



**FRONTIER**  
**Gifted Education**

# Gifted Education Handbook

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# Gifted and Talented Definitions

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Federal Definition    *"(22) GIFTED AND TALENTED- The term 'gifted and talented', when used with respect to students, children, or youth, means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities." [Title IX, Part A, Definition 22. (2002)]*

State of Missouri Definition    *Section 162.675. RSMo defines gifted children as "those children who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum."*

## Frontier Schools – Gifted Education Staff

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### **Vision**

The vision of Frontier Schools is to become a vibrant, innovative educational leader collaborating with other academic, business and community institutions.

### **Mission**

The mission of Frontier Schools is to empower students to discover and develop their gifts and talents:

- in pursuit of college readiness, productive citizenship, and lifelong learning
- within an atmosphere of academic excellence with a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) focus
- to prepare for the STEM-related jobs now projected for the American workforce
- meeting the needs of all, including those whose primary interest is non-STEM
- providing flexibility to expand in the future to a STEAM environment by adding an Arts component

## Characteristics of Gifted Learners

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All children may exhibit special talents and/or traits; however, gifted learners possess characteristics that are developed to a much greater extent than other students of the same age, background, and experience. Gifted learners require instructional modifications in order to address their exceptionalities. The table below provides insight into the differences between gifted learners and students who are bright, or academically talented.

Bright Student	Gifted Learner
Is interested	Is highly curious
Has good ideas	Has wild, silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well
Answers the question	Discusses in detail
Listens with interest	Shows strong feelings and opinions
Top of the group	Beyond the group
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults or older peers
Completes assignments	Initiates projects
Good at memorizing answers	Good at guessing correct answers
Enjoys straight forward projects	Thrives on complexity
Is pleased with their own learning and work	Is highly self-critical
Learns with ease	Already knows

Source: Bright Child Gifted Learner, by Janice Szabos, Challenge Magazine, 1989, issue 34, p.4

# Gifted Identification Procedures

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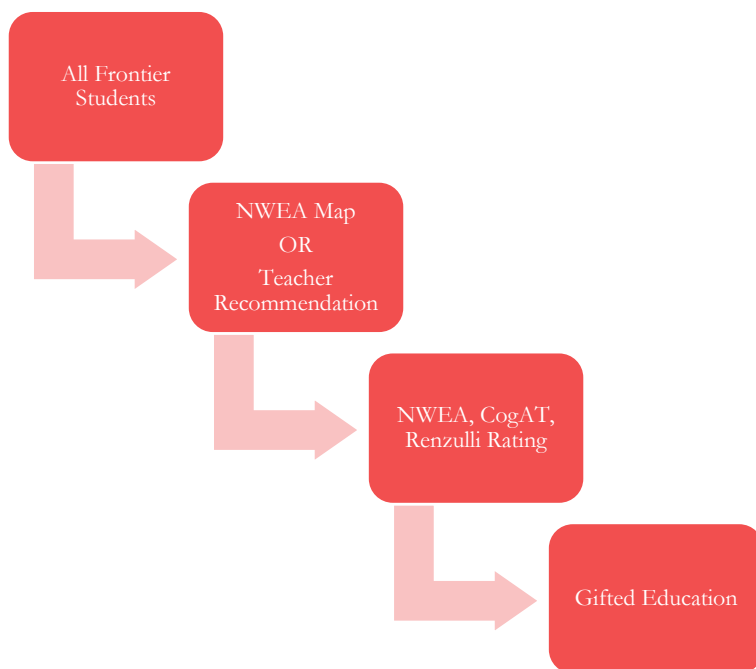
Frontier Schools Gifted Education identification protocol is prepared according with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines.

## Phase 1 - SCREENING:

All students at Frontier Schools undergo the initial screening phase via the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress assessment (NWEA Map) each year. Students scoring at or above the 90th percentile on one or more of the Reading, Mathematics, and Science subtests are automatically considered for the second identification phase. Frontier teachers can also nominate students for further assessment during the screening phase.

## PHASE 2 - EVALUATION AND PLACEMENT:

Following the initial screening and referral, students take the cognitive ability test (CogAT). Teachers provide more information regarding the students by completing the Renzulli-Hartman rating scales. Students who meet the minimum district score line in NWEA Map, CogAT and Renzulli-Hartman rating are recommended for placement in the gifted program pending parental or guardian approval.



## TIMELINE:

**Newly enrolled students:** Fall semester - identification, start of services.

**Continuing students:** Spring semester - identification, start of services.

## Transfer and Exiting Procedures

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### *Transfer*

Transfer students who have been identified and served previously in a gifted program will automatically enter or will be referred for screening and placement to the Frontier Gifted Education Program after the student's records have been reviewed by the gifted committee. Frontier Schools reserve the right to administer its own identification protocol if the gifted committee finds it necessary. It will be the responsibility of the parents to provide appropriate documentation from their previous district in a timely manner.

### *Exit Procedures*

Students placed in the Frontier School's Gifted and Talented Program may be exited when it is determined that it would be in the best interest of the student and/or the program to discontinue the student's participation.

One of more of the following conditions must be met:

A. The parent may request that their student be removed from the program. Appropriate documentation, signed by the parent(s) and the principal is placed in the student's gifted/talented records at the conclusion of this process. The student must remain out of the program for one school year and must be rescreened, tested, and requalify before re-entry into the program.

B. The gifted/talented teacher(s), principal, or counselor may recommend the exiting of a student who, in their opinion, may suffer from undue emotional stress or anxiety by continued participation in the program or who may be extreme behavioral problems that the distract from the education of others in the class. In such cases, a conference between the parent(s) or guardian(s) and appropriate school personnel will be held.

C. If a student is encountering temporary problems, the Screening and Selection Committee may "furlough" a student for one year or less. If a student is not ready to reenter the program by the end of the school year, the student will be exited.

## Talent Pool

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Talent  
Pool

Talent Pool students can be included in the Gifted Education classes and activities depending on the schedule and availability of the Gifted Teacher. The number of Talent Pool students is determined per grade level. Student enrollment is revised each semester or as needed. Gifted Teacher can make recommendations on the scope of student enrollment based on student effort and performance in the program.

## Gifted Education Services

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### **Elementary School (K-5) – approved by DESE**

Elementary school students identified for the gifted education program attend a gifted pull-out program. Students spend at least 150 minutes a week with a certified gifted teacher in a dedicated and a specifically designed classroom – the “Creativity Garden” – working on interdisciplinary STEM focused projects. Students learn about coding, robotics and scientific inquiry via project based and problem based activities. Gifted teacher also monitors the overall student academic progress via monthly “check ins”. Students are also encouraged to participate in at least one academic competition during a school year.

### **Middle school (6-8)**

Middle school students identified for the gifted education program attend a gifted pull-out program once a week. Students spend time working with a certified gifted teacher in a dedicated and a specifically designed classroom – the “Creativity Garden” – working on interdisciplinary STEM focused projects. Students learn about coding, robotics and scientific inquiry via project based and problem based activities. Gifted teacher also monitors the overall student academic progress via monthly “check ins”. Students are also encouraged to participate in at least one academic competition during a school year.

### **High school (9-12)**

High school students identified for the gifted education program meet with a certified gifted teacher on weekly bases. Students discuss college and career exploration, counseling and readiness topics in a mentorship style program. Gifted teacher also monitors the overall student academic progress via monthly “check ins” and counselor collaboration.

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **What is the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)?**

Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) appraises the level and pattern of verbal, quantitative, and spatial (nonverbal) reasoning abilities for students from kindergarten through grade 12. These abilities reflect the overall efficiency of cognitive processes and strategies that enable individuals to learn new tasks and solve problems. Because these abilities are closely related to an individual's success in school in virtually all subjects, CogAT test results are helpful in planning effective instructional programs and adapting instruction in ways that enhance the student's chances of success in learning.

### **What is the NWEA Map test?**

Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®) – nationally normed computerized tests are adaptive and offered in Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics. When taking a MAP® test, the difficulty of each question is based on how well a student answers all the previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. In an optimal test, a student answers approximately half the items correctly and half incorrectly. The final score is an estimate of the student's achievement level.

### **What if my student missed the cut off score by only a few points, can special consideration be given?**

Students missing the gifted program placement by a small margin may be included in the Talent Pool classes and activities based on the availability of a gifted teacher. Their progress is closely monitored throughout the school year.

### **Once students have been identified for the gifted program, will they have to qualify for the program every year?**

No, once your student has been identified for the Gifted Education program, they need no further testing.