

Batavia Educational Program Review (BEPR), Fall 2009

Program: Gifted Education

Gifted BEPR Participants: Holly Coon, Doug Drexler, Monika Hubble, Liz Selander

Program Commitment: Level 1, Stable funding

I. Program Outcomes:

- A. Identify students in grades 3-5 who are academically talented in math and are in need of gifted/accelerated math services, **as well as in the areas of reading, literature, science, and social studies. (bold are added items)**
- B. Identify students in grades 6-8 who are in need of enrichment and extension services in the areas of language arts, science, and social studies.
- C. Provide gifted students with differentiated curricula and an appropriate learning environment that challenges, stimulates, and encourages their natural abilities and allows them to reach their maximum level of learning.

II. Program Activities:

- A. Utilize teacher recommendations and standardized tests (including MAP, CogAT, Naglieri, and TOMAGS) to identify student ability and achievement to determine placement into the gifted program in grades 3-5.
- B. Utilize teacher recommendations, standardized tests (including MAP), and course grades to select and group students in grades 6-8.
- C. Provide identified students with instruction relating to the Illinois State Standards Application of Learning and enrichment related to math, **reading, literature, science, and social studies. (bold items are added)**
- D. Group gifted students together in small groups with students of the same academic ability to develop skills in problem solving, communicating, cooperative learning, and to address their unique socio-emotional needs.

III. Program Evaluation:

- A. Demographic data of identified gifted students (number of students served by grade level, gender, ethnicity, LEP, Special Education, etc.)
- B. Achievement Data (including MAP, ISAT, and CogAT) will be used in an annual report to analyze trends in the identified population to determine future actions to meet the needs of gifted students.
- C. Student satisfaction surveys will show the success of working with children of the same academic ability.
- D. Satisfaction survey of parents of identified gifted students will provide feedback from the parent perspective.

IV. Program Expenditures

IV. Program Expenditures	Level 1: Current
Salaries - Certified Staff	306,390
Fringe Benefits - Certified	46,500
Salary - Non Certified Staff	0
Fringe Benefits - Non Certified	0
Purchased Services	1,000
Supplies/Materials	0
Equipment	0
Other / Tuition	0
Non-Capitalized Equipment	0
Total	353,890
Minus Revenue	0
District Program Cost	353,890
FTE - Certified	4.00
FTE - Non Certified	0.00

11/22/09
Program: Gifted Education

Level 1
Goal
353,890

Current 353,890

How could we utilize this current level of funding more effectively or efficiently?

The Gifted BEPR group concluded that the creation of a BPS101 Gifted Attendance Center for grades 3-5 could provide enhanced opportunities for gifted students to achieve at high levels. This option would take the existing 3.0 Gifted FTE that are currently spread around the elementary schools and combine them into one multi-disciplinary program housed in one of the elementary buildings. Approximately 75 students could be served by this program (c. 25 per grade level).

There are a variety of hurdles to overcome to make this a viable option, including space availability, programming/staffing/scheduling issues, and transportation. The latter could occur in a manner similar to that of McWayne when it was operating as a school of choice.

Despite these challenges and the need for further study, the Gifted BEPR group concluded that the potential to develop a Gifted Attendance Center would provide gifted students in grades 3-5 with new opportunities to achieve at higher levels not only in math, but in all of the core subject areas as well. The needs of non-gifted, high-achieving students could still be met through differentiation in the regular classroom.

It was noted that some, but not most, of our benchmark districts utilize a gifted center model similar to this option.

The 2008 Program Evaluation included a discussion of the Templeton Report (on page 13). This report articulated that the research “consistently demonstrates the positive effects of acceleration”, despite the “ungrounded fears of hampering healthy social-emotional adjustment.” Please refer to the full Program Evaluation document, or the Templeton Report itself, for additional details on the relationship between the research and this option.

Gifted BEPR members articulated that although differentiation has been embraced by many teachers across the district, that there remains a level of discomfort among some staff members about differentiating for gifted students. BEPR members believe that the issue is not the concept of differentiation itself, but rather the extreme range of differentiation needs that can be present in one classroom setting that can be overwhelming, particularly at the extremes of the achievement spectrum. As such, Gifted BEPR reached consensus that serious consideration be given to this option independent of the need to reduce expenditures. This option is consistent with the conclusions of the full program evaluation from 2008, and can be a critical component to the district’s expanding RtI program.

Program Commitment: Level 2, 10% reduction in current funding

I. Program Outcomes:

- A. Identify students in grades 3-5 who are academically talented in math and are in need of gifted/accelerated math services.
- B. Identify students in grades 6-8 who are in need of enrichment and extension services in the areas of language arts, science, and social studies.
- C. Provide gifted students with differentiated curricula and an appropriate learning environment that challenges, stimulates, and encourages their natural abilities and allows them to reach their maximum level of learning.

II. Program Activities:

- A. Utilize teacher recommendations and standardized tests (including MAP, CogAT, Naglieri, and TOMAGS) to identify student ability and achievement to determine placement into the gifted program in grades 3-5.
- B. Utilize teacher recommendations, standardized tests (including MAP), and course grades to select and group students in grades 6-8.
- C. Provide identified students with instruction relating to the Illinois State Standards Application of Learning and enrichment related to math, **literature, language arts, science, and social studies. (bold are added items).**
- D. Group gifted students together in small groups with students of the same academic ability to develop skills in problem solving, communicating, cooperative learning, and to address their unique socio-emotional needs.

III. Program Evaluation:

- A. Demographic data of identified gifted students (number of students served by grade level, gender, ethnicity, LEP, Special Education, etc.)
- B. Achievement Data (including MAP, ISAT, and CogAT) will be used in an annual report to analyze trends in the identified population to determine future actions to meet the needs of gifted students.
- C. Student satisfaction surveys will show the success of working with children of the same academic ability.
- D. Satisfaction survey of parents of identified gifted students will provide feedback from the parent perspective.

IV. Program Expenditures

IV. Program Expenditures	Level 1: Current	Level 2: -10%	Dif. 1 / 2	
Salaries - Certified Staff	306,390	248,119	-58,271	
Fringe Benefits - Certified	46,500	37,665	-8,835	
Salary - Non Certified Staff	4		0	
Fringe Benefits - Non Certified	0		0	
Purchased Services	0	1,000	1,000	
Supplies/Materials	If staff is reduced or increased change FTE		0	
Equipment	0		0	
Other / Tuition	0		0	
Non-Capitalized Equipment				
Total	353,894	285,784	-67,106	
Minus Revenue	0	0	0	
District Program Cost	0	285,784	285,784	Differential: -67,106
FTE - Certified	4.00	3.50	3.50	(Difference between
FTE - Non Certified	0.00	0	0.00	Level 1 & Level 2 funding)

Explanation of cost reduction:

This option would create teams of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders that contain gifted students to be served by the gifted program. These students would be provided with an accelerated, enriched, significantly differentiated, and higher level curriculum provided by the regular classroom teacher.

Currently, students are placed on teams based partially on their math ability, as some teams offer advanced math while others do not. Literature and Language are currently handled by a pull out/replacement program. Occasional enrichment activities also occur in Social Studies and Science. This option would expand the current model utilized for advanced math at RMS to include all of the core areas of Literature/Language, Science, and Social Studies.

This model would replicate the method in which nearly all of our benchmark districts deliver gifted instruction to middle school students (see Appendix A).

Moving to this option would require curriculum work and additional training for some staff in the area of gifted education – both of which would require some investment in the short term. It would also be a significant shift in how gifted education has traditionally been approached at RMS.

Ongoing support and assistance to classroom teachers would be provided by the 0.5 FTE gifted teacher that would still exist at RMS. This 0.5 gifted teacher would also serve a resource and support mechanism to staff, as well as to meet the needs of high achieving students who may not qualify for the gifted program.

This option reduces the RMS Gifted teacher from 1.0 to 0.5 FTE. Using an average FTE cost, this would represent a savings of about \$30,000. Using actual budget numbers, we replaced a higher 1.0 FTE salary (retiring June 2010) with 0.5 FTE of \$37,500 (assumption of hiring a gifted 0.5 FTE beyond entry level due to necessary qualifications). This would be a reduction in salary level as well as a reduction in FTE.

The 2008 Program Evaluation included a discussion of the Templeton Report (on page 13). This report articulated that the research “consistently demonstrates the positive effects of acceleration”, despite the “ungrounded fears of hampering healthy social-emotional adjustment.” Please refer to the full Program Evaluation document, or the Templeton Report itself, for additional details on the relationship between the research and this option.

Depending on one’s perspective, this budget reduction could be viewed as a program enhancement by some. Gifted BEPR members articulated that although differentiation has been embraced by many teachers across the district, that there remains a level of discomfort among some staff members about differentiating for gifted students. BEPR members believe that the issue is not the concept of differentiation itself, but rather the extreme range of differentiation needs that can be present in one classroom setting that can be overwhelming, particularly at the extremes of the achievement spectrum. As such, Gifted BEPR reached consensus that serious consideration be given to this option independent of the need to reduce expenditures. This option is consistent with the conclusions of the full program evaluation from 2008, and can be a critical component to the district’s expanding RtI program.

Program Commitment: Level 3, 25% reduction in current funding

Note: The level 3 BEPR option is a combination of level 2 listed previously and this option.

I. Program Outcomes:

- A. Identify students in grades 3-5 who are academically talented in math and are in need of gifted/accelerated math services.
- B. Identify students in grades 6-8 who are in need of enrichment and extension services in the areas of language arts, science, and social studies.
- C. Provide gifted students with differentiated curricula and an appropriate learning environment that challenges, stimulates, and encourages their natural abilities and allows them to reach their maximum level of learning.
- D. Would eliminate services to grade 3, and reduce contact time slightly at grades 4 and 5.**

II. Program Activities:

- A. Utilize teacher recommendations and standardized tests (including MAP, CogAT, Naglieri, and TOMAGS) to identify student ability and achievement to determine placement into the gifted program in grades 3-5.
- B. Utilize teacher recommendations, standardized tests (including MAP), and course grades to select and group students in grades 6-8.
- C. Provide identified students with instruction relating to the Illinois State Standards Application of Learning and enrichment related to math.
- D. Group gifted students together in small groups with students of the same academic ability to develop skills in problem solving, communicating, cooperative learning, and to address their unique socio-emotional needs.
- E. Would eliminate services to grade 3, and reduce contact time slightly at grades 4 and 5.**

III. Program Evaluation:

- A. Demographic data of identified gifted students (number of students served by grade level, gender, ethnicity, LEP, Special Education, etc.)
- B. Achievement Data (including MAP, ISAT, and CogAT) will be used in an annual report to analyze trends in the identified population to determine future actions to meet the needs of gifted students.
- C. Student satisfaction surveys will show the success of working with children of the same academic ability.
- D. Satisfaction survey of parents of identified gifted students will provide feedback from the parent perspective.

IV. Program Expenditures

IV. Program Expenditures	Level 1: Current	Level 2: -10%	Level 3: -25%	Dif. 1 / 2	Dif. 1 / 3	
Salaries - Certified Staff	306,390	248,119	218,119	-58,271	-88,271	
Fringe Benefits - Certified	46,500	36,828	32,409	-9,672	-14,091	
Salary - Non Certified Staff	0	0		0	0	
Fringe Benefits - Non Certified	0	0		0	0	
Purchased Services	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0	
Supplies/Materials	0	0		0	0	
Equipment	0	0		0	0	
Other / Tuition	0	0				
Non-Capitalized Equipment	0	0		0	0	
Total	353,890	285,947	251,528	-67,943	-102,362	
Minus Revenue		0		0	0	
District Program Cost	353,890	285,947	251,528	-67,943	-102,362	Differential: -102,362
FTE - Certified	4.00	3.50	3.00	-0.50	-1.00	(Difference between
FTE - Non Certified	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	Level 1 & Level 3 funding)

Explanation of cost reduction

This option reduces the elementary gifted FTE from 3.0 to approximately 2.5. Two full time gifted teachers would have a schedule similar to the following (one on each side of the district):

East Side:

HWS 50 min with high level 4th graders 50 minutes with high level 5th graders

LWS 50 min with high level 4th graders 50 minutes with high level 5th graders

JBN 50 min with high level 4th graders

West Side:

AGS 50 min with high level 4th graders 50 minutes with high level 5th graders

McW 50 min with high level 4th graders 50 minutes with high level 5th graders

HCS 50 min with high level 4th graders

A part time teacher (approx. 0.5 FTE) would then be needed to cover two 50-minute sessions with high level 5th graders on opposite sides of the district.

This is in addition to the cessation of gifted services to 3rd grade students in the district.

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Program: Gifted Education

For the benefit of those not familiar with the Batavia Gifted Program, the following is a brief explanation:

The Batavia Challenge Program provides for the educational and social-emotional needs of gifted and talented students. The Mission of the Batavia Challenge Program is to enhance the district's mission by identifying and supporting gifted and academically talented students and their individual needs.

Elementary Schools

Math—Grades 3–5

Students who qualify for this program are pulled from their regular classrooms for math instruction. The CHALLENGE teacher delivers math instruction one year above their grade level.

Rotolo Middle School

Math—Grades 6-8

Students placed in the math program in elementary school continue in an accelerated math program in middle school. In seventh grade, they receive instruction in high school Algebra. In eighth grade, they receive instruction in high school Intermediate Algebra.

Interdisciplinary—Grades 6–8

Students' instruction is planned and delivered by the classroom teacher, the CHALLENGE teacher, or both. Students may leave the classroom to work with the CHALLENGE teacher when that situation is appropriate. Students are flexibly placed with the CHALLENGE teacher for instruction based on a schedule set by the CHALLENGE and classroom teachers. They are not formally identified as CHALLENGE students at the middle school level. Instead teachers evaluate their learning needs based on test scores, and/or student interest and motivation to schedule learning extension times when possible.

Batavia High School

Students who successfully complete the CHALLENGE Math program in middle school are ready to enroll in Geometry in high school. Students who have participated in the interdisciplinary program have some choice in their scheduling. Honors and/or Advanced Placement classes are available at all grade levels.

Background

In January 2008, a comprehensive Program Evaluation was completed of the district's Gifted Education program. The data analysis and other portions of this report are important to this BEPR Report, and the full program evaluation can be found online at: <http://www.bps101.net/curriculum/focus>.

The 2008 Program Evaluation articulated a recommendation to expand services to gifted students, a desire to deliver programs in different ways, and to meet a wider spectrum of needs for high achieving students. It was noted that Batavia had a relatively small number of intervention programs for gifted students when compared to our benchmark schools as well as our county schools. The intended expansion of the BPS Gifted Program was delayed indefinitely when funding became problematic.

As the 2009 Gifted BEPR commenced its work, the following question was often used to guide discussion and decision making: **What is the best way to meet the unique learning needs of gifted students under these 3 budget scenarios?**

Appendix A

Quick Glance at Benchmark District Gifted Education Delivery Models

(November 2009)

District	Elementary	Middle School
Barrington	Pull out/replacement at the building level, as well as a self-contained magnet program at one elementary school	Gifted courses in English, Math, Science, Art. In 6th grade, students are scheduled onto gifted teams. There are no teams in 7th and 8th grades; the schedule is similar to a junior high, with students taking advanced courses in English, Math, Science, and Art.
Elmhurst	Pull out/replacement in Reading and Math	Scheduled onto gifted teams for English and Math
Geneva	Pull out/replacement in Reading and Math	Scheduled onto gifted teams for English and Math
Naperville 203	Differentiation in regular classroom with support of gifted staff, as well as some pull out programs. Also have a magnet program at 2 elem buildings for top students in grades 4-5.	Scheduled onto gifted teams for English and Math, also a magnet program at 1 middle school for top students in grades 6-8
Naperville 204	Pull out/replacement in Reading and Math	Math is a pull out program/replacement; students at each grade level can take one of 3 math classes (at grade level, 1 grade level up, 2 grade levels up). Each math class is taught by different teachers on teams from that grade level (i.e. 6th graders are NOT in 7th grade classrooms, etc.). Within what they call the Gifted Reading Strand, Literacy, Science, and SS are packaged together on individual teams (or portions of teams). This strand is all-or-none, so students must take all three courses (Literacy, Science, and SS).
St. Charles	Pull out/replacement for Math, Literature is classroom differentiation with support of gifted staff	Scheduled onto gifted teams in Literacy and Math
Wheaton	Pull out/replacement for Math and Literature	Scheduled onto gifted teams. Math is available as accelerated at 6,7,8, grade (1 year up). Language Arts is pull out/replacement. Accelerated science at grade 8 recently added.

Appendix B

Other Gifted Program options that were considered by the BEPR group

Possible program shift	Description	Possible cost savings	Other information
Elementary Grades 3-5			
3rd and 4th graders move up to the next regular math class held at a different grade level.	Have 3rd grade students move to a regular 4th grade classroom for math. 4th graders move to a regular 5th grade math class. Gifted teacher would still be needed for 5th graders taking 6th grade math.	Would eliminate some elementary gifted FTE.	Class size impact for math classes at next grade level. Building scheduling issues.
Identify one teacher per grade level in 3, 4, and 5 to teach the next grade level's curriculum.	Identify one classroom teacher per grade level in 3, 4, and 5 to teach the next grade level's curriculum. Students would be grouped in clusters in that classroom.	Would eliminate some elementary gifted FTE.	Number of students qualifying at each elementary may not be large enough at each building to efficiently run one section of advanced math.
Combine programs in 3rd and 4 th	At each elementary, combine grades 3 & 4 gifted programs into one classroom with a 2-year curriculum.	Would eliminate some elementary gifted FTE.	Would require significant curriculum rewrite. Scheduling issues.
RMS Grades 6-8			
RJAC coordinates Gifted Program	RJAC Admin absorbs current responsibilities	Would eliminate some funding for coordination responsibilities	
Manage student eligibility to maximize efficiency in advanced math	Qualify more or fewer students to get to 30 or 60 students per grade level so that advanced classes can run as full sections.	Small overflow sections would be eliminated.	If numbers are decreased, possible that some borderline students wouldn't receive services. Risk of watering down instruction if borderline students enrolled.
Reduce services from two periods to one period per day for each grade level 6-8	Could either be in the current pull out model, or as a load-bearing exploratory class (1 per grade level).	Would eliminate a portion of the RMS gifted FTE.	Gifted as a load-bearing class option could help to ease class size issues in exploratory classes. Student scheduling conflicts may provide unequal access to the program.
Elementary and RMS			
After school/weekend/summer co-curricular gifted opportunities	Provide programs to qualifying students. Could be provided after school in a co-curricular program, and/or weekend/summer enrichment	Could be in lieu of other reduced services.	Combination of online and traditional delivery would be possible. Schedules would need to be very flexible.