

# RUSD GUIDE TO GIFTED AND ADVANCED IDENTIFICATION AND PROGRAMING



**RACINE  
UNIFIED**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## Our Mission: Educate Every Student to Succeed

### RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S NORTH STAR VISION

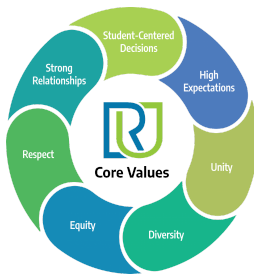
In RUSD, we are focused on our North Star Vision that all students will graduate career and/or college ready. This vision aligns with our mission of “Educating Every Student to Succeed.” Our North Star Vision focuses on the whole child. It aligns with the Board of Education’s Results Policies that establish expectations for all graduates to successfully demonstrate:

- Academic achievement
- Workplace skills
- Global citizenship
- Life skills



Key benchmarks related to academics, social/emotional and career/life skills at grade levels along the way are used to monitor student progress. In RUSD, our Vision, along with our Core Values, drives our work to ensure every student exceeds expectations.

### Core Values



- **Student Centered Decisions**—We are best when our students are first. All decisions are centered on the needs of the student
- **High Expectations**—We hold high expectations for our students and ourselves
- **Equity**—Every student deserves a high quality education with resources aligned to their needs
- **Diversity**—We believe our diversity is our strength and an asset
- **Strong Relationships**—Success requires strong, successful partnerships with our colleagues, families and community
- **Unity**—We thrive when we support one another and work collaboratively
- **Respect**—Everyone deserves a respectful, safe and positive school environment

## **Vision**

Racine Unified School District's mission includes the unique educational needs of our Gifted and Advanced students (defined as students enrolled in public schools who give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, visual/performing arts, leadership or specific academic areas).

## **Philosophy**

While all students have personal strengths, some have abilities, or the potential, to go beyond the core curriculum. Our gifted students will:

- Reflect the diverse population of our district
- Receive instruction from highly trained educators

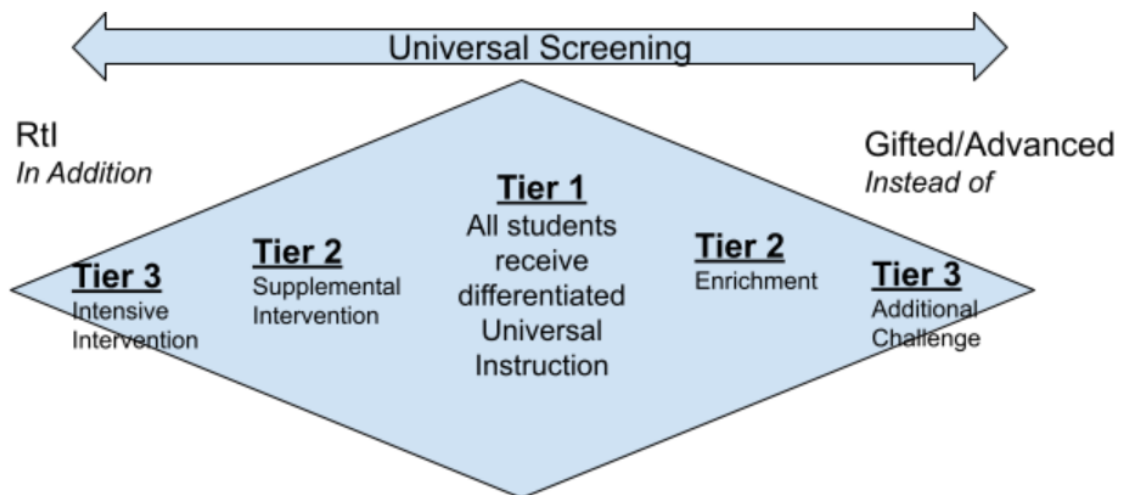
Racine Unified School District is committed to systematically and continuously identifying and monitoring students and agrees that gifted education is an integral part of the school district's staffing and funding plans. RUSD works to ensure a collaborative education that includes students, teachers, administrators, parents and the community.

## **Legal Reference** (Appendix A)

- **Wisconsin Gifted and Talented Statutes and Rules**
- **Administrative Rule 8.01(2) (t) 2.**
- **National Standards**
- **Racine Unified School District Administrative Regulations**
- [\*Statutes and Rules for Gifted Education\*](#)

## Gifted and Advanced Support Program Services

Racine Unified School District uses the Wisconsin Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Support (MTSS). Within this framework that focuses on the whole child, a Response to Intervention (RtI) three-tiered model is utilized to provide appropriate services for all students, including those with advanced needs. The essential elements of high quality instruction (Appendix B), ongoing assessment, and collaboration systematically interact with the RtI framework to provide the structures to increase success for all students. The MTSS process provides students with culturally responsive practices which are evident within each of the essential elements. The levels of support and intensity vary based upon student responsiveness to instruction and intervention.



## **RTI System of Support K-8**

- Academic needs of students will ideally be met in the classroom by the classroom teacher (**universal instruction: Tier 1**)
- Academic needs of the few (students who consistently demonstrate mastery of skills through classroom work and screening scores) will be met through differentiated lessons and materials in the classroom by the classroom teacher **enrichment (Tier 2)**
- Occasionally, there are few students who will need even more challenge than differentiated lessons and require **additional challenge (Tier 3)** from the classroom teacher with assistance from the Gifted and Advanced Support teacher.
  - These few students may be considered for Gifted Identification
  - Students who are identified as Gifted may receive a DEP (Differentiated Education Plan) to address unmet needs which includes recommendations for challenging the student in the classroom
  - There is not a specialized Gifted Curriculum or pull-out program. All needs are met in the classroom by the classroom teacher with support from the Gifted and Advanced Support Teacher.

## **Progress Monitoring**

When a student is receiving Tier 3 intensive Instruction, the use of progress monitoring (for example: pre-tests, above grade level AimsWeb Plus, product performance, grades, Map test results, exemplar comparison, rubrics) may be used to collect data to support a student's nomination and identification process.

## **High School Program**

Meeting the academic needs of high school gifted and advanced learners is primarily met through the variety of available courses including honors and AP courses. Guidance counselors are available to provide advice in choosing appropriate courses.

## **Nominating for Gifted and Talented Identification**

A student receiving Tier 3 Intensive Instruction for at least 4 cycles of MAP data (with supporting evidence which includes Progress Monitoring data) can be nominated for gifted identification in the areas of General Intellectual and/or Specific Academic.

- Students may also be nominated in the areas of: Creative Thinking, Leadership, Visual/Performing Arts using criterion other than MAP data (Appendix C)

A review of the nomination form and rating scales will result in a meeting to discuss student nomination, progress, and needs. A decision will be made to move forward with testing or not. Testing may result in the following:

- If testing indicates a formal identification for giftedness, a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP) may be developed to address unmet needs. A DEP is only written to address unmet needs and is only used as long as required to meet the needs of a student
  - If a DEP is written:
    - The DEP will be reviewed annually
      - if needed, the DEP will be updated to address the issue of unmet needs.
      - if needs are met, a note will be made in the DEP to reflect this
      - Ongoing and new DEP's will be shared with teachers yearly.
- If testing determines that a student does not meet the criterion for gifted identification, the student may still need differentiated instruction and will remain fluid in all tiers.

Students are continually monitored within a MTSS system using a Universal Screener that provides useful data.

## **Specific Procedures for Gifted Identification**

### **General Intellectual and/or Specific Academic Subject**

- Student has consistently received Tier 3 instruction (4 cycles of MAP data)
- Grades—receives highest grade available at the time for specific academic area
- Nomination form (Appendix C) is completed by teacher or parent
- Home Rating Scale (provided by GAST)
- School Rating Scale (provided by GAST)
- Meeting
- Gifted/Advanced Support Teacher will administer appropriate assessments

### **Creative Thinking**

- Nomination form (Appendix C) is completed by teacher or parent
- Home Rating Scale (provided by GAST)
- School Rating Scale (provided by GAST)
- Meeting
- Gifted/Advanced Support Teacher will administer appropriate assessments

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

- Nomination form (Appendix C) is completed by teacher or parent
- The classroom teacher will complete an evaluation scale.
- Specialists in the indicated subject will complete an evaluation scale.
- Meeting
- Supporting evidence (2 from below)
  - Completed RUSD evaluation form(s) of performance or product (by school or private tutor/judge).
  - Classroom performance—Grades in subject area above average
  - Evidence of superior performance in local, state, or national contests/competitions

### **Leadership**

- Nomination form (Appendix C) is completed by teacher or parent .
- Home Rating Scale (provided by GAST)
- School Rating Scale (provided by GAST)
- Meeting
- Gifted/Advanced Support Teacher will administer appropriate assessments
- Supporting evidence (2 from below)
  - Student generated evidence (awards and recognitions)
  - Evidence of participation in leadership activities
    - Playground patrol, cafeteria crew, hall monitor, first chair in band, peer mediation, athletic team captain, student council, etc
  - Endorsement by teacher, parent/guardian or other (scouts, community sponsored activities, community volunteering)



## Acceleration Policy

Racine Unified School District recognizes when a gifted student displays gifts in one or several areas of the curriculum, special considerations *may* be needed. While Differentiated instruction, challenge resources, pace, complexity and depth of lessons meet most students' needs, in *rare* cases, subject acceleration or grade level acceleration is considered. These terms are defined as:

- **Differentiated Instruction**- Increased pace of instruction, greater complexity in thinking, and providing avenues to depth within the discipline.
- **Subject Acceleration**—A student moves to an advanced grade level in one or more subjects but remains identified with his/her own age classmates.
- **Grade Level Acceleration**—A student is advanced to the next grade level in all subject areas on a full-time basis (grade skipping)

If accelerating for the next school year, the Request for Acceleration form (Appendix D) should be completed by teacher or parent and submitted by April 1 of the current school year. Referral for second semester acceleration should be submitted by November 15 of the current school year.

## Subject/Grade Acceleration

An acceleration scale is utilized to make effective decisions regarding subject or grade level acceleration. The scale objectively analyzes major factors considered when deciding whether or not to accelerate. The acceleration process is as follows:

- A. Request for Acceleration Form (Appendix D)
  1. Acceleration request reviewed
  2. If acceleration is a possibility, tests of achievement, aptitude and ability are administered to the student to determine if the acceleration scale is viable.
  3. If continuing the acceleration scale, there are critical issues that may discontinue the process.
    - a. Student is against acceleration
    - b. Sibling in same current grade
    - c. Sibling in receiving grade
  4. Determination made to accelerate the student or continue with Tier 3 differentiation strategies.

Should other critical issues present themselves during testing, the process changes to differentiated instruction.

## Early Entrance to Kindergarten

Racine Unified School District (RUSD) follows State law, Wis. Stat. Sec. (118.14(1) (a), which specifies that to enter five-year-old kindergarten; children must be five years of age by September 1. Occasionally, exceptions to this policy are made.

*Caution:*

*Research indicates that early entrance, early reading ability, and early math ability are not a predictor for success in school. In fact, children with strong early reading skills often plateau by third grade. Children who enter kindergarten early may experience social or emotional difficulties due to their immaturity. As they progress through school, children who are young for their grade level may incur more challenges fitting in with their peers in social situations.*

Racine Unified School District takes the issue of early entrance very seriously and may screen very few children per year. Few children are found eligible for early entrance to five-year-old kindergarten.

Racine Unified School District has developed standard criteria and procedures (Admin. Reg.) to allow for careful consideration of parent/guardian(s)' request for early entrance to five-year-old kindergarten. Criteria include:

- The child turns 5 by September 30
- The child demonstrates:
  - academic achievement
  - social-emotional growth
  - physical maturity

Parents wishing to apply for early entrance should print the Application for Early Entrance to 5-year-old kindergarten found on the public website. The completed application must be returned to the Assistant Director of Instruction and Curriculum located in the Administrative Services Building no later than May 1. Parents must supply proof of age.

Appointments for evaluation will be scheduled to be completed no later than May 31. After review of the assessment information, a decision will be made by the Assistant Director of Instruction and Curriculum. Parents will be notified of the decision by the end of the current school year. If the decision is early entrance placement, the school's principal and kindergarten teacher will be informed.

### **Appeals Process:**

- Requests for appeal must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Director of Instruction and Curriculum within 7 business days of notification of results.
- Appeal must include a written explanation as to why evaluation results should be considered.
- Appeal will be reviewed by the Assistant Director of Curriculum and Instruction and the Chief Academic Officer. The Chief Academic Officer will have final determination on early entrance to kindergarten decisions.

***RUSD does not screen for early entry to 4K programming.***

## **Students Transferring from Other Districts**

If our enrollment center receives information from a student's parent/guardian that the student has received gifted services in their prior district, the enrollment center will inform the Assistant Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

## **Discontinuation of Services**

Occasionally, program discontinuation may be necessary. This is done rarely, after careful investigation, observation and conferences. In these instances, a meeting will be held.

## Appendix A

### Legal Reference [\*Statutes and Rules for Gifted Education\*](#)

#### Wisconsin Gifted and Talented Statutes and Rules

- Wisconsin Statute 121.02 (1)(t): Each school board shall provide access to an appropriate program for pupils identified as gifted and talented.
- Wisconsin Statute: s.118,35, WIS. Stats.: Programs for gifted and talented pupils.
- “Gifted and talented pupils” means pupils enrolled in public schools who give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership or specific academic areas and who need interventions or activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program in order to fully develop such capabilities.
- Each school board shall: Ensure that all gifted and talented pupils enrolled in the school district have access to a program for gifted and talented pupils.

**Administrative Rule 8.01(2) (t) 2.** Each school district shall establish a plan and designate a person to coordinate the gifted and talented program. Gifted and talented pupils shall be identified as required in s. **118.35(1)**, Stats. This identification shall occur in kindergarten through grade 12 in general intellectual, specific academic, leadership, creativity, and visual and performing arts. A pupil may be identified as gifted or talented in one or more of the categories under s. **118.35(1)**, Stats. The identification process shall result in a pupil profile based on multiple measures, including but not limited to standardized test data, nominations, rating scales or inventories, products, portfolios, and demonstrated performance. Identification tools shall be appropriate for the specific purpose for which they are being employed. The identification process and tools shall be responsive to factors such as, but not limited to, pupils' economic conditions, race, gender, culture, native language, developmental differences, and identified disabilities as described under subch. **V of Ch. 115**, Stats. The school district board shall provide access, without charge for tuition, to appropriate programming for pupils identified as gifted and talented as required under ss. **118.35(3)** and **121.02(1)(t)**, Stats. The school district board shall provide an opportunity for parental participation in the identification and resultant programming.

**National Standards**The NAGC Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards were developed to define student outcomes for effective gifted education plans. They helped inform the language of Wisconsin State Statutes and Administrative Rules and provided guidance for resources related to Response to Intervention

**Racine Unified School District Administrative Regulations 6142.11** Early Entrance and Identification and Programming for Gifted and Talented Students.

## Appendix B

### WI DPI Elements of Effective Gifted Education

Wisconsin DPI believes in nine key characteristics of an effective gifted education plan within an RtI framework:

1. **Systemic.** The gifted and talented program should be integrated with schoolwide initiatives and programming across all grade levels, K-12. Opportunities should be incorporated into the regular school day and the regular school year.
2. **Responsive.** The gifted and talented program should be responsive to local student demographics, curriculum, resources, and needs.
3. **Fluid.** The gifted and talented program should be flexible and continuously adapt to student needs. Programs will likely differ based on local needs and community resources. G/T programs may vary from district to district and school to school.
4. **Appropriate.** The gifted and talented program should provide opportunities that are in place of, not in addition to, regular classroom instruction and activities.
5. **Collaborative.** The gifted and talented program should be the responsibility of all staff members working in a collaborative fashion to meet student needs.
6. **Sustainable.** The gifted and talented program should not be dependent on specific personnel or funding sources. Instead, it should be an integral part of the school district's staffing and funding plans.
7. **Comprehensive.** The gifted and talented program should consider the "whole child" by encouraging academic, social, and personal growth of the students.
8. **Aligned.** Goals that are clear and aligned with state statutes, administrative rule, professional standards, research, and effective practice.
9. **Measurable.** Goals in the plan should be specific enough so that progress toward them can be readily evaluated on an ongoing basis.



## Appendix C

### RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NOMINATION FORM

Please complete this form for a Tier 3 student (4 MAP cycles) performing above grade level or demonstrating exceptional strengths or talents beyond those of their classmates.

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student Number \_\_\_\_\_

School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by (name) \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to student \_\_\_\_\_

#### Area(s) for Consideration

General Intellectual \_\_\_ Specific Academic \_\_\_ Leadership \_\_\_ Creative Thinking \_\_\_

Visual/ Performing Arts: Art \_\_\_ Music \_\_\_ Drama/Theater \_\_\_

Reason for Nomination: List the evidence that supports this nomination

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List the resources, strategies and activities implemented to challenge students.

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix D**  
**Request for Acceleration Form**

Important Due Dates: April 1st for fall semester. November 15 for 2nd semester.

Date of request: \_\_\_\_\_ GT area of identification: \_\_\_\_\_

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Current School: \_\_\_\_\_ Current grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Current teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of referring individual: \_\_\_\_\_

Email & relationship to student \_\_\_\_\_

Type of acceleration requested: (circle one only):      Subject              Grade

Parent/Teacher Contact: Please list dates of conferences, phone calls, emails or other communication regarding the topic of acceleration.

Explain why you are referring to this student for acceleration. Include any evidence you may have to indicate that he/she will be successful in an accelerated placement.

Explain how this student will benefit more from acceleration than from the implementation of differentiation strategies and other educational options in the current placement.