



East Mills Talented and Gifted Handbook

K-12

2024-2025

Our Mission

Through education and learning, we foster a culture of excellence where proud and passionate students build a future by being leaders in their community and the world.

Our Vision

Every one, Everyday, A Success!

Our Core Values

- **STUDENTS FIRST**
Make decisions that are in the best interest of students. Use every resource strategically so that we can meet students' individual needs.
- **EXCELLENCE**
Be relentless in your pursuit of greatness. Be bold and innovate. Learn from your mistakes. Hold yourself and others to high standards.
- **INTEGRITY**
Do the right thing, even when no one is looking. Be honest, Be trustworthy. Be accountable.
- **EQUITY**
Diversity is an asset that makes us stronger. Advocate for the needs of others. Ensure that all members of our community have access to the tools and resources they need to be successful.
- **SERVICE**
Listen. Empathize. Respond. Own problems and help to solve them.
- **TENACITY**
Embrace hard work and persevere in the face of challenges. Follow through on your commitments and strive to do your best, no matter what.

EAST MILLS STRATEGIC PLAN VISION 2018 - 2025

Our goal is to prepare
all students to graduate ready to pursue
and succeed on their chosen paths.



Contact Us

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East Mills Gifted and Talented Handbook K-5

The East Mills Community School District believes that there are gifted and talented learners who demonstrate outstanding abilities and evidence of high achievement requiring instruction and educational services apart from the regular classroom. These students exhibit uniquely specific talents, interests, and needs in at least one of the following areas: general intellect, creative thinking, leadership ability, and visual and performing arts. It is essential that talented and gifted students receive experiences that incorporate meaningful learning objectives and capitalize on student choice, high level thinking/questioning, deeper learning, as well as real-world skills. In offering differentiated curriculum in the regular classroom as well as specialized enrichment activities and/or acceleration, all talented and gifted students are challenged and their individualized needs are met.

To provide suitable learning experiences for encouraging and developing the maximum potential of talented and gifted learners, it is the responsibility of the entire staff in partnership with students and parents to guide this process. Through ongoing assessment, accurate identification of talents and attention to individualized academic and social/emotional needs, talented and gifted learners have the opportunity to achieve to the extent of their abilities and become creative, productive, contributing members of society.

DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS

Iowa Code 257.44 Gifted and talented children defined.

"Gifted and talented children" are those identified as possessing outstanding abilities who are capable of high performance. Gifted and talented children are children who require appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs beyond those provided by the regular school program.

Gifted and talented children include those children with demonstrated achievement or potential ability, or both, in any of the following areas or in combination:

- General intellectual ability/academics
- Creative thinking
- Leadership ability
- Visual and performing arts ability
- Specific ability aptitude

MISSION

In order for Gifted and Talented students to develop their talents to their full extent, East Mills Community School District will provide experiences rich in challenges and opportunities to satisfy

intellectual and creative achievement.

OUR BELIEFS

1. The gifted and talented program is best when it is integrated within the East Mills educational system through collaborative efforts.
 - As a result of this belief, we are committed to providing learning opportunities and resources for all involved in comprehensive GT (gifted and talented) programming.
2. Gifted and talented students are found within all ages, genders, cultures, socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic groups.
 - As a result of this belief, we commit to comparing all GT data with Infinite Campus data to provide a clear picture of the different demographics.
3. Gifted and talented learners require qualitatively differentiated curriculum and instruction that includes, but is not limited to, increased rigor and appropriate pace.
 - As a result of this belief, we commit to implementing evidence-based curricular opportunities, supports, and resources that meet the individual needs of GT learners.
4. We believe that gifted and talented learners have unique social/emotional needs.
 - Because of this belief, we are committed to identifying and addressing the unique social, emotional, and learning needs of the GT learners.
5. A sound assessment system is an integral part of determining a gifted and talented learners' instructional level.
 - As a result of this belief, we commit to using a variety of assessments in order to identify a gifted and talented learner's cognitive level for academic placement.
6. Every gifted and talented student needs to be challenged everyday.
 - As a result of this belief, we are committed to providing learning opportunities and resources for all involved in comprehensive GT programming.
7. Gifted and talented learners need learning experiences with their intellectual peers.
 - As a result of this belief, we are committed to using a variety of grouping methods and placing students in an appropriate level of curriculum.
8. Gifted and talented students need time to explore their passions and interests.
 - Because of this belief we are committed to providing opportunities that are reflective of the passions and interests of each individual GT student.

IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Students are eligible for identification for the GT program at any point during their K-12 education at East Mills Community School District. The identification process will be broken up into the following categories:

- Nominations (which can occur at any point during the school year)
- Screening (done by the GT coordinator)

- Evaluation and recommendation for GT services (performed by a gifted and talented committee)

Nominations

School personnel will be provided with an overview of the identification procedures for the gifted and talented program. Nominations can be made by teachers, parents, administrators, and students by filling out the Gifted and Talented form which includes the Renzulli Scale.

Screening

During this process the gifted and talented coordinator will collect data that includes but is not limited to:

- ISASP (Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress) scores in Math and Reading (grades 3- 6) -96th percentile or higher.
- For Reading, corroboration with FAST data score 2 years above grade level expectations.
- For Reading/Language Arts, provide three different writing samples from different genres. (descriptive, expository, persuasive, narrative, creative)
- For Math, FAST data score 2 years above grade level expectations.
- Cognitive Ability Test (as needed).
- On the Renzulli – either Creativity or Learning- score of 90% or higher is required
- Other Assessments as needed for specific content (Unit Tests/End of the year tests, subject specific Renzulli with a score of 90% or higher.)

K-2 data that can be collected:

- For Reading, FAST data two years above grade level.
- For Math, FAST data two years above grade level.
- Teacher observation/recommendation.
- On the Renzulli – either Creativity or Learning- score of 90% or higher is required

Grades 3-5 data that can be collected:

- ISASP- Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress- 96th percentile in reading or math
- Cognitive Ability Test- score of 9th stanine (96-99 percent).
- For Reading, FAST data two years ahead of district requirements.
- For Math, FAST data two years above grade level.
- MAP (Measures of Academic Progress)-A math score of 240 or higher. End of the year math screener in 6th grade.
- On the Renzulli – either Creativity or Learning- score of 90% or higher is required. ● Additional classroom assessments/artifacts (writing samples, projects, presentations, Renzulli subject specific 90% or higher, etc)

Services Provided:

- 1st-2nd grades, (E.L.P.) Enrichment Learning Program

- 3rd-5th weekly pull-out classes
- Social/Emotional Advocacy
- Math/Reading Acceleration
- Support for Accelerated Students

IOWA ACCELERATION SCALE

This tool is implemented when whole grade acceleration is considered for a student identified as gifted who needs additional challenge.

A team consisting of the TAG teacher, principal, parents, students, additional staff members, and the student discuss the results from this and use it to make necessary changes for the student in the school setting.

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A team consisting of the GT teacher, school administration, and selected classroom teacher(s) will evaluate criteria and make recommendations concerning enrollment in the GT program. Recommendations will be made regarding educational programming needs for the student in the regular school program and, if necessary, in experiences beyond the regular program. Identification and programming are necessarily linked. After a student has been assessed and his/her talent and needs identified, a personalized education plan will be developed.

Students whose grades in their identified areas drop below a “C” will be evaluated by the TAG committee and classroom teacher to determine if TAG services are still needed at that time.

PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN AND EXIT PROCEDURES

Upon identification, the Gifted and Talented committee will create a personalized education plan that includes: student needs, student interests and strengths, and methods to meet the student’s needs through programming, accommodations, and modifications.

Evaluation and assessment of a student’s progress and needs is an ongoing process. When data indicates that a student’s learning needs can best be met within the traditional classroom curricula, the GT committee will evaluate data to determine whether the student should be recommended to be exited from the GT program. Parents will be notified by personal contact. Inactive students are eligible to be re-recommended for GT programming.

East Mills Gifted and Talented Handbook 6-12

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JR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM, GRADES 6-8

The main focus for the East Mills Middle School TAG program continues to be in the areas of math and language arts, but other areas can be included.

In math, students can be subject accelerated, this is dependent on previous test scores and placements in earlier grades. Problem solving strategies are taught and practiced through a variety of assignments and projects.

Students are given opportunities to enter writing contests throughout the school year by the tag teacher and the regular classroom teachers.

Students have the opportunity to compete in Scholastic writing and poetry contests, MathCounts Competition, and other opportunities for competitions during the year.

Students grades 7-9 are encouraged to take the ACT or SAT tests in these grades.

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- Nominations(which can occur at any point during the school year)
- Screening (Done by the GT coordinator)
- Evaluation and Recommendation for GT services (performed by a gifted and talented committee quarterly)

Nomination Process

- Teacher, Parent, Peer, or Self-Nomination
- Past performance demonstrating high academic ability

Screening Process

- Work demonstrating above average ability
- Previously identified at the elementary or middle schools
- 96th percentile or above on ISASP on a specific subject.
- Renzulli scales for rating the expression characteristics of gifted students with a score of 107 or higher.

Students must meet two of these additional criteria:

- Committee recommendation
- Previously identified at the elementary or middle schools
- Student work samples, products, performance showing exceptional ability

Most students in the high school program were previously identified during elementary or middle school. If this is not the case the following criteria are used in the screening and identification of students in high school for the TAG program:

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM GRADES 9-12

A variety of college courses are offered either over the ICN or on line from Iowa Western Community College or Southwestern Community College. Students taking college level courses receive both high school and college credits.

The TAG teacher meets with identified students, at an established time during the week to help students pursue individual interests or to work on college readiness activities. . The school counselor also is involved in this process of college courses.

Acceleration is a key component of the TAG student's course selection. Students also receive guidance in making career choices and making the best use of their talents.

Services Provided High School Grades 9-12

- Acceleration in specific subjects
- Independent Study
- College Courses
- Competitions and Contests
- Advocacy and Support

Continued participation will be subject to the teacher, parent, and student's evaluation of program appropriateness and/or student's performance.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Multiple assessment tools will be used to determine a student's growth in the TAG program. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Daily assignments, tests, and student projects
- 2) Iowa Assessments given in the 4th quarter
- 3) MAP scores- these tests are given three times during the school year

On-going evaluation procedures throughout the school year will include formal and informal conferences between the TAG teacher and classroom teachers, parents, and students. This information will be utilized to make necessary changes for the upcoming school year.

Students whose grades in their identified areas drop below a C will not be allowed to continue in the TAG program until their grades are raised. At that time a conference will be held to determine if the TAG program is an appropriate placement for the students or not.

INSERVICE MODEL

Issues related to gifted education will be addressed at teacher in-services on an annual basis. Items

presented at these will focus on nominations, identification, and the screening process. Faculty members are encouraged to attend workshops or classes that would help them to incorporate creative thinking skills, higher level thinking skills, or ways to differentiate instruction.