

Community Unit School District 303

Academically Talented Program

2016-2017



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D303 Vision Statement

To inspire and empower ALL to
...Achieve excellence
...Learn with passion
...Live with integrity
...In a changing world

Academically Talented Program Philosophy

In accordance with St. Charles CUSD 303's Vision, the Academically Talented (AT) Program is committed to inspiring and empowering talented learners to achieve excellence, maintain passion in their learning, and bring integrity to all activities that touch their lives and the lives of others. District 303 adds rigor and relevance through differentiation, enrichment options, individual extensions, group activities, and provisions for the enhancement of personal strengths, talents, and relationships.

Definition of Academically Talented Learners

District 303's Academically Talented Program is in alignment with the Illinois School Code, Article 14A definition: *"gifted and talented children" means children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other children and youth of their age, experience, and environment. A child shall be considered gifted and talented in any area of aptitude, and, specifically, in language arts and mathematics, by scoring in the top 5% locally in that area of aptitude. District 303 follows the Illinois School Code's definition in its identification of students for its gifted programs (P.A. 94-410, 2005).*

Identification Process

The AT identification process begins in 3rd grade for 4th grade placement and occurs again in 5th grade for 6th grade placement. The process includes an achievement test, an ability test, a content-based placement test, and a learner characteristics rating scale. The Academically Talented identification process is as follows:

- In the fall, all 3rd and 5th grade students will take an achievement and abilities test
- Using the fall achievement and ability test results, the top 20% of 3rd and 5th grade students district-wide in literacy and/or math will be identified to:
 - Take the content-based placement test(s)
 - Have a learner characteristics rating scale completed by their classroom teacher
- The scores from the all of the four above assessments will be used to identify the top 5% of students district-wide in literacy and/or math, who will be recommended for Academically Talented placement

- In addition to AT identification, for students entering 6th grade, the top 2% of students in literacy and math will be recommended for Infinity placement

Explanation of the Assessments

- Achievement measure: Achievement measure: An externally validated measure of content-based knowledge
- Abilities measure: A measure that assesses students' abilities to reason and solve problems
- Content-based placement measure: A measure based on the AT curriculum
- Learner characteristics measure: A measure designed to obtain teacher estimates of a student's characteristics in the following areas: Learning, Motivation, Communication (Precision), Reading, and Math behaviors

D303 AT Courses

Elementary School Academically Talented Program

Students are identified for the AT Program beginning in third grade for fourth grade placement. At the primary level, student needs are met within the regular classroom and through enrichment activities.

Academically Talented Literacy (AT)

The top 5% of the District's students in each grade level qualify for Academically Talented (AT) Literacy. Students receive differentiated instruction to enrich the content and skills from the District's Common Core State Standard aligned literacy curriculum. Supplemental materials specifically designed for gifted literacy learners support this AT curriculum.

Academically Talented Math (AT)

Students identified as academically talented in math participate in the AT math class. This class provides both acceleration and enrichment for high performing students at fourth and fifth grade. Students work approximately two grade levels above their grade placement. The curriculum highlights critical thinking, problem solving, math vocabulary, real-world math connections, and problem-based learning.

Middle School Academically Talented Program

Academically Talented Literacy (AT)

The top 5% of the District's students in each grade level qualify for Academically Talented (AT) Literacy. These classes differentiate and enrich the content and skills from the District's Common Core State Standard aligned literacy curriculum. Supplemental materials specifically designed for gifted literacy learners support this AT curriculum.

Academically Talented Math (AT)

The top 5% of the District's students in each grade level qualify for Academically Talented (AT) Math. Students are clustered into special accelerated sections and work two years beyond their same age peers. These classes follow the District's identified sequence of math courses. Sixth grade AT Math students will take eighth grade math; seventh grade AT Math students will take high school algebra; eighth grade AT Math students will take high school geometry.

Infinity Program

The top 2% of the District's students in each grade level qualify for Infinity--a middle school magnet program. Infinity takes a problem-based learning approach where students investigate real-world applications of learning and skills while delving into a deeper and broader understanding of the core standards. Opportunities for independent exploration and study are frequently interwoven into the academic process. Thoughtful effort is placed into the integration of all four core content areas: literacy, social studies, math, and science. An emphasis is also placed on the social emotional learning needs of this unique population of students and is integrated into content and team activities.

Exit and Remediation Procedures

Elementary School

If a student is not demonstrating progressing or meeting 70% of the unit learning targets, the following process may be initiated by the teacher, principal, counselor, parent or student:

1. Conference with teacher/parent/student/principal to address concerns and develop an action plan
2. Student has the next unit to meet goals from action plan
3. Conference again with teacher/parent/student/principal to discuss progress of action plan
4. Removal from class if placement is deemed inappropriate due to lack of ability/achievement, not lack of compliance

If the student is struggling and not demonstrating progressing or meeting 70% of unit learning targets, it is assumed that regular communication has occurred between teacher and parent before the initial conference takes place.

Middle School

If a student earns a C or lower for the quarter, the following process may be initiated by the teacher, principal, counselor, parent or student:

1. Conference with teacher/parent/student/principal or counselor
2. Student has the next quarter to remediate
3. Conference again with teacher/parent/student/principal or counselor to discuss progress
4. Removal from class if placement is deemed inappropriate due to lack of ability/achievement, not lack of compliance

If the student is struggling and earning a C or lower, it is assumed that regular communication has occurred between teacher and parent before the initial conference takes place.

Removal of a student from the Academically Talented/Advanced class will be based on a student's lack of ability/achievement. A low performing student should not be removed because of compliance problems (i.e. poor homework completion, behavior in class, etc.)

St. Charles CUSD 303 reserves the right to determine the best placement and programming for each of its students.

Appeals Process

Academically Talented (AT) Mathematics or Literacy

District 303 is committed to a comprehensive process to identify the top 5% of its academic learners in math and literacy. If your student is ineligible for the AT Program, the appeals process is an additional and final opportunity for placement for the next academic year. The following bullet points indicate the steps in the appeals process.

- Initiation of Academically Talented Appeals Process
 - Request for an appeal may be made by a teacher, principal, or parent of a student who took the placement test for literacy and/or math
 - The application for appeal is in the AT handbook
- The application for appeal must be completed and returned to your child's elementary school main office by April 7, 2017
- The Appeals Committee will consist of AT staff members
- Appeals cases will be reviewed in April 2017
- The student will be asked to respond to an academic prompt in literacy and/or math during the school day for review by the committee
- If necessary, the student will be asked to discuss his/her response(s) to the academic prompt and/or placement test with a member of the Appeals Committee in an interview at the student's school
- Notification of the final placement decision will be made by the Department of Instruction after the appeals committee completes the decision process
- The appeals decision will be final for the 2017-2018 school year. The Appeals Committee will review only one appeal per student per year

- Request for Further Information
 - If further information is needed, please contact your elementary building principal

**APPLICATION FOR ACADEMICALLY TALENTED (AT)
APPEAL OF PLACEMENT DECISION**

Directions: If after placement testing, your student was found ineligible for placement in the Academically Talented Program for math and/or literacy, you may appeal the decision. Complete this form and send to the student's principal by April 7, 2017. Appeals decisions will be communicated by the end of the school year.

Student's Name _____ Date _____

School _____ Grade _____ Subject _____

Reason for appeal:

Signature _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Identification and Appeals Process

Infinity Program

Appeals Process: Infinity Program

District 303 is committed to a comprehensive process to identify the top 2% of its academic learners for the Infinity Program. If your student is ineligible for the Infinity Program, the appeals process is an additional and final opportunity for placement for the next academic year. The following bullet points indicate the steps in the appeals process.

- Request for an appeal may be made by a teacher, principal, or parent of a student
- The application for appeal is in the AT handbook
- To appeal for placement in the Infinity Program:
 - If the student is currently in the AT program, an appeal can be made
 - If the student is not currently in the AT program, but in the top 3%, an appeal can be made. Contact your child's building principal as to whether your child is eligible for appeal
- The application for appeal must be completed and returned to Wredling Middle School's office by April 7, 2017
- The student will be asked to respond to an academic prompt in literacy and/or math during the school day for review by the committee
- If necessary, the student will be asked to discuss his/her response(s) to the academic prompt and/or placement test with a member of the Appeals Committee in an interview
- The appeals decision will be final for the 2017-2018 school year. The Appeals Committee will review only one appeal per student per year
- Request for further information
 - If further information is needed, please contact your building principal

Infinity Program
Application for Appeal of Placement Decision

Directions:

1. Complete this Application Form as well as reason for appeal
2. Submit all Forms either in Person or by Mail to:
Wredling Middle School
Attn: Infinity Team Leader
1200 Dunham Road
St. Charles, IL 60174
3. Applications will NOT be accepted after April 7, 2017.

Student Information (please print):

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Current School _____ Current Grade Level _____

Middle School you currently plan to attend in the upcoming school year (circle one):

Downtown Campus Wredling Other: _____

Current Math Program _____ Teacher's Name _____

Current Literacy Program _____ Teacher's Name _____

Parent Information (please print):

Parent/Guardian Name(s) _____

Address _____

Home Phone:

Phone: _____

Cell

Email _____

Parent Signature _____
_____/_____/____

Date:

Please see reverse.

Reason for appeal: