
*Adams County School District 50
Gifted Education Department*

Advanced Learning Plan
Support Document



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Definition of ALP: ECEA statute: 22-20-103 Rule Section 12.01 (2)

“Advanced Learning Plan” or “ALP” means a written record of gifted and talented programming utilized with each gifted child and considered in educational planning and decision making. ALPs are dynamic, working documents developed and reviewed through collaborative efforts of the teacher/s, parents and student. The areas selected as priorities for SMART goals are monitored through ongoing assessment and parent-teacher conferences. ALPs are managed and monitored in the school and filed in the student’s cumulative file. ALPs are signed annually by parents, the child’s teacher/s, the student (as appropriate) and other personnel involved in development.

CDE Definition of gifted student: *“Gifted and talented children” means those persons between the ages of five and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services. Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic and ethnic, cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:*

- *General or specific intellectual ability.*
- *Specific academic aptitude.*
- *Creative or productive thinking.*
- *Leadership abilities.*

- *Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities.*

GENERAL TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENTIATION OF INSTRUCTION

Adjusted Questioning Techniques and Higher-Order Questions. Adaptations are made to the types of questions posed to the learners based on their readiness, developmental levels, interests, and learning profiles. “Higher-order questions” are questions that require students to work out answers rather than memorize them. The teacher’s goal is to help students explore possibilities, analyze information, synthesize, and make evaluations. Students are also encouraged to generate their own related questions.

Agendas. These are personalized lists of tasks that a student must complete are prepared for a specified time. Each student may have an agenda with differing tasks.

Choice and Task Cards. Work assignments are written on cards and placed in hanging pockets or envelopes. Each student selects a card and completes that work. The teacher targets work toward student needs yet allows student choice. Task cards are another form of choice cards. Challenging, independent activities in each content area are written on cards as opportunities for independent and small-group work.

Concept Mapping. This special form of a web diagram or graphic organizer is used for exploring knowledge and gathering and sharing information. Cells contain a concept, item, question or links. The strategy stresses the importance of prior knowledge.

Content Extension: Enhancing the content increases student motivation, engagement, challenge, and depth of learning expected in a class or grade level. Content extension includes:

- Exposure beyond the regular curriculum - to new ideas, skills, and concepts not encountered before.
- Extension of the regular curriculum - going more broadly and deeply into the ideas already introduced in that curriculum. Extend learning beyond level through advanced content, materials, and complexity.
- Concept development - using a concept introduced within the regular curriculum and exploring its meaning and implications across the curricular areas. Focus on broad-based issues, themes, problems.
- Integrate disciplines (multi-disciplinary studies).
- Engage in self-selected independent study.
- Use new techniques, resources, materials.
- Examine multiple perspectives of events (time, culture, people).
- Challenge existing ideas; produce new ideas.
- Focus on open-ended questions and tasks.
- Create real-world products.
- Evaluate problems for inconsistencies, missing elements.

Content Extension Focusing on Depth: Depth encourages students to venture further, deeper, with greater elaboration, through quality of subject matter, rules and ethics, language and patterns. It involves learning from:

- Concrete to abstract;
- Familiar to unfamiliar;
- Know to unknown;
- Literal to synthesized

Content Extension Focusing on Complexity: Complexity helps students make connections and identify relationships and associations between, within, and across subjects and disciplines. It focuses on:

- Varying perspectives;
- Issues, problems, and themes;
- Conceptual learning.

Content Extension Based on Novelty: Novelty encourages students to create a personal understanding or connection to the subject area, thereby making content more memorable. It provides opportunities to:

- Interpret meaning and give personal insights;

- Use non-traditional study methods;
- Approach content through inquiry, experimentation, invention, and exploration;
- Synthesize information using irony, paradox, and metaphors.

GENERAL TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR DIFFERENTIATION OF INSTRUCTION (cont.)

Critical Thinking Skills: Various thinking skills that are used to analyze and evaluate data and evidence in order to develop, judge the effectiveness of, or respond to an argument or position.

Curriculum Compacting. A strategy designed to allow highly capable students the opportunity to be engaged in meaningful learning. The teacher assesses all students before beginning a unit of study or development of a skill. Those who do well on the pre-assessment are provided with a framework for alternate assignments.

Entry Points. Based on the work of Howard Gardner, this strategy encourages student exploration of a topic through different avenues to match various cognitive processing strengths: narrative (presenting a story), logical-quantitative (using numbers or deduction), foundational (examining philosophy and vocabulary), aesthetic (focusing on sensory features), and experiential (hands-on).

Flexible Grouping. A strategy that helps promote learning and interpersonal communication by ensuring that student groups are structured in different ways to meet varied goals. The teacher may assign small instructional groups, or the students may choose their groups according to interest. Flexibility of grouping arrangements is an important feature of a differentiated classroom.

Graphic Organizers. This is a cognitive map in which important aspects of a concept, topic, or unit of study are identified and arranged in a visual pattern to present information, review material, integrate prior knowledge with new information, demonstrate relationships between concepts, and retrieve information related to a given topic.

Higher Order Thinking Skills. Higher order thinking skills are questioning in discussions or providing activities based on processing that requires analysis, synthesis, evaluation, or other critical thinking skills.

Independent Study. Highly motivated, self-directed students who demonstrate interest in advanced research can benefit from guided independent study experiences. The teacher and student work together to identify topics of interest and plan a method of independent investigation that culminates in a product that demonstrates learning outcomes. Topic choices are related to the general curriculum.

Learning Centers. Different areas in the classroom are designated as centers for learning. Centers may be assigned or chosen, and students work on various differentiated tasks.

Pre-assessment. The teacher assesses the students before instruction to determine what they know. The teacher uses the results of the pre-assessment to design instruction.

Social Action Projects. Students research important social issues related to curricular areas of study and plan a course of action to help solve related problems. By engaging in such projects, students gain the knowledge, values, leadership experience, and skills necessary to participate in social change.

Socratic Dialogue. This strategy uses open-ended questioning to encourage higher-level discussion. The teacher acts as a facilitator and guides students in using critical thinking, active listening, and communication skills.

Tiered Assignments. This strategy provides varied levels of activities and assignments to ensure that students explore and practice concepts at a level that builds on their prior knowledge and that prompts continued growth rather than repetition of prior knowledge. Diagnostic assessment needs to be the foundation of these leveling assignments.

General Teaching Strategies for ELL Advanced Learners

- Teach from the whole back to the parts
- Use visual strategies throughout/graphic organizers
- Use discovery, constructivist techniques
- Encourage abstract, critical thinking
- Allow learning in pairs or groups
- Enter content through creative thinking
- Notice students who:
 - Acquire language at an accelerated rate; learn content and language simultaneously
 - Add details to discussions; become deeply involved in learning
 - Make comparisons
 - Exhibit advanced thinking
 - Are highly regarded by ethnic peers; give these students leadership positions
 - Are very adaptable and flexible; Have them debate the opposite side of an issue they feel strongly about
 - Place these students in the same room with a cluster of gifted students to have more opportunities for learning challenges

Teaching Strategies/Content Options for Strength Area: “Other” (Currently “Other” pertains to Intellectual Ability. In the future, this area will include Creativity, Leadership, and Visual/Performing Arts)

Ascending Intellectual Demand is the term used to describe the process whereby a teacher consciously increases the depth, complexity, sophistication, and novelty of thinking required by students as they acquire and process knowledge, e.g. scaffolding. The teacher accomplishes this increase in small incremental levels determined by knowledge gained through ongoing assessment of the current level of students’ thinking.

Strategies to increase intellectual demand in content:

- Provide above-level texts or supplemental materials for a unit of study.
- Provide materials written from different points of view about the same topic.
- Seek out classical literature, journalistic accounts from the time period being studied, eye-witness accounts, diaries, journal entries, etc. to expose students to writing styles, vocabulary, and grammar from the past.
- Use artifacts, photographs, drawings, and other visual materials rather than only written accounts.
- Expose students to the current research questions that interest experts in a field today.
- Require students to research primary sources for their information.

Strategies to increase intellectual demand in process:

- Ask students to consider multiple points of view, multiple solutions or responses, or multiple paths to solutions.

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- Require students to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information.
 - Assign students to infer, draw conclusions, and create generalizations based on data.
 - Have students identify assumptions - their own or those of a writer or researcher.
 - Teach students creative thinking strategies so that they can generate numerous, varied, and innovative possibilities and then choose effective solutions to problem situations.
 - Teach students to recognize bias, to judge the credibility of sources, and to detect inconsistencies in arguments.
 - Ask students to find patterns and relationships among disparate elements that they have studied.
 - Require students to draw up and revise plans of action for their own work.
 - Emphasize goal-setting and self-evaluation.

Teaching Strategies/Content Options for Strength Area: “Other” (cont.)

Encourage metacognition (the ability to monitor, describe, and reflect on one’s own thinking) by:

- The use of journal prompts and interactive journals.
- Learning summaries.
- Creating thinking maps that describe the type of thinking used.
- Describing the desired thinking in rubrics.
- The use of in-depth portfolio choices and captions.
- Debriefing sessions after lessons or units of study.
- Giving students the vocabulary to discuss their thinking by naming thinking skills as they are used and taught.

Teaching Strategies/Content Options for Strength Area: “Language Arts”

- Substitution of regular reading material with more advanced trade books or basal material
- Appropriate use of technology and the web
- More complex assigned reading
- More complex assigned writing
- Independent reading choices
- Independent writing choices
- Grouping changes (within class or across classes)
- Independent study
- Thematic instructional changes for talented readers (tiered reading)
- Independent project choices based on student interests
- Substitution of regular reading instructional strategies with advanced options
- Great Books or Literature Circles
- Time spent in a gifted program for reading
- Advanced questioning skills
- Interest assessment and interest-based reading opportunities Career Studies
- Foreign language
- Literature Circles
- Accelerated instruction
- Differentiated writing prompts

- Pre-assessment of language arts skills
- Advanced language arts learning centers
- Literature at advanced instructional level
- Vertical progression on reading and writing continuums
- Early instruction in research, presentation, and study skills
- Opportunities to submit work for real-world publication
- Comparison of concepts in literature in different cultures
- Navigator Novel Study Guides (College of William and Mary)
- Study of interdisciplinary themes, concepts, multicultural, and global issues
- Junior Great Books
- Philosophy for children

Teaching Strategies/Content Options for Strength Area: “Language Arts” (cont.)

- Language arts seminars
- Debate and Poetry clubs
- Advanced summer L.A. programs
- Mentorship - exploratory/investigative
- Competitions (writing, speech, drama)
- College of William & Mary units
- Early entrance into AP Composition/Literature
- Online advanced course (APEX learning, EPGY, Colorado Online)
- Authoring
- Internships
- Specialized diploma
- Post secondary literature

Teaching Strategies/Content Options for Strength Area: “Math”

- Math Project (authentic)
- Marilyn Burns Replacement Unit
- TIMS (Teaching Integrated Math and Science)
- TOPS (Techniques of Problem Solving)
- Problem-based learning, e.g.; Autonomous Learner Model
- Multiple resources e.g. college textbooks and research reports
- Technology (spreadsheet, databases, graphic and scientific calculators)
- Pre-assessments, ongoing assessments, authentic assessments
- Assessment alternatives for student’s strength areas or talent areas
- Differentiated strategies e.g. higher-level questioning, tiered assignments, extension menus
- Math clubs
- AP Math
- Competitions
- Specialized math curriculum
- Advanced summer school math programs
- Mentorship for advance study in math e.g. engineer, architect, chemist
- Online advanced course work (APEX Learning, EPGY, Colorado Online)
- Internships

- Radical acceleration
- Post secondary math
- Specialized Diploma
- Authentic work production
- Early Entrance, e.g. Alg. 1 @ 6th grade

Additional Strength Areas: Science/Social Studies/Creativity/ Leadership/ Visual/Performing Arts/ Music/ Spatial

- Confer with your building's GT Liaison

Teaching Strategies/Content Options to address “Affective Needs”

To Encourage Intellectual/Cognitive Behaviors

- **Fluency:** Generation of a quantity of relevant responses.
- **Flexibility:** Variety of ideas or a shift in categories and directions of thought.
- **Elaboration:** Embellishment or improvement of ideas; addition of details.
- **Originality:** Unusual and/or unique ideas or responses; movement away from the obvious.

To Encourage Affective – Temperament Behaviors

- **Risk Taking:** Expose oneself to failure; take a guess; function in unstructured conditions.
- **Curiosity:** Be inquisitive; toy with ideas; follow hunches; be open to puzzlement.
- **Complexity:** Delve into intricate problems willingly; seek alternatives; see gaps.
- **Imagination:** Visualize; build mental images; feel intuitively; reach beyond reality.

Generalized Teaching Strategies

- **Paradox:** Statement or proportion which seems to be self-contradictory but may express a truth.
- **Attribute Listing:** Inherent properties or identities that must be open-ended.
- **Analogy:** Finding similarities between things or situations which may in other ways be different.
- **Discrepancy:** Gaps or missing links in given knowledge.
- **Provocative question:** Inquiry to incite exploration and curiosity.
- **Examples of change:** Show the dynamics of things; make modifications; alternations, or substitutions.
- **Examples of habit:** Build sensitivity to habit-bound thinking.
- **Organized random search:** Structured case study for new courses of action.
- **Skills of search:** Research on something done before; trial and error on new ways.
- **Tolerance for ambiguity:** Pose open-ended situations, e.g., ‘What if ...?’
- **Intuitive expression:** Expressing emotion through the senses; guided imagery; role– playing.
- **Adjustment to development:** Examine or playback mistakes or failures.
- **Study creative development:** Analyze the traits of creative people, creative processes, or creative products.
- **Evaluate situations:** Extrapolate from ideas and actions; analyze implications or consequences.
- **Creative reading skill:** Generate novel ideas by reading.
- **Creative listening skill:** Generate novel ideas by listening.
- **Creative writing skill:** Generate novel ideas in writing.

- **Visualization:** Express ideas in three dimensional format or non-traditional formats.

Enrichment Programming

- Within-class enrichment (individual or small group)
- Whole-class enrichment
- Before school, after school, Saturday enrichment, Summer enrichment
- Field trips and off-campus enrichment
- Fairs, festivals, performances
- Lego League
- Honor Choir, Destination ImagiNation, National Spelling Bee, National Geographic Bee, Scientific Investigations, Math Counts, District Jazz Band, Debate Club, Drama Club, Chess Club, Computer Explorers, Other _____

Parental Support

- Recognize parents' knowledge, expertise, and contribution to their children's growth
- Provide professional presentations, speakers, and educational opportunities on topics related to social and emotional needs
- Develop individualized learning goals with parent and child
- Encourage parent participation in support groups such as the SENG (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted)
- Provide preventive guidance books and materials about social and emotional needs of gifted children

Examples of SMART Goals for Advanced Learning Plans:

- **SMART Goal for Learning and Growth:** Student F will score in the advanced/superior range on a creative product rubric when she chooses one content area each six weeks and modifies a general class project to show how cats relate to the content area
- **SMART Goal for Learning and Growth:** By the end of the second trimester, the student will analyze historical development of religions and philosophies that the regular class is studying and relate that knowledge to the overarching concept of conflict by preparing a PowerPoint presentation for a chosen audience. The work and presentation will be evaluated using a rubric created by the social studies teacher and student, and the average score will be at least a 3 out of 4.
- **SMART Goal for Learning and Growth:** By May, Student A will demonstrate advanced level skills in Reading, evidenced by Advanced scores in Reading CSAP and other district level assessments and obtain at least a "3.5" grade in Honors English.
- **SMART Goal for Learning and Growth:** By May, this student will successfully complete a mentorship with a veterinarian as measured by the mentorship rubric, a classroom presentation of investigation (with product) with a rubric score average of 3 out of 4, and compete at the County Fair with her product in June as documented by entrance paperwork
- **SMART Goal for Affective Growth:** There will be a reduction in perfectionist tendencies/behaviors/anxieties between now and May as measured through parent/teacher observations along with a reduction over time in student requests for assistance with this behavior as recorded in calendar log by adults.
- **SMART Goal for Affective Growth:** By May, Student A will have studied and reflected upon 3 Habits of the Mind as measured through journaling and interviews; and set and achieved 3 related personal goals to be measured through self-evaluation, parent and teacher observations and interviews.

- **SMART Goal for Affective Growth**

A three-year career goal has been set for Student A to be monitored by the school counselor

- By the end of 10th grade, Student A will complete an interest inventory, volunteer 2 hours a month in an area of interest, and visit one college that offers a degree in one area of interest
- By the end of first semester 11th grade Student A will complete a vocational aptitude test; volunteer, find an internship or work at least 1 hour a week in an area of interest and vocational aptitude; visit 2 colleges that offer a degree in one or more areas of his vocational aptitude and interest.
- By the end of second semester 11th grade Student A will have completed essays and applications to 3 colleges.
- By the end of 12th grade, Student A will complete a personality test, visit three job sites in his area of interest and aptitude that are atypical careers and complete a one semester paid or unpaid internship in his area of interest.

References; Suggested Readings

Please consult with the GT Department regarding your specific need as the district's GT Library may be of service. You may borrow these materials.