

**State of Maine
Department of Education**

**Gifted and Talented Educational Program
Initial Application
2015-16**

Gifted and Talented Educational Program Initial Applications are to be submitted electronically to GT.DOE@maine.gov by **September 30, 2015**.

Below is the Maine statute and accompanying Maine Department of Education rules pertaining to Gifted and Talented Educational Programs.

Maine Revised Statutes Title 20-A, Chapter 311, section 8101-A(1) and (2) state:

- 1. Implementation.** Each school administrative unit (SAU) shall implement a gifted and talented education program. The Commissioner may provide technical assistance to a SAU in planning and implementing its gifted and talented education program.
- 2. Costs; approval.** Costs of gifted and talented education programs approved by the Department are subsidizable costs under the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act.

Maine Department of Education (05-071) Rules Chapter 104:

104.13 Program Approval: General Principles. Each SAU shall apply annually to the Department for approval of its gifted and talented program(s) on forms provided by the Department. The superintendent of the SAU is responsible for supplying all information necessary for a determination that the program is entitled to approval. The application form must be signed by the superintendent of the SAU in which the program is located certifying that the form contains information that is accurate at the time of reporting.

104.14 (Initial) Program Approval Application. The Application for program approval must represent full implementation of the gifted and talented program. The following information (Items 1 – 9 on application) shall be required and must reflect the degree of implementation at the time of reporting.

***Failure to submit required reports and applications in a timely manner shall be grounds for loss of program approval and of State subsidy aid.

All final applications and accompanying approval/non-approval letters and budgets will be posted on the Maine Department of Education's gifted and talented website.

School administrative unit name: RSU 87

Name and title of person responsible for gifted and talented program: Nicole Middleswart and Austin Walker

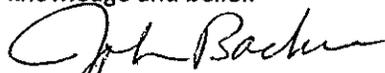
Phone number: 848-5139

Email address: nmiddleswart@rsu87.org

CERTIFICATION:

The statements made herein are correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

John Backus
Superintendent Name (printed)


Superintendent Signature

Date application submitted to Maine DOE for review: October 7, 2015

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:
Jennifer Pooler
Maine Department of Education
(207) 624-6638

RETURN BY EMAIL TO:

GT.DOE@maine.gov

EF-S-206
Revised May 26, 2015

DUE DATE: September 30, 2015

Reviewed By:



- Approval
 Approval with concerns
 Non-approval

Maine DOE Authorization:



Date of Approval:

1/13/16

Initial Application

The following information shall be required and must describe the complete plan for identification, programming, and evaluation of the gifted and talented academic and arts programs. Refer to the companion *Instructions* document for clarification.

Please use as much space as necessary. DO NOT add tables, charts or graphs, or change the formatting of this document.

1. Provide the school administrative unit's (SAU) philosophy for the gifted and talented program(s) (by academic and arts).

Academic program philosophy:

RSU 87 believes that all students deserve the right to an education that fits their own personal educational needs. We understand that some students learn in a different way and/or excel in one or more areas. Therefore the student would benefit from the offering of a gifted and talented program. RSU 87 believes that through an accelerated program, classroom differentiation, and other enrichment offerings, we can provide students who are identified as gifted and talented with educational opportunities that will support their learning, which will in turn create well-rounded individuals for the outside world. Our gifted and talented students need to understand how they learn and how to best help themselves be successful in the future through individual growth. This philosophy accompanies our overall educational philosophy for our entire district and for all the students we serve.

Arts program philosophy:

RSU 87 believes that opportunities should be provided for all students who excel in any subject including the visual and performing arts. We believe that these gifted and talented students should be given opportunities for enrichment and/or acceleration to maximize their special talents in the arts. These students will be provided opportunities in performance and presentation that will compliment the achievement they have already shown and push them to understand how they learn best and therefore achieve more. Our gifted and talented environment will foster individual awareness and growth to help the student be a life long learner. RSU 87 believes that all students deserve the right to the best education possible and together as a school we will strive to make that happen for each individual student.

2. Provide a program abstract which describes the children to be served and the program(s) to be implemented in the school(s) of the unit (by academics and arts).

Academic program abstract:

The gifted and talented program at RSU 87 is for a K-8 population and is meant to differentiate the learning for students who are identified as gifted and talented, which is typically the top 5% of our local population. Students who are recommended into the program will go through a series of testing to identify the student in the areas of mathematics, reading, writing, science, and/or social studies. The identification process will happen at designated times throughout the year and grade levels, and students will then enter the program in which we will use acceleration, differentiation, enrichment, and mentorship to enhance their education to fit their direct needs. Each student will have a plan designed for them with the accommodations needed for their individual growth. The GT coordinators will compile the information on each child and will meet with the principal and current teacher to discuss what types of accommodations will be made based on the student's needs. The teachers will

carry out all of the differentiation and enrichment opportunities with the support of the building principal and instructional coaches.

- Math- Acceleration is possible in math classes when necessary, especially in math because our schedules are set up to more easily support that change. These students will be carefully monitored to make sure that they are supported in the social/emotional way and to make sure that they feel as though the coursework is right for them.
- Science- Our curriculum supports enrichment activities for our identified students to go above and beyond the general education standards and create higher level thinking for those students. We will look into going deeper into the standards and not quickly moving from standard to standard.
- Social Studies- We will use differentiation and enrichment in the classroom to create more complex reasoning and transfer with the content for each student with the intent of going deeper into the standard and creating more complex products.
- Writing- Our writing curriculum provides the opportunity to encourage the students to go deeper into their writing and challenge themselves to be a stronger writer. Sometimes this will be moving through the standard faster and sometimes it will be going deeper into the standard with the use of differentiation in the classroom.
- Reading- In language arts, the program will focus on the complexity of their reading and their ability for complex reasoning through differentiation in the classroom focusing on content enrichment and going deeper into the standards.

The gifted and talented program will be monitored and records will be maintained by the two gifted and talented coordinators. These two coordinators will also be a channel for teachers to come to if they have questions or concerns with the students. If a student is showing stress or the inability to cope with the rigor of work, our school guidance councilors will meet with them to try and resolve the problem will follow up with the GT coordinators.

Arts program abstract:

The Gifted and Talented in the Arts program at RSU 87 will involve identifying students in grades 3-8 in the spring of each year. The process involves screening with the use of recommendations by teachers, parents, or students. Once they are recommended they will move to the selection portion which will involve reviewing a Visual Arts Portfolio or a Vocal/Instrumental Audition and interview. Once identified, the students will be given opportunities throughout the year for specialized presentations and performances, multiple enrichment opportunities, and apprenticeships. The instruction will be delivered by the art and music teachers during regular weekly class time and through some other enrichment opportunities throughout the year.

- Visual Arts- Differentiation will be done in the classroom with the idea that students use different techniques, perspectives, and media to complete projects. Community connections will be made providing the students with enrichment opportunities through apprenticeships. Students will have the opportunity to explore art in a deeper and more meaningful way than in the general education classrooms through some pull out bi-monthly opportunities.
- Performing Arts- Differentiation will take place in the classroom with these students being encouraged deeper into the music through solos and leading small groups. Small ensemble time will be provided for performances on top of their general concert performances. Students will

have the opportunity to explore art in a deeper and more meaningful way than in the general education classrooms through some bi-monthly pull out opportunities.

The Arts program will be monitored and all records kept by the two GT coordinators. Student goals and plans will be made through collaboration with the arts teachers and GT coordinators.

3. Provide the goals, objectives and activities for each program component, K-12 (by academics and arts).

Academics:

Goals: To develop and implement a program that provides opportunities for our gifted and talented students to learn in their own way and to discover how they best learn.

Objectives: By providing the support for the students and the teachers to help everyone be aware of the unique thinking skills involved in gifted and talented children and by giving the teachers the necessary tools and skills to instruct these students.

Activities: Classroom educators will be given professional development around differentiation and enrichment strategies and they will work collaboratively with the GT coordinators and building principals to meet the goals set for our gifted and talented children.

Goals: To enrich and develop our gifted and talented students in their thinking and self-awareness as well as their content knowledge based on their individual needs.

Objectives: By providing identification of these students and then creating plans to be implemented in the classroom for more differentiation, enrichment, and opportunities for these children including educating the children in their own metacognition.

Activities: The GT coordinators will work collaboratively with the teachers to create plans for the children and to find strategies and ways to provide the students with the individual instruction that they need to succeed.

Arts:

Goals: To develop a gifted and talented arts program that identifies and serves the students who show a general talent in this area to help them understand themselves as a learner and to push themselves to become better artists.

Objectives: By creating a solid procedure for identification and by providing coordinating services to these children to build a strong arts program.

Activities: The GT coordinators will work with the administration and arts teams to implement and effectively manage this gifted and talented arts program throughout the year to find ways to enrich our students and give them the experiences and differentiated learning they need to succeed beyond our school walls.

Goals: To provide our students with enrichment opportunities that will deepen their thinking and understanding in the arts.

Objectives: By finding ways to deepen the understanding and provide opportunities to our arts students who are gifted that we can't provide them in our school.

Activities: The GT coordinators will seek community members and other associations in the community to work with our gifted and talented students to help deepen their understanding of the arts and help them to achieve more.

4. Provide a description of the identification processes (for general intellectual ability, academic aptitude and artistic ability) for each of the following program components: screening, selection, placement, and review of policies and procedures.

General Intellectual Ability:

Screening: The purpose of our screening is to ensure that all students are given an opportunity to be tested for acceptance into the gifted and talented program. All screening tools target the students' achievement and/or ability. If the student demonstrates through the screening process that they would benefit from the program they will be moved on to the selection process. The screening tools that may be used include AIMSweb; New MEA scores; teacher nominations; self-nominations; peer nominations; parent nominations; and district assessments.

Selection: Once a pool of students are identified they may be assessed using one of these tools: Stanford Achievement Test and the MEA.

Placement: The qualifying test scores are based on the top 5% of the local population. No student will be eliminated from the talent pool based on one test score. The committee will meet and consider all of the collected information to make a decision on the acceptance into the program. The building principals, superintendent, and anyone else necessary will receive a copy of the acceptance list and the services that will be needed.

Academic Aptitude:

Screening: The purpose of our screening is to ensure that all students are given an opportunity to be tested for acceptance into the gifted and talented program. All screening tools target the student's aptitude. If the student demonstrates through the screening process that they would benefit from the program they will be moved on to the selection process. The screening tools that may be used include teacher nominations; self-nominations; peer nominations; and parent nominations.

Selection: Once a pool of students is identified they may be assessed using the OLSAT.

Placement: The qualifying test scores are based on the top 5% of the local population. No student will be eliminated from the talent pool based on one test score. The committee will meet and consider all of the collected information to make a decision on acceptance into the program. The building principals, superintendent, and anyone else necessary will receive a copy of the acceptance list and the services that will be needed.

Artistic Ability:

Screening: The purpose of screening is to ensure that all students are assessed equitably for possible exceptional abilities and to locate students who either clearly need the program or students who need further assessment in order to determine if there is a need for services. All the tools used in the screening process target the student's achievement and include teacher nominations; self-nominations; peer nominations; and parent nominations.

Selection: Once a student is identified in the screening pool, each student will be assessed using one of the following components: portfolio assessments; interview; written artist statements; audition assessment; and/or playing/singing exam.

Placement: The committee will meet and consider all of the collected information. Only 5% of the population

may be identified in the arts. This may or may not be a different 5% from the academic area.

Process for transfer students:

In the event a student transfers from a different district and was previously identified and serviced in that district, RSU 87 will review the identification documentation and compare it to the local identification system. If the student does qualify for services in RSU 87 under its local identification criteria, then the student will automatically be eligible for services. If the student was not identified in his/her previous school district, then the student should be automatically reviewed in his/her new district within 45 days of the record review. If the student meets the local criteria then he/she is placed immediately in the gifted and talented program.

Exit Procedure:

- Exiting procedures: Reasons and process

Possible exiting situations:

- Inability to function in a group
- Emotional Readiness
- Emotional Trauma
- Attendance issues
- Disruptive behavior
- Unwilling to participate
- Low performance
- Missing work
- Anxiety resulting from services
- Inattentiveness during work times
- Manifestations of frustration
- Teacher request
- Student request
- Parent/guardian request

Sample exiting procedures:

- Students participating in the 3-5 program will be reevaluated going into grade 6. Students participating in the 6-8 program will be reevaluated going into high school.
- Qualified students are eligible to continue in the gifted and talented program from one year to another unless there is a written request for a student to exit the program from the teacher, parent/guardian, counselors, and/or administrator of the student.
- Exiting of students from gifted and talented services is based upon multiple criteria including student performance in the program, psychological or personal reasons, and is finalized by a consultation with parents and teachers.
- Prior to formal exit from the program, the following steps will be followed:
 1. Document and review student progress.

2. Conference with student, parent, and other appropriate professional educators.
3. Formal notification of parent.

Process for appeals:

1. A parent, guardian, or teacher expresses concern regarding the exclusion of the student into the program. The coordinator of the gifted and talented will review results of testing and information collected with the concerned person. The coordinator of the gifted and talented will compare results and let the concerned person know why the decision was made according to the criteria of the program.
 2. The concerned person initiates an appeal in writing to the teacher of the gifted and talented. The coordinator of the gifted and talented with the new information may conduct an alternative test. If an achievement test score was low, an alternate achievement test may be administered. If an ability test score was low, an alternate ability test may be administered.
 3. The gifted and talented advisory board of identification committee may meet to reconsider eligibility in terms of new test results, additional data, and/or student products.
 4. The coordinator of the gifted and talented program may notify the parent or guardian and teacher of the decision made by the advisory or identification committee.
 5. In the event the student does not qualify for services, the student may be reevaluated in a year at the request of the parent, guardian, and/or teacher.
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5. Provide a description of the staff development that takes place in order to implement the program(s).

It is the belief of RSU 87 that students who are identified as gifted and talented will receive services through differentiation, enrichment, and guidance in the general classroom. With that, our teachers must have the resources and training necessary to provide the instruction needed for our gifted and talented students. As part of the implementation of our GT program, we will provide teachers with professional development on how to do this effectively in the class. The staff development will include how to differentiate for the gifted learner and how to provide enrichment in the classroom without pull-outs. The teachers will also be supported by the building administrators as well as the GT coordinators when issues arise that need to be addressed. The GT coordinators will also be participating in professional development through workshops offered throughout the year.

6. Provide a description of the staffing and management of the program(s); including completing the staffing tables below.

The gifted and talented staff act as coordinators for the program in RSU 87 and work directly under the

superintendent and building principals. The coordinators are in charge of identification and management of the program throughout the school year. The responsibilities include:

- Distribute and collect screening data and recommendations each spring,
- Review screening data and create a pool of students who will go through the selection process,
- Take care of parent communication for parts of the process,
- Oversee the testing for students,
- Review scores and determine eligibility for Gifted and Talented program,
- Schedule and hold meetings with parents to set-up student goals and begin creating their personal learning plan,
- Notification of teachers of students identified in the program and will provide the teacher with the information necessary from the personal learning plan and work with the teacher and building administrator to decide on accommodations for the students,
- Completing periodical check in with the students identified to monitor social/emotional well being as well as their progress academically in the program,
- Evaluate the program through the necessary means each year and making changes to better the program, and
- Research and seek out enrichment opportunities for all gifted and talented students through community outreach.

Indicate the professional staff for the K-12 Gifted and Talented Program.

Name of Staff	690 Endorsement Yes/No	Teacher or Administrator	Grade level	Indicate Full-Time or Part-Time in GT
Nicole Middleswart	No	Teacher	PreK-8	Part-Time in GT
Austin Walker	No	Teacher	PreK-8	Part-Time in GT

Indicate the Auxiliary Staff: Educational Technician

Name of Staff	Role	690 Endorsement Yes/No	Grade level	Name and position of supervisor	Indicate Full-Time or Part-Time in GT
N/A					

7. Provide a description of the annual program self-evaluation process.

Annually a team of three or more qualified professionals including an administrator will meet to

review the screening, selection and placement of the identified students. Surveys will be sent to parents, teachers, and students to have their input about how the program is going. At this time the team will discuss student growth and the effectiveness of services as well as the parent, teacher, and student surveys collected. Services will be adjusted to meet the needs of the students and the team will also review the identification process and make any necessary changes based upon team input.

8. Provide a description of the costs to be incurred to implement the program(s).

The GT coordinators will both receive a stipend of \$1500 for their work throughout the year. The only other cost anticipated at this time is the cost for enrichment and the cost for professional development.

9. For those school units requesting approval of allowable program costs for State subsidy, complete the following budget proposal. These amounts must be reported in the Maine Education Data Management System (MEDMS) financial system as part of the Annual Budget Reporting.

Professional Staff Name	Elementary (salary with benefits)	Secondary (salary with benefits)
Subtotal		

Auxiliary Staff Name	Elementary (salary with benefits)	Secondary (salary with benefits)
Subtotal		

Independent Contractor Name	Elementary (contract amount)	Secondary (contract amount)

Subtotal		

Please list individual product names and costs associated with the district's gifted and talented program(s).

A. Educational Materials and Supplies:

Elementary: Material/Supply name	Cost	Secondary: Material/Supply name	Cost
Subtotal		Subtotal	

B. Other allowable costs:

Elementary: Item name	Cost	Secondary: Item name	Cost
STANFORD 10/OLSAT	1017.00		
Subtotal	1017.00	Subtotal	

C. Student Tuition:

Elementary: Program name	Cost	Secondary: Program name	Cost
Subtotal		Subtotal	

D. Staff Tuition/Professional Development:

Elementary: Title	Cost	Secondary: Title	Cost

Staff Development around Differentiation and Enrichment in the classroom specifically for gifted and talented students.	5,000.00		
Subtotal		Subtotal	

Totals

Subtotals from above	Elementary Costs:	Secondary Costs:
Professional Staff		
Auxiliary Staff		
Independent Contractors		
A. Materials & Supplies		
B. Other Allowable Costs	1017.00	
C. Student Tuition		
D. Staff Tuition/PD	5,000.00	
Total	6,017.00	