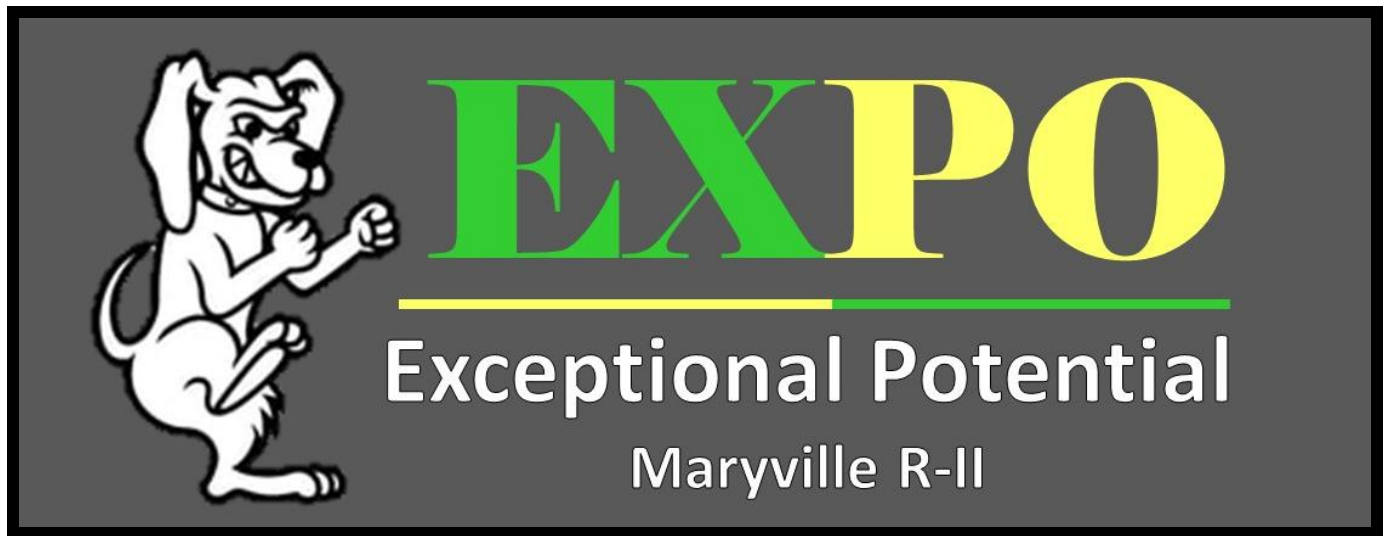




Exceptional Potential (EXPO) Gifted Program Handbook

2026-2027 School Year

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IS THE STUDENT GIFTED?

Gifted and talented children are by virtue of outstanding abilities those identified by professionally qualified persons as being capable of high performance. These children require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society.

-U.S. Office of Educational Report to Congress

Although gifted children come in all shapes and sizes, they typically share many common characteristics. Though the vast majority of children will display some of the following attributes, the gifted child tends to possess most, if not all of them.

- Questions critically
- Transfers learning to new situations
- Learns rapidly and easily
- Uses a large number of words easily and accurately
- Shows curiosity and originality
- Has the power of abstraction, conceptualization, and synthesis
- Has a sense of humor
- Is challenged by new ideas
- Offers several solutions to the same problem
- Shows ability to plan, organize, execute, and judge
- Finds ways to extend ideas
- Is sensitive to the feelings of others or to situations
- Is persistent
- Exercises responsibilities independently
- Has a sense of fairness
- Is imaginative

-Nancy Johnson, gifted educator

DEFINITION

A gifted student is one who gives evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, and who needs services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.

PHILOSOPHY/BELIEFS

We believe gifted students need:

- to be identified at an early age.
- continual opportunity to interact with intellectual peers.
- a safe and nurturing environment, which encourages creativity, risk-taking and flexible thinking.
- opportunities for problem solving, higher order thinking skills, challenging activities and authentic learning experiences. Support and guidance as they recognize, accept, enhance and apply their gifts and talents.
- parent involvement and education.

MISSION

The mission of the Maryville R-II EXPO Gifted Program is to provide gifted students the opportunity to become independent learners and decision makers who recognize their potential and responsibilities in a changing global society.

VISION

The vision of the EXPO Gifted Program is to create and provide challenging opportunities for Maryville R-II students who have been determined eligible for gifted services.

CURRICULUM GOALS

The goals for the gifted program are to:

- 1.) Provide academic activities that address state and district standards at a level commensurate with the abilities and interests of advanced learners.
- 2.) Provide learning activities which foster a respect for diversity and opportunities for students to expand their understanding and acceptance of self and others.
- 3.) Provide a differentiated learning environment for students which emphasizes and expands their thinking abilities and independent learning skills.
- 4.) Provide students with opportunities to solve real-life problems and to develop products and information that will be communicated to others.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Thinking Skills

- Develop creative thinking skills
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Develop problem solving skills

Social Development

- Enhances task commitment
- Works cooperatively with teachers and peers
- Organized material and manages time
- Develops understanding of self as a gifted learner

Concept Development/Authentic Learning Experiences

- Understands the concepts taught
- Transfers knowledge among various areas of study

Communication Skills

- Communicates thoughts effectively in oral, visual, and/or written modes

Risk Taking

- Displays curiosity for learning
- Demonstrates a willingness to try new things
- Prefers to take leadership roles
- Risks failure; accepts and learns from failures

Research

- Uses technology effectively
- Judges the usefulness of information
- Finds information independently

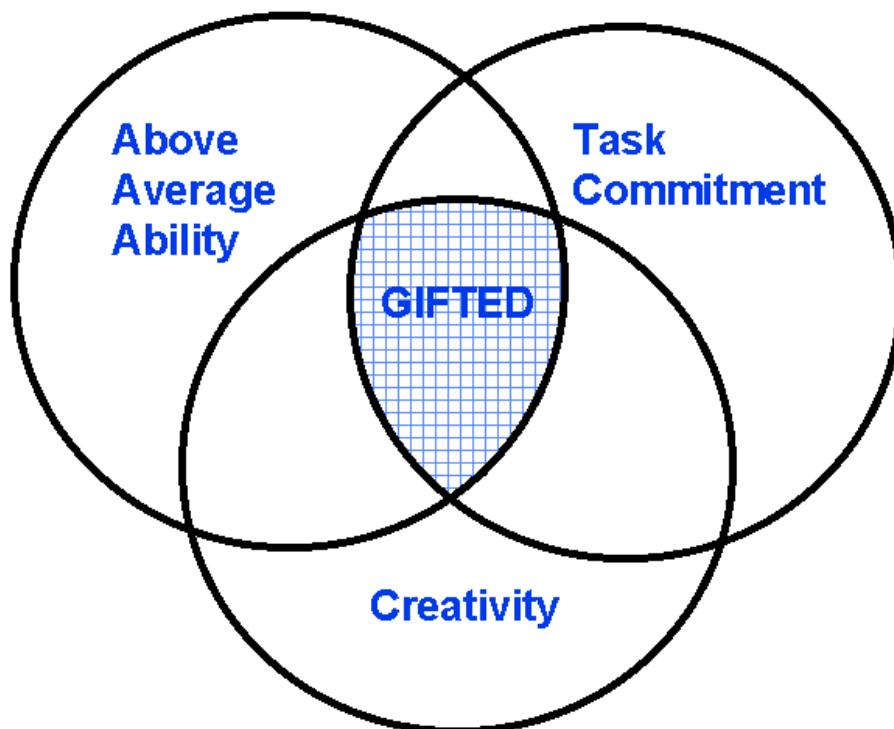
PHILOSOPHY

The gifted students in the Maryville RII School District represent an identified group of students whose learning styles and thinking dimensions require experiences and instruction beyond the standard curriculum. An educational program for gifted students shall identify their unique capabilities, and provide enrichment which encourages them to explore those capabilities. Educators bear the responsibility of knowing the total gifted child and need to understand personal needs and anxieties as well as achievement competencies in order to facilitate growth. We need to create a warmly responsive, non-threatening climate in the classroom. We need to work with those educating these gifted children to understand and utilize teaching strategies involving higher thought processes. It becomes our responsibility to prepare these future leaders for a rapidly changing world where facts become outdated before printed; where learning how to learn, how to adapt and change and relying on process rather than static knowledge are highly significant factors in determining educational goals for the gifted and talented.

The Maryville R-II EXPO Gifted Program does not substitute or replace the excellent classroom instruction and enrichment already provided in the district. Instead, it is an integral part of the school curriculum. The district philosophy notes a commitment to developing the maximum potential of all students. To achieve this end result, all students should have a curriculum which includes basic skills, enrichment activities to nurture affective and cognitive skills, guided investigation, independent study, and accelerated learning, as appropriate.

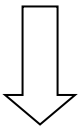
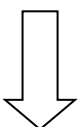
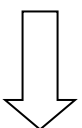
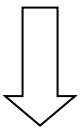
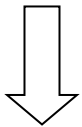
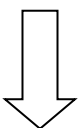
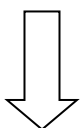
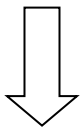
What Makes Giftedness?

Renzulli Model



IDENTIFICATION

The following criteria will be used in screening and placement of students for the Gifted Program:

Grades 2 nd – 3 rd	Grades 4 th – 8 th
All students are given the iReady Math and STAR Reading/Early Literacy assessment in the spring.  Students scoring at the 60th percentile or higher on either assessment will be given the OLSAT-8 (Otis-Lennon School Ability Test) *** Spring 1st Grade Star Early Literacy & 2nd Grade Star Reading Assessment  Students scoring in the 90th percentile or higher on the OLSAT-8 will be given the KTEA-3 (Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement)  Students scoring in the 95th percentile or higher on the KTEA-3 will be given the WISC-V (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children)  Students scoring in the 95th percentile or higher on the WISC-V are eligible for EXPO services.	All students are given the MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) in the spring.  Students scoring advanced in math or ELA will be given the OLSAT-8 (Otis-Lennon School Ability Test)  Students scoring in the 90th percentile or higher on the OLSAT-8 will be given the KTEA-3 (Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement)  Students scoring in the 95th percentile or higher on the KTEA-3 will be given the WISC-V (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children)  Students scoring in the 95th percentile or higher on the WISC-V are eligible for EXPO services.

**Re-screening/testing cannot occur within 24 months of any previous testing for our district program. One re-test may be given in the elementary grades; one re-test may be given in the middle school grades.

**Parents with questions, concerns, or appeals to the evaluation process should contact Brian Lynn, Director of the EXPO Program.

PLACEMENT

Students are permanently placed in the program, unless a parent requests otherwise.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

If a child transfers into the Maryville R-II School District who has been deemed eligible for gifted services in their previous district, Maryville R-II will initiate a re-evaluation. Students must qualify for services in the Maryville R-II School District using the criteria listed previously (unless the previous district's identification process included a score of the 95th percentile or higher on both an academic standardized test AND an intelligence test). The school diagnostician and director of gifted education will review all documents that have been sent by the previous district and plan the re-evaluation accordingly. Parents are responsible for communicating their child was in a gifted program in a previous school during the enrollment process.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

If a child has had a previous education evaluation through the Maryville R-II Special Education Department, those scores that are applicable to Gifted Education will be considered. A student who has an IQ score in the 95th percentile will be automatically considered for the EXPO Gifted Program.

PROBATION/DISMISSAL

A student may be withdrawn from the gifted program due to academic problems, behavior problems or failure to complete required projects.

EXITING THE PROGRAM

If a parent decides to remove a student from the gifted program, the parent will need to contact Brian Lynn, Director of the EXPO Program, either in writing or verbally. If a student exits the program and later decides they would like to re-enroll, they will be required to go through the evaluation process again.

PARENT RESOURCES

Parent involvement is important to the EXPO gifted program. To help communicate more specific information related to gifted students the following resources have been included on the subsequent pages:

- Differences among high achiever, creative thinker, and gifted learner
- Characteristic behaviors and traits of gifted and talented students
- Possible problems that may be associated with characteristic strengths of gifted children

A High Achiever...	A Creative Thinker...	A Gifted Learner...
Remembers the answers	Sees exceptions	Poses unforeseen questions
Is interested	Wonders	Is curious
Is attentive	Daydreams; may seem off task	Is selectively mentally engaged
Generates advanced ideas	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed	Generates complex, abstract ideas
Works hard to achieve	Plays with ideas and concepts	Knows without working hard
Answers the questions in detail	Injects new possibilities	Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives
Performs at the top of the group	Is in own group	Is beyond the group
Responds with interest and opinions	Shares bizarre, sometimes conflicting opinions	Exhibits feelings and opinions from multiple perspectives
Learns with ease	Questions: What if...	Already knows
Needs 6 to 8 repetitions to master	Questions the need for mastery	Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master
Enjoys the company of same age peers	Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone	Prefers the company of intellectual peers
Understands complex, abstract humor	Relishes wild, off-the-wall humor	Creates complex, abstract humor
Grasps the meaning	Makes mental leaps: Aha!	Infers and connects concepts
Completes assignments on time	Initiates more projects than will ever be completed	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments
Is receptive	Is independent and unconventional	Is intense
Often enjoys school	Enjoys creating	Enjoys self-directed learning
Absorbs information	Improvises	Manipulates information
Is a technician with expertise in a field	Is an inventor and idea generator	Is an expert who understands abstract ideas beyond the field
Memorizes well	Creates and brainstorms well	Guesses and infers well
Is highly alert and observant	Is intuitive	Anticipates and relates observations
Is pleased with own learning	Is never finished with possibilities	Is self-critical
Is able	Is idiosyncratic	Is intellectual

Characteristic Behaviors and Traits of Gifted and Talented Students

Adapted from the work of Susan Winebrenner

Gifted students may exhibit many of the characteristics below. When you observe a student who consistently exhibits a number of these behaviors, there is a strong possibility they are highly capable. If you believe a student is highly capable, please refer them for testing by filling out a nomination form. Parents or teachers may initiate the process.

INTERESTS • Curious: asks endless questions (why?) • May have a "passionate interest" that has lasted for many years • Strongly motivated to do things that interest them; may be unwilling to work on other activities • Intense; becomes totally absorbed in activities and thoughts • Prefers complex and challenging tasks to "basic" work • Catches on quickly, then resists doing work, or works in a sloppy, careless manner • Is eager to try new things • Aware of global issues many age peers are uninterested in • Passionately interested in some topic or field of endeavor	CREATIVE THINKING • Comes up with "better ways" for doing things; suggests them to peers, teachers, and other adults • Sees endless possibilities for various situations or uses for objects • Thinks brilliantly, but is absentminded about details • Sophisticated sense of humor; loves to play with words and ideas • May be talented in the fine arts • Fluent in idea generation and development; likes to experiment with ideas and hunches • Great imagination; frequent daydreamer • Values nonconformity in appearance or thought • Perceives subtle cause/effect relationships; Sees connections between apparently unconnected ideas and activities • Is extremely creative, uses materials in unusual ways; makes up elaborate stories or excuses
SOCIAL RELATIONS AND INTERACTIONS • Sensitive to beauty and other people's feelings and emotions • Takes the role of "class clown" • Advanced sense of justice and fairness • Bossy in group situations • Prefers the company of older children and adults • Prefers to work alone; resists cooperative learning • Exhibits need to constantly share all they know • Impatient when not called on to recite or respond • Speaks mind without regard for consequences • Creates complicated play and games	PERFECTIONISM • Believes they are valued for what they can do rather than who they are • May cry easily in frustration that their work at school can never be perfect • Works very slowly in hopes that their product will be perfect • Discovering a mistake in their work leads to erasing until there is a hole in the paper or crumpling up the paper and throwing it away • Asks for lots of help and reassurance from the teacher. ("Is this all right?" "Is this what you want?" "Please repeat the directions.") • Cannot take criticism or suggestions for improvement without being defensive • Expects other people to be perfect • Avoids challenging work for fear their struggle will be seen by others. ("If my teacher and peers see me struggle, they will conclude I'm not so smart.") • Procrastinates to the point that work never even gets started
THINKING TRAITS • Advanced vocabulary for chronological age • Operates on higher levels of thinking than his age peers; is comfortable with abstract thinking • Standardized test scores significantly better than classroom peers • Outstanding memory; possesses lots of information • Ability to "track" two or more things simultaneously • Ability to generate many solutions • Transfers concepts and learning to new situations • May be "street smart" while not doing well on school tasks	

Possible Problems That May be Associated with Characteristic Strengths of Gifted Children

Strengths	Possible Problems
Acquires and retains information quickly.	Impatient with slowness of others; dislikes routine and drill; may resist mastering foundational skills; may make concepts unduly complex.
Inquisitive attitude, intellectual curiosity; intrinsic motivation; searching for significance.	Asks embarrassing questions; strong-willed; resists direction; seems excessive in interests; expects same of others.
Ability to conceptualize, abstract, synthesize; enjoys problem-solving and intellectual activity.	Rejects or omits details; resists practice or drill; questions teaching procedures.
Can see cause--effect relations.	Difficulty accepting the illogical--such as feelings, traditions, or matters to be taken on faith.
Love of truth, equity, and fair play.	Difficulty in being practical; worry about humanitarian concerns.
Enjoys organizing things and people into structure and order; seeks to systematize.	Constructs complicated rules or systems; may be seen as bossy, rude, or domineering.
Large vocabulary and facile verbal proficiency; broad information in advanced areas.	May use words to escape or avoid situations; becomes bored with school and age-peers; seen by others as a "know it all."
Thinks critically; has high expectancies; is self-critical and evaluates others.	Critical or intolerant toward others; may become discouraged or depressed; perfectionistic.
Keen observer; willing to consider the unusual; open to new experiences.	Overly intense focus; occasional gullibility.
Creative and inventive; likes new ways of doing things.	May disrupt plans or reject what is already known; seen by others as different and out of step.
Intense concentration; long attention span in areas of interest; goal-directed behavior; persistence.	Resists interruption; neglects duties or people during period of focused interests; stubbornness.
Sensitivity, empathy for others; desire to be accepted by others.	Sensitivity to criticism or peer rejection; expects others to have similar values; need for success and recognition; may feel different and alienated.
High energy, alertness, eagerness; periods of intense efforts.	Frustration with inactivity; eagerness may disrupt others' schedules; needs continual stimulation; may be seen as hyperactive.
Independent; prefers individualized work; reliant on self.	May reject parent or peer input; non-conformity; may be unconventional.
Diverse interests and abilities; versatility.	May appear scattered and disorganized; frustrations over lack of time; others may expect continual competence.
Strong sense of humor.	Sees absurdities of situations; humor may not be understood by peers; may become "class clown" to gain attention.