

Pillager Public Schools

323 East 2nd St. South
Pillager, MN 56473



Gifted & Talented Handbook

(School Board Approved July 20, 2020)

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Welcome to the Pillager Public Schools Gifted & Talented Program	3
Contact Information	4
Part I: GENERAL INFORMATION	5
Beliefs	5
Definition	5
Goals	6
Mission	6
Vision	6
Part II: SERVICES	7
Pillager School District	7
Differentiated Instruction	7
Grade Acceleration & Compacting	7
Grading of Gifted & Talented Programs	7
Pillager Elementary School	8
Pillager Middle School	8
Pillager High School	8
Other Services	8
Part III: IDENTIFICATION	9
Identification Factors	9
Identification Timeline	10
Part IV: CURRICULUM	11
Pillager Elementary School	11
Math	11
Reading	11
Pillager Middle School	11
Math	11
Reading	11
Pillager High School	11
Part V: STATUTE & STANDARDS	12
Minnesota State Statute	12
National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Programming Standards	13
Standard 1: Learning & Development	13
Standard 2: Assessment	13
Standard 3: Curriculum, Planning, & Instruction	13
Standard 4: Learning Environments	13
Standard 5: Programming	13
Standard 6: Professional Development	13
References	14

Introduction

Welcome to the Pillager Public Schools Gifted & Talented Program

Pillager Administration and Staff would like to welcome you to our community of learners. As a close-knit group of teachers and students, we look forward to working together to provide the best education experience possible. Gifted & Talented students, like all students, have unique strengths and growth areas, and Pillager School is committed to helping each student reach his or her potential. In an effort to meet this goal, Pillager School has created a comprehensive program that attempts to identify students who would benefit from services and curriculum different from that of the regular classroom. Overall, Pillager's Gifted & Talented Programming seeks to help the school district as a whole meet the needs of its diverse student population.

Contact Information

Elementary School Office

Phone: 218-746-2111

Fax: 218-746-2134

Email: elementary@isd116.org

Middle School Office

Phone: 218-746-2112

Fax: 218-746-2153

Email: middleschool@isd116.org

High School Office

Phone: 218-746-2113

Fax: 218-746-3406

Email: highschool@isd116.org

Gifted & Talented Committee

High School Principal – Jason Savage	746-2117
HS Guidance Counselor - Sue Turner	746-2116
HS Representative – Erin Anderson	746-2115
Middle School Principal – Wade Mortenson	746-2096
MS Guidance Counselor – Stacy Germundson	746-2097
MS Teacher Representative – Kaitlin Rondeau	746-2151
Elementary Principal – Josh Smith	746-2110
Elementary Teacher Representative – Wendy Hall	746-2139
Gifted & Talented Coordinator – Erin Anderson	746-2115

Part I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Beliefs

We believe...

- gifted and talented learners should learn and be challenged to ensure optimal growth, as should all children.
- gifted and talented learners have a right to receive an education commensurate with their abilities or performance.
- learners with gifts and talents have a unique set of cognitive/academic, social, and psychological needs that can be addressed in the school environment.
- giftedness and talent know no boundaries of socio-economic class, gender, or race.
- early and timely identification is essential for optimal levels of giftedness and talent to be developed.
- learners with high talent should be challenged on a daily basis in their specific talent area(s).
- learners with gifts need time and space to learn together.
- the education of gifted or talented learners is a shared responsibility among students, families, school, and community.

Definition

“Children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.”

– US Department of Education, 1993

“This definition of giftedness is the broadest and most comprehensive and is used by many school districts. It speaks of **talent**, which includes all areas of a child’s life: academic, artistic, athletic, and social. Most schools limit their definition and their programs to academics, but it is important to focus on **performance and accomplishment**. It is not enough to just have the talent; you must be using that talent to achieve at remarkably high levels. However, this definition does also recognize that while all very talented students have the potential to achieve at high levels, some may not have yet realized or demonstrated that potential. Such students may be underachievers, twice exceptional, or represent underserved groups who have not had a nurturing environment to bring out those talents. Finally, this definition is a **comparative** one; these students achieve or have the potential to achieve at levels way above their peers” (National Society for Gifted and Talented, 2016).

Goals

- Implement an ongoing identification process for grades K-12 based on multiple and specific criteria that will ensure every population has an equal opportunity for nomination, screening, and selection into the program
- Provide an array of learning experiences that are appropriately differentiated and meaningfully linked to core content
- Develop and expand higher order thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, along with critical thinking and reasoning
- Guide students to develop a healthy self-awareness of what it means to be gifted and encourage them to reach their potential and apply their talents toward responsible service to others
- Provide ongoing training opportunities for administrators, counselors, and teachers involved in serving the needs of gifted and talented students
- Encourage students to think not only of what is, but what can be

Mission

Based upon this set of beliefs, and building the district's general mission, Pillager School supports the need for students with gifts and talents to be provided with services apart from, but connected to, the organization's educational outcomes and core educational values. We will ensure that the unique needs of these students become the responsibility of the entire staff, in partnership with the community via:

- Ongoing, defensible identification of learners with gifts and/or talents
- Appropriate, systematic educational services matched to the learning, social, and emotional needs of these learners
- Professional development for those working closely with these students

Vision

Pillager School will strive to meet the needs of all learners and to challenge every student every day. In an effort to challenge a wide variety of advanced students, Pillager School will provide a wide variety of interventions and differentiated strategies while addressing intellectual, academic, social, and emotional needs.

Part II: SERVICES

Pillager School will provide targeted services for Gifted & Talented students in both reading and math as well as differentiated instruction in other subject areas.

Pillager School District

Differentiated Instruction

Pillager School has committed to providing the most individualized education possible for all students in the form of differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction is defined as a teacher's adapting to a student's needs in order to achieve maximum growth (Tomlinson & Allan, 2000). Teachers can differentiate instruction by varying the content, process, or product based on the student's readiness, interest, or learning profile. All teachers in the Pillager School District have been trained on differentiated instruction and implement it in their classrooms to benefit all students, including those in the Gifted and Talented program.

Grade Acceleration & Compacting

As administrators deem necessary, students may be assessed to determine the need for promotion to another grade level or completion of more than one grade level within a school year through a process referred to as compacting. The Gifted & Talented Coordinator will collect data, such as MCA and STAR scores, and will also proctor additional assessments as needed, which may include the CogAT or other ability tests. These steps will be taken in order to help each student meet his or her potential while taking the precious emotional maturity of each student into consideration.

Grading of Gifted & Talented Programs

Due to the increased rigor and complexity of the Gifted & Talented curriculum, all Gifted & Talented programs will be ungraded; however, teachers will continue to monitor all students' progress toward Common Core Standards and benchmarks and report achievement and growth regularly.

Pillager Elementary School

Pillager Elementary students in the Gifted & Talented Program may be clustered into one classroom under the direction of a certified educator. When students are broken into small groups for instruction in reading and/or math, the Gifted & Talented students will be grouped based on their needs with a regular education teacher in order to explore the specified Gifted & Talented curriculum. Students may be pulled out from another class to participate in gifted programming.

Pillager Middle School

Pillager Middle School will provide gifted content options in both reading and math. Language arts teachers may offer alternative novel units related to the same novel the rest of the class is reading; however, these novel units will require more critical thinking and advanced responses. Math students will complete material along with their classmates as a priority. Then they will be offered the opportunity to work on the gifted curriculum either individually or in small groups. Gifted and Talented math students may also have the option to participate in the Math Masters program where they will have the opportunity to compete with other advanced math students. As scheduling allows, students may be offered pull-out opportunities in reading and/or math.

Pillager High School

Pillager High School students in the Gifted & Talented Program have many educational opportunities, including College-in-the-School (CIS) classes, online classes, and independent study. CIS classes are offered for college credit and are taught by properly certified Pillager School teachers. Pillager works with Central Lakes College (CLC) in Brainerd to provide these classes. Students with other unique skills and interests may opt to take a class online, where the possibilities are endless. These classes are available to all students, but the student must demonstrate the ability to work independently and successfully manage time. High school students can also seek out a specific teacher and request an independent study course. In this case, students would work very closely with a particular staff member to explore a skill or interest in great depth, set relevant learning goals, and create a project, paper, or portfolio that communicates growth in the specified area.

Other Services

Gifted & Talented students will also have the opportunity to participate in activities that are offered to students throughout the district in order to develop various gifts and talents. These activities include, but are not limited to, the Art Show, Art Field Trip, History Posse, Knowledge Bowl, Math Masters, Science Fair, Spelling Bee, Theater Workshops, and the YAYA (Young Authors, Young Artists) Conference.

Part III: IDENTIFICATION

Pillager School implements a comprehensive identification strategy for the Gifted & Talented Program. This process incorporates two factors at the end of kindergarten and three factors at the end of fourth grade, with each factor weighted according to its importance for being successful in this program.

Identification Factors

The three identification factors include CogAT (Cognitive Ability Test) scores, MCA (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment) scores, and teacher recommendation. Once a student has been recommended either by a teacher or due to an MCA score, a student can be assessed with the CogAT in reading, mathematics, or both subject areas.

1. Each teacher will be able to recommend up to three students for the Gifted & Talented Program, and they may notify parents of their recommendation; concurrently, students who received a Minnesota percentile rank of 90% or higher on the MCA score the previous year in math and/or reading will be recommended for CogAT testing.
2. The Gifted & Talented Coordinator will review the MCA (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment) scores of all recommended students (not for kindergarten students).
3. Students who have been recommended by a teacher and/or whose MCA test scores are above 90% will be given the CogAT test.

At the end of kindergarten, Pillager School will use this matrix to identify Gifted & Talented students for grades 1-4.

ID Factor:				
CogAT	96-99% = 10	91-95% = 8	88-90% = 6	85-88% = 4
Teacher Recommendation		Highly recommended = 3	Recommended = 2	Weak Recommendation = 1

Total = _____/13

At the end of fourth grade, Pillager School will use this matrix to identify potential Gifted & Talented students.

ID Factor:				
CogAT	96-99% = 10	91-95% = 8	88-90% = 6	85-88% = 4
MCA	96-99% = 5	91-95 = 4	88-90% = 3	85-87% = 2
Teacher Recommendation		Highly recommended = 3	Recommended = 2	Weak Recommendation = 1

Total = _____/18

Once total scores have been calculated using the matrix, the Gifted & Talented Coordinator will determine how many and which students will receive services.

Students entering high school classes who are interested in the Gifted & Talented Program can be assessed at the request and expense of a parent or guardian.

Identification Timeline

<u>Month</u>	<u>Task</u>
September-March	Compile teacher recommendations
March-April	MCA testing
April-May	CogAT testing
May-June	Review data to determine G/T students
June-August	Contact parents concerning G/T students
August	Contact teachers concerning G/T students
September-May	Implement G/T services and curriculum

Part IV: CURRICULUM

Pillager Elementary School

Math

The Pillager G/T Program will implement a variety of resources in order to meet the needs of students in the area of mathematics. Potential options include IXL, Kahn Academy, Beast Academy, and materials published by The College of William and Mary. These publications are created with Gifted & Talented students in mind and meet their unique academic needs.

Reading

Students in the G/T Program for Reading will enjoy advanced literature units created by Junior Great Books, Navigators, The College of William and Mary, and/or Michael Clay Thompson. These units revolve around complex themes that will capture the intellect and imagination of the Gifted & Talented students.

Pillager Middle School

Math

Middle School Math students in the Gifted & Talented Program will be required to first demonstrate mastery of each daily lesson with their whole class. After they have done this, G/T students will have access to the G/T curriculum. Fifth- and sixth-grade students will work on material from Beast Academy either independently or in small groups. Seventh-grade students will access Art of Problem Solving's Pre-Algebra course, and eighth-grade students will work within the Algebra curriculum from Art of Problem Solving.

Reading

Pillager Middle School students will use novel units and other resources created by the William & Mary School for Gifted Education. Often these units will apply to novels the entire class is reading together; however, the student may also complete a novel unit independently.

Pillager High School

The curriculum of College-in-the-School (CIS), on-line, and independent study classes will be determined by each individual instructor, at times in consultation with the student.

Part V: STATUTE & STANDARDS

Minnesota State Statute

120B.15 GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS PROGRAMS.

(a) School districts may identify students, locally develop programs addressing instructional and affective needs, provide staff development, and evaluate programs to provide gifted and talented students with challenging and appropriate educational programs.

(b) School districts must adopt guidelines for assessing and identifying students for participation in gifted and talented programs consistent with section 120B.11, subdivision 2, clause (2). The guidelines should include the use of:

(1) multiple and objective criteria; and

(2) assessments and procedures that are valid and reliable, fair, and based on current theory and research. Assessments and procedures should be sensitive to underrepresented groups, including, but not limited to, low-income, minority, twice-exceptional, and English learners.

(c) School districts must adopt procedures for the academic acceleration of gifted and talented students consistent with section 120B.11, subdivision 2, clause (2). These procedures must include how the district will:

(1) assess a student's readiness and motivation for acceleration; and

(2) match the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum to a student to achieve the best type of academic acceleration for that student.

(d) School districts must adopt procedures consistent with section 124D.02, subdivision 1, for early admission to kindergarten or first grade of gifted and talented learners consistent with section 120B.11, subdivision 2, clause (2). The procedures must be sensitive to underrepresented groups.

(see <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/?id=189&year=2016&type=0#laws.25.14.0>)

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Programming Standards

Standard 1: Learning & Development

Educators, recognizing the learning and developmental differences of students with gifts and talents, promote ongoing self-understanding, awareness of their needs, and cognitive and affective growth of these students in school, home, and community settings to ensure specific student outcomes.

Standard 2: Assessment

Assessments provide information about identification, learning progress and outcomes, and evaluation of programming for students with gifts and talents in all domains.

Standard 3: Curriculum, Planning, & Instruction

Educators apply the theory and research-based models of curriculum and instruction related to students with gifts and talents and respond to their needs by planning, selecting, adapting, and creating culturally relevant curriculum and by using a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to ensure specific student outcomes.

Standard 4: Learning Environments

Learning environments foster personal and social responsibility, multicultural competence, and interpersonal and technical communication skills for leadership in the 21st century to ensure specific student outcomes.

Standard 5: Programming

Educators are aware of empirical evidence regarding (a) the cognitive, creative, and affective development of learners with gifts and talents, and (b) programming that meets their concomitant needs. Educators use this expertise systematically and collaboratively to develop, implement, and effectively manage comprehensive services for students with a variety of gifts and talents to ensure specific student outcomes.

Standard 6: Professional Development

All educators (administrators, teachers, counselors, and other instructional support staff) build their knowledge and skills using the NAGC-CEC Teacher Standards for Gifted and Talented Education and the National Staff Development Standards. They formally assess professional development needs related to the standards, develop and monitor plans, systematically engage in training to meet the identified needs, and demonstrate mastery of standard. They access resources to provide for release time, funding for continuing education, and substitute support. These practices are judged through the assessment of relevant student outcomes.

View the full document at <http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/standards/K-12%20programming%20standards.pdf>

References

- Minn. Stat. § 120B.15. (2014). Gifted and talented students programs. Retrieved from <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/?id=189&year=2016&type=0#laws.25.14.0>
- National Association for Gifted Children. (2016). 2010 Pre-k-grade 12 gifted programming standards. Retrieved from <http://www.nsgt.org/giftedness-defined/>
- National Society for Gifted and Talented. (2016). Giftedness defined. Retrieved from <http://www.nsgt.org/giftedness-defined/>
- Tomlinson, C. & Allan, S. (2000). Leadership for differentiating schools and classrooms. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/100216/chapters/Understanding-Differentiated-Instruction@-Building-a-Foundation-for-Leadership.aspx>