

Gifted and Talented Education

The Beaver Dam Unified School District (BDUSD) uses two identification systems to identify K-12 gifted and talented (G/T) students in one or more of the following areas:

- leadership
- academic
- intellectual
- creative
- visual and performing arts

The first identification system (Watch) is designed for early elementary, K-2. In this identification system, file folders are used to hold observational and performance data from children who show high potential in any of the five gifted and talented areas. This can be samples of the student's work, evaluations of finished products, and/or yearly records of programming. The data is collected by teachers, parents, school counselors, and the coordinator of the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program or GATE Intervention Specialist. Once the information is collected, it is used to develop programming options.

A more complex identification system takes place beginning in third grade. It is at this level and beyond when specific criteria (see criteria pages) are used to identify the students in the gifted and talented areas. Nomination forms must be received in order for the screening process to begin. The nominations can be completed by any of the following persons: GATE Intervention Specialist, teachers, parents, self, and peers (high school). The nomination forms will be sent to the GATE Intervention specialist. Additional documentation is collected and then reviewed before identifying a student as gifted and talented. Standardized testing, as well as specific criteria supporting identification in one or more of the five areas is explored and discussed with the classroom teacher and, if necessary, special teachers (music, drama, and art). A release form may be sent to the parents to allow the student to partake in additional testing. The additional testing focuses on specific gifted areas. At the secondary level (Middle and High School), the houses or departments might be asked to submit further documentation. The results are used for identification purposes and/or programming possibilities. After the information is collected, a Building Consultation Team (BCT) may be scheduled for those people involved in the placement and/or the programming of the identified GATE student. Members may include the following people: GATE coordinator, GATE Intervention Specialist, school psychologist, parent(s), teachers (past and present), school counselors, and special teachers (art, drama, and music) if necessary for proper identification and/or programming.

BDUSD has adopted the Pyramid, Three Tier Responsive Education Model to help structure the programming options for the identified gifted and talented students, K-12. At the base of the pyramid (universal), where approximately 70% of the identified G/T students are located, the regular classroom educator, with support from the GATE Intervention Specialist, meets the needs of the G/T students in the classroom by using curriculum compacting and modifications, cluster grouping, learning centers, enrichment materials, and/or thinking skills to enhance the curriculum for the G/T students. In the middle section of the pyramid (selected), 20% of the

identified G/T population may have needs that the above list cannot meet. In these situations, programming options could be met by ability grouping, pull-out programming, honors programs, and/or subject acceleration. At the top of the pyramid (targeted), where it is possible to have up to 10% of the identified G/T population, the G/T student might have independent studies, advanced placement, specialty schools, contracting, mentorships, total acceleration, and/or course work constructed specially for their needs.

Some of the gifted and talented students need guidance and counseling services to assist them toward their goals. Guidance opportunities are offered to students K-12 individually as well as in small groups.

Since gifted and talented students learn differently than their contemporaries, efforts are made to develop programming to encourage and ensure systematic and continuous progress throughout their school years. If a student's programming needs altering, the teacher(s) and the GATE Intervention Specialist discuss the options and then the GATE Intervention Specialist contacts the student and his/her parents by mail, phone, or in person to inform them of any changes. The coordinator of the GATE program keeps records of the identified students and oversees the GATE Program K-12 as well as supervises and evaluates the GATE Intervention Specialist.

Revised October, 2009