

Talented and Gifted Plan
Lewis Central Community Schools

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Lewis Central Community Schools District Mission

Our Mission:

Inspiring Excellence!

Our Vision:

We develop passionate, innovative, adaptable learners prepared to embrace the challenges of the future and make a positive difference in their community.

Our Core Values:

Student Focus - We foster a passion for learning by developing the whole child.

Opportunity - Each person deserves to engage in experiences that help him or her grow and excel.

Collaboration - We embrace differences to work together productively.

Excellence - Higher expectations yield higher results for everyone.

Community - We create a sense of belonging through demonstration of respect, acceptance and pride.

Innovation - We seek new ways to make learning environments more exciting, challenging and rewarding.

Lewis Central Talented and Gifted Mission

The Lewis Central Community School District Talented and Gifted Program supports the district mission by “Inspiring Excellence” for students who are identified as possessing outstanding abilities and require appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs beyond those provided by the regular school program. We recognize that gifted students are a unique segment of the district’s student population. If gifted students are to grow in their academic achievement, they need ongoing, systematic, and varied educational opportunities. Through an integrated approach, general education classroom teachers and TAG Strategists work together to provide differentiated opportunities to these students.

K-12 Talented and Gifted Program Model

The Talented and Gifted Program serves students who demonstrate outstanding abilities in the areas of general intellectual ability or specific subject aptitude, with a primary focus on mathematical problem-solving and literacy.

When a student demonstrates exceptional need for services beyond the prioritized content areas of math and literacy, the building TAG Strategist will provide consultative guidance using MTSS Tier 1 strategies for advanced learners and gifted education best practices.

Program Goals

Goal #1: The Lewis Central Talented and Gifted program will provide a variety of research-based gifted education services in grades K-12 that are based on the students' cognitive and affective needs.

Indicators and Measurement Plan:

- Caregiver Input Survey responses added to Personalized Education Plans (PEPs)
- Student input on PEPs
- Gifted students' performance data in reading, literacy, and mathematics on standardized assessments
- Maintain offerings in advanced/compacted courses, Advanced Placement, and college-credit courses provided within the school district.
- Monitor the number of students participating in services offered.
- Evidence of student success in whole grade or subject level acceleration.

Each year, evidence must indicate measurable growth and improvement in instruction for gifted students. Data will be assessed yearly to improve gifted programming.

Goal #2: The Lewis Central Talented and Gifted program will provide on-going professional development to teaching staff in differentiation strategies for gifted students.

Indicators and Measurement Plan:

- Evidence of differentiated learning options at Tier 1 as evidenced by the PLC process.
- Number of staff who have been trained through district gifted professional development.
- Evidence of on-going, continued training and support in differentiation for classroom teachers. (Yearly professional development for teachers, continued support for implementation of strategies, book studies, etc.)
- Collaboration planning records with cluster teachers and teachers of advanced students.
- Promotion of Belin-Blank Fellowship for general education teachers and administrators, advanced training in mathematics and/or literacy to meet program goals.
- The Talented and Gifted Strategists will attend annual professional learning conferences, as well as subject-specific professional development in new instruction and curriculum.

Goal #3: The Lewis Central Talented and Gifted Program will enhance communication with families and the community to ensure eligible students are accessing and participating in services offered.

Indicators and Measurement Plan:

- Use of the LC website to share the district TAG plan, building level services, and contact information.
- Identification letters and an overview of services sent out to families in a yearly mailing.
- Provide families, students, and teachers access to identification status and TAG Personalized Education Plans (PEP) in PowerSchool/PowerTeacher and/or shared electronically.
- Additional communication methods will include emails to provide specific information to families (availability during conference times, unit information, etc.) and the use of existing social media channels to inform the public.

Program Services

The TAG Strategist will collaborate with general classroom teachers and building administration to ensure appropriate research-based gifted education services. This collaboration occurs through:

MTSS Tiers of Service - through a TAG lens.

Students move flexibly between tiers for a unit/instructional situation.

Specific needs become known through pre-assessment data, student work, and professional learning community / examining student work protocol process by grade-level or content teams.

Tier One / Universal Services:

Building-wide core instructional practices

Based in general ed/content setting

Specialists consult, help with resources

Service:	Examples:	Provided by:
Pre Assessment	Standards-aligned / looking for early mastery	Classroom teacher
Curriculum Differentiation	Text and task selection Pacing / Compacting Modified practice ("MDF")	Classroom teacher Consultative support from TAG Strategist
Tiered Instruction / Practice	Extension / Choice activities; clubs and exploratories Depth and Complexity	Classroom teacher Consultative support from TAG Strategist
Instructional Grouping	Cluster grouping Intentional partners In-class flexible grouping by unit Small group instruction	Master schedule Classroom teacher

Tier Two / Supplemental:

Small percentage of total students; most TAG students, but possibly not all

Outliers among G/T peers in unit or subject

Specialists collaborate with classroom / content teachers

Service:	Examples:	Provided by:
Subject Acceleration	Testing out of a class Moving up 1 year in 1 subject besides the Adv 6/7 Math and 8 ELA group processes	Master Schedule Facilitated by TAG Strategist Classroom Teacher
Specialized Curriculum	Unit replacement/extension Pull out instruction Flexible grouping for pull out Jacob's Ladder Affective Units Beast Academy Participation in academic challenges like Math Olympiads, WordMasters	TAG Strategist
Learning Contracts / Independent Study	Interest-driven projects Online, skills-based programs like Khan Academy or IOAPA May include contests like Mock Trial, NHD, Math Modeling, Scholastic Art & Writing	TAG Strategist in collaboration with content experts / mentors

Tier Three / Intensive:

Rare needs that require significant changes to the instructional experience.

Delivered by specialists in collaboration with administration or others.

Service:	Examples:	Provided by:
Whole grade acceleration • Use Iowa Acceleration Scale • Require additional assessment data	"Grade skipping"	TAG Strategist Ad hoc Student Study team
1:1 Supports for affective or 2e Needs	504 Plan that includes TAG Coaching in specific skills Support from other specialists	TAG Strategist 504 Manager School Counselors Other specialists as needed
Curriculum Compacting by Semester or Year or Replacement	Diagnostic/prescriptive instruction Individualized / 1:1	TAG Strategist

TAG Personalized Education Plans (PEPs)

TAG Strategists will facilitate the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of TAG Personalized Education Plans for students identified for TAG services in grades 3-12. The purpose of a PEP is to maintain open communication of student needs with classroom teachers, as well as to document the delivery and effectiveness of TAG services.

PEPs include:

- Domain and Tier of TAG identification
- Recommended Tier 1 / Universal instructional strategies
- Tier 2 / Supplemental services provided by TAG Strategist
- Tier 3 / Intensive services provided through TAG program
- Assessment data
- Affective information
- Student Input
- Parent/Caregiver Input
- Communications/Meeting log

TAG Strategists will facilitate the development, implementation, and regular evaluation of TAG Personalized Education Plans for the following groups K-2:

- Students needing Intensive Tier TAG services
- Students who are twice-exceptional
- Students who are gifted and receiving ELL supports

All TAG-identified students are indicated on PowerSchool with a blue tag alert. The areas of strength and recommended universal and supplemental tier services are listed, as well as a hyperlink to the student's PEP document.

Identification Procedures/Criteria Grades 3-12

Screening through assessment data occurs annually and looks at the entire student population.

The TAG Strategists review data history, as well as new assessment data to determine student needs and service levels for the next school year. A pattern of scores at or above the 95th percentile, or those in the top 5-10% of the grade, are significant when determining a need for services in math and/or literacy. Decisions cannot be made using a single score.

Screening may also include nomination and review of additional data. (These methods are primarily used to screen for students who are new to the district; twice exceptional or ELL students; or those who show strengths outside district and state assessments).

- A teacher or parent may nominate a student for screening using forms provided by the TAG Strategist..
- A checklist of universal tier strategies for advanced learners will be provided at this time, with a data collection period of 6 instructional weeks to follow.
- [The referral form](#) is then reviewed by the TAG Strategist Team. Additional data may be collected. (e.g.-work samples, testing data, other assessments or measures, observations of the child in the classroom)
- Data will be reviewed by the TAG Strategist Team to determine if gifted instructional services are necessary.
- Communication will include classroom teachers, parents, students, and administration as appropriate.

Examples of Data Sources:

	Achievement	Ability	Aptitude
Objective:	aReading/aMath ISASP (3-11) Common summative assessments Common formative assessments End-of-course assessments ELPA 21	Cognitive Ability Test (screener and full battery)	Out-of-level testing (iEXCEL, ACT, PSAT, etc.) Out-of-level Iowa Assessments
Subjective:		SIGS (K-8)	

Identification for Talent Pool (K-2)

- Services for the kindergarten learners are flexible, 6-week pullout groups that focus on talent development and may support future identification.
- Services for grades 1-2 are flexible pullout groups and can include extension of classroom standards, or enrichment beyond classroom standards.
- The TAG Strategist reviews available data, including patterns of FAST scores, classroom teacher observation of gifted behaviors, TAG Strategist observation of gifted behaviors, prior performance in kindergarten talent development groups, and other anecdotal and student work samples.
- Students who are consistently at or above the 95th percentile, and/or in the top 5-10% of their grade, and/or demonstrate research-based behaviors of young gifted learners, and/or show through other assessments and work samples that grade-level instruction may not meet their academic needs will be identified for services.

Identification of Special Populations

Gifted English Language Learners

Gifted English Language Learners (ELL) are identified as having varying degrees of the following characteristics:

- Acquisition of a second language rapidly
- Demonstrates high ability in mathematics
- Displays a mature sense of diverse cultures and languages
- Code switching easily (thinking in both languages)
- Demonstrations an advanced awareness of American expressions
- Quickly acquires communicative language
- Translates orally at an advanced level
- Navigates appropriate behaviors successfully within both cultures.

Twice-Exceptional Learners

Students with a Special Education IEP or 504 plan, who also show a need for TAG services in literacy and/or mathematics, are considered twice exceptional.

When the TAG Strategists identify ELL and Twice Exceptional Learners, they will:

- Use multiple data sources for gifted programming identification: intelligence and/or achievement tests, teacher referral, classroom evidence, student interviews, portfolio of work, and/or parent referral.
- Look for growth in the student's data over a 3 year period.
- Reduce qualifying cutoff scores for gifted services to account for depression of scores due to the disability.
- Compare expected performance on statewide standardized testing as well as

psycho-educational assessments with actual performance using the student's daily classroom achievement, as well as other authentic assessments.

- Use formal (such as standardized tests) and informal (such as student class work) assessments.
- Conference with families about student performance outside of school.
- Be aware that identification is seldom pursued for students whose gifts and disabilities mask one another. As such, be vigilant in identifying subtle indicators of exceptionality.

Acceleration Guidelines

Acceleration is a broad term that encompasses many options.

The two broad categories of acceleration are **subject-based** and **grade-based**. Any type of approved acceleration for a student including the established group processes (i.e. Advanced 6 or 7 Math, Advanced 8 ELA) will need to be documented on a TAG PEP and reviewed annually, or as needed, to provide guidance and support for the student's long-term academic needs.

The Lewis Central acceleration options are classified in the following list:

Subject acceleration:

Subject acceleration provides students with advanced content, skills, or understandings before the expected age or grade level. Students typically remain with the peers of the same age and grade for most of their school day and travel to the next grade level's instruction for a specific content area. Subject-based acceleration may also refer to allowing a student to work at a higher grade-level in their regular classroom or through independent study facilitated by the TAG Strategist instead of grade-level instruction.

K-11 Process for single subject acceleration:

A dialogue considering possible acceleration is initiated by the student, the student's family, classroom teacher, or the TAG Strategist. The group reviews observations and data for consideration when determining the ways single subject acceleration may/may not benefit the student.

Subject-specific data for decision-making could include:

- State testing subtest scores
- District testing subtest scores
- Out-of-level testing subtest scores
- End-of-unit and/or end-of-course standards assessments

Concurrent Enrollment

Lewis Central allows advanced students to enroll in higher level coursework when proficiency at grade level has been demonstrated. For example, a middle school student may take a high school math course, or a high school student may take a college credit course during the school day.

Advanced Placement coursework

Advanced Placement courses are another way to access challenge and possibly earn college credits while still in high school. AP classes are open to all high school students when prerequisites are met. The Secondary TAG Strategist/AP Coordinator will oversee enrollment and monitor student progress in online AP courses through IOAPA (Iowa Online AP Academy). Eligible middle school students may take honors-level high school courses through the IOAPA with the facilitation of the Secondary TAG Strategist.

Credit by testing out

Testing out is available to all students at the high school level. No modified instruction is provided through this option. A student takes a department-created end-of-course assessment or final exam of the course standards and content. Successful test-out options may earn “pass credit” which is then reported on the student’s academic record, as “P”. Procedures are outlined in the high school course handbook. Administration approval is required, and not all courses are available for testing out.

Whole Grade Acceleration

Whole grade acceleration or “grade-skipping” typically shortens the number of years a student spends in the K-12 system. A student is placed for their entire day in a higher grade level for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities.

K-8 Process

A dialogue considering possible acceleration is initiated by parents, classroom teachers, or the TAG Strategist. The group meets to review observations and other data to determine the ways whole grade acceleration may/may not benefit the student. When the group decides that a continuing investigation of whole-grade acceleration is likely to benefit the student, the *Iowa Acceleration Scale* process begins.

The Iowa Acceleration Scale (used for grades K-8)

The *Iowa Acceleration Scale* is a several-week process that ends with a formal meeting where a collection of information is reviewed and a determination of the appropriateness of acceleration is made.

Information Includes:

General Information

Critical Items
School History
Prior Professional Evaluation Services
Current Academic Ability and Achievement Test Results
School and Academic Factors
Developmental Factors
Interpersonal Skills
Attitude and Support

A parent signature is required for the administration of individual achievement and ability tests. School records and interviews with parents, students and teachers are used to gather information. A summary of all collected information results in a recommendation of *excellent candidate*, *good candidate*, *marginal candidate*, or *whole-grade acceleration not recommended*. When acceleration occurs, plans for a smooth transition and monitoring are made and reflected in the student's PEP.

Whole-grade Acceleration (9-12)

*Students seeking early graduation from high school should work with the guidance department to ensure all graduation requirements are met, and college admissions requirements are completed.

*All LCHS students seeking college-credit courses through IWCC work through the 11th-12th grade school counselor for enrollment.

Exit Criteria or Change of Services Procedures

On-going Review:

Performance and needs of students participating in TAG programming are reviewed annually, and as new formal and informal data is received. When data indicates the student learning needs are best met within the general classroom and curriculum, the student may be exited from the TAG program or a change in tier of services may occur. The change of status is noted in PowerSchool and student performance is monitored.

*Parents will be notified of changes to their child's services by mail prior to the next school year

Timing:

Changes in identification are timed to occur during points of transition: the end of a unit, a trimester, a grade level, or when natural moves from one building to the next

occur.

Decision-making Questions:

- Can the student be served appropriately with universal tier strategies (cluster grouping and in-class extension?)
- Can the learning needs of this student be met through the typical classroom, instruction, and curriculum resources?
- What is the evidence?
- What adaptations, if any, are needed to support the learning of the student in the grade level classroom?
- What social-emotional needs should be addressed through collaboration with the school counselor?

Professional Development

The Talented and Gifted Strategists will offer ongoing targeted professional development to all staff through a variety of formats. These could include, but are not limited to:

- Extended or short professional development training sessions, during or outside of the contract day with support provided by the district.
- Co-planning and collaboration with cluster section teachers.
- Specific training for cluster section teachers and teachers with gifted identified students.
- TAG Hub website with updated information and strategies.
- Videos, emails, articles, and other short, topical resources.

Professional development items used to assist teachers in learning about gifted students and strategies to meet their needs may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Research-based professional development materials designed for gifted education (including purchased resources by Brulles, Winebrenner, Cash, and Tomlinson.)
- Classroom modeling and co-teaching provided by gifted strategists or peer-teachers who have successfully implemented gifted strategies
- Working with teachers on instructional planning, pre-assessment, modification of instruction, and locating advanced resources to meet learner needs.

Professional development will occur throughout the academic year. Our district believes that all teachers and all students can benefit from differentiated learning experiences. Professional development in differentiated instruction is a primary focus for our district in helping to accomplish both our school and gifted mission statements and goals.

Staffing and Roles

Administrators –

- Provide continued support for gifted and talented programming and services as outlined in the district TAG plan.
- Collaborate with and support the TAG Strategists in scheduling of classes/students, scheduling TAG collaboration time, scheduling content collaboration time (PLCs), curriculum development, and in parent meetings.
- Recognize and support the schedule flexibility needed for TAG Strategists to support multiple buildings and grade levels.
- Support and supervise program implementation in buildings,
- Provide assistance in identification for services
- Support flexible grouping structures
- Ensure that teachers have instructional modifications in place and documented in course, unit, and lesson plans to meet the needs of gifted students.
- Support and participate in professional development for gifted education.
- Share data with the staff regarding testing for special populations (including TAG)

Classroom Teachers –

- Provide differentiated instruction at Tier 1 in the classroom for all students.
- Use pre-assessment in instruction to tailor instruction to meet the needs of students' varying abilities.
- Provide appropriate instruction in collaboration with the TAG Strategist through communication, shared access to unit plans, student work, co-teaching, planning meetings, and planning student independent study options.
- Help coordinate Tier 2 services with classroom-based instruction using best practices and flexibility.
- Participate in the identification process
- Assist TAG Strategist in completing Personalized Education Plans as needed for students receiving intensive services.
- Implement and document instructional modifications as described on a student's PEP.

TAG Strategist –

- Collaborate with classroom teachers to identify strategies, instructional practices,

and resources for gifted students.

- Model strategies for teachers on how to differentiate.
- Assist teachers with differentiated instructional planning specifically for gifted students through shared unit plans.
- Provide staff development for general education teachers through group and/or individual meetings.
- Provide direct instruction to students for Tier 2 and 3 services.
- Monitor student progress of achievement gains.
- Facilitate and coordinate identification procedures
- Guide and document individual student programming through updated PEPs.
- Participate in program evaluation.
- Attend and implement professional development that addresses best practice in gifted and talented issues on an on-going basis.
- Using best practices, advocate for students' needs and district services.

Qualified Staffing

The Talented and Gifted program has three full time strategists. One Strategist serves K-3, one serves 4-7, and one serves 8-12.

Talented and Gifted Strategists employed by Lewis Central Schools have valid Iowa Teaching Licenses and possess or are earning Gifted and Talented endorsements.

Program Evaluation

Through a rotation of areas identified by the G-SAP, the Lewis Central TAG Team will regularly review and revise:

- Procedures for student identification
- Appropriate types of acceleration and extension programming
- Program goals and performance measures
- On-going program evaluation
- Number of K-12 Gifted and Talented endorsed teachers
- Professional development available to TAG Strategists
- Professional development available to classroom teachers and administrators
- Individual student achievement and growth data for all identified students
- Group data within each program and/or strand and subject area.
- The academic growth of other students in cluster classrooms or who receive differentiated instruction
- The District TAG plan as posted on the District Website.

Glossary

Acceleration Providing gifted learners access to content at a faster pace or higher level than typical for their grade.

This may include:

- grade-level acceleration
- subject acceleration
- compacting curriculum to skip mastered material

Extension Activities that stretch learning beyond the core objective without moving ahead to new standards.

Extensions deepen thinking through:

- Justification
- Application
- Problem-solving
- multiple representations

Enrichment Experiences that broaden learning beyond required curriculum.

Enrichment often includes:

- Projects
- Inquiry
- creative or interdisciplinary work

**TAG Cluster
(Cluster
Grouping)**

The purposeful placement of a small group of identified or high-potential gifted students (typically 5–8) in the same heterogeneous classroom with a teacher prepared to differentiate.

Differentiation

Intentional adjustments to content, process, product, or learning environment to meet diverse learner needs.

For gifted learners, differentiation often includes:

- increased rigor
- depth of reasoning
- Choice
- flexible pacing

**Tiered
Instructional
Supports**

A framework (often within MTSS) that provides varying levels of instruction and support based on student need.

For gifted learners:

- Tier 1: Differentiation in the core classroom
- Tier 2: Small-group enrichment or extensions
- Tier 3: Intensive supports such as pull-out, acceleration, or mentorship

Depth

The extent to which students explore a concept deeply, focusing on:

- underlying ideas
- Patterns
- Rules
- Relationships
- precise language

Complexity

The degree to which students connect ideas, consider multiple perspectives, or apply learning across contexts.

Complexity often includes:

- interdisciplinary connections
- multiple viewpoints
- real-world application

Pacing

The rate at which instruction moves, including time spent on practice, repetition, and mastery.

For gifted learners:

- pacing is often faster
- repetition is reduced
- mastery is demonstrated earlier

Flexible Grouping

The intentional regrouping of students based on:

- Readiness
- Interest
- Task
- learning goal

Talent Pool

A group of students identified as having high potential but who may not yet meet formal gifted identification criteria.

Talent pools are used to:

- develop emerging strengths
- monitor growth over time
- support equity in identification

Twice Exceptional (2e)

Students who are both gifted and have a disability (e.g., ADHD, dyslexia, autism, anxiety).

2e learners may show:

- high reasoning ability
- uneven academic performance
- masking of strengths or challenges

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