

Montague Township School

K-8 Gifted and Talented Program Guide

Gifted and Talented Services Team

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Purpose Statement/ Program Description

Based on the mission of the Montague Township School District to provide the best educational experience and opportunities to realize the potential of every child, the Gifted and Talented Program is committed to identifying gifted and talented students. Gifted and talented students are those children who display outstanding intellectual ability, academic aptitude, creative thinking leadership or exceptional talents in the literary, visual, and/or performing arts by the use of multiple criteria.

Students in grades K-3 who are identified as intellectually gifted are provided either classroom or pull-out services through an academic enrichment program. The aim is to remove the ceiling on what is learned and promote creativity and higher level cognitive skills.

Students in grades 4-8 who are identified as intellectually gifted are provided with a pull-out enrichment program in which they are grouped with peers. These students are provided with a program designed to encourage and develop knowledge acquisition, thinking skills, creative expression, and student interaction.

District Philosophy

The Montague Township Board of Education firmly believes that it is the inherent right of every child enrolled in the public schools to receive a sound education rooted in equal opportunity and delivered in an environment that ensures physical and mental security. In today's pluralistic technological society, our first and foremost task is to instruct students in the democratic principles found within the ethical framework of the Constitutions of the United States and the State of New Jersey.

The Montague Township Board of Education recognizes the importance of promoting early literacy as a foundation for academic success. Through its instructional program and co- and extra-curricular experiences, students will become independent thinkers, good decision makers, and self supporting, productive citizens

The Montague Board of Education promulgates the following goals:

1. To provide students with the skills essential to obtaining information, thinking critically, solving problems, and communicating effectively.
2. To create an atmosphere that encourages students to obtain knowledge and to develop the life skills necessary to enter the work force and/or pursue higher education.

3. To furnish students with knowledge of current and changing technologies across the curriculum.
4. To encourage the school community to become responsible contributors to the decision making process.
5. To develop an appreciation for the creative process through problem-solving and technology.
6. To foster understanding, sensitivity, and respect regarding all cultures.
7. To impart knowledge, practices, and perspectives that promote personal and global health and safety.
8. To nurture an appreciation for the fine, applied, performing, and literary arts.
9. To encourage students to become knowledgeable consumers of electronic information able to discern quality resources.
10. To attain these goals, the Montague Township Board of Education shall provide meaningful instruction, an environment conducive to learning, an opportunity for community input, and a professional staff of the highest quality.

K-8 Gifted and Talented Overall Program Objectives

- I. To engage in concepts enrichment while developing and improving complex, and cognitive skills.
- II. To improve the expression of creative thinking abilities.
- III. To develop self-directed learning skills and the likelihood of academic success and personal satisfaction.
- IV. To interact with one another and participate in activities designed to promote self awareness and acceptance, interpersonal relationships and realistic recognition of abilities.

K-8 Gifted and Talented Identification and Selection of Students

The identification process for entrance into the Gifted and Talented Program for students is a three step process consisting of screening, recommendation, and selection.

Gifted Services for Grades K-3

Screening and Identification Process for Grades K-3

Children enter school with wide variations in skills, abilities, interests, and experiential backgrounds that help foster readiness to learn. Children are not bound by age from possessing or displaying a variety of talents. At early ages, it is often very difficult to denote how much precocious behavior can be attributed to an enriched home environment versus actual intellectual ability.

Identification of academically gifted students is far more reliable beyond the early grades. The first four primary years are critical for gifted children—as they are for all children—because at this time children are developing educational patterns and attitudes that last a lifetime and may affect later school performance. Although Montague Township School does not formally affix the label of “gifted” to children in grades K-3, the district does evaluate these young students as potentially gifted and believes it is our responsibility to provide a learning environment that will address each child’s instructional needs.

Regular Classroom Environment Differentiation (provided by classroom teacher)

Identification of high ability K-3 students is conducted according to the following measures:

1st marking period and ongoing throughout the school year

- Preliminary identification of high ability K-3 students
- Compilation of Gifted and Talented Early Identification Criteria: Kindergarten Screening score, K-3 Nomination Form, Independent Reading Level
- Classroom teacher maintenance of Early Identification Sheet (Update November/June)
- Informal parent communication regarding student readiness, academic strengths, learning styles, multiple intelligences
- Student Conferencing/Observation

To this end, classroom teachers work to develop and implement appropriate programming for more able learners.

The curriculum for K-3 students identified will be differentiated from the regular curriculum in the areas of content, process, and product. Differentiated instructional strategies may include:

- Student centered classroom
- Cooperative environment
- Questioning techniques
- Critical, creative, evaluative, and interpersonal skills
- Learning Centers

Project Discovery Academic Enrichment Program (pull-out services)

In addition to differentiation provided within the regular education classroom, a pull-out academic enrichment program will be offered for students that meet the determined criteria. Project Discovery is an enrichment program that encourages higher level thinking skills, critical and creative problem solving, and meaningful learning beyond the standard curriculum for those students identified as academically advanced.

Implementation of the K-3 Project Discovery Academic Enrichment Program

The classroom teacher will initiate the nomination process for entry into the Project Discovery Academic Enrichment Program. Once the teacher referral is received, student data will be reviewed, parent feedback will be requested, and additional testing may be required.

After the identification process is initiated by the classroom teacher to the Gifted and Talented Services Team, additional qualitative and quantitative data will be collected to determine eligibility for the Project Discovery Academic Enrichment Program. Additional data will include:

Qualitative Category- Behavioral Indicators	
Referral Data Category	Minimum Required Score
Teacher Identification Form (Modified Renzulli Teacher Inventory)	85% of total possible points= 102
Parent Identification Form (Modified Renzulli Parent Inventory)	85% of total possible points= 102

Quantitative Category- Academic Indicators	
Referral Data Category	Minimum Required Score
ELA Benchmark Score	70%
Math Benchmark Score	70%
Reading Level	One grade-level above or higher (+1, +2, etc.)

Additional Factors	N/A
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Additional Factors: Gifted learners from under-represented populations are often overlooked in gifted programming. These students therefore require purposeful and intentional support to ensure that their potential is recognized, developed, and served. Once identified, they have the benefit of supplementary points to create a more equitable opportunity for them.

Additional Factors

- Limited English Proficient
- Special Education / 504
- Underrepresented groups

If additional quantitative data is necessary to create an accurate depiction of student strengths and abilities, the Level 2 RAVENS-2 testing may be administered. The Gifted and Talented Services Team will decide on a case by case basis if this additional testing is warranted and needed.

Yearly Review

The classroom teacher will complete a student progress update in the form of a narrative in November and June of the school year. This narrative is intended to be an overview of the child’s progress and should include representational student work to document the student’s progress or lack thereof. This information is to be filed in a student portfolio as reference for the following school year.

Students that meet the criteria and qualify for services in the Project Discovery Academic Enrichment Program will be enrolled for one year. The abilities and aptitude of children in grades K-3 can vary significantly year to year, therefore the identification process should be ongoing and students will not be retained in the program. A student’s classroom teacher should nominate all children he or she believes qualify for services every fall.

Participation in the Project Discovery Academic Enrichment Program is neither a prerequisite for, nor a guarantee of eligibility for gifted services in grades 4-8.

Students identified for Gifted Services are responsible for maintaining academic excellence in the general educational classroom as evidence of their grade level curricula achievement.

Gifted Services Appeal Process: Grades K-3

As special abilities can manifest at different times in the development of children, the Gifted Services Appeal Process allows for the re-evaluation of a student for gifted services. As testing and evaluation is conducted only once a year, students *who do not initially meet qualifying expectations* may be reevaluated, by parent or teacher request, for gifted services after one school year through the Gifted Services Appeal Process. Thus, the Appeal Process may be initiated *during the fall of the next school year* by notifying the student's classroom teacher *at that time*.

Gifted Services for Grades 4-8

Grades 4-8 Gifted and Talented Screening and Identification Process

Gifted and Talented Screening and Identification Process: 3 Phases

1. Initial Referral Phase: Nomination
2. Evaluation Phase: Level 2 Identification
3. Selection and Placement Phase

1. Initial Referral Phase: Nomination

The Screening Process consists of creating a pool of potential students who may or may not proceed to the subsequent phases. The Referral Phase is initiated by the student's classroom teacher according to the *minimal Referral Guidelines*.

The referral guidelines are a means of bringing students to the attention of the Gifted Services Team for further review and therefore a referral for gifted evaluation is not a guarantee of eligibility testing and does not guarantee gifted services.

Referrals help cast a wide net for identifying as many students as possible who might qualify for gifted services. The wide net means that when evaluating a student's referral data, the Gifted Services Team is looking for sufficient evidence of intellectual ability or potential, to warrant special programming or services. Best practice in gifted and talented identification procedures involves making decisions on the basis of multiple measures.

District screening and identification procedures emphasize the use of multiple criteria as a means of determining eligibility for gifted support services. The use of multiple measures assures that no single component will be used for identification but rather multiple identifiers designed to recognize latent, emergent, or manifest indicators of giftedness are employed.

Teachers must refer any student who meets the *minimal* Referral Guidelines:

Quantitative Category-Educational Performance	Minimum Required Score
NJSLA ELA or Math Scores	750-850
Grade-level ELA or Math Trimester Grades	90-100

Student Referrals must be submitted with the following:

Qualitative Category- Behavioral Indicators
Teacher Identification Form (Modified Renzulli Teacher Inventory)
Parent Identification Form (Modified Renzulli Parent Inventory)

Additional Factors: Gifted learners from under-represented populations are often overlooked in gifted programming. These students therefore require purposeful and intentional support to ensure that their potential is recognized, developed, and served. Once identified, they have the benefit of supplementary points to create a more equitable opportunity for them.

Additional Factors

- Limited English Proficient
- Special Education / 504
- Underrepresented groups

2. Evaluation Phase: Level 2 Identification

During the Evaluation Phase, all data is gathered into a profile format so that each student's strengths may surface. Qualified individuals are identified and invited to participate in Level 2 Identification in which further evaluation is necessary to narrow the field of students to those who have demonstrated gifts or talents.

Referral Data Category	Minimum Required Score
NJSLA ELA or Math Scores Quantitative	750
End of Year ELA Benchmark score Quantitative	70%
End of Year Math Benchmark score Quantitative	70%
Modified Renzulli Teacher Inventory Qualitative	85% of total possible points= 193
Modified Renzulli Parent Inventory Qualitative	85% of total possible points= 193
Additional Factors	N/A

If the student referral data evidences that he or she may benefit from gifted services, permission slips are distributed and the Level 2 RAVENS-2 testing is conducted.

Meets 3 out of the 5 referral data categories	Level 2 RAVENS-2 testing
Meets 1 Quantitative category + 1 Qualitative category + an Additional Factor	
Less than the above	Process Discontinued

RAVENS-2 Progressive Matrices

Aptitude is measured by this non-verbal reasoning subtest, in which the child solves new problems by identifying relationships among pictures and figures rather than words. The questions use drawings, shapes or codes, and the child will need to work out sequences, similarities and differences between these figures or break the code. Non-verbal reasoning tests are designed to see how the child can use critical thinking and logic to solve problems, and are an indication of mathematical capabilities and powers of deduction. From this, the theory is that the examining body can get a picture of the child’s potential and intelligence, rather than their learned ability. As the RAVENS-2 is non-verbal involving pictures and figures (i.e. no words and no numbers) it therefore minimizes cultural and/or educational biases. The RAVENS-2 is utilized, in addition to the previous multiple measures, to determine how a

child performs on the assessment as compared to their peers and the results are used as a placement measure.

3. Selection and Placement Phase

During the Selection and Placement Phase, each individual Profile of Student Strengths is reviewed and service recommendations are made. Research suggests that a base of intelligence and achievement is necessary before talents begin to emerge and is critical in the identification of potentially gifted students.

Students identified in grade 4 remain as such and automatically continue through grade 5 according to their status. In grade 6, students will be reassessed to determine if they still qualify for gifted services.

Students identified in grades 6-8 remain as such and automatically continue through grade 8 according to their status.

Participation in 4-8 Gifted Services is neither a prerequisite for, nor a guarantee of eligibility for gifted services in grades 9-12.

Students identified for Gifted Services are responsible for maintaining academic excellence in the general educational classroom as evidence of their grade level curricula achievement.

<p>RAVENS-2 Progressive Matrices Score: Placement Service Recommendation</p> <p><i>The RAVENS-2 is utilized, in addition to the multiple measures in Phase 1 and 2, to determine how a child performs on the assessment as compared to their peers and the results are used as a placement measure.</i></p>	
<p>RAVENS-2 score below the 77th percentile</p>	<p><u>Strand A Talent Pool:</u> Differentiated services within the general education classroom</p>

<p>RAVENS-2 score 77th to 84th percentile</p>	<p><u>Strand B Talent Pool:</u> Differentiated services within the general education classroom</p>
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A talent pool is a group of students who demonstrate an ability in a particular area, but at this time do not meet the criteria for advanced gifted service options. Students in a talent pool are provided differentiated services within the general education

classroom. Intelligence develops over time when children are provided with the:

- Right motivation
- Right opportunities to learn
- Right environmental supports

Nurturing talent and giftedness requires providing students with classroom tasks that promote challenge and higher thinking opportunities in order to help grow gifted behaviors. The classroom should provide an atmosphere of inquiry and discovery, with emphasis on problem solving, reflection, and critical thinking. Foundational skills and tools to help students discover and build their personal strengths, talents, and motivation.

As students are presented with additional levels of challenge and rigor, increased achievement may occur. Additionally, nonintellective factors such as a stimulating home or community environment maximize potential. A student may meet the criteria for gifted identification at a later date.

Intelligence is fluid and multi-faceted and every child is quite remarkable in certain ways. All students benefit from enriching activities and educational experiences that recognize their strengths. Selection for a talent pool is inclusion into appropriate differentiated programming options necessary to develop an academic or talent aptitude and promote achievement and growth.

<p><u>3 out of 5</u> categories met including <u>both</u> Reading AND Math</p>	<p>RAVENS-2 score 85th-89th percentile: Possibly Gifted <i>(INCLUSIVE MEASURE>>>considered only if student has met 3 out of 5 categories including both reading and math)</i></p>	<p><u>Advanced Gifted Services Option:</u> Student eligible to participate in the Strand C/ Pull-Out Academic G&T Program</p>
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	RAVENS-2 score 91st -98th percentile: Likely Gifted	
	RAVENS-2 score 98th -99th percentile: Very Likely Gifted	
<p>Students eligible to participate in the <u>Advanced Gifted Services Option/Strand C Academic G&T Pull-Out Program</u> are those likely to benefit from participation in programming designed for the gifted. With evidence of strong intellectual aptitude and the ability to rapidly learn and apply academic knowledge, the Strand C student can be challenged with differentiated services varying pace, depth and breadth within the regular classroom <i>as well as</i> the pull-out Academic G&T Program service option. As their advanced cognitive development enables these students to learn and understand more advanced and complex material than their age mates, they require differentiated and challenging programs and/or services beyond the general school program to reach their full potential, both intellectually and emotionally.</p>		
<p>PARTICIPATION IN 3-5 ACADEMIC GIFTED SERVICES IS NEITHER A PREREQUISITE FOR, NOR A GUARANTEE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR GIFTED SERVICES IN GRADES 9-12. Students identified for Gifted Services are responsible for maintaining academic excellence in the general educational classroom as evidence of their grade level curricula achievement.</p>		

Gifted Services Appeal Process: Grades 4-8

As special abilities can manifest at different times in the development of children, the Gifted Services Appeal Process allows for the re-evaluation of a student for gifted services. As testing and evaluation is conducted only once a year, students *who do not initially meet qualifying expectations* may be

reevaluated, by parent or teacher request, for gifted services after one school year through the Gifted Services Appeal Process. Thus, the Appeal Process may be initiated *during the fall of the next school year* by notifying the student’s classroom teacher *at that time*.

<p>THREE STRANDS OF DIFFERENTIATED GIFTED SERVICES GRADES 4-8 AS WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF MEETING THE NEEDS OF HIGH-ABILITY STUDENTS UTILIZING <i>THE LEVELS OF SERVICE APPROACH</i> ALLOWS US TO EXTEND THAT COMMITMENT INCLUSIVELY BY RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL WHICH EXISTS AMONG MANY MORE STUDENTS THAN HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN IDENTIFIED AND SERVED IN BOTH ACADEMIC CONTENT AREAS AND MANY TALENT DOMAINS.</p>	
<p>THE CLASSROOM SHOULD PROVIDE AN ATMOSPHERE OF INQUIRY AND DISCOVERY, WITH EMPHASIS ON PROBLEM SOLVING, REFLECTION, AND CRITICAL THINKING, RATHER THAN MERE COVERAGE OF THE CONTENT. STUDENTS WITH HIGH POTENTIAL SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO STRETCH THEMSELVES TO SUCCEED, WITH A BLEND OF INDIVIDUALIZED AND GROUP ACTIVITIES.</p>	
<p><u>STRAND A</u> <u>TALENT POOL:</u> <i>RAVENS-2</i> <i>Below 77th</i> <i>percentile</i></p>	<p>Service Recommendation: <u>The student can be challenged with increased responsibility and access to enriched assignments within the general educational classroom.</u> <i>Through a blend of individualized and group activities, a Strand A student can be challenged with opportunities that provide foundational skills and tools to help the student discover and build his/her personal strengths, talents, and motivation.</i></p>
<p><u>STRAND B</u> <u>TALENT POOL:</u> <i>RAVENS-2</i> <i>77th-84th</i> <i>percentile</i></p>	<p>Service Recommendation: <u>The student is considered an appropriate candidate for differentiated services within the general educational classroom.</u> <i>A Strand B student can be challenged through differentiated learning opportunities in his/her strength or interest area(s) within the regular classroom and along the Continuum of Services offered. Differentiated services within the general educational classroom provide varied opportunities for students with specific or emerging academic strengths to be challenged with opportunities to practice complex thinking</i></p>

	<i>strategies, learn at an appropriate pace, with significant depth and breadth, in an inclusive learning environment.</i>
<p><u>STRAND C</u> <u>ADVANCED</u> <u>OPTION:</u> <i>RAVENS-2</i> <i>85th -99th</i> <i>percentile</i></p>	<p>Service Recommendation: <i>*<u>In addition to differentiated services within the general education classroom, the student is considered an appropriate candidate for the pull-out Academic G&T Program. Eligible students are those</u></i> <i>with an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability and potential, task commitment, and creative- productive thinking, who require differentiated and challenging programs and/or services beyond the general school program to reach their full potential, both intellectually and emotionally.</i></p>
<p>The RAVENS-2 Progressive Matrices is utilized, in addition to the multiple measures in Phase 1 and 2, to determine how a child performs on the assessment as compared to their peers and the results are used as a placement measure. RAVENS-2 scores are reported in percentile format. The average student scores at the 50th percentile.</p> <p>POTENTIALLY GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS TYPICALLY SCORE ABOVE THE 90TH PERCENTILE.</p> <p>No two gifted and talented children are alike: the professional judgment of the identification team ensures that placement determinations are made according to the unique traits and characteristics of each child in the identification process. As the screening process involves the analysis of multiple measures, both qualitative and quantitative, <u>no specific score on any one measure determines eligibility and the identification team therefore does not furnish individual eligibility reports.</u></p>	
<p>The Continuum of Services includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academic and Creative Competition ● Acceleration by Grade ● Acceleration by Subject ● Cluster Grouping ● Flexible Grouping ● Gifted and Talented Visual and/or Performing Arts Program ● Gifted and Talented Academic Pullout Program (Literary Arts) 	

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction in the General Education Classroom● Integrated Summer Enrichment Program |
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Grades K-8 Gifted and Talented Mid-year Exit Procedures

Exit procedures are initiated by the teacher of the gifted as a result of his/her observations of the student, or upon the recommendation of the student's regular classroom teacher. The teacher of the gifted, the classroom teacher, the Gifted and Talented Services Team, and/or administration will confer to consider the recommendation and, if necessary, to seek and review additional information from other staff members and/or the student's parents or guardians.

Parents will be informed if their child's placement in the program is being reconsidered and will have the opportunity to discuss the student's circumstances and status. A decision will be made whether the child will remain in the program or be discontinued from program participation.

Some indicators that program discontinuation may be desirable for an individual child include, but are not limited to the following:

- Inability to meet the requirements of the regular instructional program
- Reluctance to participate in program activities
- Inability to function constructively
- Inability or reluctance to meet the requirements of the Gifted and Talented Program
- Expressed desire on the part of the student to discontinue his/her involvement in the program

Grades K-8 Gifted and Talented Statement of Attendance Policy

Student attendance requirement is consistent with the Montague Township School Board of Education Policy for the district.

Grade K-8 Gifted and Talented Program Course Descriptions

Project Discovery:

- Development of Thinking Skills – students will develop higher level thinking processes through involvement in activities which include problem solving, fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, logic, reasoning, decision making and critical thinking.
- Academic Investigations – students will broaden their interests, knowledge, and experiences by completion of academic investigations which are broad based, interdisciplinary and

incorporate higher level thinking skills into content areas. These units are developed using the content, process, product model and Understanding by Design.

- Independent Study - using research skills to locate, gather, organize, process and communicate information, students will select an area of interest from a list of sub-topics based on the theme of the academic investigation and synthesize their knowledge into a final product.
- Peer Interaction – through grade level meetings, multi grade level meetings and field trips, students in Project Discovery will meet to share ideas, experiences, concerns and problems. In addition, students will present their final products and research findings with students in the regular classroom.

Literary Arts: Students will be exposed to challenging and engaging humanities curricula that will build student skills and abilities in the appreciation and creation of various forms of the literary arts.

Visual Arts: Students will develop and refine observational drawing skills, broaden experiences in a variety of media, solve challenging problems of visual composition, and develop creative thinking to produce critically acclaimed works of art.

Passion Projects/ Genius Hour/ 20% Time: Students will research, plan, and present student-led inquiry projects that focus on self-selected areas of investigation. Students will work with the gifted and talented teacher through the process: Passion, Pitch, Plan, Project, Product, and Presentation. Students will create an Action Plan, research notes, citations, and complete a reflection after the culmination of the project. Student projects may include, but are not limited to: prototypes, demonstrations, TED talks, slideshow presentations, performances, service projects, and art installations.

Curriculum Addenda For Special Education

This curriculum can be both grade and age appropriate for special education students and is in line with the district's written philosophy of special education, concerning Programs for Educationally Disabled Students. Based on the Child Study Team evaluation and consultation with the parent and classroom teacher, an individualized education plan may include modifications to content, instructional procedures, student expectations, and targeted achievement outcomes of this curriculum document in accordance with the identified individual needs of an eligible student. This educational plan will then become a supplemental guide that the classroom teacher, parent, and Child Study Team will use to measure the individual student's performance and achievement.

Curriculum Addenda for English Language Learners

This curriculum guide is appropriate and is implemented for all students according to age and grade, and is in line with the district's written philosophy of English language acquisition concerning Bilingual Instruction and English as a Second Language Programs. In accordance with the New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:15, the contents herein provide equitable instructional opportunities for English Language Learners to meet the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and WIDA ELD Standards and to participate in all academic and nonacademic courses. Students enrolled in a Bilingual and/or an ESL program may, in consultation with the classroom teacher and Bilingual and/or ESL teacher, receive modifications to contend, instructional procedures, student expectations and targeted achievement outcomes of this curriculum document in accordance with the individual student's developmental and linguistic needs.