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# Ripon Area School District **Gifted and Talented Program Plan**

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Revised April 2025

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# Mission, Vision, and Core Values

## Ripon Area School District Mission Statement

Empowering learners, engaging community, enriching the world.

## Ripon Area School District Vision Statement

One of Wisconsin's finest school districts, fostering excellence for all through innovation.

## Ripon Area School District Core Values

**Integrity:** Exemplifying honesty and trustworthiness while adhering to high moral principles

**Excellence:** Striving for the utmost quality in any endeavor

**Commitment:** Devoting full energies and talents to successfully complete undertakings

**Collaboration:** Working together inclusively toward a positive outcome, locally and globally

**Innovation:** Taking initiative and risks to seek better solutions

**Kindness:** Treating ALL others and self with consideration and generosity

## Gifted and Talented Mission Statement

The Ripon Area School District (RASD) Gifted and Talented (G/T) program ensures that students who display evidence of high-performance capability in one or more of the five areas of giftedness are provided with the opportunities and support to reach their full potential. The five areas of giftedness are:

- General Intellectual
- Specific Academic
- Creativity
- Leadership
- Visual and Performing Arts



## Gifted and Talented Vision Statement

The vision of the Ripon Area School District Gifted and Talented program is to provide instruction and opportunities for students who display evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, or specific academic areas. The Ripon Area School District recognizes that every student has unique gifts and talents, but that gifted and talented students possess measurable, qualitatively different characteristics.

The district strives to ensure challenging and appropriate opportunities for each of its students. The district uses the Wisconsin Multi-Level Systems of Supports (WiMLSS) to identify and serve the academic and affective needs of all of its students, including the gifted.

# Statutes and Rules for Gifted Education

## Wisconsin Statute: s. 118.35, Wis. Stats. Programs for gifted and talented pupils

- (1) In this section, "gifted and talented pupils" means pupils enrolled in public schools who give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership or specific academic areas and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program in order to fully develop such capabilities.
- (2) The state superintendent shall by rule establish guidelines for the identification of gifted and talented pupils.
- (3) Each school board shall ensure that all gifted and talented pupils enrolled in the school district have access to a program for gifted and talented pupils.
- (4) From the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (fy), the department shall award grants to nonprofit organizations, cooperative educational service agencies, institutions within the University of Wisconsin System, and school districts for the purpose of providing to gifted and talented pupils those services and activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program that allow such pupils to fully develop their capabilities.

**Administrative Rule 8.01(2)(t)2.** Each school district board shall establish a plan and designate a person to coordinate the gifted and talented program. Gifted and talented pupils shall be identified as required in s. 118.35 (1), Stats. This identification shall occur in kindergarten through grade 12 in general intellectual, specific academic, leadership, creativity, and visual and performing arts. A pupil may be



identified as gifted or talented in one or more of the categories under s. 118.35 (1), Stats. The identification process shall result in a pupil profile based on multiple measures, including but not limited to standardized test data, nominations, rating scales or inventories, products, portfolios, and demonstrated performance. Identification tools shall be appropriate for the specific purpose for which they are being employed. The identification process and tools shall be responsive to factors such as, but not limited to, pupils' economic conditions, race, gender, culture, native language, developmental differences, and identified disabilities as described under subch. V of ch. 115, Stats. The school district board shall provide access, without charge for tuition, to appropriate programming for pupils identified as gifted or talented as required under ss. 118.35 (3) and 121.02 (1) (t), Stats. The school district board shall provide an opportunity for parental participation in the identification and resultant programming.

**Wisconsin Statute 121.02(1)(t)**, relating to school board requirements.

Provide access to an appropriate program for pupils identified as gifted or talented.

### **Definitions of Terms**

- **"Access"** means an opportunity to study through school district course offerings, independent study, cooperative educational service agencies, or cooperative arrangements between school district boards under s. 66.0301, Stats., and postsecondary education institutions (per PI 8.001(1), Wis. Admin. Rule).
- **"Appropriate program"** means a systematic and continuous set of instructional activities or learning experiences which expand the development of the pupils identified as gifted or talented (per PI 8.01(2)(t)1.a., Wis. Admin. Rule).

**Ripon Area School District Policy [2464: Programs for Gifted and Talented Students](#)**

**Ripon Area School District Policy [5112: Early Entrance Age](#)**



# What is Giftedness?

## State Definition of Giftedness

“Pupils enrolled in public schools who give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, or specific academic areas **and** who need services or activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program in order to fully develop such capabilities.”

## Federal Definition of Giftedness

“The term ‘gifted and talented,’ when used with respect to students, children or youth, means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in such areas as intellectual creative, artistic, or leadership capacity or in specif academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.”

## National Association for Gifted Children

Students with gifts and talents perform—or have the capability to perform—at higher levels compared to others of the same age, experience, and environment in one or more domains.

## Five Areas of Giftedness

Giftedness is multidimensional. Students may be capable of superior performance or potential in one or more of the following areas.

General Intellectual	Intellectually gifted children exhibit early and rapid development of language ability, strong powers of reasoning and advanced ability in critical thinking and problem solving in multiple areas. They may manipulate information in divergent ways when challenged by complex issues. Typically, these children are noted for being several years beyond their peers in their cognitive ability.
Creativity	Exceptional ability to use divergent and unconventional thinking in arriving at creative and unusual ideas or solutions to problems. Creativity may cross all areas (academic, arts, leadership) or may manifest itself in one specific area such as writing or math. Highly creative students tend to develop original ideas and products. They may express their creativity in oral, written, or nonverbal expression. They are flexible and original in their thinking, tending to reject one-answer solutions. These children tend to possess strong



	visualization. Frequently these individuals are strongly independent and often resist conformity. Creativity is characterized by originality of thought, human behavior, and product.
Specific Academic	Exceptional ability and performance in a single academic area. Academically able students have unusual/advanced ability or capability in reading or math. These students often make connections within a discipline that transcends the obvious. They quickly grasp relationships among facts and see facts as parts of a more complex whole.
Artistic	Ability to create or perform in music in a way that suggests exceptional talent or an ability to paint, sculpt, photograph or arrange media in a way that suggests exceptional talent. Students can demonstrate unusual adeptness or skill in the fields of music or visual arts. Since this is a performance-based talent, identification centers around nominations, portfolios and expert assessment.
Leadership	Exceptional ability to relate to and motivate others leadership comes in many forms and may be positive or negative. Individuals gifted in leadership usually have the ability to convince people to act or not act in specific ways. Leaders are often self-confident and comfortable with their peers. They express themselves well and frequently are charming and charismatic. It is important to recognize that leadership traits may manifest into different leadership styles, depending upon environment and personality of the individual. Observable characteristics may include influencing peers, being sought out by others to accomplish a task, addressing a need, holding high expectations for self and others, demonstrating or delegating responsibility, and internalizing concepts of right and wrong.

## Characteristics of Gifted Students

Children's gifts and talents can be overshadowed by learning or behavior challenges such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), emotional and behavioral disorders, and Aspergers syndrome. These "twice-exceptional" students may also have gifts and talents that need to be recognized and nurtured.

Below is a table of "usual" characteristics; the traits that are most commonly found in gifted children, identified by Mary Ruth Coleman, Sneha Shah-Coltrane and Ann Harrison. These observable characteristics can help recognize children with outstanding potential who may be gifted through the



use of the *Teacher's Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS)*.

<b>Learns Easily</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is eager to learn</li> <li>Has lots of information.</li> <li>Retains and retrieves information easily.</li> <li>Carries out complex instructions with ease.</li> <li>Completes assignments ahead of others (gets A's without effort).</li> <li>Shows strong memory, quick recall.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses complex language, math, and/or musical symbol systems.</li> <li>Prefers work with more complexity.</li> <li>Refuses and becomes impatient with tedious and repetitious work.</li> <li>Appears bored with or rushes through "easy" work.</li> <li>Corrects the teacher and students in class.</li> <li>Does not show work, only answers.</li> </ul>
<b>Has Strong Interests</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is able to lose self in something of interest.</li> <li>Demonstrates unusual or advanced interests.</li> <li>Keeps extensive collections.</li> <li>Is considered an "expert" in a particular topic (may seem domineering).</li> <li>Checks out books, websites, and materials on particular topics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chooses to become involved when area of interest is addressed.</li> <li>Has interest in areas outside typical school curriculum.</li> <li>Leads discussions back to one topic of interest.</li> <li>Resists transitions and moving onto new topics of study.</li> </ul>
<b>Shows Motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a self-starter (requires little direction).</li> <li>Is persistent in pursuing and completing self-selected tasks.</li> <li>Is independent (requires little feedback).</li> <li>Prefers to do things on own ("the quiet child").</li> <li>Enjoys challenge of new and different.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prefers interacting with older people.</li> <li>Converses about mature topics.</li> <li>Does not follow typical path (moves to the beat of a different drummer).</li> <li>Questions authority (is considered a "trouble-maker" or instigator).</li> </ul>
<b>Shows Advanced Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reads and comprehends on an advanced level (this may be seen in <u>listening</u> comprehension).</li> <li>Tells or reproduces stories and events with detail.</li> <li>Has a large vocabulary.</li> <li>Speaks more than one language.</li> <li>Uses descriptive language, similes, puns.</li> <li>Makes up songs, stories, and rhymes.</li> <li>Communicates well with symbols (art, design, music, or dance).</li> <li>Carries on conversations related to academic topics and within a discipline.</li> <li>Challenges teacher to go further in depth and complexity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spends free time absorbed in books (may read when supposed to do other things).</li> <li>Seeks non-fiction as well as fiction.</li> <li>Generates many writing ideas and products.</li> <li>Understands advanced mathematical concepts.</li> <li>Understands the meaning and use of maps, diagrams, and graphs.</li> <li>Connects and uses mathematical language and skills in meaningful real-world ways.</li> <li>Masters and shows high level thinking in a specific content area.</li> <li>Manipulates situations for specific purposes.</li> </ul>
<b>Shows Advanced Reasoning &amp; Problem Solving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is a keen observer (spots details others miss).</li> <li>Recognizes and can recreate patterns (may be in numeric, linguistic, musical or physical form).</li> <li>Draws accurate and advanced conclusions based on information.</li> <li>Designs experiments to test hypotheses (develops logical ways to collect and analyze data).</li> <li>Makes mental connections (transfers learning into other subjects or real life situations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expresses relationships between past and present</li> <li>Is aware of problems others do not see.</li> <li>Devises or adapts strategies to solve problems.</li> <li>Questions "rote" approaches to problem solving.</li> <li>Has "out of the box" ways of solving problems and seeing situations.</li> <li>Doesn't do well on tests with limited answer choices.</li> <li>Is argumentative.</li> <li>Sees cause and effect relationships. Asks, "why?"</li> </ul>
<b>Shows Social Perceptive-ness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Displays sense of humor (may be "class clown").</li> <li>Responds to needs of others (is able to see another's point of view).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reads social situations well and can gain acceptance in most groups.</li> <li>Displays strong sense of justice (may overreact</li> </ul>



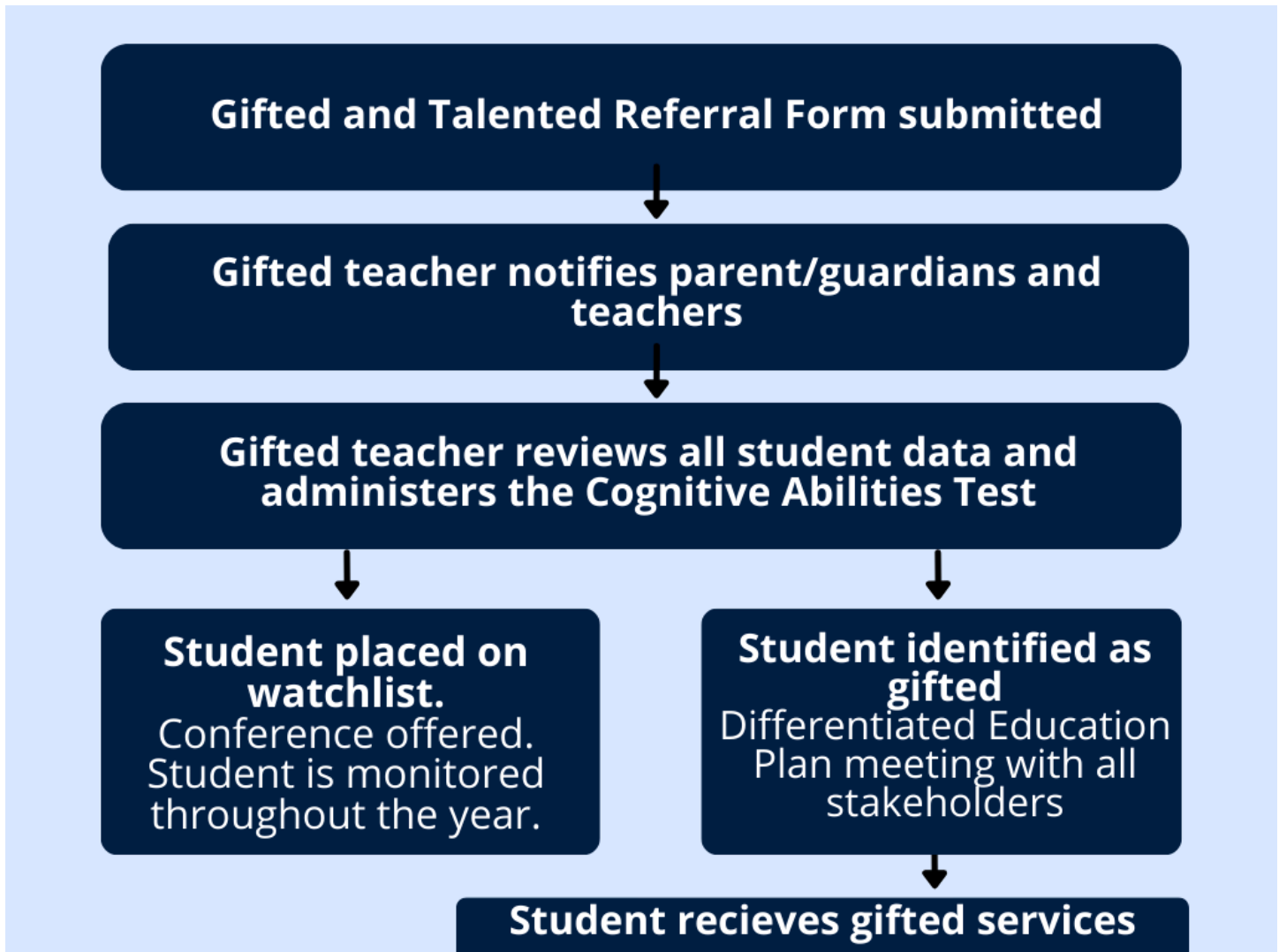


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoys working in groups.</li> <li>• Identifies with individuals in books, history, movies, etc.</li> <li>• Uses skills to resolve conflict.</li> <li>• Stands up to bullying and/or protects other students who are being mistreated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• emotionally).</li> <li>• Is easily distracted by others' needs. Is over-talkative and social.</li> <li>• Uses humor and sarcasm inappropriately.</li> </ul>
<b>Displays Curiosity &amp; Creativity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions, explores, experiments.</li> <li>• Asks unusual, provocative questions.</li> <li>• Is curious. Asks how, why, and what if?</li> <li>• Tries to discover the how and why of things.</li> <li>• Enjoys doing things in new ways.</li> <li>• Puts unrelated ideas and materials together in new and different ways.</li> <li>• Offers unique responses.</li> <li>• Develops and tells elaborate "stories."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has an active imagination (likes to pretend).</li> <li>• Assumes another persona during activities or conversations.</li> <li>• Has trouble distinguishing fact from fiction.</li> <li>• Does not follow or wait for directions (makes own rules).</li> <li>• Refuses to follow rules unless they see "why."</li> <li>• Is seen as "deviant" or non-conformist.</li> </ul>
<b>Displays Spatial Abilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a good sense of direction.</li> <li>• Figures out why and how things work.</li> <li>• Takes objects apart and reassembles with speed and accuracy.</li> <li>• Creates interesting shapes and patterns.</li> <li>• Shows unusual talent in various art forms (including musical, dance, and performance arts).</li> <li>• Invents games.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates three-dimensional structures.</li> <li>• Has excellent motor planning and coordination.</li> <li>• Needs movement to connect learning to memory.</li> <li>• Prefers hands-on experiences to learn (uses manipulatives/artifacts).</li> <li>• Brings gadgets, toys, etc. to tinker with at school.</li> <li>• Moves around often (keeps hands and body always busy).</li> </ul>
<b>Displays Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizes materials and activities.</li> <li>• Accepts and carries out responsibilities.</li> <li>• Supports others who may be vulnerable with advocacy and protection (may serve as translator for others).</li> <li>• Is sought by others (influences others, positively or negatively).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapts readily to new situations and changes.</li> <li>• Is a positive and compassionate guide to others.</li> <li>• Prefers adult company.</li> <li>• Is seen as manipulative and strong-willed.</li> <li>• Is seen as "bossy" (wants to be the center of attention).</li> <li>• Dominates others (may not be a good follower).</li> </ul>

Characteristics are taken from *USTARS-Teacher Observation of Potential in Students (TOPS)*, *USTARS™PLUS 2018*, Copyright Council for Exceptional Children.



## Identification Process



[Gifted and Talented Referral Form](https://forms.gle/aSpTz8Ya3LgUtfnF8) (<https://forms.gle/aSpTz8Ya3LgUtfnF8>)

[Cognitive Abilities Test \(CogAT\) Information](https://riversideinsights.com/cognitive_abilities_test)

([https://riversideinsights.com/cognitive\\_abilities\\_test](https://riversideinsights.com/cognitive_abilities_test))

**Differentiated Education Plan (DEP)** All stakeholders will meet to review data and determine how to best meet the needs of the student. This may mean the student is at times best served within their regular classroom or via pullout in a small group setting.



## Gifted and Talented Stakeholder Responsibilities

Raising a gifted student is not always easy. Together we can ensure your gifted student receives instruction in a differentiated educational environment to meet their unique academic, social, and emotional needs.

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Gifted Teacher/ Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Act as an advocate for the needs of talented students.</li><li>● Provide vision and direction for the district gifted supports.</li><li>● Facilitate the writing of DEPs and ensure teachers receive copies of the DEPs.</li><li>● Provide support for classroom teachers implementing DEPs.</li><li>● Monitor supports for identified students.</li><li>● Coordinate professional development.</li><li>● Provide resources/materials/ideas for gifted students.</li><li>● Participate in professional development.</li><li>● Maintain up-to-date demographic district database.</li><li>● Monitor data to ensure the needs of high-achieving students are being met.</li><li>● Collaborate with teachers in differentiating for high-achieving learners.</li></ul>
Counselors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Act as an advocate for the needs of talented students.</li><li>● Participate on DEP team as necessary.</li><li>● Consult with DEP team when referrals come in.</li><li>● Support DEP goals.</li><li>● Participate in professional development.</li></ul>
Psychologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Act as an advocate for the needs of talented students.</li><li>● Administer standardized intelligence and achievement tests.</li><li>● Share assessment results with parents and DEP team.</li><li>● Participate on DEP team as necessary.</li><li>● Participate in professional development.</li></ul>
Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Act as an advocate for the needs of talented students.</li><li>● Communicate and ensure appropriate G/T support options are offered for identified students.</li><li>● Participate in DEPs and monitor continuous progress and support for identified students.</li><li>● Consult with the G/T teacher to ensure resources/materials/ideas for G/T support as required by DEPs are provided.</li></ul>

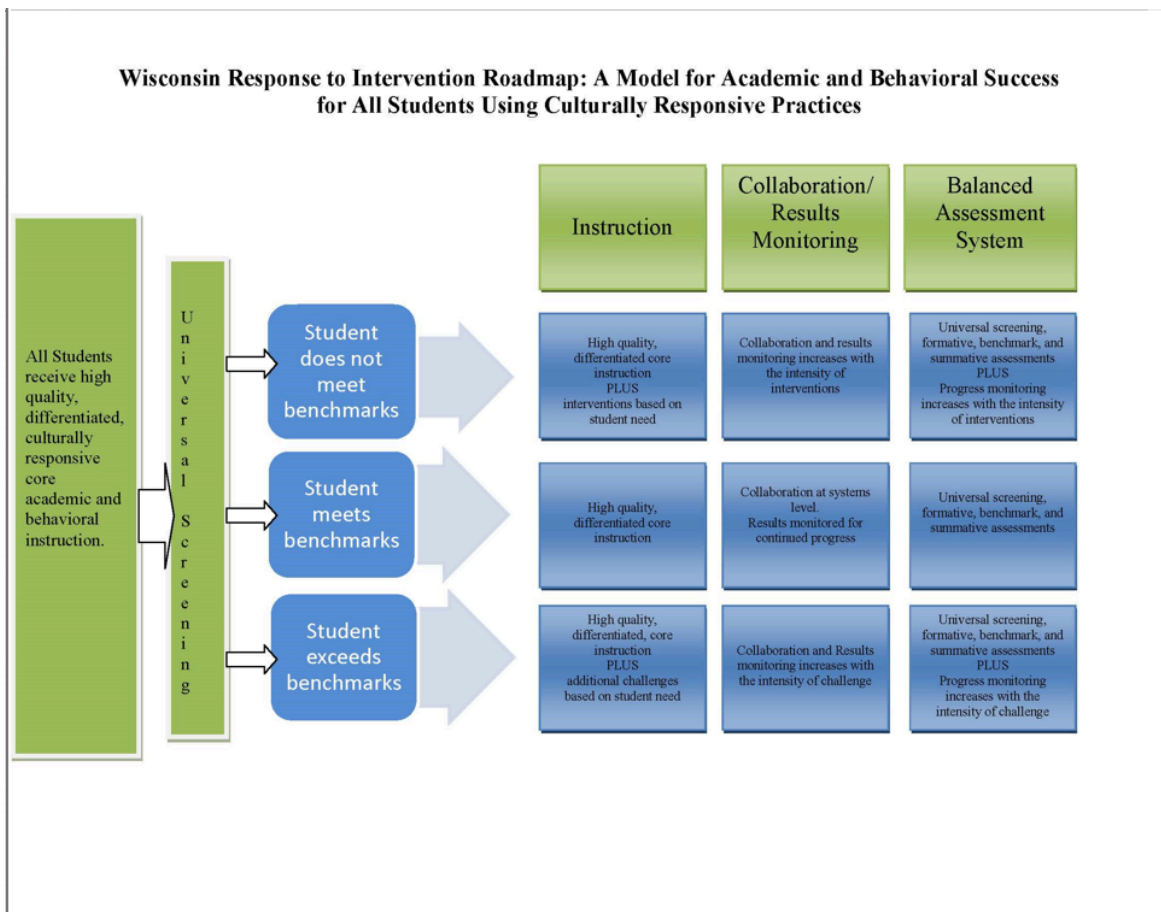


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Support differentiation strategies employed by teaching staff.</li><li>● Participate in professional development.</li></ul>
Classroom Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Act as an advocate for the needs of talented students.</li><li>● Participate on DEP team.</li><li>● Coordinate enrichment activities for students.</li><li>● Provide differentiation.</li><li>● Document mastery of goals identified in DEP.</li><li>● Utilize individual and small group instruction as needed.</li><li>● Communicate with DEP team about progress.</li><li>● Collaborate with gifted teacher.</li><li>● Participate in professional development.</li></ul>
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Act as an advocate for the needs of talented students.</li><li>● Participate on the DEP team.</li><li>● Collaborate with DEP team to meet your gifted student's needs.</li><li>● Communicate with DEP team any struggles and successes their student is experiencing at home and at school.</li><li>● Nurture persistence, effort, intellectual risk-taking, and perseverance.</li></ul>
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Act as an advocate for your needs.</li><li>● Communicate with your DEP team when you have struggles or successes so they can support your learning.</li></ul>



## Wisconsin Multi-Level Systems of Support

According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, “implementing a multi-level systems of supports means providing services, practices, and resources for each and every learner based upon responsiveness to effective instruction and intervention. In this system, high quality instruction, strategic use of data, and collaboration interact within a continuum of supports, starting with a strong universal level, to ensure learner success. Schools provide varying types of supports at differing levels of intensity to proactively and responsively adjust to the needs of the whole child. These include the knowledge, skills, and habits learners need for success beyond high school, including developmental, academic, behavioral, social and emotional skills.” <https://dpi.wi.gov/emlss>





## Programming for Gifted Students in Ripon Area School District

Students may receive services in a variety of different ways in order to best address student learning needs. Services may include compacting, differentiation, acceleration, mentoring, shadowing and enrichment seminars. The district's Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Support (EMLSS) is used as the foundation on which service delivery plans are based. These service delivery options will vary in duration, frequency, and intensity based on the student(s) for whom the service is being designed.

### ***What is differentiation?***

Differentiation means providing students with different learning options, generally in the classroom, that best meet their learning needs. There are five elements of differentiation (Winebrenner, 2001) to include:

**Content**—providing more advanced, complex instructional resources

**Process**—defining higher order thinking methods for students to make sense of concepts or generalizations often in a more complex and abstract manner

**Product**—offering choices in the ways in which a student demonstrates learning

**Environment**—providing the setting that best suits the learning style and needs of the student

**Assessment**—providing alternative means of documenting mastery of the curriculum

### ***What is enrichment?***

Enrichment refers to learning experiences either in or out of the classroom where the curriculum content is extended. One way in which enrichment is provided at the elementary level is the “seminar.” Students with a common interest or talent are placed together in a cluster group to participate in an extension of the curriculum that may include one or more of the types of differentiation noted above. Many seminars are facilitated by the Gifted/Talented teacher but others are offered by the classroom teacher. Seminars cover an array of curricular areas and include the talent areas of leadership and fine arts as well. Flexible grouping structures are used so that enrichment opportunities may be provided to many learners over the course of the school year based on the students’ interests and areas of talent.

### ***What is compacting?***

Compacting begins with a student being pretested either for the unit of study or the course. The pretest identifies the specific knowledge or skills that need to be developed with the learner and those that have already been mastered. In this way, the unit of study or course is completed in a shorter period of time with a focus on the knowledge or skills needed for further development. Compacting can also be used in situations where the student is able to learn the material more quickly than peers as the student needs less repetition or practice to accomplish mastery. Compacting can be done with individuals or with flexible groupings of students.



### ***What is mentoring?***

Mentors are individuals who have expertise with a certain skill set or knowledge base and are willing to share this expertise with students who have interests in that area. G/T personnel may seek mentors for individuals or small groups of students to extend the school experience beyond the grade-level curriculum and expectations. Adults, college students, and high school students may serve as mentors following completion of the district's police background check process. "Mentor relationships with dedicated scholars, artists, scientists, or businesspeople are highly suitable for gifted adolescents" and provide an opportunity to network with individuals who share a common set of interests.

### ***What is shadowing?***

G/T personnel may arrange for students to shadow a person on the job site or in post-secondary institutions in order to gain experience in an area of high interest for the able learner as another means of extending the school experience beyond the grade-level curriculum and expectations. Generally, this type of service is provided by an area business or educational institution.

### ***What is acceleration?***

Acceleration generally refers to students attending a class with older students. This option is used more frequently with students in grades 6-12 but includes full grade acceleration, which may be used at any grade level. For example, a student may complete first grade in the spring of one school year and be enrolled in third grade for the following school year. A student might also be placed in an advanced grade level for a single course. The more common application of acceleration is to have a middle school or high school student attend an upper-level course. In this way, acceleration is course or subject-specific and offers students the opportunity for learning options that provide acceleration in the needed areas while also enabling the student to participate in other courses and activities with age mates. Students may travel between the middle school and high school to access such course opportunities. To learn more about acceleration, please read the Wisconsin Association for Gifted and Talented Acceleration Report.

<https://watg.starchapter.com/images/downloads/Documents/WATGAccelerationReport2020.pdf>

### **Seminar examples may include (but are not limited to):**

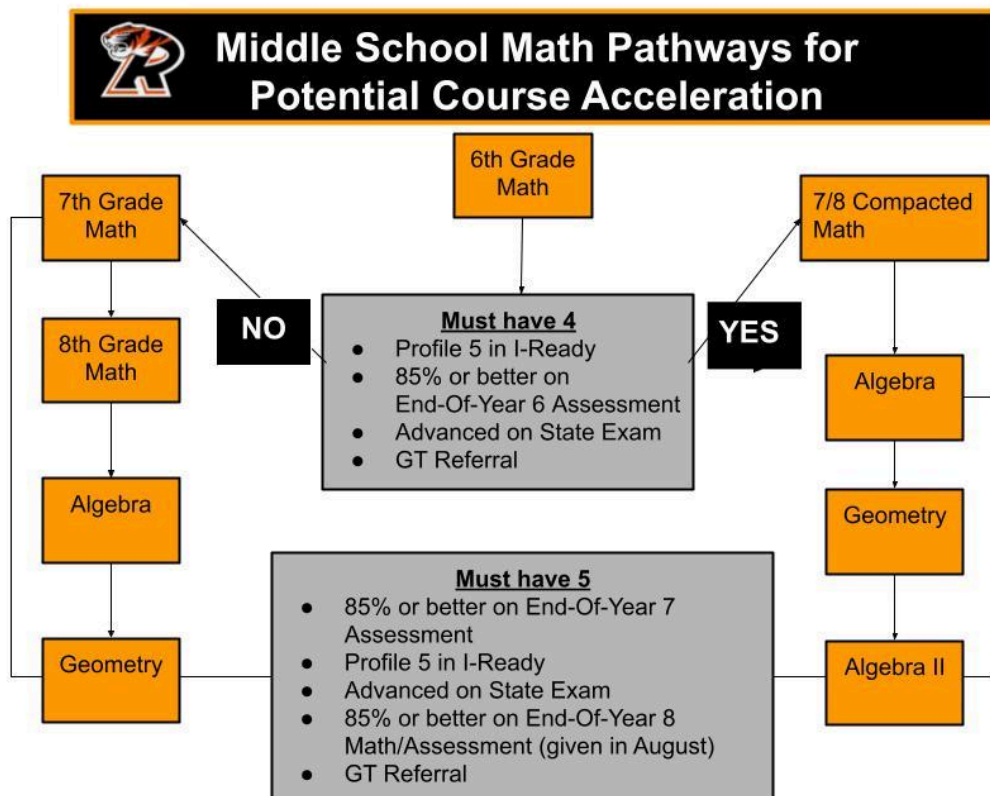
- Junior Great Books
- Caesar's English
- Book Clubs
- Ian Byrd's Word Puzzles
- Concept Quests- Bridges Math Enrichment
- Open Middle Math Problems



**Co-curricular opportunities may include (but are not limited to):**

- Noetic Math Competitions – Grades 2-6
- Fox Valley Junior Math League—Grades 5-8
- Fox Valley Math League– Grades 9-12
- UW-Oshkosh Math Meet– Grades 7-10
- Scripps's National Spelling Bee—Grades 3-8
- Wisconsin Future Problem Solver's Writing Contest– Grades 4-12
- Student Council—Grades 3-12
- Academic Bowl– Grades 9-12

The Ripon Area School District has alternate pathways to accommodate the advanced needs of our students. One such way is through curriculum compacting math at the middle school level.







To be responsive to the needs of our compacted and accelerated students, the board enacted Act 138 in 2024. Students are able to earn:

- High school credit toward the 3 math credits provided that they meet the following requirements:
  - The pupil's performance on the state examination or a similar examination approved by the school board demonstrates that the pupil is academically prepared for coursework that is offered in the high school grades.
  - The credit is earned in a course that is taught by a teacher who is licensed to teach the subject in the high school grades.
  - The credit is earned in a course that is taught using a curriculum and assessments that are equivalent to the curriculum and assessments used to teach the subject in the high school grades.
- Ripon Middle School accelerated math students do attend the same math courses as high school students enrolled in Algebra and Geometry.
- Students in grade 7 or 8 who are enrolled in the high school Algebra 1 course would continue to receive elective only credit towards their 24 credit graduation requirements.

While many accelerated math students elect to take advanced math courses throughout high school to prepare them for their post-secondary education, approval of this recommendation for 8th grade students enrolled in Geometry would provide greater scheduling flexibility. It would potentially allow students to explore other areas of interest if they so choose in their Junior and Senior years of high school as they would have met their 3-credit math requirement by the end of their Sophomore year. Students would still have the option to continue to take math credits if they choose to do so.

### **Record of Services:**

Information about student participation in G/T services is housed in their cumulative folder and G/T Infinite Campus academic tab. In this way, all faculty who work with a student will have ready access to information about the learner in one location. Documents such as students' differentiated learning plans and seminar participation records are uploaded to a Personal Learning Plan tab (PLP) in the RASD student information system software.



## Frequently Asked Questions

Parent input is essential for meeting each student's needs and helping each student reach higher levels of accomplishment. The following set of questions and answers is designed to answer some frequently asked questions about talent development.

### ***Who do I talk to if I think my child is talented in any area(s) and has not been identified?***

Parents should initially contact the classroom teacher with questions regarding talent identification, differentiation and next steps. At the elementary level, the teacher will then consult with the G/T Teacher and/or principal when appropriate, and at the middle school level the designated school counselor will be contacted. If additional assessments are warranted, parents will be contacted for permission. The G/T Coordinator or school counselor will arrange for appropriate assessments and identify talented student needs. At all levels, the results of the testing regarding formal identification will be communicated to parents through a meeting, phone call or letter. Differentiation will then be provided within the classroom and should be communicated by the classroom teacher.

### ***When should I talk to the classroom teacher?***

It is never too early or too late to contact your child's teacher about your child's educational needs. While conference time may be convenient, you may also call, e-mail, or ask your child's teacher for a meeting at other times during the year. In addition, you are always welcome to visit and/or volunteer in your child's classroom.

### ***How will I know if my child is identified for Gifted/Talented supports?***

Parents play a central role in the identification process and will be included throughout the evaluation.

### ***How will I know what services my child will receive?***

Students identified as having Tier I needs will be provided a variety of services appropriate to their educational needs by their classroom teacher. Conversations with teachers at parent-teacher conferences or individual meetings will provide information about each student's services.

A Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) is developed for students with Tier II and Tier III needs. The plan is jointly developed by classroom teachers and G/T consultants and reviewed yearly. School staff will meet on an annual basis with families whose child has a DEP.

### ***What does it mean to differentiate instruction?***

Students come to school with varying levels of readiness to learn, different ways in which they learn best, and a wide range of interests. Differentiating instruction means that a teacher



recognizes those academic differences and modifies classroom instruction in order to help each child reach his or her academic potential.

***How will I know if my child is receiving differentiated opportunities?***

Differentiation is designed to occur in all subjects and at all grade levels throughout the entire school year. In many cases, a child may not be aware that adaptations have been made to meet his or her needs, but parents are encouraged to ask their child and/or their child's teacher about assignments, groupings, projects, and opportunities that occur in his or her classes.

***Who do I talk to if I have questions about Gifted/Talented opportunities? Who is the point of contact for a parent about different issues regarding Gifted/Talented services?***

At the elementary and middle school level, the points of contact (in order) are your child's classroom teacher, the school's Gifted/Talented Teacher, and the principal. At the high school, the first points of contact are the classroom teacher and school counselor. If any parent has further questions, s/he may contact the district's Gifted/Talented Coordinator (Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment).

***How will I receive on-going information about my student's progress and support opportunities?***

Communication among parents, students, and teachers is essential for parents to learn about supportive opportunities. Parents should ask the teacher if they are unsure of the differentiated opportunities being provided to their child.

***How can I best prepare for a meaningful parent/teacher conference?***

Feel free to write a brief letter or email that introduces your child and describes his or her needs to the teacher before the school year begins. The following questions for teachers may help you obtain more in-depth information about your child.

1. What do you see as my child's strengths and weaknesses?
2. If my child already has a solid grasp of the subject matter in a class, what additional opportunities are available? Does s/he take advantage of the opportunities?
3. If my child has a great deal of prior knowledge in a unit/theme, is there a way s/he can be given other options to broaden his/her knowledge base or move ahead into more complex subject matter? (curriculum compacting, contracting, etc.)
4. How can I help my child at home?

***How do I find out what opportunities there are throughout the school year for my child?***

Information sheets listing extracurricular activities and clubs are generally available at schools during registration prior to the start of the school year. The RASD also supports a wide range of activities for all students, such as spelling bees, academic competitions (reading, writing, math, etc.), forensics, clubs, and other competitions. Students are encouraged to explore and develop their interests. These activities come to students through many avenues, including parents,



teachers, schools, or the district. Families are also encouraged to explore activities offered by outside organizations such as the Wisconsin Center for Academically Talented Youth and Northwestern University's Midwest Academic Talent Search.

## Additional Resources

National Association for Gifted Children <https://nagc.org/>

- Timely Information for Parents (TIP) Sheets [https://nagc.org/page/family\\_tip\\_sheets](https://nagc.org/page/family_tip_sheets)

Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted <https://www.sengifted.org/>

Wisconsin Association for Talented and Gifted <https://watg.org/>

Wisconsin Department of Education: Gifted and Talented

<https://dpi.wi.gov/families-students/programs-initiatives/gifted-talented>