

Gifted and Talented Program Policies

Revised and Adopted
February 2016



A special federal report in 1972 resulted in the creation of the office of Gifted and Talented in 1974. Since 1975 emphasis has increased on providing educational opportunities for gifted and talented students. Many states, including Arkansas, require local school districts to implement programs for identifying and serving gifted and talented students.

Table of Contents

ARKANSAS'S DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS	1
PANGBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT'S DEFINITON OF GIFTEDNESS	1
PANGBURN GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM GOALS	1
4.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	2
5.0 STAFF DEVELOPMENT	3
6.0 PERSONNEL.....	4
7.0 IDENTIFICATION	5
Referrals	
Permission	
Data Collection	
Placement Committee	
Dissemination of information	
Placement Appeals	
Annual Review	
Exit Policy	
Transfer Students	
Record Keeping	
8.0 PROGRAM OPTIONS	10
POLICY ON ACADEMIC ACCELERATION.....	11
9.0 CURRICULUM.....	16
10.0 EVALUATION	17

ARKANSAS'S DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS

Gifted and talented children and youth are those of high potential or ability whose learning characteristics and educational needs require qualitatively differentiated educational experiences and/or services. Possession of these talents and gifts, or the potential for their development, will be evidenced through an interaction of above average intellectual ability, task commitment and /or motivation, and creative ability.

PANGBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT'S DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS

We define giftedness as a combination of factors that produce special behavior. These factors include superior ability and achievement, task commitment and creativity. Superior ability and achievement are indicated by test data. Task commitment involves the student's willingness and ability to carry through on responsibilities and projects. In other words, to stay with a job until it is complete. Creativity involves planning, and often producing, something unique and unusual.

PANGBURN GIFTED AND TALENT PROGRAM GOALS

We are committed to provide a program for identifying and meeting the needs and interests of our gifted and talented students. The identification and placement of these gifted and talented students will be based on documented objective and subjective evidence of above average intellectual ability, creative ability, skills, products, and task commitment/motivation.

The goals of Pangburn School District are: 1) to develop the student's thinking, creative, and reasoning abilities as well as his decision-making and communication skills, 2) to help the student become a more independent and self-directed learner, 3) to provide new and challenging learning experiences that are not ordinarily included in the regular classroom curriculum, 4) to guide the student in personal growth and social development, recognizing and responding to personal strengths and needs of self and others and 5) to provide the format for gifted students to come together to challenge each other and to encounter other students with similar skills and talents.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

4.0 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A key element in any successful program for students is the continuing communication and mutual support among the school staff and administration, the parents, the students, and the community. This can be accomplished by having an active parent group and annual parent meetings. To enhance our curricula, parents and community members are solicited as mentors, coaches, resources, and audiences for student product/projects presentation. The Pangburn School District Gifted Program is committed to promoting parent and community communication and involvement.

- 4.01 The parents and community are given ongoing opportunities for awareness and involvement in the gifted program and activities through the school website, media, meetings, and newsletters. Evidence of these opportunities is collected and filed.
- 4.02 Parents and community members are informed annually of program opportunities, allowing parents/community members the opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, and gain information about our program. Meeting agendas and other communications are kept on file.
- 4.03 An advisory committee including parents and community members is established each school year with at least one documented annual meeting. The advisory committee is an effective tool to help the program serve the needs of gifted students. This district suggests that the role of the advisory council is threefold – awareness, advocacy, and advisory. The coordinator will keep on file the list of members of said advisory committee, sign-in sheets, and the minutes from each meeting.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

5.00 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

5.01 and 5.02

The Pangburn School District provides ongoing and continuous opportunities for professional growth in the area of Gifted and Talented by organizing a flexible and varying program to meet the individual needs of school personnel. The gifted and talented annual professional development plan is based on feedback from the stakeholders, including professional growth plans, program evaluation report, and overall school professional development plan. Areas of gifted training appropriate for the entire school staff could include: (1) characteristics and needs; (2) identification procedures; (3) curriculum and teaching strategies; (4) creativity; (5) utilization of community resources; (6) program evaluation; (7) district's philosophy and program model for gifted; and (8) overview of state requirements.

The District G/T Coordinator is responsible for staff development through formal sessions, faculty meetings, handouts and professional literature. The coordinator will also make arrangements for consultant services and provide information about regional and state workshops and conferences. Training for the teacher of the gifted will be provided as needed.

Less formal staff development is encouraged by adding books and journals on gifted education to the school's professional library; placing reprints of pertinent articles in teacher boxes; presenting short, specific classroom demonstrations and teaching techniques at regular building-level faculty meetings; and sharing gifted students' projects with all staff.

The coordinator and facilitator is encouraged to attend regional, state and national workshops and conferences which provide staff development opportunities for the G/T facilitator(s) and other interested staff members.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

The staff is encouraged to attend staff development sessions that are conducted by professionals with special training in gifted education.

Opportunities to increase knowledge of the education of gifted and talented students will be provided for school board members, school and district administrators, teachers and support staff on a continuing and regular basis.

Documentation of staff development kept on file will include an annual plan, certificates of attendance, rosters, and programs.

6.00 PERSONNEL

6.01 6.02 6.03

The Pangburn School District acknowledges that personnel who teach homogenously grouped gifted students and personnel who coordinate and/or administrate the district gifted and talented program must have the appropriate certification as listed in standards.

Administrator/Coordinator will keep all certificates (and transcripts with ALP when necessary) on file.

- 6.04 The selection of administrators, coordinators, and teachers of the gifted is defined clearly in accordance with the Pangburn Public School's employment policies and practices. Qualities such as the ability to be flexible of time, pace, materials, instructional patterns will be considered. They should be accepting of diverse ideas and populations. Personnel hired to work with gifted students should possess a genuine concern for gifted children and youth.

- 6.05 A written job description for the administrator, coordinator and/or teacher(s) is kept on file.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

6.06 The Pangburn School District provides Gifted Coordinators/Administrators with regularly scheduled time for duties other than direct services to the identified students. A copy of the coordinators schedule is kept on file. In addition to time spent in planning the overall structure of the district gifted program and direct services to gifted students, the coordinator/administrator will perform a variety of duties that promote integration of the gifted program with the regular education program.

These duties might include:

- a. working with classroom teachers and other personnel;
- b. locating resources;
- c. arranging mentorships and other out-of school learning experiences;
- d. supervising independent studies and mentorships;
- e. leadership of the identification process;
- f. conducting community awareness activities;
- g. conducting staff development activities;
- h. program documentation;
- i. development of appropriate curriculum; and/or
- j. involvement in Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate program planning and implementation.

7.00 IDENTIFICATION

Because Arkansas Gifted Standards require identification of gifted students, the Pangburn School District considers the task of identifying gifted students extremely important. The district also maintains that it is the parents' right to be included in the process and informed of the outcomes which could affect their child. The process for identifying students has several stages. School personnel, teachers, parents, students, and community members are provided with information concerning the identification process, including characteristics of the gifted.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

Procedures for Identification: (7.01, 7.02)

1. **Referrals:** Referrals are accepted from teachers, school personnel, parents, students, and community members. The coordinator can also use the review of student assessment scores to refer students, along with the data retrieved from enrichment. Although the district might set specific times for blanket testing or the requesting of referrals, referrals are encouraged and accepted at all times during the school year (7.09). It will be the responsibility of the gifted coordinator to seek these referrals and begin the identification process in a timely manner. A referral form should be completed on each individual and submitted to the gifted coordinator. Referral forms are available on the district website.
2. **Permission:** Once the referral form is completed and submitted to the coordinator, the coordinator notifies the parent by letter. At this point, the parent/guardian is asked to sign the permission to assess and collect data form and a parent/guardian inventory (7.08). Permission is requested to collect relevant data, administer various tests, and share pertinent data with a professional placement committee. This permission must be granted in writing before the data collection process can begin.
3. **Data Collection:** If the parents/guardians sign and return the permission form, then the data collection process begins. As standards require, the use of at least two objective and two subjective measures (one of which must assess creativity), must be used in the identification process. Data collection includes, but is not limited to current standardized test scores, an ability test, grades, creativity test, data collected through enrichment, and parent and teacher checklists. It is the objective of the school district to insure that the gifted and talented identification procedures are non-discriminatory with respect to race, culture, economic background, religion, national origin, sex, or handicapping (7.06). The coordinator is responsible for collecting data, overseeing any assessments given, and

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

compiling the results in an orderly fashion to be shared with the placement committee (7.04).

4. **Placement Committee:** The placement committee of at least five members, chaired and trained by the gifted coordinator and including administrators, teachers, and/or counselors, will review the compiled data collection of the nominated student. The list of committee members are kept on file annually (7.03). All current data is used to determine the placement of a child according to the appropriate program options. It is important to note that student placement decisions are based on multiple criteria. No single criterion or cut-off score is used to include or exclude a student from placement (7.05). This committee will make professional decisions on placement of students (7.03).
5. **Dissemination of Information:** After the decision of the placement committee is made, parents (7.08), teachers, and school personnel are notified of the identification committee results. If placement in the gifted and talented program is recommended, parental permission for participation in the program must be obtained. If placement in the gifted and talented program is not recommended, parents are informed of that decision and provided with contact information for questions or an appeal. Instructionally useful information about individual students obtained during the identification process is communicated to the instructional staff regardless of the placement decision (7.07).
6. **Placement Appeals:** Parents/Guardians may appeal placement decision through the following process (7.08):
 - A. Request an initial conference with the GT coordinator regarding the placement decision. Those included in this conference would be the parent/guardian questioning the committee decision, the GT Coordinator, and the appropriate administrator/s.
 - B. After this informal meeting, if the parent/s still disagrees with the committee decision, then a written appeal can be filed by the

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

parents/guardians to the gifted coordinator, including information sharing why they believe the student should have been placed.

Parents will be asked to cite data/evidence for why the student is in need of the services of the program.

- C. The Gifted Coordinator will collect any further data that might help in the identification process, including additional testing when possible.
- D. An appeals committee of at least five professional educators (including some initial committee members and some new committee members) will be formed to review the appeal (7.03). The appeals committee will once again be chaired by the gifted coordinator and include the appropriate administrator/s. The parent/guardian making the appeal has the right to address the appeals committee, but will not be present as the committee makes the placement decisions.
- E. The decision of the appeals committee must be based on multiple criteria (7.05). The appeals committee will review at least two objective and two subjective measures (one of which must assess creativity) when making a placement decision related to an appeal. The decision of the appeals committee will be communicated in writing to the parent/guardian making the appeal.

- 7. **Annual Review:** Identification of gifted and talented students is an on-going process extending through grades 12. The student's placement may be reviewed at least annually and/or when specifically requested to update or modify the students' educational plans. If data indicates that current placement is not in the most appropriate way to meet the student's needs, exit procedures will be followed and placement decisions will be made by through the placement committee. Annual review data will be noted in individual student folders.

(7.00 #12 B)

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

8. **Exit Policy** - Although attention is given to carefully placing students in the program due to evidence that they need qualitatively differentiated educational services, situations may arise when placement in the program no longer seems to meet the needs of the student. As with determining placement in the gifted program, multiple criteria will be used in determining if exiting the program is the most appropriate way to meet the student's needs. One factor will not cause a student to be excluded from the program. (7.05) A student with signed parental permission to no longer participate in the program will be allowed to exit program without committee decision.

When determining an exit from the program, if data indicates that placement may not be the most appropriate way to meet the student's needs, a conference will be held in an effort to address areas of concern. Those present at the conference may include the student, classroom teachers, GT teachers, parents, administrators, counselors, etc. An action plan will be developed at this time. This action plan will not change the student's placement. If data continues to indicate current placement is not the most appropriate way to meet the student's needs, then formal exit procedures will begin. Formal exit procedures will consist of a placement committee review of the student's data, including at least two objective and two subjective measures (one of which must assess creativity). The committee will determine the most appropriate placement for the student based on this data. The committee's decision will be communicated to the parents in writing.

Parents and/or classroom teachers may appeal the exit decision. Procedures for appeals of placement decisions will then be followed.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

9. **Transfer students** will be evaluated and considered for participation, but not automatically placed. Records will be requested and the placement committee will determine whether a decision can be made with existing records or if further testing will be needed. If further testing is needed, parental permission will be required and the identification procedures will be followed (7.01-7.09). The only exception to this process will be the transfer of a previously identified gifted student, due to active military duty. This military-transfer student will be placed immediately upon entering when the records indicate previous identification. (Act 146 - 2013)
10. **Record Keeping:** The Gifted and Talented Coordinator will keep all records of placement decisions and data on each student nominated and placed in the program. Records are kept for a minimum of five years or for as long as needed for educational decisions. Appropriate confidential destruction of the records will take place at the end of the above stated time frame. Transcripts and all permanent records of identified gifted students will reflect participation in the program.

8.00 PROGRAM OPTIONS

Gifted children are as different from each other as they are from other children. They have needs for differing amounts of homogeneous grouping, and at various stages of development their interests differ. The gifted program is systematically organized, with the long range goal of providing a rigorous and relevant education in preparing our gifted students to become college and career ready. This goal is designed to guide the development of gifted students from the time they are identified through graduation from high school. Annual goals and/or objectives are developed based on the program evaluation. Evidence is kept on file. (8.01)

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

A table of organization is developed which clearly delineates roles, responsibilities and coordination procedures. A copy of the table of organization is on file. (8.02)

Identified students' placement in program options is based on their abilities, needs and interests, and resources of the district. Evidence of student assessment data is kept on file. (8.03)

Because no single program option can ever meet all of the needs of all gifted children, the Pangburn School District tries to vary the programming options that are best suited at each campus. These programming arrangements are designed to promote interaction among gifted students and both their intellectual and chronological peers (8.04). All identified gifted students will receive at least 150 minutes per week of direct instruction (8.05). The Pangburn School District currently meets the needs of the gifted population through a variety of documented program options including: whole group enrichment, pull-out program, pre-AP, AP Secondary Classes, as well as other options. The Pangburn Gifted Program is designed to identify and to meet the needs of those students that are identified as needing specially designed instruction beyond that provided in the regular classroom to meet their educational needs. Placement in the Pangburn Gifted Program is intended to focus attention on the special educational requirements of each identified gifted student.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC ACCELERATION, EARLY ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN, AND EARLY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

In accordance with the belief that all children are entitled to an education commensurate with their particular needs, students who can exceed the grade-level indicators and benchmarks set forth in the standards must be afforded the opportunity and be encouraged to do so.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

The Pangburn School District believes that such students often require access to advanced curriculum in order to realize their potential contribution to themselves and society. All children learn and experience success given time and opportunity, but the degree to which academic content standards are met and the time it takes to reach the standards will vary from student to student.

The Pangburn School District believes that all students, including advanced learners, should be challenged and supported to reach their full potential. For many advanced learners, this can best be achieved by affording them access to curriculum, learning environments, and instructional interventions more commonly provided to older peers.

This policy describes the process that shall be used for evaluating students for possible accelerated placement and identifying students who should be granted early admission to kindergarten, accelerated in one or more individual subject areas, promoted to a higher grade level than their same-age peers, and granted early graduation from high school.

Referrals and Evaluation Process

1) Any student residing in the district may be referred by a teacher, administrator, gifted education specialist, guidance counselor, school psychologist, or a parent or legal guardian of the student to the principal of his or her school for evaluation for possible accelerated placement. A student may refer himself or herself or a peer through a district staff member who has knowledge of the referred child's abilities.

2) Copies of this policy and referral forms for evaluation for possible early entrance, whole-grade acceleration, individual subject acceleration, and early high school graduation shall be made available to district staff and parents at each school building. The principal of each school building (or his or her designee) shall solicit referrals of students for evaluation for possible accelerated placement annually, and ensure that all staff he or she supervises are aware of

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

procedures for referring students for evaluation for possible accelerated placement.

3) The principal (or his or her designee) of the referred student's school shall obtain written permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement. The district shall evaluate all students who are referred for evaluation and whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have granted permission to evaluate the student for possible accelerated placement.

4) A parent or legal guardian of the evaluated student shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the evaluation process within 45 days of the submission of the referral to the referred student's principal. This notification shall include instructions for appealing the outcome of the evaluation process.

5) A parent or legal guardian of the referred student may appeal in writing the decision of the evaluation committee to the local Superintendent within thirty days of being notified of the committee's decision. The Superintendent shall review the appeal and notify the parent or legal guardian who filed the appeal of his or her final decision within thirty days of receiving the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final. However, the student may be referred and evaluated again at the next available opportunity if he or she is again referred for evaluation by an individual eligible to make referrals as described in this policy.

Acceleration Evaluation Committee Composition

The referred student's principal (or his or her designee) shall convene an evaluation committee to determine the most appropriate available learning environment for the referred student. This committee shall be comprised of the following:

- (a) A principal or assistant principal from the child's current school;
- (b) A current teacher of the referred student

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

- (c) A teacher at the grade level to which the student may be accelerated
- (d) A parent or legal guardian of the referred student or a representative designated by a parent or legal guardian of the referred student;
- (e) A gifted education coordinator or gifted intervention specialist. If a gifted coordinator or gifted intervention specialist is not available in the district, a school psychologist or guidance counselor with expertise in the appropriate use of academic acceleration may be substituted.

Responsibilities of the Acceleration Evaluation

- 1) The acceleration evaluation committee shall conduct a fair and thorough evaluation of the student.
 - a) Students considered for whole-grade acceleration or early entrance to kindergarten shall be evaluated using an acceleration assessment process approved by school administration. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
 - b) Students considered for individual subject acceleration shall be evaluated using a variety of data sources, including measures of achievement based on state academic content standards (in subjects for which the state had approved content standards) and consideration of the student's maturity and desire for accelerated placement. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.
 - c) Students referred for possible early high school graduation shall be evaluated based on past academic performance, measures of achievement based on state academic content standards, and successful completion of state mandated graduation requirements. The committee shall consider the student's own thoughts on possible accelerated placement in its deliberations.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

2) The acceleration evaluation committee shall issue a written decision to the principal and the student's parent or legal guardian based on the outcome of the evaluation process. If a consensus recommendation cannot be reached by the committee, a decision regarding whether or not to accelerate the student will be determined by a majority vote of the committee membership.

3) The acceleration evaluation committee shall develop a written acceleration plan for students who will be admitted early to kindergarten, whole-grade accelerated, or accelerated in one or more individual subject areas. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student shall be provided with a copy of the written acceleration plan. The written acceleration plan shall specify:

- a) placement of the student in an accelerated setting;
- b) strategies to support a successful transition to the accelerated setting;
- c) requirements and procedures for earning high school credit prior to entering high school (if applicable); and,
- d) an appropriate transition period for accelerated placement for early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual content areas.

4) For students the acceleration evaluation committee recommends for early high school graduation, the committee shall develop a written acceleration plan designed to allow the student to complete graduation requirements on an accelerated basis.

5) The acceleration evaluation committee shall designate a school staff member to ensure successful implementation of the written acceleration plan and to monitor the adjustment of the student to the accelerated setting.

Accelerated Placement

The acceleration evaluation committee shall specify an appropriate transition period for the accelerated placement of early entrants to kindergarten, grade-level accelerated students, and students accelerated in individual subject areas.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

- a) At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing that the student be withdrawn from accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall remove the student without repercussions from the accelerated placement.
- b) At any time during the transition period, a parent or legal guardian of the student may request in writing an alternative accelerated placement. In such cases, the principal shall direct the acceleration committee to consider other accelerative options and issue a decision within 30 days of receiving the request from the parent or legal guardian. If the student will be placed in an accelerated setting different from that initially recommended by the acceleration evaluation committee, the student's written acceleration plan shall be revised accordingly, and a new transition period shall be specified.

At the end of the transition period, the accelerated placement shall become permanent. The student's records shall be modified accordingly, and the acceleration implementation plan shall become part of the student's permanent record to facilitate continuous progress through the curriculum.

9.0 CURRICULUM 9.01, 9.02, 9.03

The Gifted and Talented curriculum is designed to extend and/or replace the regular curriculum and is based on the adopted scope and sequence including 21st Century skills and themes. This scope and sequence along with state standards provide the foundation for an aligned curriculum. The curriculum developed for all programs is differentiated in content, process, and/or product. Gifted curriculum should demonstrate the overall ideas of cross-curricular, project-based, and technology infused student work.

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

10.0 EVALUATION 10.01 -10.07

The gifted coordinator is responsible for conducting an extensive evaluation of the gifted program that provides accurate, timely, and relevant information to decision-makers for improving program options offered gifted students (10.01). This evaluation will be based on program goals and/or objectives (10.02). Annual evaluation data will provide the data for the required evaluation report. The purpose of this evaluation is two-fold, including both a determination of the program's effectiveness and assessment of student growth.

A. All components of the gifted program are evaluated including identification, staff development, program options, program goals and objectives, curriculum, community involvement, program expenditures, and the evaluation process/plan (10.03). Data for consideration are obtained from a variety of instruments procedures, and informational sources. Input should come from students, teachers, administrators, parents, school board members, other community members, statistical analysis of enrollment, and achievement data. All stakeholders are given an opportunity to participate in the evaluation process using a variety of procedures because different components of the program call for different techniques and access to stakeholders vary. Some procedures that might be used include surveys, focus groups, questionnaires, charts, anecdotal data, checklists, and/or informal discussions (10.04). Evaluation findings are compiled, analyzed, and communicated to the appropriate audiences. The overall program evaluation is shared with the ADE Office of Gifted and Talented as required in the program approval application. This evaluation is also shared with the other stakeholders in a variety of ways and provides the data for goals and/or objectives for the program. (10.05)

B. Evaluation of student growth is based on appropriate and specific criteria and includes self-appraisal, teacher appraisal, and criterion

Pangburn School District Gifted and Talented Policies

referenced and/or standardized instruments (10.04). Student progress is assessed, with attention to mastery of content, higher level thinking skills, creativity, and affective growth (10.06). The Pangburn School District realizes that a gifted student's progress cannot be fully assessed by standardized tests only. (10.06) Although student assessment does not always come in the form of letter grades given, especially for elementary students in pull-out, student progress is reported to parents and teachers. (10.05) Participation in the gifted program is noted on student transcripts and permanent records. (10.07)