

**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](mailto: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: Westbrook School Department

Name and title of person responsible for gifted and talented program: Peter Lancia, Ph. D.

Phone number: 207-854-0800

Email address: landap@westbrookschoools.org

**CERTIFICATION:**

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

Superintendent Name (printed)  
Marc Edward Gousse, Ed. D.

Superintendent Signature



Date application submitted to Maine DOE for review:  
September 30, 2015

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Jennifer Pooler  
Maine Department of Education  
(207) 624-6638

**RETURN BY EMAIL TO:**

[GT.DOE@maine.gov](mailto:GT.DOE@maine.gov)

EF-S-206  
Revised May 26, 2015

**DUE DATE: September 30, 2015**

Reviewed By:

Lee Worcester

- Approval  
 Approval with concerns  
 Non-approval

Maine DOE Authorization:



Date of Approval:

4/12/16

**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:**

The philosophy of the Westbrook School Department is stated in its vision statement:

*The Westbrook School Department believes that education is a partnership among students, staff, parents, and the community. We encourage self-directed learning and individual excellence through student centered activities and interdisciplinary connections. Within a framework of high expectations, the school environment allows for a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned. As partners in learning, we all share the responsibility to make this vision a reality in a changing world.*

Similarly, in alignment with the school department's vision, the Challenge Plus program addresses the unique needs gifted and talented learners in Westbrook in the humanities and STEM subjects as well as the arts. These needs include, but are not limited to, high academic achievement, high intellectual and artistic ability, unique abilities to approach and solve problems, unusual creativity, high vocabulary, and highly personal talents and passions. Gifted learners may also exhibit social, emotional, and behavioral challenges that are isolating and complicate interpersonal relationships among peers and adults. The Challenge Plus program, therefore, believes that learning must be learner centered, highly customized, and focused on developing the whole child. Through deep study in the humanities, STEM subjects, and the arts, gifted learners focus on areas on strength and interest as they progress through school. We believe that through accelerated, customized, and alternate learning opportunities, intentionally designed and provided by educators, parents, peers, and themselves, our students will achieve high levels of success, satisfy personal curiosities and aspirations, expand their capacities to think and communicate, engage in meaningful opportunities for learning, and influence others and the world around them.

**Arts program philosophy:**

See above.

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 Challenge Plus program supports identified gifted learners in grades 3-12 in the humanities and STEM subjects.

Children are recommended and screened at the end of grade 2 and identified as gifted learners at the beginning of grade 3. Children are identified in Humanities (English language arts and social studies) and STEM subjects (primarily math and science.) The program involves both pull-out services, typically a class that meets twice a week in the area in which the child is identified. Humanities classes include reading and responding to literature at an advanced text and complexity level, writing, problem solving, logic, and advanced math skills. In addition, consultation is provided to the classroom teacher who differentiates their instruction for the child to be successful in the general classroom.

In Middle School, children are provided services in Humanities and STEM. The humanities program

involves both a pull-out class that meets at least three times per week as well as in-class consultation for the classroom teachers in the identified areas. Pull out classes typically include reading and responding to literature, writing, research, and content study connected to topics in the grade level units of study. The math program involves pull-out classes which provide an opportunity for acceleration from the general math curriculum as well as opportunities for research and problem solving. In addition, consultation is provided to the classroom teacher who differentiates their instruction for the child to be successful in the general classroom.

In High School, children are provided with consultation services as well as advanced level courses that are part of the universal program of studies. These include: honors and AP English, honors World Studies I and II, honors and AP US History, AP Psychology, AP Government, Economics, Sociology, honors Secondary Math 1, 2, and 3, honors Finite Math, AP Calculus, AP Statistics, honors Intro to Physical Science, honors and AP Biology, honors and AP Chemistry, honors and AP Physics, honors Earth and Space Science, Anatomy and Physiology, and Environmental Science. In addition, students are able to confer with GT teachers to support them in career and college planning, designing internships, and with selecting academic pathways through high school.

#### **Arts program abstract:**

The Challenge Plus program supports identified gifted learners in grades 3-12 in the fine arts.

Children are recommended and screened for the Arts program at the end of grade 2 and identified as gifted learners at the beginning of grade 3. Elementary children are provided with support in art and music by differentiation in their general classroom classes as well as pull out classes, particularly when there is a critical mass. Classes focus on the discernment of talent, the exploration of media, and the exploration within their area.

Similarly, children in middle school are provided with services through differentiation in their general classroom and through pull-out classes when scheduled. Classes focus on further exploring media and expanding and refining their talent in their identified area.

In High School, students are supported in rigorous, highly customized course offerings, including Foundations of Art, AP Studio Art, Photography, Digital Media, Animation, Concert and Jazz Band, Wind Ensemble, Guitar and Piano Lab, Chorus, Chamber Singers, Jazz Choir, and Music Theory.

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

#### **Academics:**

##### **Goals:**

K-4:

- 1) to appropriately identify learners who are gifted in the humanities and STEM subjects and meet their academic and social needs through direct instruction and consultation;
- 2) to reflect upon themselves as learners and develop personal learning plans for identified students in

collaboration with teachers and parents to guide their learning.

5-12:

1) to continue to nurture learners who are identified as gifted in the humanities and STEM subjects and meet their academic and social needs through direct instruction, including accelerated and customized pathways through middle and high school, and consultation with students, teachers, and parents;

2) to enable students to become more involved in their community through outreach activities, advocacy, and internship opportunities.

3) to reflect upon themselves as learners and develop personal learning plans for identified students in collaboration with teachers and parents to guide their learning pathways through rigorous coursework, community engagement, and a capstone presentation.

**Objectives:**

K-4:

1) by conducting appropriate screening practices and providing coordinated support service;

2) by providing time to reflect and develop learning plans that involve parent, teacher, and student input

5-12:

1) by conducting appropriate screening practices and providing coordinated support service;

2) by supporting student in acquiring outreach, mentoring, and intern opportunities;

3) by providing time to reflect and develop learning plans that involve parent, teacher, and student input

**Activities:**

K-4:

1) Identify learners using our identification process beginning at the end of grade 2 and provide support through separate classes with the program teacher, typically twice a week, or within their classroom through in-class differentiation. Third and fourth grade projects are often theme based but connected to grade level standards and instruction. For example, when all fourth graders are reading and studying different versions of fairy tales in order to write their own version of one, identified students study several authors as mentors and apply storytelling elements used to develop their own piece of writing.

2) Prompt student reflection about learning styles, interests, and aspirations; invite parents and teachers to contribute to learning plans which will be developed through an online interactive format.

5-8

1) identify learners using our identification process beginning at the end of grade 5 and provide support in a small group setting, with like-minded peers, for a chance to focus on their individual needs. Learning opportunities include reading and literature analysis, research, and creative writing. Students also blog and communicate about literature electronically with their peers and teacher.

2) collaboratively investigate and provide opportunities to match students interests with internships in local businesses and organizations, create opportunities for leadership, and offer mentorships with local leaders and professionals.

3) Prompt student reflection about learning styles, interests, and aspirations; invite parents and teachers to contribute to learning plans which will be developed through an online interactive format.

9-12

1) identify learners using our identification process beginning at the end of grade 8 and provide support through consultation and direct service. This includes scheduled times to meet with the GT teachers in order to provide any help or guidance in support of their learning and future aspirations, including written projects and college application essays as well as direct instruction in separate math classes, focusing on higher-level projects or work within the regular classroom through differentiated instruction, and enrollment in advanced placement course offerings, online courses, and early college classes.

2) collaboratively investigate and provide opportunities to match students interests with internships in local businesses and organizations, create opportunities for leadership, and offer mentorships with local leaders and professionals. These include leadership through the Model UN, editing a literary magazine, supporting younger learners, and facilitating collaborative discussions among peers.

3) Prompt student reflection about learning styles, interests, and aspirations; invite parents and teachers to contribute to learning plans which will be developed through an online interactive format. This aligns with our local graduation requirement which includes a learning plan beginning with the class of 2019.

#### **Arts:**

##### **Goals:**

1) to nurture talented artists who are identified as gifted and meet their needs through direct instruction, including accelerated and customized pathways through middle and high school, and consultation with students, teachers, and parents;

2) to refine the selection process for Challenge Plus in the Visual Arts so that it is more rigorous, less subjective, and more highly selective.

3) to redesign the GT Arts delivery model

##### **Objectives:**

1) by providing customized approaches in general and separate art classes, including workshops to

expand talent;

2) by becoming more highly selective and refining the identification process and programming for gifted artists.

3) by researching and piloting different practices, including in class differentiated approaches and specialized workshops rather than separate classes year round

#### **Activities:**

1) provide additional art classes with their gifted peers (like additional art classes or advanced courses) as well as differentiated instruction within their general art class and extended learning opportunities (like work with visiting artists, students from MECA, USM, or other art and music students and teachers about specialized subjects of interest).

2) research, develop, and pilot a refined identification process

3) research, develop, and pilot different approaches to GT arts education.

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:** COGAT administered to students scoring above 95th percentile on NWEA screening, proficiency grades of 3-4, strong work samples, and high recommendations.

**Selection:** Students are selected by when the COGAT overall score and subscores are 95 and above, particularly in the areas in which the student was referred for evaluation (verbal and non-verbal for humanities and quantitative and non-verbal for STEM).

**Placement:** Students are selected for programming based on a collaborative decision made by a team that included GT teachers and the GT coordinator. Parents are notified and agree, or disagree, to placement. All class assignments are the responsibility of the school principal. General classroom placement and the student's schedule are determined with input from GT teachers, the student, and parents.

#### **Academic Aptitude:**

**Screening: Elementary (general screening beginning of grade 3):** Fall (grade 3) NWEA percentile scores in reading and mathematics; history of proficiency based grades, and work samples; recommendation from parent, teacher, student.

**Middle (general screening end of grade 5):** Spring (grade 5) NWEA percentile scores in reading and mathematics; history of proficiency based grades, and work samples; recommendation from parent, teacher, student.

**High School (general screening end of grade 8):** Spring (grade 8) NWEA percentile scores in reading and mathematics; history of proficiency based grades, and work samples; recommendation from parent, teacher, student.

**Selection:** Students are selected when their scores are consistently at or above the 95th percentile on NWEA,

when grades and work samples are consistently above "3 - proficient" or above "93 = A-" in classes using a 100-point scale in the academic areas in which they were recommended, and when recommendations from self, parent, and teacher are high.

**Placement:** Students are selected for programming based on a collaborative decision made by a team that included art/music teachers and the GT coordinator. Parents are notified and agree, or disagree, to placement. All class assignments are the responsibility of the school principal. General classroom placement and the student's schedule are determined with input from GT teachers, the student, and parents

### **Artistic Ability:**

**Screening:** Visual Art: Locally developed prompt that students complete independently; an on-demand prompt provided by the child's art teachers; past proficiency grades; work samples; parent, teacher, student recommendations. Screening at beginning of grade 3, end of grade 5, and end of grade 8, and as requested.

**Music:** Past proficiency grades; work samples; parent, teacher, student recommendations. Screening at beginning of grade 3, end of grade 5, and end of grade 8, and as requested.

**Selection:** Art and Music teachers in the district work collaboratively to select students. In Art, both prompted pieces are displayed and scored according to a locally developed rubric. Each student's recommendation is discussed, including past grades, other work samples, and recommendations. Students who receive high scores in all areas are selected. In music, students are recommended by their past performance and selected for acceleration in their given area through general music classes.

**Placement:** Students receive support in their general art class or in pull-out classes. Children are not clustered, but rather served through differentiation.

**Process for transfer students:** When a student transfers to Westbrook and has been identified as gifted by their previous school, we tentatively place the student into the appropriate program. Upon a review of the academic records and a conversation with GT teachers at the previous school, placement is confirmed. If a similar or appropriate is unavailable (i.e. student had been enrolled in a Creative Writing GT class and one is not offered at our high school) accommodations will be made through a customized personal learning plan. If a student transfers to Westbrook who has not been previously identified yet exhibits qualities of a gifted learner, the student will be referred for evaluation.

**Exit Procedure:** At screening points: If a child's achievement scores, proficiency grades, work samples, or recommendations do not meet program criteria at each benchmark screening year, a conference is held with the child and his/her parent at which time the screening data is shared. Occasionally, a student is monitored in their general classroom after exiting to ensure that needs continue to be met.

At non-screening points: If a child is not successful in GT programming, shows a lack of interest, or is struggling with the program, a conference is held with the child and his/her parents to discuss appropriate placement and options for service. Only upon mutual agreement is a student exited from the program in non-screening years. Instead, adjustments to their personal learning plan are made. If it is determined to exit the child, he/she will be monitored by GT staff for one year in their general classroom to ensure their success.

**Process for appeals:** At any time, a parent may appeal a decision about qualification for the program. Parents meet with GT staff and the coordinator to discuss reasons for the appeal and they are asked to state their request in writing. Typically, a COGAT or comparable intellectual assessment is administered and other administrations of NWEA, recent grades and work samples, and other recommendations are considered.

Re-evaluations are conducted within two weeks of the appeal and results are shared within one week.

If the parent disagrees with the findings after the appeal, he/she may meet with the assistant superintendent, and then the superintendent, who will convene a review of all data and make a recommendation for identification.

5. Provide a description of the staff development that takes place in order to implement the program(s).

PLC: The GT Teachers participate in a weekly PLC meeting. Goals of the PLC are to unpack learning standards, design and study instruction, and monitor student progress. The GT teachers discuss ways to differentiate within their classes, particularly for students who are in general classes and in which they consult to provide content and materials. PLCs are also used to study and discuss articles, texts, and issues connected to gifted learners. Art and Music teachers work collaboratively in their respective PLCs and with their department director.

Conferences: Teachers participate in the annual MEGAT conference.

Courses: Graduate courses are reimbursed by the district at the rate of the current U Maine tuition and fees up to 9 credits per year.

General PD: GT Teachers have been included in general school-based PD as the district has moved to implementation of Proficiency Based Learning. Workshops have addressed topics including grading, developing assessments, and writing curriculum, creating units of study, instructional frameworks (balanced literacy, Everyday Math), behavioral expectations (Habits of Work and Learning and PBIS.)

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

One full time teacher provides GT support in three K-4 schools. She provides both Humanities and STEM programs in both in-class and pull out settings, but is not teacher of record.

One full time teacher provides GT Humanities support at Westbrook Middle School and Westbrook High School. She is not teacher of record for specific courses, but rather provides in-class and pull out services in all grades. She also provides "office hours" consultation to students and teachers in ELA and social studies, including supporting internships and college placement.

One full time teacher provides GT STEM support at Westbrook Middle School and Westbrook High School. She provides pull-out support in grades 5 and 6, but is not teacher of record. She teaches separate accelerated math courses in grades 7-8 and is teacher of record. She teaches up to two courses at Westbrook High School (typically AP Calculus and AP Statistics) of which she is teacher of record. 80% of students are identified as GT. She also provides "office hours" consultation to students and teachers around other STEM subjects, including supporting internships and college placement.

The art and music teachers at each school provides GT students with customized instruction within their general art and music classes and in separate classes when necessary, such as Studio, Photography, Instrument Lab, and Music Theory.

The Assistant Superintendent, in collaboration with the Directors of Art and Music, supervises staff, manages budgets, and submits required reports. Together with the GT Teachers, the Assistant Superintendent coordinates programmatic aspects of the program.

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
Crystal Card	Yes	Teacher	K-4	FT
Julia McCabe	No	Teacher	5-12	FT
Nola Urban	Yes	Teacher	5-12	FT
School Unified Arts Teachers	No	Teachers	K-12	FT/PT

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

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

A full program evaluation for all intervention programs in Westbrook occurs every four years. The Challenge Plus program was evaluated in 2013-14. It follows Stufflebeam's CIPP Evaluation Model which involves a study of the program's context (a general description of the program and the needs it satisfies), inputs (activities, initiatives, and strategies provided through the program), process (the ways the program is intended to operate and the ways in which it does), and product (the results of the program (such as successful outcomes and high academic growth or achievement.))

During the evaluation year, all teachers collaborate to complete the evaluation, typically within a few months. Achievement of students over the past year(s) is considered as part of the evidence the evaluation provides. They make recommendations for program improvement based on what was revealed in the process. Other stakeholders (teachers, administrators, the Education Programs Committee, and eventually the Parent Advisory) also review the evaluations and make

recommendations for improvement.

The GT program, like all academic departments in the district, develops an annual Comprehensive Education Plan which sets goals for continuous growth and improvement in October and is reviewed in June.

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

Costs are associated with teacher salaries and benefits, materials (books, consumable supplies), professional development workshops, courses), travel (in-district mileage between buildings), online learning for students, and field trips and experiences.

Courses requested are to complete GT endorsement, including Teaching Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom, Educating Gifted/Talented Students/English, Education of Gifted and Talented

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)
Crystal Card	75,083	
Nola Urban	43,048	21,524
Subtotal	118,131	21,524

Auxiliary Staff Name	Elementary (salary with benefits)	Secondary (salary with benefits)
Subtotal	0	0

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

Subtotal	0	0
<b>Total Salaries</b>		

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
Pentominoes	29	Scrabble	20
Lego Robotics (4)	2800	Norlands Robotics	726
Norland Robotics Kit and Accessories	726		
Slow n Go Tool Box (3)	62		
Jacob's Ladder MS3	28		
Jacob's Ladder EL2	28		
Jacob's Ladder EL1	30		
You Decide	27		
Language Mechanic	25		
Thinking Directionally	8		
Think a Minute	8		
Building Thinking Skills	30		
K'Nex Forces (3)	360		
Critical Thinking Booster	99		
Reading Detectives	25		
Assessment Material identification, not screening (CoGAT)	600		
Word Masters	99		
Trade Books (Flight Behavior, Wild Things, Where the Wild Things Are, Man's Search for Meaning, Chains, Guide to Creating Writing Centers, Faranheight 451, Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing, Knots in my Yo Yo String, Downsiders, )	482	Trade Books on the theme of identity as well as contemporary fiction that connects with other content area Units of Study	500
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>5466</b>	<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>1246</b>

**B. Other allowable costs:**

Elementary: Item name	Cost	Secondary: Item name	Cost
Staff travel (in-city travel between schools, travel to conference) and conference (MeGAT)	500	Staff travel (in-city travel between schools, travel to conference) and conference (MeGAT)	1,000

Field Trips (may include Telling Room, science, social studies, art, music related themes for GT students)	700	Field Trips (may include science, social studies/ government, Writing Olympics, art, music related themes as well as Model UN and college visits for GT students)	1500
Special projects (may include Nat Spelling Bee x3, special experiences for art)	1500	Special Projects (may include special experiences for art, Writing Center development, and workshops to support peer tutors)	2,000
		Digital Storytelling Event	350
IXL Subscription	320	IXL	80
Aleks Subscription	2800	Aleks Subscription	700
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>5820</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>5630</b>

**C. Student Tuition:**

Elementary: Program name	Cost	Secondary: Program name	Cost
		Online courses and early college. Courses are typically through USM, are college level offerings, are online, and are not available to students through our program of study or AP offerings. These have included: Calculus A, Intro to Sociology, College WRiting, Beginning ASL, and Intro to Microeconomics	20,000
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>20,000</b>

**D. Staff Tuition/Professional Development:**

Elementary: Title	Cost	Secondary: Title	Cost
Conferences (MEGAT)	500	Conferences (MEGAT)	1,250
		Tuition (up to 9 credits) See #8	5,910
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>7160</b>

**Totals**

<b>Subtotals from above</b>	<b>Elementary Costs:</b>	<b>Secondary Costs:</b>
<b>Professional Staff</b>	118,131	21,524
<b>Auxiliary Staff</b>	0	0
<b>Independent Contractors</b>	0	0
<b>A. Materials &amp; Supplies</b>	5,466	1,246
<b>B. Other Allowable Costs</b>	5,820	5,630
<b>C. Student Tuition</b>	0	20,000
<b>D. Staff Tuition/PD</b>	500	7,160
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,917</b>	<b>55,560</b>