



An Overview of the Gifted and Talented Services at Cottonwood Creek Elementary

Cottonwood Creek Elementary School has adopted a wide array of practices to meet the needs of our diverse student population. Students enter our school with different strengths, talents, and experiences; therefore, our programming continually evolves to meet their varied needs. In keeping with the district's approach to programming, Cottonwood Creek uses a three-tiered model to support the needs of our gifted and advanced learners. Examples of programs are listed below.

Universal Level (Serves 70-80% of the student population)

At the universal level, all students are provided with high-quality and rigorous instruction in both their required coursework (mathematics, language arts, social studies, and science) and during specials. Teachers also support the needs of gifted and advanced learners at this level through pre-assessments, curriculum compacting, differentiated instruction, flexible pacing and grouping, and ongoing progress monitoring, using both formative and summative assessments. After school clubs and enrichment opportunities also support the needs of gifted and advanced learners at this level.

Targeted Level (Serves 10-30% of the student population)

At this targeted level, 10-30% of the gifted and advanced student population receives additional support to meet their needs. Examples of this type of support would be: advanced or accelerated coursework, specialized instruction (independent projects, problem-based learning, etc), targeted assistance and school/district competitions (e.g., spelling bee, chess tournament, Destination Imagination, etc.).

Intensive Level (Serves 1-10% of the student population)

This level is designed to meet the needs of 1-10% of the student population. In addition to the programming received at the universal and targeted level, students may additionally be supported through pull-out classes with Mrs. Bainbridge, one-on-one conferences, acceleration, specialized counseling, independent studies, and specialized coursework.

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Cottonwood Creek uses what is called a “push in” model for GT (meaning that students are kept on their grade level teams unless they are accelerated for Reading, Writing, or Mathematics). Of course, students identified as gifted and talented will have their learning needs met in Science and Social Studies, in the form of flexible grouping, curriculum compacting (allowing students to advance to the next learning level when appropriate), differentiated curriculum and assessments, and pull-out sessions for acceleration or enrichment. Students identified as GT at Cottonwood also benefit from the wealth of programming options available at the district level.

My Role as the GT Coordinator

As Cottonwood Creek’s GT resource teacher, I support the identified students both directly and indirectly. Here are a few examples of some of the services I provide...

Direct Services (When I work directly with the students)

- Pull-out instruction/enrichment in a specific content area (when students have mastered grade-level material)
- Facilitation of independent study projects
- Social/emotional support (holding lunch bunches, helping students to understand their gifts and talents, etc.)
- Informing students of enrichment opportunities both inside and outside of the district (e.g. chess tournament, Inside/Out enrichment program, summer programs, etc.)

Indirect Services (When I support students by working with their classroom teachers)

- Collaborating with teachers in...
 - The development of curriculum (Concept-based, interdisciplinary units of study, etc.)
 - The creation of pre-assessments, formative and summative assessments
 - The creation of differentiated learning opportunities:
 - Tiered activities
 - Learning centers
 - Menus
- Modeling instructional strategies for classroom teachers (learning centers, Socratic Seminars, etc.)
- Organizing field trips, enrichment opportunities for teams (guest speakers, service learning)

If you have a question about the GT identification process, district level programming, or any other questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me via the e-mail listed below.

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