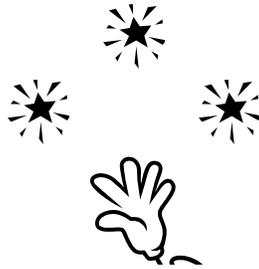


Fox C-6 School District Gifted Education REACH Handbook

REACH Program – 1st - 5th Grade

**Melanie Wille – 1st Grade
Tara Schnable – 2nd Grade
Carly Mansfield – 3rd Grade
Heather Pendley – 4th Grade
Christie Robbins – 5th Grade**



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Characteristics of a Gifted Learner

Traits of Giftedness

No gifted individual is exactly the same, each with his own unique patterns and traits. There are many traits that gifted individuals have in common, but no gifted learner exhibits traits in every area. This list of traits may help you better understand whether or not your child is gifted.

Cognitive	Creative	Affective	Behavioral
Keen power of abstraction			Spontaneity
Interest in problem-solving and applying concepts	Creativeness and inventiveness	Unusual emotional depth and intensity	Boundless enthusiasm
Voracious and early reader	Keen sense of humor	Sensitivity or empathy to the feelings of others	Intensely focused on passions—resists changing activities when engrossed in own interests
Large vocabulary	Ability for fantasy	High expectations of self and others, often leading to feelings of frustration	Highly energetic—needs little sleep or down time
Intellectual curiosity	Openness to stimuli, wide interests	Heightened self-awareness, accompanied by feelings of being different	Constantly questions
Power of critical thinking, skepticism, self-criticism	Intuitiveness	Easily wounded, need for emotional support	Insatiable curiosity
Persistent, goal-directed behavior	Flexibility	Need for consistency between abstract values and personal actions	Impulsive, eager and spirited
Independence in work and study	Independence in attitude and social behavior	Advanced levels of moral judgment	Perseverance—strong determination in areas of importance
Diversity of interests and abilities	Self-acceptance and unconcern for social norms	Idealism and sense of justice	High levels of frustration—particularly when having difficulty meeting standards of performance (either imposed by self or others)
	Radicalism		Volatile temper, especially related to perceptions of failure
	Aesthetic and moral commitment to self-selected work		Non-stop talking/chattering

Source: Clark, B. (2008). *Growing up gifted (7th ed.)* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Characteristics of a Gifted Learner

Intro to Gifted Learners

Who is the Gifted Learner?

Section 162.675.RSMo defines gifted children as “those children who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum.”

A learner who

- exhibits precocious capacity and learning potential;
- is identified by competent professionals; and
- needs an academic environment beyond standard grade level curriculum.

Why is Gifted Education Important?

Gifted and talented students need an academic environment to meet their learning needs so they can make continuous progress in school.

They need

- curriculum that will challenge them in regular classroom settings;
- exploration and enrichment on a variety of topics;
- accelerated learning opportunities; and
- appropriate social and emotional support.

The myth that “gifted students will do fine on their own” is not supported by research. Gifted students need services provided by well-trained teachers, who challenge and support them, in order to fully develop their gifts and talents.

Characteristics of Gifted Students

- Interests: intense and sometimes unusual
- Motivation: evidence of desire to learn
- Humor: conveys and picks up on humor
- Problem-Solving: effective and inventive strategies
- Inquiry: questions, experiments, explores
- Memory: large storehouse of information on school or non-school topics
- Imagination/Creativity: produces many ideas, highly original
- Insight: quickly grasps new concepts and makes connections, senses deeper meanings
- Reasoning: logical approaches to figuring out solutions
- Communication: highly expressive (with words, numbers, or symbols)

Source: <https://dese.mo.gov/media/pdf/intro-gifted-learners>

Gifted Program Nomination and Identification Process

Gifted Identification Process: Grades K-8

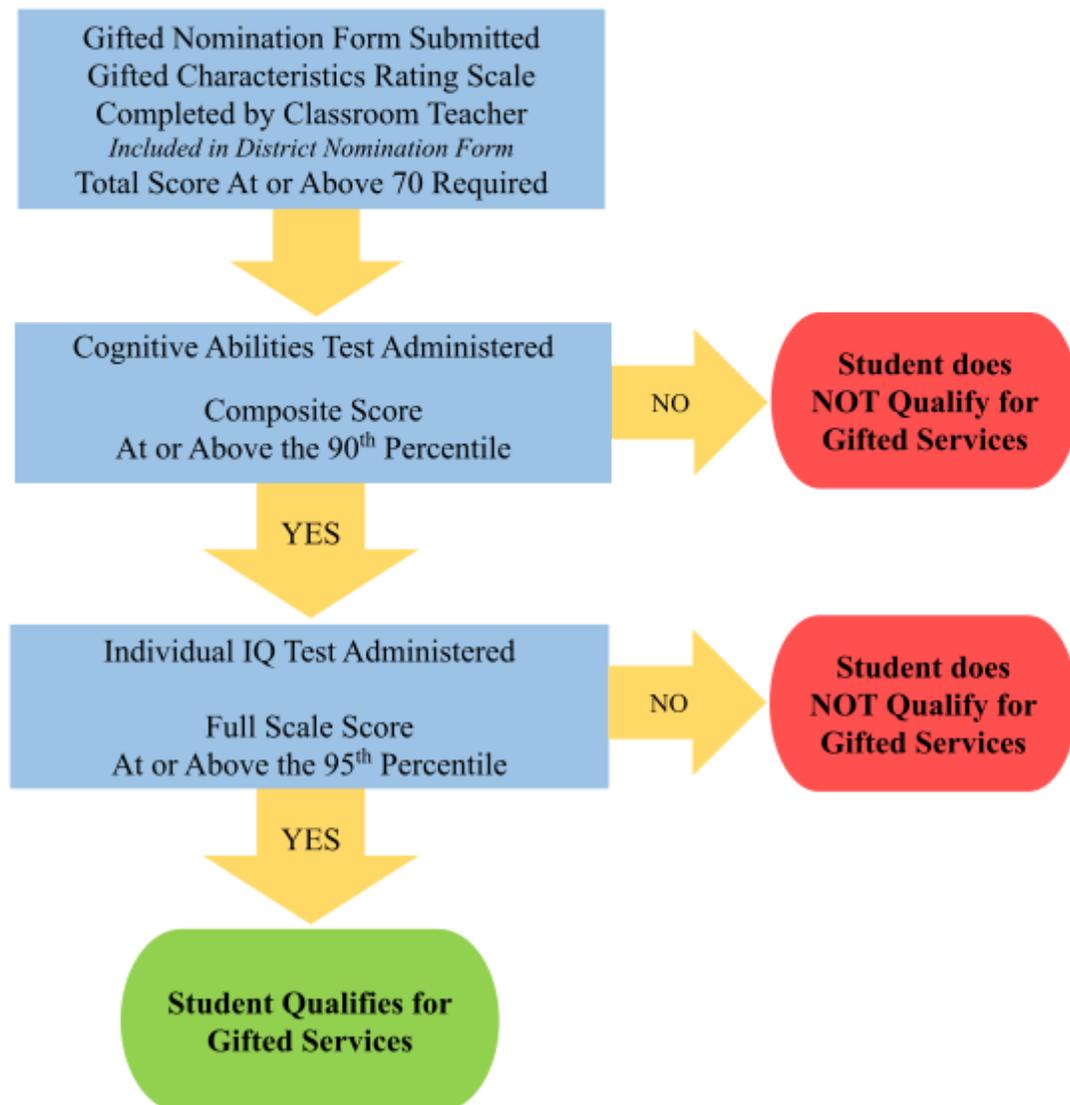
Student Referrals

Students who demonstrate advanced academic ability and higher-level thinking skills should be considered for gifted screening. Teachers should review student records including grades, benchmark assessments, achievement test scores, and previous gifted testing to determine if the student is a candidate for evaluation.

Referrals are accepted November 15 - February 15. All testing is completed in the spring and newly qualified students begin receiving services the following school year.

Screening guidelines for further evaluation:

- Reading and Math NWEA Subject Area Scores at or Above the 85th Percentile (K-8)
- Advanced ELA and Math MAP Scores (Grades 4-8)



Gifted Program Referral and Identification Process

Supplemental Identification Procedures

Private Schools & Home School

Private school and home school students who reside in the district and meet the district gifted identification criteria are eligible to receive gifted services. Private school and home school students must follow the previously outlined referral and identification process. To determine if a student is a candidate for evaluation please contact Christie Robbins – robbins@foxc6.org.

Transfer Eligibility

Transfer guidelines for the REACH Gifted Education Program. Students must meet all three of the following criteria to be eligible for gifted services in the Fox C-6 School District.

- Participated in a Missouri approved Gifted Education Program
- Received a percentile rank score of 95 or higher on an approved IQ instrument
- Evidence of academic proficiency (achievement/abilities test scores and/or grades)

Students who do not meet these eligibility requirements must be evaluated following the district identification process. Evaluation may take place at the time of transfer or during the testing timeline.

Re-Testing Guidelines

Generally, there should be a two year period between full evaluations. Students who only receive the cognitive abilities test may be eligible for re-testing sooner upon review of the referral and approval by the Gifted Education Department. Students are limited to a total of two evaluations unless there are special circumstances.

Identification Appeal Process

The Fox C-6 Gifted Program may consider an appeal if one of the following conditions exists:

1. An error was discovered in the original paperwork submitted.
2. New information is available that would be relevant to the identification process.
3. There is believed to be a circumstance or condition that would invalidate the initial testing results.

Steps in the Appeal Process

1. Contact a gifted specialist to review your child's initial scores and discuss testing circumstances.
2. After the discussion with the gifted specialist, if you wish to proceed with an appeal, an Appeal Form link will be provided. Submit the form to Christie Robbins – robbins@foxc6.org. Appeal forms must be received within 30 days of the date listed on the decision letter. Only a parent or guardian may submit an appeal for identification.
3. Information is reviewed by the following Appeals Committee:
 - a. Central Office Administrator or District Diagnostician
 - b. Building Administrator or Building Counselor
 - c. Two Gifted Specialists

Additional district staff knowledgeable about the student may also be consulted. The Appeals Committee will review information contained in the original file as well as any new information provided by the parents and school that supports the appeal condition and is consistent with district identification guidelines. The Committee will meet within 30 days of receipt of the Appeal Form.

4. Parent or guardian will receive written notice of the decision of the Appeals Committee within 10 days of the decision meeting. Decisions are not released by phone, fax, email, or in person. All decisions made by the appeals Committee are final.

Gifted Program Overview

Gifted Education Services

Students must meet the gifted identification criteria set forth by the school district and approved by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to receive gifted services.

Elementary REACH (Grades 1-5)

Identified gifted students in grades 1-5 attend gifted classes one day per week at the REACH Center located at Simpson Elementary School. The REACH day begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 1:30 p.m. REACH attendance days are based on middle school feeder patterns. The REACH curriculum includes differentiated educational opportunities at advanced levels that are appropriate for gifted learners. The curriculum focuses on problem-based units that provide enrichment in all subject areas. Students will spend time each day engaging in activities that focus on critical thinking, problem solving skills, and affective needs. Major units are developed around real-world challenges that include in-depth studies of a particular topic. At each grade level, there will be one major unit that focuses on Claim, Evidence, & Reasoning and one that focuses on the Engineering Design Process. Minor units are student-selected courses that are based on students' strengths and interests.

Middle School Challenge (Grades 6-8)

The Challenge Program is available in the middle schools as an elective class that meets for one class period daily. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders who are qualified to participate in the district's gifted program must choose Challenge for one of their elective courses when registering for classes. In this class, students will use critical thinking and problem solving to complete individual and group projects. Curriculum units focus on creative thinking, design thinking, computational thinking, and global thinking. Participation in advanced core courses is also recommended at the middle school level for identified gifted students.

High School Consult (Grades 9-12)

At the high school level, the gifted program supports and serves our students by transitioning them during their freshman year through an academic lab setting where organization, time management, note taking, study skills, test preparation, communication, independence, resilience and college/career readiness are the focus. As students encounter struggles or obstacles, the gifted teacher supports the student and offers strategies and instruction on skills for success. The gifted teacher also coordinates participation in numerous academic and enrichment opportunities. The gifted teacher is a resource for students, parents, and teachers.

Kindergarten Enrichment

Gifted specialists provide whole-group and small-group kindergarten enrichment lessons throughout the year. Whole-group screening lessons provide all kindergarten students opportunities to demonstrate gifted characteristics. Small-group lessons provide enrichment activities that focus on critical thinking, creative thinking, and visual-spatial awareness. Participation in small group enrichment lessons is based on whole-group screening and teacher request.

Kindergarten students may be referred for gifted services at the conclusion of 3rd quarter. Formal identification and gifted services begin in 1st grade.

Gifted Program Overview

Gifted Education Curriculum

REACH Performance Strands & Objectives

Curriculum is developed to meet the explicit learning needs of gifted students. These needs vary from student to student but usually include the ability to learn quickly with fewer repetitions, the tendency to be affected by social issues, the capacity to think logically to solve problems, the ability to manipulate multiple pieces of information at one time, the skill to reason by analogy, and the drive to be in control of their own learning. Fox gifted specialists incorporate many learning concepts into the design of each unit. The curriculum is designed around the REACH Performance Strands and the Fox C-6 Power Standards.

REACH Performance Strands & Objectives

Strand I - Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

Objectives:

- A. Reason with Facts and Logic
- B. Make Connections and Explain Relationships

Strand II - Communication & Collaboration

Objectives:

- A. Gather and Apply Relevant Facts and Data
- B. Create Written and Verbal Presentations

Strand III - Creativity & Innovation

Objectives:

- A. Demonstrate Originality in Work
- B. Elaborate to Enhance Quality of Work

Strand IV - Success Skills

Objectives:

- A. Task Commitment
- B. Perseverance
- C. Initiative
- D. Collaboration
- E. Leadership

Fox C-6 Power Standards

Science Power Standards

Scientific Inquiry – Ask questions and define problems to plan and conduct investigations to construct explanations and design solutions

Apply Cross-Cutting Concepts to all Science Disciplines: Nature of Science – Make connections between science, technology, society, and the natural world and the impact they have on each other

Math Power Standards

Modeling – Construct visual and mathematical models in order to manipulate variables and determine values

Strategies – Choose, use, and evaluate strategies for solving problems and communication solutions

ELA Power Standards

Informational Writing – Compose informational text for an intended audience and purpose using relevant details from multiple sources

Opinion/Argumentative Writing – Compose a coherent argument to convince a specific audience of a position and support with relevant details from personal and/or outside sources

Gifted Program Overview

Elementary Guidelines

Coordination between home schools and REACH is essential. The goal of these guidelines is to provide a condensed but clear picture of expectations. Teachers should keep the following guidelines in mind when planning educational experiences at the elementary level.

New Content

When new concepts are introduced on REACH days, teachers should provide direct instruction to students when they return to class. Students should not be responsible for obtaining this information on their own.

Classroom Work

Students should only be required to complete work that is necessary to demonstrate mastery. Most classroom work that is missed due to REACH participation should be compacted or waived. If there is a special assignment or required reading that must be completed, students should be given a minimum of two days to complete the assigned work. Students should not be required to make-up work during their recess time.

Tests

Avoid administering tests on REACH days. This guideline refers to district-wide and end-of-unit assessments.

Special Events

Avoid scheduling special events on REACH days. Special events include field trips, guest speakers, parties, game days, assemblies, special instructional films, performances, etc. Please keep in mind the REACH curriculum builds from week to week. It is very difficult for students to make-up missed REACH classwork.

Transportation

Fox C-6 students are transported to and from their home schools to the REACH Center. Private school and home school parents will need to provide/arrange transportation to and from the REACH Center.

Lunch

Students can purchase lunch at Simpson using their Fox C-6 lunch account. Account balances are managed at the students' home school. Lunch choices are listed on the Fox C-6 Elementary Menu.

Student Health Forms

The Simpson Elementary nurse reviews all health forms and follows all district procedures for managing student health concerns, including food allergies. Daily medications are transported to Simpson in a locked medicine box and administered as prescribed.

Parent Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in December and May. This corresponds with the conclusion and final assessment of the semester-long major units. Conference dates and times are included on the REACH calendar.

Field Trips

When possible, each grade level will plan a field trip that coordinates with a major unit of study. Field trips are related to unit objectives and often provide authentic learning opportunities related to a variety of professions. Student attendance is optional for all field trips.

Gifted Program Overview

Elementary Guidelines

Student Attendance

Student attendance is very important. In order for students to be successful and benefit from the gifted curriculum, students must attend class regularly. Attendance is **not** optional. If a child is present at his/her home school on Center day, he/she is required to attend the Center. If attendance should become a problem, a conference may be scheduled to assess whether or not the gifted program is meeting the child's needs.

Student Improvement Plan

Students who experience academic struggles at REACH or in the regular education classroom may be subject to a Student Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP will set academic goals which the student must work to achieve in order to improve grades and/or classroom performance. REACH attendance may temporarily be suspended in order to ensure students are successfully mastering grade level objectives and skills. The SIP will be developed with input from the parent, classroom teacher, building administrator/counselor, and gifted specialist.

REACH Withdrawal

The gifted curriculum is designed to develop higher level critical and creative thinking skills. For some students this may be their first experience with accelerated material that they do not already know or readily master. This initial discomfort may cause students to perform poorly or express that they do not want to attend REACH. On those rare occasions when a parent is considering withdrawing a student from the program, we encourage the parents to meet with the REACH staff to discuss how to best meet the educational and social/emotional needs of the student. Our experience is that, given encouragement, most students will rise to the challenges and the necessary level of commitment to be successful in the gifted program. If the decision is made to formally withdraw the student from the program, the student may be subject to a full re-evaluation in order to determine future eligibility for gifted program services.