



Grande Prairie and District
Catholic Schools

Individual Program Plans

An Individualized Program Plan (IPP) is developed for each student who is identified as gifted and talented (*Alberta Education Code 80*). The IPP documents the student's assessment data, current levels of performance and achievement, areas of strength, and areas to develop. Meaningful long term goals and short term objectives are set by the Learning Team; strategies and accommodations to promote student growth are established.

Identification and Programming

Identifying gifted learners includes input from parents, teachers and students themselves. Multiple sources of information, including student history, exceptional products/performances, academic records and existing psychological and/or educational assessments need to be considered when making decisions regarding identification and programming for gifted learners.

A team comprised of resource teachers, classroom teachers and school administration determine student eligibility for Gifted Programming. The identification process includes nomination, screening, programming and evaluation components. Our continued goal is to identify a broad range of diverse high-ability learners and support them in a safe and caring, faith-based environment which encourages personal risk taking and fosters academic, social-emotional and spiritual excellence.

If you believe your child may be gifted, please contact the Gifted Education Lead Teacher at (780)532-3013.

Parent Contributions

The most effective services are provided to students when the home and school work together as a team. To provide a positive learning experience parents can:

- Share information about their child's strengths and needs
- Provide information that could affect their child's learning and behaviour at school

- Give written and informed consent for specialized assessments
- Be willing to discuss the educational and social-emotional goals they have for their child
- Maintain a positive, respectful and supportive attitude about school learning, homework and school activities
- Maintain open communication with teachers and the school
- Participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of the IPP

Recommended Resources

Gifted and Talented Educational Council of the ATA
<http://www.gtecouncil.com>

GPCSD Gifted Education – website link
<http://www.gpcsd.ca/sections/parents/subsections/gifteded/index.asp>

The following resources can be downloaded at:
http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/ParentResources.asp or ordered through the Learning Resources Centre at 427-2767

The Journey: A Handbook for Parents of Children who are Gifted and Talented (2003)
<http://education.alberta.ca/media/448831/journey.pdf>

The Learning Team: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs (2003).
<http://education.alberta.ca/admin/special/resources/learningteam.aspx>

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Toll Free: 1-800-661-2568 (within Alberta)
Email: cec@gpcsd.ca

Gifted Programming

- *We provide opportunities to optimize potential*
- *We differentiate learning*
- *We foster respect within a safe environment*
- *We are committed to continuous, meaningful learning*
- *We build community while celebrating individuality*

Gifted Programming

Understanding Giftedness

Giftedness is exceptional potential and/or performance across a wide range of abilities in one or more of the following areas:

- general intellectual
- specific academic
- creative thinking
- social
- musical
- artistic
- kinesthetic

(Alberta Learning, 2000)

Identifying Gifted Students

Generally, the characteristics of children who are gifted can be categorized into these areas:

Advanced Intellectual Ability – exceptional ability in one or more academic areas such as language arts, mathematics and science. Children tend to be curious and constantly ask questions; demonstrate unusual memories, read voraciously and surprise others with their advanced thinking.

Abundant Creativity – children often look for the unusual and may take different paths when solving problems and completing assignments; more interested in questions and processes than in answers and solutions.

Heightened emotions and sensitivities – children may feel things more deeply and react to situations more intensely than other children; demonstrate empathetic understanding well beyond what is expected from children their age.

Young children often exhibit precocious development; they learn quickly, have superior memories and vocabularies, exhibit curiosity, energy and sensitivity. These children may talk, walk and read at much earlier ages than their peers (Alberta Learning, *The Journey: A handbook for parents of children who are gifted and talented*). Checklists, surveys and rating scales can be accessed through the GPCSD website and used to gather information and guide nomination and identification procedures.



District Programming

In addition to support given in inclusive settings, gifted students have the choice of focus schools and programs such as French Immersion, Sports Academy and Montessori. These program options serve a broad range of strengths and interests within the diverse group of gifted students.

Our goal is to develop programming for students who enjoy challenges and complexity and who require more individualized accommodations in order to convert potential to performance. Programming is developed in the following ways:

Differentiation: Includes acceleration and/or enrichment opportunities, in depth study, a high degree of complexity, advanced content and/or variety in content, learning processes and products.

Acceleration: Compacting curriculum, subject acceleration, increase in pacing, grade skipping, early admission or telescoping.

Cluster Grouping: Gifted learners are placed in a classroom with a small group of like-ability peers where they receive advanced instruction in reading, mathematics or other content areas.

Out-of-grade placement: Students are placed with a higher grade for certain subjects such as language arts, mathematics and/or science.

Online or distance education courses: Students access electronic classrooms via the computer, using email or videoconferencing with teachers.

Seminars and special projects: Students participate in interdisciplinary studies, special interest groups or other special options projects.

Mentorships: Students meet with a resource teacher, specialist, parent volunteer or community member to work on a project, develop skills in a specific field and build career awareness.

Advanced Placement (AP) and Pre-AP: Students participate in junior and senior high courses that prepare them for higher level learning. Students can apply to complete AP examinations for advanced credit or placement at post-secondary institutions.