Link Community Charter School

Gifted & Talented Program

Manual & Overview
2022-2023 School Year

Draft 2022
Table of Contents

1. Gifted and Talented Team Members
2. Mission
3. Program Overview
4. Who is Identified for the Program?
5. Identification
6. How we Ensure Equitable Identification
7. Programs and Continuum of Services
8. On-going Professional Development
9. Timeline
10. Resources for Staff and Parents
11. NJDOE “Strengthening Gifted & Talented”
I. Gifted and Talented Team

- Ms. Crystal A. Covington, Vice Principal & G&T Director
- Ms. Annie Gunther, Coordinator
- Ms. Gina Schiano, K-4 Supervisor
- Ms. Suzanne Dandie, School Social Worker
- Ms. Ameenah Brown, Dean
- Ms. Eugenia Cooley, Reading Specialist
- Mr. Chris Kennedy, Physical Education Teacher
- Ms. Tiara Davis, Kindergarten Teacher
- Ms. Jessica Bloom, First Grade Teacher
- Mr. Errol LaGuerre, Science Teacher
- Ms. Maija Ploof, ELA Teacher
- Ms. Kelly Start, Social Studies Teacher
- Ms. Victoria Windapo, ELA Teacher
- Ms. Krista Miller, Art Teacher
- Ms. Revelle Clarke-Avignant, Link Parent

II. Our Gifted and Talented Mission Statement

Link Community Charter School recognizes the need for a continuum of programming services to exist for gifted learners as an integral part of a differentiated instructional program. The school community strives to provide a rich array of learning experiences and ongoing educational programs that identifies, develops, and expands the wealth of gifts and talents of our students while monitoring the value and impact of the services provided. These experiences should promote 21st Century Learning Skills that include; critical thinking, creative problem solving, creativity, communication, collaboration, and global competencies that exist within and beyond the classroom.

III. Program Overview & Goals
As a school community, we recognize that students come from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and the goal of the gifted and talented program is to provide opportunities for students to explore their intellectual, creative, and artistic gifts and talents within the classroom and with beyond-the-classroom experiences.

Therefore, we plan to launch our gifted and talented program with the three principles of mind, body and spirit, embodied in Link’s mission, as we meet the following goals by the end of the 2022-2023 school year:

- Infuse G&T into the general education program, by offering a broad range of activities for high-level learning, that will challenge all students to perform at advanced levels, and provide extended opportunities, resources, and support in particular areas where student interest or talent is demonstrated.
- Offer enriching and challenging learning opportunities for all students, and provide specialized learning experiences.
- Promote achievement of students’ best potentials and increased ability, through a productive and collaborative relationship among the building principals, classroom teachers, the Gifted and Talented team members, school board and all community stakeholders.
- Create programming related to the 21st Century learning standards in the areas of STEM and humanities, which will enhance the learning experience for every student and serve the unique and specialized needs of students currently demonstrating gifted behaviors.
- Infuse elements and components of our schoolwide intervention approach, W.I.N (What I Need), Club House (K-4); Advisory (5-8); community circle/morning meeting; differentiated instruction; R.T.I., and the individual programs into a student’s regular instruction program. Including all of these areas will ensure a connection regarding our overarching framework for gifted education at Link Community Charter School.
- Provide opportunities for all students to discover and explore new areas of interest, while providing all students with experiences and strategies that promote increased creativity and better problem solving.
- Provide those students demonstrating exceptional ability with social-emotional affirmation and support, as well as periodic opportunities to learn with like-minded peers and others from the school community.

Resources for Supporting Gifted Education
IV. Who is Identified for the Program?

- **Academically Gifted Fields:** possessing superior ability or potential in a specific course of study such as English language arts/reading, mathematics, science, or social studies.
- **Creatively Gifted:** possessing outstanding imagination, thinking ability, innovative or creative reasoning ability, ability in problem solving, and/or high attainment in original or creative thinking.
- **Gifted in Leadership:** possessing the natural ability to influence others; possessing skills in interpersonal relationships demonstrated, for example, by outstanding ability in such activities as student government.
- **Intellectually Gifted:** possessing superior intelligence, with potential or demonstrated accomplishments in several fields of study; ability to perform complex mental tasks.

*The NJDOE defines gifted and talented students as: "Gifted and talented student" means a student who possesses or demonstrates a high level of ability in one or more content areas when compared to his chronological peers in the school district and who requires modifications of his educational program if he is to achieve in accordance with his capabilities.*

"Instructional adaptation" means an adjustment or modification to instruction enabling a student who is gifted and talented to participate in, benefit from, and demonstrate knowledge and application of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in one or more content areas at the instructional level of the student, not just the student’s grade level.

C.18A:35-35

V. How we ensure Equitable Identification
- **Referrals:** Parent/Guardian Referrals, Teachers, Specialists, Instructional Coaches, Assessment Scores, (including all demographics, subgroups and student populations) See attached Referral Form

- **Data Collection:** Grades K-8 Achievement Measures, Teacher Rating Tools, Work Samples and/or Portfolios

- **Data Interpretation and Service Match:** Student Profile-Score range, School Site Council (SSC) Data & Recommends services (on a continuum), Notify stakeholders of identification outcome

- **Appeals:** Appeal letter submitted to committee

**Measures for identification include:**

a) Multiple Measures Screening Tools

- 3-8 NJSLA Assessment Scores (End of year results)
- K-8 Academic Performance
- K & 1 Brigance Assessment
- K-8 Teacher, Specialists and Instructional Coaches (On-going In-Class Observations)
- K-8 Teacher Recommendations/Teacher Nomination Tool
- K-8 NWEA In-District Assessment Scores (end of year results)
- K-8 Parent/Guardian Referrals
- K-8 Student Work Samples

b.) Characteristics Scales:

The Renzulli Scales support identification of gifted children by rating the characteristics in comparison to their peers on a large base of observable behaviors. They measure four scales to ensure input into learning behaviors: Creativity, Learning, Motivation, Leadership. Help teachers by providing a standardized questionnaires completed by teachers.

*These multiple measures will continue to be updated*
VII. Programs and Continuum of Services

Talent Development (K-8)
- Programs, Clubs & Competitions
- A Variety of Courses/Special Topics (internal/external)

Targeted Skill Development
- In class differentiation based on student need; determined by classroom assessments.
- WIN Intervention Task

Small Group Investigations & Collaborations
- Research in a self-selected area of interest, with direct skill instruction in research, critical and creative thinking
- 21st Century Learning and Leadership Opportunities

VIII. On-Going Professional Development

Gifted & Talented Team
- Identification/Selection Process
- Supporting gifted learners

Leadership Team
- Identification Process
- Rationale and implementation of Cluster Grouping Model
- Supervisory and observation protocols that support differentiation of advanced learners and fidelity to program goals

School Social Workers/Liaison
- Needs and characteristics of gifted learners
- Tools and strategies to counsel gifted learners

Teachers
- Facilitating Talent Development: integrating research, critical and creative thinking skills into tasks
- Cluster Teachers: rationale; curriculum compacting & assessment; modifying curriculum & differentiating instruction
• Support Teachers facilitating investigations: rationale; research process, research curriculum; management tools

IX. Timeline

Fall & Winter 2022
• Link Board Presentation
• Staff Trainings
• Assessment Administration
• Community and LPA Introduction w/Ongoing Communication
• Professional Development (Initial)
• Data Collected and Reviewed
• Referrals Accepted and Reviewed
• Invitations Sent to Participants

Spring 2023
• Professional Development (Continues)
• Programming Launch
• Feedback Surveys Distributed and Analyzed

As LCCS builds knowledge and experience in Gifted and Talented Programming during 2022-2023, the following programming and continuum of services will be offered:
• Ongoing Talent Development
• Differentiation of Programming/Grouping
• Small Group Developments
• Professional Development
CHAPTER 338
AN ACT concerning gifted and talented students and supplementing chapter 35 Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act.”

C.18A:35-35 Definitions relative to gifted and talented students.

2. As used in this act:
"Gifted and talented student" means a student who possesses or demonstrates a high level of ability in one or more content areas when compared to his chronological peers in the school district and who requires modifications of his educational program if he is to achieve in accordance with his capabilities.
"Instructional adaptation" means an adjustment or modification to instruction enabling a student who is gifted and talented to participate in, benefit from, and demonstrate knowledge and application of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in one or more content areas at the instructional level of the student, not just the student’s grade level.

C.18A:35-36 Instructional adaptations, educational services for gifted and talented students.

3. a. A board of education shall ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations and educational services are provided to gifted and talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 to enable them to participate in, benefit from, and demonstrate knowledge and application of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at the instructional level of the student.
b. A board of education shall:
(1) ensure that appropriate instructional adaptations are designed for students who are gifted and talented;
(2) make provisions for an ongoing kindergarten through grade 12 identification process for gifted and talented students that includes multiple measures in order to identify student strengths in intellectual ability, creativity, or a specific academic area. School districts shall ensure equal access to a continuum of gifted and talented education services. The identification process shall include consideration of all students, including those who are English language learners and those with Individualized Education Plans or 504 plans;
(3) develop and document appropriate curricular and instructional modifications used for gifted and talented students indicating content, process, products, and learning environment, and including, but not limited to, additional education activities such as academic
competitions, guest speakers, and lessons with a specialist;
(4) take into consideration the Gifted Programming Standards, Position Statements, and White Papers of the National Association for Gifted Children in identifying and serving gifted and talented students;
(5) provide the time and resources to develop, review, and enhance instructional tools with modifications for helping gifted and talented students acquire and demonstrate mastery of the required knowledge and skills specified by the standards at the instructional level of the student; and
(6) actively assist and support professional development for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders in the area of gifted and talented instruction.

P.L. 2019, CHAPTER 338
2
C.18A:35-37 Coordinator for gifted and talented services.
4. a. The Commissioner of Education shall appoint a coordinator for gifted and talented services. The coordinator shall have teaching experience and specialized knowledge in gifted and talented education. The coordinator shall be responsible for providing support by identifying and sharing research and resources to school districts as they develop, implement, and review their local gifted and talented services. The coordinator shall be responsible for reviewing the information about gifted and talented services provided by each school district to support implementation of the provisions of this act.
b. Each school district shall file with the coordinator a report by October 1, 2020 and thereafter on a schedule that coincides with the school district’s New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum review pursuant to section 11 of P.L.1975, c.212 (C.18A:7A-11). The report shall include, but not be limited to:
(1) the gifted and talented continuum of services, policies, and procedures implemented in the school district;
(2) the total number of students receiving gifted and talented services in each grade level kindergarten through grade 12 disaggregated by race, gender, special education designation, and English language learner designation;
(3) the professional development opportunities provided for teachers, educational services staff, and school leaders about gifted and talented students, their needs, and educational development; and
(4) the number of staff employed by the school district whose job responsibilities include identification of and providing services to gifted and talented students.
5. a. An individual who believes that a school district has not complied with the provisions of this act may file a complaint with the board of education. The right to file a complaint shall be set forth in the board’s policy on gifted and talented education. The policy shall be linked to the homepage of the board’s Internet website. The board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the district’s action in the matter.
b. The individual may then file a petition of appeal of the board’s written decision to the Commissioner of Education through the Office of Controversies and Disputes in accordance with N.J.S.18A:6-9 and the procedures set forth in State Board of Education regulations.


6. A school district shall make detailed information available on its website regarding the policies and procedures used to identify students as gifted and talented and the continuum of services offered to gifted and talented students. The information shall include the criteria used for consideration for eligibility for the gifted and talented services, including the multiple measures used in the identification process to match a student’s needs with services, and any applicable timelines in the identification process.

7. This act shall take effect in the 2020-2021 school year.

SOURCES

