

# Clear Creek Amana Community School District K-12 Extended Learning Program

## Collaboration and Differentiation, K-12

A guiding characteristic of our district's ELP programming is a flexible services model which focuses on differentiated instruction within the general education classroom as well as enrichment and acceleration through additional services provided outside the general education classroom. Therefore, the responsibility for differentiation of the curriculum for gifted students must be a collaborative effort between general education teachers and the ELP teacher. This collaborative environment fosters communication and cooperation among all staff.

## 1. Program Structure and Options, K-8

### Service Strands

Students identified as gifted will receive instruction and educational services that fit their learning needs. This is done through a flexible services model called Service Strands. This model focuses on collaboration between classroom teachers and the ELP teacher to enable gifted and talented students to develop their unique abilities and high potential.

**Exploration Strand-** All students participate in classroom instructional activities and schoolwide enrichment opportunities. The unique needs of students begin to emerge during these activities. These needs may initiate a concern from the classroom teacher, who then confers with the ELP teacher.

**Modification Strand-** For students whose needs go beyond the Exploration Strand, the classroom teacher and ELP teacher collaboratively develop modifications. These modifications will be implemented by the classroom teacher and may include differentiation options such as: curriculum compacting, learning centers, contracts, mentors, mini-courses, independent study, assignment modification, and/or flexible grouping.

**Extension Strand-** Students whose needs go beyond the Modification Strand will be identified as outlined in our identification procedures and they may participate in the Extension Strand. At this time, the ELP teacher may continue to work with classroom teachers to identify instructional strategies and resources for gifted students. The ELP teacher may also work with identified students outside the classroom to pursue a meaningful inquiry based investigation of their choice. Students may work alone or in teams, depending on the focus of the project.

### Extension Strand Components

#### A. Inquiry Based Investigations

Research demonstrates the need for gifted students to pursue their interests in an inquiry based, personalized environment. During ELP Extension classes students will have the opportunity to investigate a topic of their choice, formulate driving questions to guide their research, and design original solutions for real-world problems. In this environment students will assume roles of practicing professionals engaged in compelling and challenging work. Inquiry based learning is the core of the ELP Extension Strand. Various interest groups will also be offered based on student needs and interests.

#### Guiding Principles for Inquiry Based Learning

Content focuses on questions or problems students must grapple with in order to understand big ideas or concepts in greater depth. This constructivist learning environment allows students to build the knowledge they need to develop a meaningful investigation.

1. Content is inherently interdisciplinary. Inquiry is the HOW while skills and content are the WHAT.

2. Students are self-directed while teachers act as coaches of their learning, providing direct feedback throughout the investigation.
3. Investigations are based on real or authentic scenarios within the school and/or the community outside the school.
4. Focus for learning is based on strengths, needs and interests. Therefore, it is personalized and meaningful for each student.
5. Technology is used to: connect students with experts, partners and audiences; find resources and information; and create original products.

### **B. Interest Groups**

In addition to inquiry based, personalized projects, students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of interest groups such as: Computer Programming or Coding, Writer's Workshop, Literature Circles, Lego League, and Newspaper, based on student interests and needs. These group topics will vary from year to year.

### **C. Affective Needs**

An inquiry-based learning environment will provide opportunities for gifted students to build confidence, solve problems, work collaboratively, take responsibility and communicate effectively while pursuing a meaningful real-world investigation. Unique affective challenges that may accompany giftedness, including perfectionism, anxiety, and social interactions will be addressed during individual and/or group sessions. The ELP classroom will also serve as a space for students with similar academic abilities to build friendships and a network of support systems.

### **D. Personalized Learning Plans**

All students meet individually with the ELP teacher at the beginning of each school year to review their data, set goals and update their Personalized Learning Plan (PLP). ELP goals and objectives may be written in collaboration with the classroom teacher, ELP teacher and parents during conferences.

## **2. Programming Structure and Options, 9-12**

Personalized services and programming options are provided for students identified as Talented and Gifted at the secondary level. Students will be screened every spring using the following objective and subjective measures: standardized test results, classroom performance, teacher input, student projects and cumulative grade point average. If students have participated in ELP during their elementary and/or middle school grades, they will continue as members of the Extended Learning Program. In addition a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) may be written to communicate and manage student interventions and activities.

**Most ELP "programming" is offered through course level selection. Students may also have the opportunity to work with the HS ELP teacher to:**

1. pursue an in-depth inquiry based investigation,
2. participate in a variety of interest groups,
3. receive guidance services to explore: accelerated high school and college course options, career counseling, college scholarships, dual enrollment options, summer enrichment opportunities, college essays, resume writing, internships, job shadowing and test prep, and
4. participate in counseling support for social-emotional complexities related to giftedness.

**A. Inquiry Based Investigations**

Research demonstrates the need for gifted students to pursue their interests in an inquiry based, personalized environment. Students will have the opportunity to investigate a topic of their choice, formulate driving questions to guide their research, and design original solutions for real-world problems. In this environment students will assume roles of practicing professionals engaged in compelling and challenging work. The focus for learning is based on strengths, needs and interests, therefore a Project-Based Learning inquiry is personalized and meaningful for each student.

**B. Interest Groups**

In addition to inquiry based, personalized projects, students will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of interest groups such as: Computer Programming, Writer's Workshop, Physics Olympics, Academic Decathlon, Science Olympiad, and Literature Circles, based on student interests and needs. These group topics will vary from year to year.

**C. Guidance and Counseling Services**

The high school guidance counselors, advisory teacher, and/or ELP teacher are available to help students select high school classes, explore careers, learn about scholarships, help with resume writing and meet with college admissions representatives. Most ELP "programming" is offered through grade level and accelerated course level selection. Juniors and Seniors are encouraged to take AP Courses based on their needs and interests. Classes are also available through post secondary enrollment options (PSEO). Counseling services are available for students who need support with social and emotional issues. In addition, all students meet individually with the ELP teacher at the beginning and end of each school year to review their data, set goals and update their Personalized Learning Plan (PLP).