

Gifted/ Enrichment

Contact:

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Elementary enrichment specialist:

Middle school enrichment specialist:

Program Description:

The enrichment program in the Elmwood Park schools aims to provide an appropriate variety of instructional and co-curricular options for students in order to challenge them to reach their full academic and intellectual potential.

School-wide enrichment model

The Elmwood Park Schools' Academic Enrichment Program is designed to fit into the Joseph Renzulli all school enrichment model. We feel strongly that all students should be challenged. We believe that children can be different in what they know or how they learn. We must provide for those differences.

The regular classroom teacher, supported by the enrichment specialist, is the primary source for the implementation of the program. Usually, this is accomplished through a differentiated curriculum – the modification of the regular curriculum (based on abstractness, complexity, and critical and/or creative thinking) to make it more appropriate for identified students. One or more of the following may be modified:

- Content – what is being taught
- Process – the methods used and the thinking/working procedures students are expected to use
- Product - the tangible outcomes which result from the interaction of content and process

The work students do is not in addition to the regular work assigned, but should be at a difficulty level commensurate with the identified student's achievement and ability. In other words, the work is designed to challenge and engage the student at a level that enables them to grow academically and intellectually. Additional designs which may be employed are enrichment – educational experiences which supplement content in depth, breath, or intensity, or acceleration – advancement through curriculum in a shorter time frame. Honors classes and Advanced Placement (AP) classes are available to qualifying high school students.

Identification

Students are identified as academically “gifted” in grade four through the administration of the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Students may be added to the selection pool through teacher, parent, or self-nomination. Criteria used for identification include teacher observation and

assessment (Renzulli Behavioral Checklist), the ninth stanine scores on the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), the nationally normed percentile (90th and above) on the ISAT test, other related achievement scores (if available), and a parent observed behavior checklist. Transfer students may be screened at any time after transfer materials are reviewed. However, all students, whether they are identified as “gifted” or not, have a variety of academic enrichment opportunities available to them throughout their school years in EPCUSD 401.

How can I tell if my child is “gifted”? Common characteristics of gifted students

These characteristics are some of the most commonly identified as traits of an academically gifted person:

Asks many thought-provoking questions, often questions that the parent or teacher has never considered

Reads at an early age, enjoys reading, and is a voracious reader

Has an extensive vocabulary

Is curious and enjoys learning about new things

Learns new skills rapidly, easily, and without needing repetition

Displays a sense of humor at an early age

Has a wide range of interests and pursues those interests in a self-directed manner

Is sensitive to the feelings of others; has a keen sense of justice and fairness

Gets along well with adults and is comfortable conversing with adults

Curricular Program Options

Elementary and middle school: Identified students in grades 4-8 may participate in projects and lessons taught by the designated enrichment teacher at their school, targeting thinking skills and subject-area enrichment. Students who have not been identified as gifted may be invited to join a project based on their advanced skills or interest in the particular area under study.

High school: Advanced Placement and Honors level classes are available in most academic areas. All students are encouraged to take classes at the highest levels of challenge in order to better prepare themselves for the rigors of college.

K-12: Interest-based enrichment activities are available at all grade levels through curricular and co-curricular (beyond the school day) activities. Some examples of enrichment activities that have been offered in the past are: Accelerated Reader, independent projects, field experiences, spelling bee, NewsBowl current events competition, Geography Bee, Zaner-Blozer handwriting,

Young Authors, family reading nights, student newspaper, choir, band, yearbook, Math club, Science club, Art club, Operation Snowflake, Student Council, NUMATS (Northwestern University Midwest Academic Talent Search), National Junior Honor Society, National Honor Society, conference athletic teams, IHSA athletic teams, intramural athletics

Web Links: These web links contain activities that can provide additional academic challenge for students at all grade levels:

[Puzzles and more...](#)

[Word Problems for Kids, grades 5-12...](#)

[Problem Solving for Kids...](#)

[Word Origins Game](#)

[SAT Word Puzzles](#)

[Math Games](#)

Additional resources for parents:

Hoagies Gifted Educational Page: www.hoagiesgifted.org

Parenting Gifted Kids

http://www.prufrock.com/client/client_pages/parent_introduction.cfm

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC): www.nagc.org

Illinois Association for Gifted Children: www.iagcgifted.org

National Research Center for Gifted: www.gifted.uconn.edu

Kids Source: www.kidsource.com/kidsource/pages/ed.gifted.html

Recommended Reading

The Survival Guide for Parents of Gifted Kids By S. Y Walker

You Know Your Child is Gifted When.... By J. Galbraith

The Kids' Survival Guide (Teens) By J. Galbraith

The Gifted Kids' Survival Guide (Ages 10 and Under) By J. Galbraith

Perfectionism By M. Adderholdt, Ph.D.

Helping Gifted Kids Soar By C. Strip, Ph. D. with G. Hirsch

Guiding the Gifted Child By J. Webb Ph. D, E. Meckstroth, M.S.W., & S. Tolan, M.A.

Smart Boys By B. Kerr, Ph.D., S. Cohn, Ph. D.

Smart Girls By B. Kerr, Ph. D.

Being Smart About Gifted Children By D. Matthews, Ph.D.