

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Gifted Education

What is the District Philosophy regarding Gifted Education?

District 67 recognizes the diverse academic and social-emotional needs of our gifted students. Explore and Quest services provide a Language Arts and Mathematics curriculum, which is differentiated in pace, depth, complexity and content level. Through the curriculum, academic environment and through various support services, Explore and Quest work to foster within students a desire for academic excellence, the confidence to take risks, a sense of responsibility and a healthy self-concept. This program challenges students to translate potential into performance. The board approved policy explaining some of the guidelines can be found on our district website.

What is the District Rationale for Enrichment and Explore?

Learning occurs at a different pace, depth, and style for all children including gifted students. A curriculum changed in the level of content, depth and pace is necessary. The curriculum is not designed to give some students an advantage, but to provide an equal opportunity to develop potential and success. All students should be properly challenged and growing in their learning. Students need to have their strengths recognized as early as they are demonstrated.

What are Replacement Services?

Replacement services are just that a replacement. Students who receive replacement services in Explore follow a different depth, pace and rigor than students placed in the classroom. Students have their replacement Explore Language Arts and or Math class at the same time Language Arts and or Math is being taught in the homeroom. If your child receives replacement math services in Explore your child will not have additional math instruction with the classroom teacher.

What are Explore Services?

These are replacement services for our identified gifted students in grades three and four in Math and in Language Arts. A teacher who has a background in gifted education teaches these Explore classes. In third grade we also have students who have not been identified for Language Arts, but through their higher scores on the matrix and through recommendations they also join the Explore Language Arts Class on a flexible basis. These students demonstrate strength in conceptual thinking in Language Arts. These services are five days a week and they are replacement services.

What are Enrichment Services?

We have enrichment resource teachers who have their background in gifted education. Students who are not identified for the Explore replacement classes, but who have exhibited high potential via matrix for grades 3-4, classroom teacher input as well as enrichment teacher input are seen in these groups with like peers for support primarily in Language Arts and or Math. In grades K-2, the ERTs work mostly with students who demonstrate a high level abstract thinking ability. These enrichment teachers also assist the classroom teachers to provide them with curricular support and they help make programming decisions for the students when they are in third and fourth grade.

If my child is identified as gifted will that change throughout the years?

No. If a child is truly gifted that will not change as he/she grows up. With that being said there are many factors that could contribute to the child needing different programs/placements at different times. As a district, we are committed to helping all children learn to the best of their ability and we will work with parents to share determinations and ways to support each child.

As a district parent when should I attend the meetings regarding gifted instruction?

All parents are encouraged to attend our district meetings. We strive to develop partnerships that assist us moving forward to best help all of our students. We want to make sure that the meetings will share information that will be helpful for you regardless of your child's placement. We will take care at planning our meetings to have topics, resources and discussions that will help all students.

When does identification occur?

Formal identification begins at the end of 2nd grade for third grade placement in Explore Math. Students for Language Arts are also identified, but additional students not placing in the program are also added per teacher recommendation. Each elementary school also has an Enrichment Resource Teacher to support students. The Explore curriculum is implemented in grades three and four. The Quest curriculum is implemented in grades five through eight.

Can I have my child tested outside the district?

It is important to work with the school district so that the tests to determine placement are completed with our evaluators. Many of the tests that are used for placement in our programs cannot be given again for several years. To provide testing consistency, we have our evaluators administer the tests determined by the Quest committee. If you have any questions regarding this, please call Colleen Brueggeman at 1-847-235-9665.

Is there a cut off amount of students that are seen for Enrichment and or for the Explore programs?

No. Enrollment into the Enrichment or Explore program not driven by numbers or percentages of our population, but by guidelines that are set up by our district. Services are to best support students with additional needs.