

HANDBOOK



AAACS GIFTED AND TALENTED

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VISION - MISSION

Aurora Academy Charter School is committed to an educational program that recognizes individual student differences, strengths, interests and needs. Our goal is to ensure that all students will be given the opportunities that challenge them and provide creative thinking experiences through a system of support, programming and advocacy.

MEET THE STAFF

My name is Amy Greenwood, and I am the Gifted and Talented Coordinator here at Aurora Academy. I am so excited to be starting a new year with such an amazing group of students, staff, and parents.

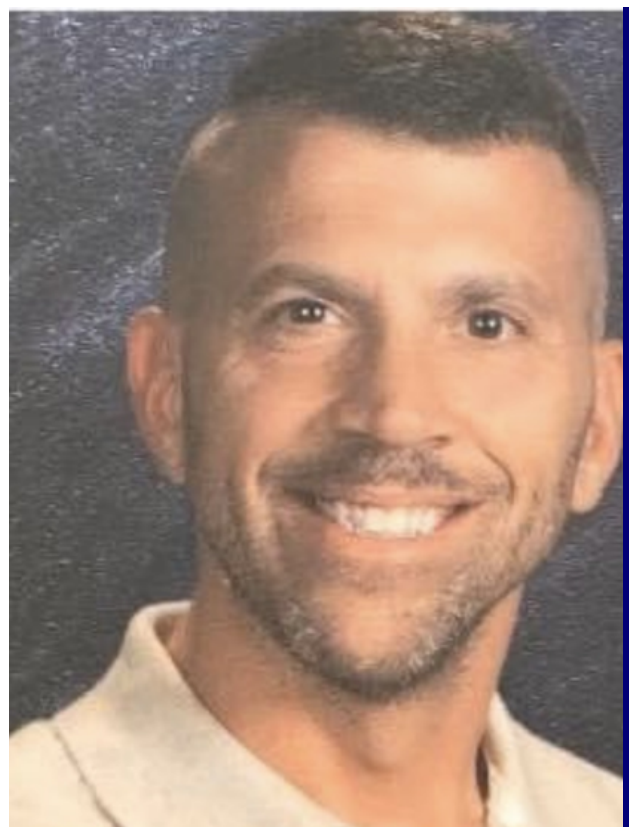
Let me tell you a little about myself. I was born in Ohio but have lived in Colorado for most of my life. I'm a big Cincinnati Bengals, Denver Broncos, and Cincinnati Reds fan! I've always enjoyed watching and playing sports in my free time, especially volleyball. I also enjoy reading, hiking, music, and hanging out with my friends.

I have my master's degree in Elementary Education from University of Northern Colorado and an undergraduate degree from Colorado State. I am also certified in Gifted and Talented and Technology. I hope my knowledge and experience will help all students in this school achieve their goals.



Franky Wade

I am excited to be the 5-8 grade assistant principal at Aurora Academy. In the past, I have taught grades 5-12 as a science teacher. My leadership experience began as a high school science department head, dean of culture and instruction, instructional coach, and assistant principal. I have had the opportunity to teach in various parts of the country (Memphis, TN, New Orleans, LA, Tampa, FL, Louisville, KY and Denver, CO). The past three years I served as the assistant principal at Ricks Center for Gifted Children. Prior to that, I served as the Dean of Culture at Boston p-8 and the Dean of Instruction at Aurora Central High School. I hold a bachelor's degree in secondary science education from Mississippi State University, master's degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Denver and am currently seeking an EdD from the University of Denver with a focus on equitable and social justice centered curriculum and instruction. It is an honor to be back serving as a school leader in Aurora and looking forward to the opportunity to support the Aurora Academy community. Go Falcons!





AURORA ACADEMY

DEFINITION OF GIFTEDNESS

The Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA) defines gifted children as:

Those persons between the ages of four and twenty-one whose aptitude or competence in abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment in one or more domains are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Gifted children are hereafter referred to as gifted students. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services. Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:

- General or specific intellectual ability
- Specific academic aptitude
- Creative or productive thinking
- Leadership abilities
- Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities 12.01(16)

TYPES OF GIFTEDNESS

General Intellectual Ability: Characteristics for these students include exceptional ability in both verbal and non-verbal reasoning. This is often characterized by advanced vocabulary and abstract reasoning. Generally, they are capable of achieving in all academic subjects.

Specific Intellectual or Academic Ability: Characteristics for these students include exceptional ability in either verbal or non-verbal reasoning. They are exceptionally high achievers in a specific academic subject to the extent that the normal curriculum in that subject is insufficient. This specific ability may be displayed as exceptional understanding of a skill in a vocational area.

Creative or Productive Thinking Ability: Characteristics for these students include exceptional ability in developing original and/or unusual ideas, especially as solutions to problems. They are very imaginative and often willing to take risks when offering ideas.

Psychosocial Ability: Characteristics for these students include exceptional managerial or leadership ability. This is often characterized by the ability to organize people and tasks, and motivate others. Often these students have strong moral and social concerns. These students often relate well to adults and peers and can be relied on to accept and carry out responsibilities.

Psychomotor Ability: These students show exceptional ability in fine and/or gross motor skills. They have exceptional ability in balance, strength, physical endurance and agility, as well as aptitude in fine and industrial crafts.

Visual or Performing Arts Ability: These students have exceptional ability in art, music, drama, or creative writing. They are highly committed to their art form and often show imagination and originality within general artistic disciplines. Psychomotor Ability: These students show exceptional ability in fine and/or gross motor skills. They have exceptional ability in balance, strength, physical endurance and agility



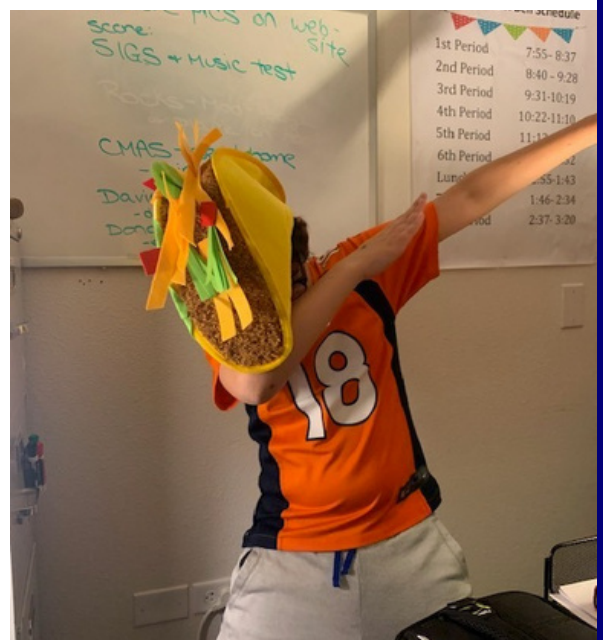
TRAITS OF A GIFTED LEARNER

1. **Advanced Thinking and Comprehension:** Gifted children often grasp concepts, draw connections, and comprehend subjects far more quickly and in greater depth than their age peers.
2. **Emotional Intensity:** Many gifted children showcase strong feelings and emotions at a very young age, which might sometimes make them seem overly sensitive.
3. **Heightened Sense of Self-awareness:** This trait often accompanies their deep emotional experiences. Gifted children can be acutely aware of their feelings, strengths, and vulnerabilities.
4. **Highly Developed Curiosity:** They frequently exhibit an insatiable appetite for new information, always eager to learn and explore.
5. **Excellent Memory:** Their ability to retain and recall information is often above average, aiding them in their academic pursuits.

Common Gifted Traits

- Intellectual Curiosity
- Creative Thinking
- Learns Rapidly
- Challenges Authority
- Advanced Vocabulary
- The ability to focus on a subject intently for an extended period of time
- Difficulty making transitions
- Engages easily with adults
- Perfectionism
- A complex sense of humor
- A need to explore subjects in surprising depth
- Extreme Intensity
- Emotional Sensitivity
- High Energy Levels
- Advanced Empathy
- Nonconformity
- A Vivid Imagination
- The ability to think about problems in "out of the box" ways

www.elivivita.com/coaching/





IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Steps:

1. Screener - All new and never been tested, second and sixth graders will be tested for gifted and talented services - Identification process may include a review of test scores, and parent, teacher, or self-nomination.
2. Nominations by parents, students and/or teachers
3. Collect a body of evidence - Potential students are identified through a robust body of evidence including test scores, the use of parent and teacher scales for identifying gifted students including Use of ACCESS scores to help nominate ELL
4. Review the body of evidence with the GT committee (usually the students' teacher(s), GT coordinator, admin, counselors, and ELD staff, parents and student)
5. Make a final determination
6. The results of this test will be used to help identify abilities and aptitudes in our students and can be used to make programming and curricular adjustments for all students.
7. Develop Advanced Learning Plans for identified GT and goals for identified HP
8. Parents will be notified within thirty calendar days of their child's test results
9. If identified, students will receive daily instruction for Gifted Services in their area of giftedness.
10. If student is not identified, staff will continue to collect evidence and find other ways to qualify student.

ADVANCED LEARNING PLANS

Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA) defines "Advanced Learning Plan" as: A written record of a gifted student's strengths, academic and affective learning goals and the resulting programming utilized with each gifted child and considered in educational planning and decision making. 12.01(2)

An ALP shall be developed for every gifted student according to the student's determined area(s) of giftedness, interests, and instructional, and affective needs.

The Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) is a legal document [22-20-R-12.00, C.R.S.] outlining programming for identified gifted students and is used as a guide for educational planning and decision-making. The Exceptional Children's Educational Act states that there will be ALP content and procedures set in Rule for statewide implementation; and that goals in the ALP are standards-based. Sections 12.02(2)(f) – 12.02(2)(g)(vi) of the Rules clarify ALP content, procedures and responsibilities. For high school students the ALP may be blended with an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) if all contents of the ALP are inclusive in the ICAP, including achievement and affective goals.



PROGRAMMING

Gifted and Talented Development:

Aurora Academy is dedicated to delivering scholars with opportunities that challenge them to a level appropriate with their academic and affective needs which enables us to nurture their diverse talents and abilities.

- Differentiated strategies based on areas of giftedness included in the lesson design and execution.
- Provide support in dealing with social and emotional issues
- Help develop self-esteem and self-awareness
- Opportunities for student to interact and structured conversations within the classroom
- Align instruction and differentiation with National Association of Gifted Students standards
- Uses weekly and quarterly assessments to guide future lessons and provide student feedback
- Instruction that embeds meaning and context (National Literacy Panel, 2007)
- Ongoing school-wide Professional Development for teachers and GT staff
- Communication and collaboration with GT staff, Administration, and content area staff
- GT staff presentations and resource sharing
- Monitored by a gifted and talented certified or endorsed instructor.
- Include differentiation strategies for 2all types of learners

AURORA ACADEMY GT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Yearly GT Information Night/Showcase
- Parent surveys and input when creating students goals
- Parents are notified within thirty calendar days of their child's ALP (advanced learning plan)
- GT parents are provided timely communication
- AACCS GT Website has useful program information, resources, and links
- Quarterly GT updates to faculty and families through IC and email communication
- Students share their progress with parents via student-led conferences



PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

What can you do to help your child?



- [A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children](#) by James Webb, Janet Gore, Edward Amend, and Arlene DeVries
- [Developing Math Talent: A Comprehensive Guide to Math Education for Gifted Students in Elementary and Middle School](#) by Susan Assouline and Ann Lupkowski-Shoplik
- [Doing Poorly on Purpose: Strategies to Reverse UnDoing Poorly on Purpose: Strategies to Reverse Underachievement and Respect Student Dignity](#) a book by James R. DeLisle (bookshop.org) underachievement and Respect Student Dignity by James Delisle
- [Emotional Intensity in Gifted Students: Helping Kids Cope with Explosive Feelings](#) by Christine Fonseca
- [From School to Homeschool: Should You Homeschool Your Gifted Child?](#) by Suki Wessling
- [Genius Denied: How to Stop Wasting Our Brightest Young Minds](#) by Jan Davidson, Bob Davidson, and Laura Vanderkam
- [Make Your Worrier a Warrior: A Guide to Conquering Your Child's Fears](#) by Dan Peters
- [Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnoses of Gifted Children and Adults: ADHD, Bipolar, OCD, Asperger's, Depression, and Other Disorders](#) by James Webb, Edward Amend, and Paul Beljan
- [Parenting Gifted Children 101: An Introduction to Gifted Kids and Their Needs](#) by Tracy Inman and Jana Kirchner
- [Smart but Scattered: The Revolutionary "Executive Skills" Approach to Helping Kids Reach Their Potential](#) by Peg Dawson and Richard Guare
- [Smart Kids With Learning Difficulties: Overcoming Obstacles and Realizing Potential](#) by Rich Weinfeld, Linda Barnes-Robinson, Sue Jeweler, and Betty Roffman Shevitz
- [Smart Parenting for Smart Kids: Nurturing Your Child's True Potential](#) by Eileen Kennedy-Moore and Mark Lowenthal
- [Some of My Best Friends Are Books: Guiding Gifted Readers from Pre-School to High School](#) by Judith Wynn Halsted
- [The Gifted Teen Survival Guide: Smart, Sharp, and Ready for \(Almost\) Anything](#) by Judy Galbraith and James Delisle
- [The Explosive Child: A New Approach for Understanding and Parenting Easily Frustrated, Chronically Inflexible Children](#) by Ross Greene

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

What can you do to help your child?

- 1. Coordinate, facilitate, or provide transportation for extensions or opportunities outside of school**
- 2. Offer support with content extension opportunities or assignments**
- 3. Monitor student progress and satisfaction**
- 4. Commit to attend parent, teacher, student conferences to review academic achievement and social-emotional development**
- 5. Provide homework space and time**
- 6. Establish ongoing collaboration with teachers and your child; be as involved as possible**
- 7. Talk about/ provide support with homework and assignments**
- 8. Model mistakes and humor in fixing them**
- 9. Support with school attendance**
- 10. Help your child with time management**
- 11. Help your child with organizational skills**
- 12. Provide support in planning and completing long term projects**
- 13. Celebrate school successes Assist student with setting and reaching goals**
- 14. Seek opportunities to praise your child on his/her effort rather than innate ability**
- 15. Encourage child to equate effort with success**

USEFUL WEBSITES

National Association for Gifted Children: The National Association for Gifted Children is one of the best places for parents of gifted children to find resources, reading, help, and advice on raising an exceptional child. <http://www.nagc.org/>

Gifted Child Society: The Gifted Child Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to furthering the cause of gifted children. Through their website, parents can find helpful information and learn about seminars and workshops they can attend. <http://www.gifted.org/>

SENG: SENEG is short for Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted and is an organization that wants to help ensure that gifted children are understood, accepted, nurtured, and supported by their families, schools, and workplaces. <http://sengifted.org/about-seng/>

Mensa for Kids: Mensa embraces younger members through this fun website, offering up monthly themes to get kids reading and learning at an advanced level.

<https://www.mensaforkids.org/>

Center for Talented Youth: Located at Johns Hopkins, this organization engages gifted kids and their families through programs, summer classes, and even a bi-monthly magazine.

<https://cty.jhu.edu/>

Gifted Guru: Head to this website to hear from Lisa Van Gemert, a gifted youth specialist for Mensa. You'll find resources, ideas, and tips for teachers and parents of gifted children.

<http://www.giftedguru.com/>

Hoagies Gifted: full of resources, articles, books and links to help and support parents, teachers, and gifted children alike. <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/>

Byrdseed: Ian Byrd's website is geared toward teachers of gifted children, but there are many resources and ideas that can be used by parents, as well. <https://www.byrdseed.com/>

Gifted Development Center: Looking for information about giftedness and how to raise a gifted child? Dr. Linda Silverman provides both on this helpful site.

<http://www.gifteddevelopment.com/overview-giftedness/what-is-giftedness>

Gifted Child Today: This open-access journal is a great read for parents who want to learn more about how to cater to the needs of their gifted child.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/home/gct>

Exquisite Minds: Parents and teachers who work with gifted children can find resources, online games, tips, tools, and more on this social site. <http://www.exquisite-minds.com/>

TeachFine on Gifted and Ed Tech: This site gathers recent articles from around the web related to gifted learners and educational technology. It is moderated by Audrey Peacock, a gifted specialist and former President of the Alabama Association for Gifted Children (AAGC).

<https://educationaladvancement.org/grc/teachfine-on-gifted-ed-tech/>

Colorado Department of Education (CDE): Information for the parent of a child enrolled in school in Colorado, from the Colorado Academic Standards for all content areas by grade level to the state's GT identification requirements. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/>

Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented (CAGT): Fosters an understanding of all gifted children and their exceptional needs, and to advocate for appropriate education through partnerships with educators, parents, administrators, legislators, and the general public.

<http://www.coloradogifted.org/>

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