
* Evaluation process/plan

**10.04** Evaluation data will be obtained from the use of the following:

* Students, parents, staff, administrators
* Surveys/questionnaires
* Interviews
* Discussions

**10.05** Based on findings of the evaluation, the designated personnel in the gifted program will implement modifications and adjustments to the program options to ensure effectiveness. Data collected from the evaluation are compiled, analyzed, and communicated to the ADE-OGT and appropriate audiences.

**10.06** Teachers constantly evaluate and re-evaluate each student’s progress. Included in the evaluation is mastery of content, as well as higher level thinking skills, creativity, and affective development. Continuous evaluation is done through teacher observation, teacher-made-test, and standardized tests. Students are involved to some extent in the evaluation of their own work.

**10.07** Participation in the GT program is noted on the permanent student record.

**Contact Information:**

# Lance Mabrey, GT Coordinator

870-595-3358

lmabrey@rector.k12.ar.us