

TAG Handbook

For Parents & Teachers

Talented and Gifted Programs and Services



Jefferson County
School District 509J

UNITE. ENGAGE. SOAR.

Kim Waite Lindsay Tarvin

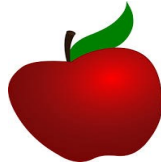
Talented and Gifted Coordinators K-12

Melinda Boyle

Director of Curriculum

Jay Mathisen

Superintendent Jefferson County School District 509J



Jefferson County School District has one TAG coordinator to facilitate the Talented and Gifted Program district-wide for grades K-12

The TAG Specialist works under the supervision of the Director of Curriculum and Federal Programs

The TAG Specialist works with building principals and classroom teachers to design and implement program options and services that fit within the instructional context and learning philosophy of each school

A school-based TAG Evaluation Committee assists in the final placement decision of all students referred for TAG identification throughout the academic year.

Parent participation and advocacy is an essential element to the ongoing growth and development of the 509J Talented and Gifted Program.

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What is Talented & Gifted?

Purpose: TAG serves students who, when compared with others of their age/grade level, require learning experiences beyond the standard curriculum. TAG programs seek to provide an educational experience at the student's rate and level of learning.



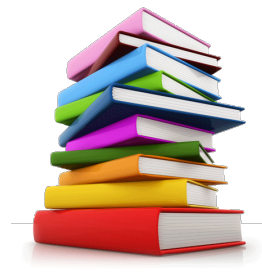
Common Characteristics of Gifted Individuals

Because gifted children are so diverse, not all exhibit all characteristics all of the time. However, there are common characteristics that many gifted individuals share:

- Unusual alertness, even in infancy
- Rapid learner; puts thoughts together quickly
- Excellent memory
- Large vocabulary and complex sentence structure for age
- Advanced comprehension of word nuances, metaphors and abstract ideas
- Enjoys solving problems, especially with numbers and puzzles
- Deep, intense feelings and reactions
- Highly sensitive
- Thinking is abstract, complex, logical, and insightful
- Idealism and sense of justice at early age
- Concern with social and political issues and injustices
- Longer attention span and intense concentration
- Preoccupied with own thoughts—daydreamer
- Learn basic skills quickly and with little practice
- Asks probing questions
- Wide range of interests (or extreme focus in one area)
- Highly developed curiosity
- Interest in experimenting and doing things differently
- Desire to organize people/things
- Vivid imaginations

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Jefferson County School District 509J policies and procedures for Talented and Gifted Education are designed to comply with the requirements of the Oregon Talented and Gifted Education Act and the Department of Education Administrative Rules for Talented and Gifted Education.



The Oregon Talented and Gifted Education Act, ORS 343.391 to 343.413, passed by the 1987 legislature and signed into law by the Governor, require school districts to identify and serve both intellectually gifted and academically talented students in grades K-12.

All schools within Jefferson County School District 509J are responsible for identifying and maintaining site-based TAG programming options for students within classrooms, within the building and community.

Guidelines for developing appropriate programs and services for talented and gifted students are outlined in the Jefferson County School District 509J Policies and Procedures (Code: IGBB, IGBBA, IGBBB-AR, IGBBB, IGBBC, IBGGD)

Oregon Administrative Rules for the Oregon Talented and Gifted Education Act are as follows:

1. Each school district shall have policies and procedures for the identification of Talented and Gifted students.
2. Each school district shall have a written plan for programs and services.
3. The Instruction provided to identify students shall address their assessed levels of learning and accelerated rates of learning.
4. School districts shall inform parents at the time of identification of the programs and services available.
5. School districts shall provide an opportunity for parents to provide input about the programs and services model.
6. Parents may request the withdrawal of their child from programs and services.
7. Parents shall be informed of the right to file a complaint.

The Oregon Talented and Gifted Act passed by the legislature in 1987, requires school districts to identify and serve both intellectually gifted and academically talented students in grades K-12.

Introduction

Jefferson County School District 509J provides instruction for Talented and Gifted students through an in-class collaborative/consultant model.

- The TAG specialist coordinates the program for the district and serves grades K-12
- Classroom teachers are the primary service provider for gifted students but,
- Principals, counselors, parents, and specialists are all part of the process

Because of the unique learning needs of students with exceptional abilities, a differentiated program of instruction is necessary.

Differentiation may take the form of:

- Accelerating the pace of instruction
- Raising the instructional level
- Changing the content
- Modifying the product required of the student
- Varying the process by which the student acquires knowledge

Usually a combination of these modifications is appropriate. The classroom teacher is responsible for assuring that the learning needs of the Talented and Gifted students are met. Both formal and informal assessments are used by teachers to provide the basis for the differentiation of curriculum.



Policies and Procedures for TAG

Program & Services

1. There will be an ongoing district-wide search for students eligible for TAG services
2. TAG nominations may be initiated by parent, teacher, community member or self. Nomination packets and information will be available district-wide
3. Criteria and standards for TAG identification will exist as specified in the Oregon Administrative Rules.
4. School-based TAG evaluation committees shall seek demonstrated evidence of a student's potential, and shall consider all students for TAG identification who meet criteria
5. Appropriate service options shall be identified and maintained at each school site detailing alternatives for students within classrooms, within the building and after school

Continued...

6. Levels and rates of learning of identified TAG students will be assessed

7. Appropriate service options for each student to work at assessed level(s) and rate(s) of learning will be documented on a TAG Instructional Plan within 30 days from the beginning of the course or school year

8. Parent input in the TAG planning process is encouraged



TAG Roles and Responsibilities

Parent's Role

- Initiate the TAG identification process on behalf of your child
- Provide information about your child's development and interests on the nomination form.
- Give input into the selection of appropriate programs and services for your child
- Communicate with the teacher as needed
- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Support school efforts at home



Principal's Role

- Provide leadership for the delivery of services to identified TAG students within their building
- Maintain communication with parents
- Plan and develop instructional progress in all curriculum areas at all grade levels
- Establish a process to review classroom teacher's adherence to TAG policy by reviewing individual TAG instructional plans and observing classroom instruction

Teacher's Role

- Initiate TAG identification process on behalf student
- Be aware of TAG Students' characteristics & learning needs
- Assess level/rate of learning in different content areas
- Use curriculum modification strategies
- Complete the annual ATAG instructional plan for each TAG students within first 30 days of school
- Review TAG Plan with Parents. Acknowledge parent right to participate in the TAG planning process

TAG Specialist Responsibilities

Coordinate TAG Instructional Planning District-wide

Facilitate TAG Identification Process District-wide

Develop/Distribute TAG Publications District-wide

Program Development, Academic Support, & Enrichment



TAG Identification Process

The purpose of the JCSD TAG Program is to:

- Identify students who require differentiated services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program because their abilities are significantly higher than the norm.
- Provide needs-based, individualized programming options that will challenge students and enable them to progress through the curriculum at appropriate rates and levels of learning.

Jefferson County School District 509J identifies students in the categories of Academic Talents and Intellectual Gifts.

- Those identified as Academically Talented have shown specific ability in either reading or math.
- Intellectually Gifted students have demonstrated unusual capabilities in mental reasoning.
- Students who demonstrate the potential.



Identification is based on multiple criteria that call for a consistent pattern of excellence over time.

- A score of 97th percentile or greater on a nationally standardized test of mental ability or students identified as intellectually gifted
- A score of 97th percentile or greater on a nationally standardized achievement test in reading and/or in math for students identified as academically talented.
- Districts shall also identify students who demonstrate the potential to perform at the 97th percentile (these may include students from cultural and ethnic minorities, disadvantaged or underachieving students and learning disabled students)
- No single test score, measure or piece of evidence shall be the sole criteria for identification or prevent students from being identified.

Students new to the district, who have received TAG services from their previous district, will be considered identified as TAG and served accordingly upon receipt of their TAG folder.

Steps in the Referral Process

Step 1: Initial Screening/Referral

Classroom teachers, parents, community members may refer a student (K-12) for TAG. Students may also make self-referrals. To make a referral, teachers and/or parents must complete a TAG nomination packet and Consent to Test form. TAG Nomination Packets are available at all district schools and may be returned to the Principal or TAG Specialist.

Step 2: Evidence Collection and Testing

When a student has been nominated, the TAG Specialist collects and reviews all applicable data including work samples, cumulative school records, Oregon State Assessment scores and anecdotal information on social-emotional variables and learnings styles. If additional testing is necessary, the TAG specialist will make arrangements with the building principal for individual and/or group assessments. Parent permission is required. All evidence is recorded on the Frasier Talent Assessment Profile (FTAP) to be shared with the building TAG Evaluation Committee (TEC).

Step 3: TAG Evaluation Committee Data Review

The TAG Specialist and building principal will identify teachers willing to serve on the TAG Evaluation Committee (TEC). If there is a Student Intervention Team or Study Team already in place, this may replace the TEC. Team members review their school's TAG nominees to decide if the student meets the criteria for identification, does not meet the criteria for identification, or may meet the criteria for identification pending further testing. If additional information is needed, another TEC meeting scheduled to review the student.

Step 4: Communication and Program Placement

Parents, teacher(s) and building principal will be notified of the TEC identification decision immediately. Letters will be sent home to parents with TG information including the TAG Parent Handbook and 509J TAG Policies and procedures. Parents have the right to appeal the decision if they disagree, and should contact the principal.

TAG program placement begins with the completion of the TAG instructional plan by the student's teacher(s). The plan is sent to parents review and input.

Questions regarding the TAG identification process should be directed to the TAG Specialist or building principal.



509J TAG Instructional Planning Process

The Oregon Talented and Gifted Education act requires that all modifications to instruction and course content be documented on an individualized instructional plan within the first 30 school days of the course or school year.

The Elementary TAG Plan for grades K-6 will be completed by the classroom teacher for each identified TAG student in the class. The plan documents the assessments used to determine current rate and level of learning within the academic content area, the assessment results, and the instructional modifications planned to accommodate the learner.

The Differentiated Educational Plan for grades 7-12 will be completed by the teacher for the academic content area taught. The plan documents the assessment scores used to determine the current rate and level of learning within the content area. The plan includes a checklist of instructional modifications with room to elaborate as needed.

At all grades, parents have the opportunity to provide input into instructional planning.

- To meet this requirement the original TAG Plan is collected from teachers by the TAG Specialist in early October.
- A copy is mailed to parents in a “draft” form for their review and approval.
- Teacher and parent may review the plan during Fall Conferences
- The final copy of the annual TAG Instructional Plan is kept in the student’s TAG file

Determining Level and Rate of Learning

For students identified as TAG, instructional services are provided through an in-class collaborative model. In this model, TAG students are placed into inclusive classrooms and the teacher is the primary service provider. Instruction is adjusted for the accelerated rate and level of learning of any TAG or high-ability students in the class. The TAG Specialist will assist the teacher with instructional planning process and provides materials, resources, and other supports as needed.

Assessment for Rate and Level of Learning

Assessment is critical to the learning process and is an essential tool for modifying instruction for gifted students. Classroom teachers are responsible for assessing the student's rate and level of learning and providing appropriate instruction. This applies to all grade levels, and for all subject areas of courses.

All identified TAG students receive instruction at their assessed rate and level of learning in all content areas.

- Level of Learning is the student's instructional level in the curriculum, the place where the student will be successful, but will encounter knowledge and skills they have not yet learned or mastered.
- Rate of Learning refers to the pace at which a student successfully progresses through the curriculum after being placed at the appropriate level. A student's rate of learning will vary depending on the following:
 - * Learning style of the student
 - * Academic content area
 - * Point of learning process
 - * Degree of interest to the student
 - * Level of Difficulty of the materials

509J TAG Options

Based on the needs of the student, most TAG programming options include the following:

Elementary Level

- Acceleration
- Academic Competitions
- After School Enrichment
- Cluster Grouping
- Continuous Progress
- Differentiated Lessons
- Flexible Grouping
- Higher Order Thinking Skills
- Individualized Instruction
- Independent Learning
- Pull-Out/In-Class Enrichment
- Research Projects

Middle Level

- Elementary Level Options
- Advanced Courses
- Academic Competitions
- Concurrent Enrollment JCMS/MHS
- Self-Directed Learning
- Independent Study

High School Level

- Elementary & Middle Level Options
- Advanced Placement Courses and Exams
- Dually Accredited Courses (College Now: COCC)
- Dual Enrollment (MHS and College Enrollment)
- Enriched & Honors Courses
- Internships
- National Honors Society
- School to Work/Peer Tutor

Parents Supporting TAG Education

Parents of TAG children have the right and responsibility to enhance the quality of education for their child by being informed, by participating in decision-making and by being proactive to ensure that appropriate educational opportunities are provided. Research suggest that students who are the most successful lifelong learners are ones who parents have been actively involved in their child's education.

Everyone benefits when schools and parents who hand-in-hand to provide programs for AAG students. The 509J TAG Program values this partnership and woks to facilitate good communication and positive relationships among all parties involved.

How parents can support their child's education:

- Be knowledgeable about your child's needs and communicate these needs to his/her teacher.
- Support educational success. Talk with your child about the importance of setting goals and achieving them.
- Participate in parent-teacher conferences and give input to the written TAG instructional plan for your child.
- Be knowledgeable about program and course placement options within the school district. Parents play an important advocacy role in the development of higher level courses including Advanced Placement.
- Volunteer to be a club advisor for after-school enrichment activities.
- Be an advocate for education by joining your child's school Site Council or other education planning groups within the district.



For Parents of TAG Children

A variety of resources are available to support parents of TAG children and link them with others who have similar interests. For information about any of the following resources or additional resources, contact the 509J TAG specialist.

509J Parent Communication

Important TAG information will be mailed directly to the parents of identified TAG students. Additional information will be published in individual school newsletters and other district publications.

509J Lending Library

The 509J TAG program maintains a small lending library for parents and teachers. A complete list of resources is available upon request. Parents interested in a topic of interest should contact the TAG Specialist. If the book is not in our library we will try to locate a copy for you.

509J TAG Parent Groups

Organizations for TAG parents and educators exist at the state and national levels. All are excellent sources of information and support. Depending on parent interests, discussion groups and information nights for 509J TAG parents may be arranged.

Websites

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

www.nagc.org

The Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted (OATAG)

<http://www.oatag.org/>

The Gifted Development Center (GDC)

<http://www.gifteddevelopment.com/>

Oregon Department of Education

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=76>

Hoagies Gifted Education

<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/>





**Jefferson County
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Please contact the district TAG
coordinators with questions

Kim Waite kwaite@509j.net

Lindsay Tarvin ltarvin@509j.net

541-475-6192

**445 SE Buff Street
Madras, Oregon 97741**