

# Alloway Township School District



## Gifted and Talented Program

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. Definition**

The New Jersey Department of Education and the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children define gifted and talented students as:

*“Those students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas, when compared to their chronological peers in the local district and who require modification of their educational program if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities.”*

## **B. Philosophy**

It is the goal of the Alloway Township Board of Education that the district’s Gifted & Talented programming shall ensure that curriculum and instruction are designed and delivered in such a way that students identified as gifted and talented are able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) while ensuring that appropriate instructional adaptations relative to content, process, products and learning environment are designed and delivered in an effort to enable these students to achieve to their high levels of ability.

To achieve this outcome, as outlined in regulation by the New Jersey Department of Education and the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children, Alloway Township School District:

- has a board-approved gifted and talented program.
- compares students with their peers in the district.
- makes provisions for an ongoing K-8 identification process for gifted and talented students that include multiple measures, including but not limited to, achievement test scores, grades, student performance or products, parent, student and/or teacher recommendation, and other appropriate measures.
- ensures that the identification methodology used is developmentally appropriate, non-discriminatory, and related to the programs and services offered (e.g., use math achievement to identify students for a math program).
- provides appropriate K-8 educational services for gifted and talented students; therefore, the identification process and appropriate educational challenges must begin in kindergarten.
- develops appropriate curricular and instructional adaptations for gifted students with programs addressing appropriate content, process, products, and learning environment.
- references the curriculum frameworks for each NJSLS; for, they provide general, as well as content-specific information on gifted education (e.g. terminology, examples of appropriate practices).

## C. Program Structure

The curricular framework for each content area of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards includes adaptations for the “exceptionally able learner”. The information that follows has been adapted from the “New Jersey Language Arts Literacy (NJ LAL) Curriculum Framework” that is most relevant to the Gifted & Talented Programming that is offered in the Alloway Township School District as evidenced in the current Gifted & Talented Policy & Regulation included in Section II of this curricula.

### Strategies for the Exceptionally Able

“Differentiating the curriculum” refers to appropriate adjustments to content, teaching strategies, expectations of student mastery, and scope and sequence. In different classrooms, students work at different paces. Gifted students are more likely to develop study and production skills, experience success and feel challenged in a classroom setting that encourages learners to master information more quickly. Adaptation strategies may include the following:

- Interdisciplinary and problem-based assignments with planned scope and sequence; Advanced, accelerated or compacted content;
- Abstract and advanced higher-level thinking;
- Allowance for individual student interests;
- Assignments geared to development in areas of affect, creativity, cognition and research skills;
- Complex, in-depth assignments;
- Diverse enrichment that broadens learning;
- Variety in types of resources;

Adaptation categories include *enrichment, and grouping*.

*Enrichment* is a way to meet the differentiated needs of exceptionally able students. Well articulated assignments that require cognitive processing, in-depth content and alternative modes of communication can be effective and stimulating. Differentiating classroom instruction to meet the needs of academically talented students in the Alloway Township School may be accomplished through any one or more of the following *Enrichment* activities:

Alternate learning activities: Opportunities to pursue alternate activities permit students to engage in new learning and avoid the boredom of repeating instruction or unnecessary practice in skills already mastered.

Independent study: Students conduct carefully planned, self-directed research projects carefully monitored by the teacher.

Advanced thinking processes: Provide assignments in all curriculum areas emphasizing higher level thinking skills such as synthesis, analysis and evaluation.

Alternate resources: Use materials from a higher grade level.

**Grouping** students of like-ability together or clustering in the same classroom allows for more appropriate, rapid and advanced instruction without isolating the exceptionally able student. Research indicates that gifted students are more likely to socialize “normally” when they are with students who share their interests and learning style. Flexible grouping is recommended in the regular classroom to give gifted students an opportunity for development of advanced skills. Grouping flexibly allows exceptionally able students time for advanced work and a chance for independent study. Students in the Alloway Township School District may be **grouped** using any one or more of the following settings:

Classroom cluster grouping: Permits homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping according to interests and achievement.

Accelerated/Advanced/Enrichment: Provide opportunities for practicing higher level thinking skills, creativity and exploration of in depth course content.

## **D. Identification of Students**

In order to identify students who demonstrate exceptional ability along with students who demonstrate the potential for exceptional abilities and talents, the following criteria have been established for the Alloway Gifted and Talented Program.

### **A. Elementary School: Kindergarten – Grade 2**

- a. Teacher recommendation
- b. Parent recommendation
- c. Academic performance
- d. Iready Diagnostic Fall Score

### **B. Elementary School: Grade 3 - 5**

- a. Teacher recommendation
- b. Parent recommendation
- c. Academic performance
- d. Iready Diagnostic Fall Score
- e. NJSLA scores - Literacy and/or Math sections

### **C. Middle School: Grades 6 - 8**

- a. Teacher recommendation
- b. Parent recommendation
- c. Academic performance
- d. Iready Diagnostic Fall Score
- e. NJSLA scores – Literacy and/or Math sections

## ***Identification Criteria Charts***

The criteria outlined in the following paragraphs are used as a basis from which placement decisions are made. Students meeting all of the requirements as outlined below will be placed into the Alloway Township School Gifted and Talented Program.

### ***Procedures for Identification and Admission***

#### **A. Identifying new program participants, Kindergarten – Grade 8**

1. Classroom teachers can recommend a student. The student's performance will be reviewed against the program criteria.
2. Parents can recommend a student. The student's performance will be reviewed against the program criteria.
3. Independent of teacher recommendations, there will be a review of the program criteria at the end of each school year to identify students.
4. Parents will be notified of placement into the appropriate program.

#### **B. Recommendation for Program Continuation – “Rollover” Grades 6 - 8**

1. The list of current *and eligible\** gifted students in grades 4 – 7 will be “rolled over” into the program for the following year.
  - a. At the middle school level, the gifted program uses a combination Iready Diagnostic scores, state assessments and teacher recommendations based on student grades to identify students for the program. However, because state assessment results reach the district late in the summer, it is difficult to use that final piece of criteria to identify students in time for the beginning of the school year. As a result, the list of current *and eligible\** gifted students in grades 4 – 7 will automatically be “rolled over” into the program for the following year.
  - b. \*Eligibility for “rollover”
    - i. Students who are eligible for “rollover” are those who have maintained the minimum grade requirements for the program and been recommended by their current teachers for the following year in addition to achieving the appropriate scores on the Iready Diagnostic.
    - ii. Students on the “rollover” list who receive state assessment results late in the summer that are below the cutoff *will be placed on probation but will be allowed to continue the program under the conditions of the probation designation.* Probation does not carry over from year to year.
2. All students are eligible to join the gifted program each year by meeting the identification criteria. For new students, the process may occur in late summer because assessment results are not received from the state until that time.

## ***Additional Characteristics of the K-8 Gifted Program***

### **A. Appeals Process**

1. Parents should contact the school should they have a question regarding their child's eligibility for the program. The student's profile and the Gifted Program criteria will be reviewed with the parent.

### **B. Grading**

1. Students in the K-8 Enrichment Gifted program will not receive separate grades for their activities. Parents will receive progress reports from their teachers outlining their student's progress.

### **C. Probation**

1. A student may be conditionally accepted into the program on a probationary basis.
  - a. Probationary students will be placed in the program based on his/her ranking of the admissions criteria.
  - b. Probationary students who possess the highest total ranking criteria will be given first option to be admitted into the program.
2. Students in must maintain at least a B average for each marking period or the student will be placed on probation. Students who receive less than a B for a marking period grade while on probation will be removed from the program at the conclusion of that marking period.

### **D. Removal from Program**

1. Students may be removed from the gifted program if they fail to meet the program criteria, their academic record indicates a decline in classroom performance, or if parents request to remove the student.
  - a. The teacher should notify the parent if a student is not maintaining his/her grade requirement.
  - b. Removal of any student from the gifted program will result in notification to the parent in writing. The curricular framework for each content area of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards includes adaptations for the "exceptionally able learner". The information that follows has been adapted from the "New Jersey Language Arts Literacy (NJ LAL) Curriculum Framework" that is most relevant to the Gifted & Talented Programming that is offered in the Alloway Township School District as evidenced in the current Gifted & Talented Policy & Regulation included in Section II of this curricula.

### **Strategies for the Exceptionally Able**

"Differentiating the curriculum" refers to appropriate adjustments to content, teaching strategies, expectations of student mastery, and scope and sequence. In different classrooms, students work at different paces. Gifted students are more likely to develop study and production skills,

experience success and feel challenged in a classroom setting that encourages learners to master information more quickly. Adaptation strategies may include the following:

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- Advanced, accelerated or compacted content;
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- Complex, in-depth assignments;
- Diverse enrichment that broadens learning;
- Variety in types of resources.

Adaptation categories include *enrichment, and grouping*.

**Enrichment** is a way to meet the differentiated needs of exceptionally able students. Well articulated assignments that require cognitive processing, in-depth content and alternative modes of communication can be effective and stimulating. Differentiating classroom instruction to meet the needs of academically talented students in the Alloway Township School may be accomplished through any one or more of the following **Enrichment** activities:

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Independent study: Students conduct carefully planned, self-directed research projects carefully monitored by the teacher.

Advanced thinking processes: Provide assignments in all curriculum areas emphasizing higher level thinking skills such as synthesis, analysis and evaluation.

Alternate resources: Use materials from a higher grade level.

**Grouping** students of like-ability together or clustering in the same classroom allows for more appropriate, rapid and advanced instruction without isolating the exceptionally able student. Research indicates that gifted students are more likely to socialize “normally” when they are with students who share their interests and learning style. Flexible grouping is recommended in the regular classroom to give gifted students an opportunity for development of advanced skills. Grouping flexibly allows exceptionally able students time for advanced work and a chance for independent study. Students in the Alloway Township School District may be **grouped** using any one or more of the following settings:

Classroom cluster grouping: Permits homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping according to interests and achievement.



Accelerated/Advanced/Enrichment: Provide opportunities for practicing higher level thinking skills, creativity and exploration of in depth course content.

### **E. Timeline**

Alloway Township School's timeline for nominations, admission decisions, and services is as follows:

#### **Grade Nominations Analysis Parent Notification Services Begin**

Kinder January Jan. – Feb. February March 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Due by May 1 May-June June  
Following Fall

### **F. Program Evaluation**

The Gifted program will be evaluated by the CSA and members of the teaching staff at the end of each school year.

## **II. Programs**

### **Literacy Program**

**I. ENRICHMENT PROGRAM – KINDERGARTEN, GRADES 1 & 2** The curriculum is a literature-based program for the purpose of exposing all students to a broad selection of literature, stimulating critical thinking, and developing problem-solving skills. Materials chosen reflect the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and support student achievement of the performance indicators in the district language arts literacy curriculum.

#### **Curriculum:**

The enrichment program is designed to supplement the regular education curriculum in the following ways:

- Provide students with opportunities to extend foundational literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
- Offer students an in-depth look at a variety of extended real world themes and literary styles.
- Provide students opportunities to develop logical thinking skills by applying problem solving strategies.
- Engage students in whole group, small group, and independent activities.
- Encourage student interaction through classroom discussions, creative writing, and small scale projects.

#### **Program Start Date:**

The program will commence in March of the current school year for kindergarten. The programs commence at the beginning of the school year for grades one and two.

## **II. ENRICHMENT PROGRAM-GRADE 3, 4 & 5**

The curriculum is a challenging literature-based program for students who demonstrate above grade level language arts literacy (LAL) skills, as well as, the motivation and ability to work independently. The purpose is to expose students to a broad selection of literature, expand vocabulary, stimulate critical thinking, and refine writing skills. Materials chosen are aligned with the district curriculum maps in language arts literacy and, therefore, reflect the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

### **Curriculum:**

The enrichment program is designed to supplement the regular education curriculum in the following ways:

- Extend foundational literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing
- Explore a variety of extended curricular themes and literary styles through the study of various literary genres
- Read extended text through the study of novels
- Incorporate literary devices into their writing
- Deepen comprehension skills through student-led class discussions

### **Identification of Students:**

*Language Arts Literacy Analysis Sheets* - These will be completed by the grade two and three LAL teacher after the third marking period for students receiving a teacher rating scale (TRS) of 1 or 2. This will serve as an initial screening and provide the list of students to be tested for admission into the Grade Three and Four Enrichment LAL program.

*Testing* – Iready Diagnostic Benchmark testing is administered three times throughout the year (pre, mid and post). The post score is recorded on the analysis sheet and is one of the components used to help identify potential candidates for the enriched program. During the last marking period of grade two and three, students identified as potential candidates for this program based on the analysis sheets will be tested for reading and writing skills. Students may be tested in a group setting but are required to complete the tests independently following general instructions given by the teacher who administers the test.

*Reading test* – This consists of reading passages followed by a series of multiple choice and short response comprehension questions.

*Writing test* – This consists of a personal extended response to a writing prompt.

*Criteria* – The program is designed for students who have the ability to read literature independently, demonstrate critical thinking, show advanced writing skills, and take risks in their writing. Students are selected based on these characteristics, analysis sheets, and test scores.

### **Student Responsibility:**

Students are required to regularly attend class, to participate actively in classroom discussions and activities, and to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

**Program Start Date:**

The program commences at the beginning of the school year.

**III. ENRICHMENT PROGRAM – GRADES 6-8**

The enriched language arts literacy (LAL) curriculum is a challenging literature based program for students who demonstrate above grade level language arts literacy (LAL) skills as well as the motivation and ability to work independently. The purpose is to expose students to a broad selection of literature, expand and enhance vocabulary, stimulate critical thinking, and refine writing skills. Materials chosen are aligned with the district curriculum maps in language arts literacy and, therefore, reflect the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

**Curriculum:**

The enrichment program is designed to supplement the regular education curriculum in the following ways:

- Extend foundational literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing.
- Explore a variety of extended curricular themes and literary styles through the study of various literary genres.
- Read extended text through the study of novels.
- Deepen comprehension skills through student-led class discussions.

**Identification of Students:**

*Language Arts Literacy Analysis Sheets* – grade four - LAL teachers will complete these after the third marking period for students receiving a teacher rating scale (TRS) of 1 or 2. This will serve as an initial screening and provide the list of students, not currently in the enrichment programs, to be tested for admission into the grade five, six, seven and eight enrichment LAL program. Students who remain in the enrichment programs through grades four, five, six, and seven will be carried over to grades five, six, seven and eight with the recommendation of their LAL teacher and will not be retested.

*Testing* –Iready Diagnostic Benchmark testing is administered three times in grades four, five, six, and seven (pre, mid and post). The post score is recorded on the analysis sheet and is one of the components used to help identify potential candidates for the enrichment program. In the spring of grades four, five, six, and seven students that are identified as potential candidates for the program based on the analysis sheets will be tested on reading and writing skills. Students may be tested in a group setting but are required to complete the tests independently following general instructions given by the teacher who administers the test.

*Reading test*- Narrative (fiction) and/or persuasive reading passages (nonfiction) followed by a series of multiple choice and extended response questions

*Writing test*- Five paragraph essay in response to a writing prompt

**Criteria** – The program is designed for students who have the ability to read literature independently, demonstrate critical thinking, show advanced writing skills, and take risks in their writing. Students are selected based on these characteristics, analysis sheets, and test scores.

**Student Responsibility:**

Students are required to regularly attend class, to participate actively in classroom discussions and activities, and to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

**Program Start Date:** The programs commence at the beginning of the school year.

## **MATHEMATICS PROGRAMS**

### **I. MATHEMATICS ENRICHMENT PROGRAM – GRADE 4**

The program is for students who demonstrate above grade level mathematics skills, as well as, the motivation and ability to work independently. The purpose of the program is to enhance math concepts and problem solving skills. Emphasis will be placed on opportunities for students to build their math skills through participation in activities which require higher level thinking skills. The goal is to prepare the students to participate in the enriched fifth grade mathematics program that is closely aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics.

**Curriculum:**

The regular education class serves as an enrichment mathematics program that is designed as a prerequisite to the grade five enrichment mathematics program and offers students the opportunities to:

- Extend foundational mathematical skills.
- Expose students to the Alloway Township School District grade five mathematics curriculum that is closely aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Mathematics.
- Deepen problem-solving skills.
- District Curriculum is implemented in conjunction with math resources in Grade Four and are both closely aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics.

**Identification of Students:**

**Mathematics Analysis Sheets** – These will be completed at the end of the first marking period of fourth grade by the classroom teacher for all students who have received a TRS (teacher rating scale) score of 1 or 2. The analysis sheet incorporates the report card grades, work and study habits, and problem solving skills.

**Testing** – Iready Diagnostic Benchmark testing is administered three times in third and fourth grades (pre, mid and post). The grade 3 post-score and the grade 4 pre-score are recorded on the analysis sheets and are one of the components used to help identify potential candidates for the enrichment program.

**Criteria** – The program is designed for students who have the ability to work independently, demonstrate above average critical thinking skills, and show advanced math problem solving skills. Students are selected for the enrichment program based on a combination of these characteristics and the data compiled on the analysis sheets.

**Student Responsibility:**

Students are required to regularly attend class, to participate actively in classroom discussions and activities, and to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

**Program Start Date:**

The program commences at the beginning of the first full week of November.

**II. MATHEMATICS ENRICHMENT PROGRAM – GRADES 5 & 6** This program is for students who demonstrate above grade level mathematics skills as well as, the motivation and the ability to work independently. The purpose of the program is to enhance math concepts and problem solving. Emphasis will be placed on opportunities for students to build their math skills through participation in activities which require higher level thinking skills. Resources utilized are aligned with the district mathematics curriculum and therefore, reflect the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics.

**Curriculum:**

The regular education class serves as the enrichment math program and offers students the opportunities to:

- Extend foundational mathematical skills.
- Expose students to the sixth grade mathematics curriculum that is closely aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics.
- Deepen problem solving skills.
- District Curriculum is implemented in conjunction with the Math series in Grade Five and Grade Six, and they are closely aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics.

**Identification of Students:**

**Mathematics Analysis Sheets** – These will be completed at the end of the fourth and fifth grades by the classroom teacher on all students who have a TRS (teacher rating scale) score of a 1 or a 2. The analysis sheet incorporates the report card grades, work and study habits, and problem solving skills.

**Testing** –Iready Diagnostic Benchmark testing is administered three times in fourth and fifth grade (pre, mid and post). The post score is recorded on the analysis sheet and is one of the components used to help identify potential candidates for the enriched program.

**Criteria** – The program is designed for students who have the ability to work independently, demonstrate above average critical thinking skills, and show advanced math problem solving skills. Students are selected for the enrichment program based on a combination of these

characteristics and the data compiled on the analysis sheets.

**Student Responsibility:**

Students are required to regularly attend class, to participate actively in classroom discussions and activities, and to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

**Program Start Date:**

The program commences at the beginning of the school year.

**III. MATHEMATICS ENRICHMENT PROGRAM – GRADES 7 & 8** The program is for students who demonstrate above grade level mathematics skills as well as, the motivation and the ability to work independently. The purpose of the program is to enhance math concepts and problem solving. Emphasis will be placed on opportunities for students to build their math skills through participation in activities which require higher level thinking skills. Resources utilized are aligned with the district mathematics curriculum and therefore, reflect the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics.

**Curriculum:**

The regular education class serves as the enrichment math program and offers students the opportunities to:

- Extend foundational mathematical skills.
- Deepen problem solving skills.
- *In seventh grade:* Learn the eighth grade math skills that are closely aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics using the math resource.
- *In eighth grade:* Expose Grade Eight students to Pre- Algebra mathematics curriculum that is closely aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for mathematics, using the designated math series and NJDOE Curriculum Frameworks.

**Identification of Students:**

***Mathematics Analysis Sheets*** – These will be completed at the end of the sixth and seventh grades by the classroom teacher on all students who have a TRS (teacher rating scale) score of a 1 or a 2. The analysis sheet incorporates the report card grades, work and study habits, and problem solving skills.

***Testing*** –Iready Diagnostic Benchmark testing is administered three times in sixth and seventh grade (pre, mid and post). The post score is recorded on the analysis sheet and is one of the components used to help identify potential candidates for the enriched program.

*For the seventh grade program:* The NJSLA test administered at the end of sixth grade will be used as one of the criteria on the analysis sheet for possible placement into enrichment in grade 7.

*For the eighth grade program:* The NJSLA test administered at the end of seventh grade will be used as one of the criteria on the analysis sheet for possible placement into Pre-Algebra in grade 8.

**Criteria** – The program is designed for students who have the ability to work independently, demonstrate above average critical thinking skills, and show advanced math problem solving skills. Students are selected for the enrichment program based on a combination of these characteristics and the data compiled on the analysis sheets.

**Student Responsibility:**

Students are required to regularly attend class, to participate actively in classroom discussions and activities, and to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

*For seventh grade:* Students are given a final at the end of the year, which has been created by the cooperative efforts of the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. Scores from the final exam are taken into consideration for 8th grade placement into Pre-Algebra.

*For eighth grade:* Students are given a final at the end of the year, which is administered and graded in order to place out of Algebra 1.

**Program Start Date:**

The program commences at the beginning of the school year.

**Links to Appendices:**

Appendix A: [Teacher Rating Scale- Literacy](#)

Appendix B: [Teacher Rating Scale - Mathematics](#)

Appendix C: [Literacy Placement Analysis](#)

Appendix D: [Mathematics Placement Analysis](#)

Appendix E: [Differentiated Education Plan](#)

Appendix F: [Parent Referral](#)

[Gifted or Honor Explanation](#)