



## **Gifted and Talented Education in Pleasant Valley**



*ELP*

## *Extended Learning Programming*

Presented to the  
Board of Education

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## **Mission Statement:**

*The mission of the Pleasant Valley Community School District as a premier innovative district in the Midwest is to prepare students to succeed in a diverse, global society by providing superior quality opportunities in a safe environment for each student to become a life-long learner and by continuously improving and customizing the educational experience.*



## *Extended Learning Programming*

The Pleasant Valley Community School District is committed to the development of comprehensive programming designed to help students with multiple kinds and degrees of abilities to realize their potential (allowing for different learning rates, styles, and interests) to facilitate life-long learning, and to foster the acquisition of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. With this in mind, Pleasant Valley reaffirms its commitment to gifted and talented education as a high priority for the district.

### **Introduction**

Programming for gifted and talented students is a mandated function in the state of Iowa (Iowa Code Chapter 59) for students in grades K-12. It requires local Boards of Education to include the following program components in their respective service models:

- Provision of valid, systematic and multiple criteria for identification
- Defined program goals and performance measures
- A specified and differentiated curricular program for identified students
- Annual review and evaluation procedures
- A program budget
- Specifically endorsed instructional personnel

### **Programming Goals**

The following goals (**See Appendices #1a-1e**) provide for the learning needs of the gifted and talented students in the district:

1. To reaffirm gifted and talented education as a high priority for the Pleasant Valley Community School District.
2. To use multiple criteria to identify students with advanced skills and abilities for the purpose of extending services/opportunities that will meet their unique educational needs.
3. To provide an array of service options aligned to the district's mission statement which supports individual growth at varying levels of abilities, needs, interests and pacing.
4. To meet the needs of gifted students in the total school program by working with classroom teachers to assess, plan and carry out differentiated instruction and evaluate outcomes (Chp. 59).
5. To acquire and provide ongoing professional development opportunities based on best practice to effectively meet the social, emotional and intellectual needs of the gifted students. A staff development plan will be created based on the assessed needs of the personnel to maintain and update understandings and skills about servicing gifted and talented students. (Chp. 59)



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# **Programming Definitions and Terms**

The following definitions are provided to assist with the understanding of the text and the programming options delivered by the district.

### ***Definition of Gifted and Talented***

As defined by the Iowa Code **257.44**, gifted and talented children are those identified as possessing outstanding abilities capable of high performance. It includes those students with demonstrated achievement or potential in any or the following areas or in combination with one another:

- General intellectual ability
- Creative thinking
- Leadership ability
- Visual and performing arts ability
- Specific ability aptitude (math, science, etc.)

Formal identification of the talented and gifted students in Pleasant Valley occurs during the students' third grade year. Thereafter, students identified as talented and gifted will have their programming needs met, monitored, and modified through the provision of a Personalized Education Plan (P.E.P.).

### ***Definition of Personalized Education Plan (P.E.P)***

A P.E.P. is a planning and programming document designed for students who have been formally identified as gifted. This document is used throughout the student's school experiences to articulate needs, plan and provide programming, and document growth. A P.E.P. is developed by the ELP specialist in collaboration with a student's regular education teacher(s) and parent(s). (**See Appendices #2a-2b**)

### ***Definition of ELP***

Extended Learning Programming (ELP) is the district's vehicle for the provision of services to the gifted and talented students. It includes collaboration with the classroom teacher for the provision of differentiated instruction, specialized services and extension opportunities to students in the talent pool and personalized education plans and instruction for the highly gifted.

### ***Definition of Talent Pool***

Talent Pool students are a group of students who meet some of the formal identification criteria and receive enrichment over and above the regular curriculum. Services will be provided based on needs, strengths, or interests of the student.



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### **ELP Identification/Selection Criteria**

The goal of identification is to recognize students with unusual talents and abilities for the purpose of extending services/opportunities that will meet their unique educational needs. Identification is an on-going process and students may be recommended for services at any grade level and at any time during the school year. The general procedure is as follows:

1. Beginning with students in kindergarten, the ELP teacher acts as a resource for the classroom teacher, providing ideas, materials, and where necessary, direct services.
2. During each year of the primary grades, (Grades 1-3), the ELP teacher conducts two structured observation activities (such as Kingore Observation Inventory) with each homeroom class.
3. Identification throughout the elementary experience is based upon the use of multiple assessment criteria/measures. Among those given consideration are the following:
  - Observation (parent, homeroom teacher, ELP teacher, others)
  - Classroom Achievement/Assessment
  - Structured Classroom Observation Activities
  - Checklist of Student Behavior (**See Appendix #3a**)
  - Student Background Questionnaire for Parents (**See Appendix #3b**)
  - Student Survey Data (**See Appendix #4**)
  - Standardized Assessment Data (MAP, ITBS, CogAT)
4. Students demonstrating consistently high achievement based on information obtained from one or more of the above criteria are monitored, and provided services such as curricular extensions or classroom differentiation as needed.
5. These students continue to be monitored throughout their elementary education experience, occasionally receiving direct services and, at other times, served within the regular education classroom.

### **Formal Identification Procedure**

#### **Elementary**

1. During the second semester of third grade, students are **formally** identified for the delivery of extended learning programming. Formal identification may occur in any grade thereafter as assessment data dictates.
2. The formal identification process includes the completion of the assessment identification matrix (**Appendix #5**) and the incorporation of perceptual data from the parent and teachers.
3. The criteria for formal identification are based upon the following numerical indices:
  - Scores equal to or exceeding the 97 %ile (using Iowa norms) on the ITBS areas of vocabulary, reading comprehension, and/or math total (based upon two consecutive years)
  - Scores equal to or exceeding 125 (using SAS) on the Cognitive Abilities Test areas of verbal ability, quantitative reasoning and/or non-verbal ability
  - Scores equal to or exceeding the 98 %ile on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment in the areas of reading and/or math
  - Combination of scores equal to or exceeding 7 of the 11 areas targeted



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4. Additional non-academic assessments may be used to identify students who do not meet the numerical indices listed above, but who demonstrate gifted behaviors.
5. Identification data is reviewed by building personnel and the ELP team for programming determination.
6. A Personalized Education Plan (P.E.P.) is designed for students who have been formally identified as gifted. After identification, this plan is used throughout the students' school experience to articulate needs, plan services, and document student growth. The planned services may be delivered as part of differentiated instruction within the classroom setting, as part of group extension experiences, or on an individualized basis. The P.E.P. ensures the continued provision and ongoing appropriateness of those services. Students who have been formally identified as gifted are served with a continuous P.E.P., reviewed and renewed annually.
7. Students shall not be precluded from services based on behavior, work completion, organization, or study habits.

### **Junior High**

For students new to the Pleasant Valley School District at the junior high level (either 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade), the MAP assessment will be used as a trigger for identification purposes according to the following rubric:

1. Use of MAP assessment data identifying students with national percentile scores of 98<sup>th</sup>ile or higher in either math or reading or both (+2)
2. Review cumulative records for standardized achievement test data, identifying national percentile scores 98<sup>th</sup>ile or above. (If Iowa percentiles are used, use 97<sup>th</sup>ile or above). Review scores for math, reading, and total/composite if present. (+3)
3. If Cognitive Abilities Tests from 5<sup>th</sup> grade or above are available, use SAS scores of 125 or higher in verbal, quantitative, and/or nonverbal. (+3)
4. History of participation in an ELP (TAG) program in another state/district. (+1)
5. Completion of perceptual surveys (students/parents) (+1)
6. Teacher recommendations/First quarter grades (+1)

In order to be identified at the junior high level, students must receive +5 of the above criteria.

The MAP assessment will be used extensively to help in the development of the Personalized Education Plan (PEP) for the formally identified students. For that purpose, the Skills and Concepts to Introduce from the Class Breakdown by Goal report should be used as the reference point.

### **High School**

For students new to the Pleasant Valley School District at the high school level, the MAP assessment will be used as an assessment tool for new students. Identification for formal gifted identification shall occur on the basis of:



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1. Use of MAP assessment data identifying students with national percentile scores of 98%ile or higher in either math or reading or both (+2)
2. Review cumulative records for standardized achievement test data, identifying national percentile scores 98%ile or above. (If Iowa percentiles are used, use 97%ile or above). Review scores for math, reading, and total/composite if present. (+3)
3. History of participation in an ELP (TAG) program in another state/district. (+1)
4. Completion of perceptual surveys (students/parents) (+1)
5. Teacher recommendations/First quarter grades (+1)

In order to be identified at the high school level, students must receive +5 of the above criteria.

The MAP assessment will be used extensively to help in the development of the Personalized Education Plan (PEP) for the formally identified students. For that purpose, the Skills and Concepts to Introduce from the Class Breakdown by Goal report should be used as the reference point.

## **Talent Pool Identification Procedure**

1. Students included in the talent pool must meet one or more of the following criteria:
  - Consistent ELP participation in previous years.
  - Scores equal to or exceeding the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile (using Iowa Norms) on the ITBS areas of vocabulary, reading comprehension or math total.
  - Scores equal to or exceeding 120 (using SAS) on the Cognitive Abilities Test areas of vocabulary, quantitative reasoning and/or non-verbal activity.
  - Expression of intense outside interests and/or commitment to self-selected work
2. Unlike students who are formally identified, students included in the talent pool vary from year to year.
3. Checklist of student behavior from parents, students, or teachers may be used to gain input on the strengths and interests of students.



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# Differentiated Programming

Students of high ability require qualitatively differentiated programming designed to meet their unique cognitive and affective needs. In the PVCSD, differentiated programming for these learners may take the form of any of the following:

- Acceleration in which instruction is matched to competence
- Enrichment in which opportunities for the investigation of supplementary material are given
- Individualization in which instruction is matched specifically to the learner's achievement, abilities, and interests.

Given that understanding, Pleasant Valley has incorporated the following components into its differentiated programming model:

### 1. **Acceleration of Instruction**

Students are given curriculum material that is typically above their current grade placement. Information presented is often more complex requiring the use of enriched vocabulary and greater depth of thinking. Acceleration may include curriculum compacting of subjects allowing students to move at an advanced pace through the material, telescoping curriculum (completing an extended amount in a reduced timeframe), or placement for one or more subjects at an advanced grade level.

In the rare instances when whole grade acceleration is a consideration, excessive assessment of a student's skills and abilities will be required. Test scores, social-emotional behavior and other factors will be evaluated using the Iowa Acceleration Scale. A team consisting of the principal, counselor, parent, gifted and talented professional and classroom teacher will review the information to determine where the needs of the student would be best met. Decisions to proceed with or limit the whole grade acceleration will be individually made based upon a thorough review of the assessment data. **(See Appendix #13)**

In Pleasant Valley, at the end of their fifth grade year, students have the opportunity to be considered for acceleration to a pre-algebra class to be taken during the sixth grade year. Students assessed for such acceleration will be screened during the end of fifth grade using a variety of measures. Parents, students, teachers, and administrators will work collectively to review the data for determination of the most appropriate placement to meet the students' individual needs.

### 2. **Enrichment Opportunities**

With this type of programming option, students explore material in greater depth or breadth than it is typically presented as a part of the regular grade level curriculum. Enrichment opportunities most often occur within the regular school day both inside and outside the regular classroom. Students may be "pulled out" to pursue topics of personal interest and use research and analytical skills to further explore the complexity of the content. Specialized curriculum may also be designed and implemented as the needs and interests of the high ability students dictate. Enrichment experiences allow students to be included in flexible grouping arrangements working with their intellectual peers as they explore challenging content and further develop their thinking skills. **(See Appendix #6)** Students, parents, and teachers receive feedback based upon their participation. **(See Appendix #12)**

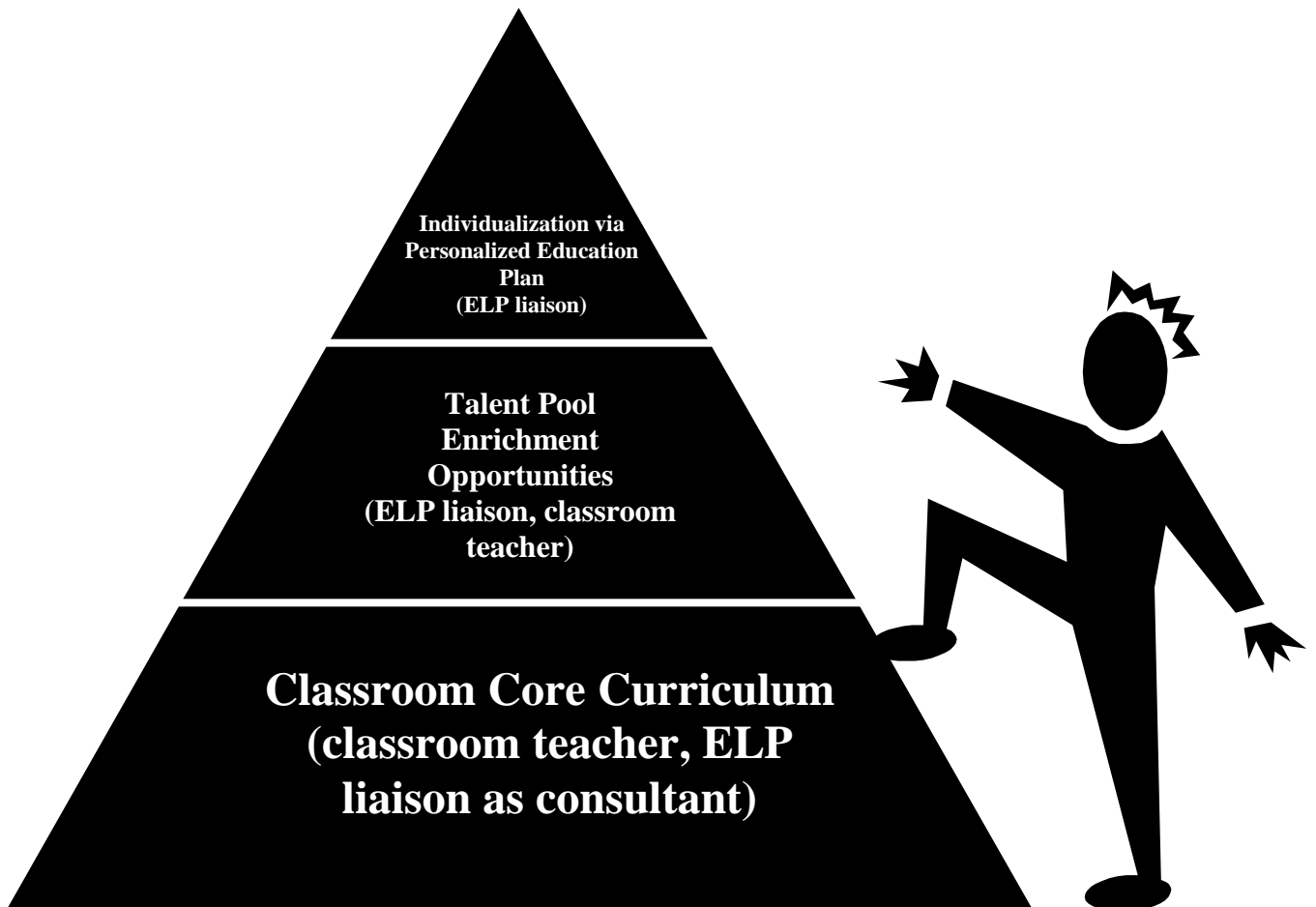
### 3. **Individualized Instruction**

Differentiated programming for the highly gifted must rely on the unique and highly specialized needs of the individual to dictate an appropriate course of action. Individualized instruction for these students often has no precedent or preordained plan but may include such components as mentorships, independent study, online learning, seminar experiences, research projects, externships, or other self-determined courses of study. **(See Appendix #6)** Students, parents, and teachers receive feedback based upon their participation. **(See Appendix #12)**



## **Differentiated Programming Service Delivery Model**

In Pleasant Valley, the model for the delivery of differentiated programming for gifted and talented learners in the district is best shown visually using a multi-leveled triangle. Three service delivery options are represented by the various levels of the triangle, each with distinct functions, but circumscribed by the flexibility necessary to move students fluidly throughout those levels as their unique needs and interests would dictate.





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### **Core Curriculum K-12:** (in the classroom)

Fundamental to the success of any academic program is a strong educational foundation best provided through the regular school program. All students in the district are expected to master the curriculum as determined by the state of Iowa and local standards, benchmarks and grade level indicators. Based upon the content mastery of this regular school curriculum, students are introduced to material more closely aligned to their learning potential, achievement levels and/or interests. This differentiation of instruction is an appropriate instructional strategy for all students from time to time, but occurs on a more frequent basis for students of high ability. Differentiated instruction may occur on the basis of content, process, and/or product as some of the examples shown below would indicate:

#### **Content**

Supplementary Materials  
Internet Resources  
Media Support  
Multiple Text Sources  
Computer Software

#### **Process**

Tiered Assignments  
Varied Prompts  
Acceleration  
Learning Center Tasks  
Questioning Strategies

#### **Product**

Independent Study  
Presentation Criteria  
Tiered Products  
Public Performance  
Application

To provide differentiated instruction for the students of high ability, the classroom teacher and the ELP teacher collaborate to determine appropriate modifications of activities and content. The focus of the differentiation is to extend or deepen the students' thinking as questioning strategies and critical thinking skills are applied to challenge students to respond more abstractly and complexly.

### **Talent Pool K-12:** (within/outside the classroom)

The needs of high ability students, who can learn more quickly or deeply or plan and think more independently, cannot always be met solely within the regular school program. In such situations, enrichment or extension opportunities provide students the vehicle for learning material in greater depth or breadth than it has been presented as part of the regular school curriculum. Students are able to pursue topics of personal interest and use research and analytical skills to further explore the complexity of content. Emphasis is also given to the synthesis of information and the ability to make connections to prior learning or previously assimilated information. Higher level questioning skills, critical thinking and problem solving form the constants of the learning for the talent pool students while the specific content or activities incorporated into these extension experiences are more variable.

Many of these talent pool extensions or enrichment opportunities include groups of students of similar ability and/or interests. These students work together for varying lengths of time on a particular curricular focus before concluding their study with some type of culminating event. However, the group constellation over time is not static, but flexible and fluid based upon the content being explored and the needs of the students involved. Thus, students move in and out of the talent pool experience throughout the year and from one year to the next as the need for extension dictates.

### **Individualization Gr. 4-12** (personalized services)

A small segment of the population, approximately 3-5% district-wide, has characteristics and abilities that lead to their formal identification as "gifted." Formal identification occurs first during the third grade year and then subsequently thereafter as evaluation is an ongoing process. Formally identified "gifted" students have their unique service needs met through the development of a Personalized Education Plan (P.E.P.). While students who exhibit talents and abilities at this level are highly unique, it could be expected that these students might receive varied combinations of classroom differentiation, talent pool extension and individualized services. **(See Appendix #6)**



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### **Staffing Provisions**

Responsibility for the education of gifted learners is a shared process requiring collaborative relationships and effective communication mechanisms between the gifted and talented program personnel and the general education teachers. At the present time, the Pleasant Valley Community School District has two full-time teachers and two part-time teachers assigned to work with its gifted and talented student population at the elementary level. These staff members are assigned to the four elementary schools in a manner consistent with the population distribution of the four buildings.

Work with the gifted and talented students at the secondary level is the responsibility of classroom teachers and/or guidance counselors as students' Personalized Education Plans (P.E.P.) and needs dictate.

As of July 1, 2012, state law requires that all teachers specifically involved in gifted education possess a gifted and talented endorsement. Staff members currently employed in these positions in Pleasant Valley Schools meet this requirement.

### **Professional Development**

As with the other members of the certified instructional staff, teachers who work with the talented and gifted population will participate in the professional development process through the Iowa Professional Development Model (IPDM). Individual Career Goals will align to the District's Career Goals. As opportunities and new trends in gifted education arise, ELP personnel will be encouraged and supported in their efforts to continue their education and professional growth in the field.

In addition, teachers of the talented and gifted will be involved in the ongoing **delivery** of staff development to define the nature and needs of gifted learners. On a regular basis, faculty members should be reminded of and provided guidance on the provision of instructional strategies appropriate to the differentiated needs of the gifted learners. This information should include support for both the cognitive and affective needs of the gifted students.

### **Budgetary Resources**

Each gifted and talented program in the state of Iowa is funded as part of the school finance formula and as stipulated by the Iowa Code (**257.46**). Beginning in 1999, each district began to receive a per pupil expenditure to be designated for the education of its gifted and talented students. In addition, each district must fund an additional one fourth or more from the district cost of the school district **257.46(1)**. It is a state requirement that this money must be reserved to be spent for the education of gifted and talented students only. If any portions of this budget remain unexpended at the end of a given budget year, the remainder of the funds must be carried over to the subsequent year and added to the gifted and talented program budget for that year.

In keeping with the state requirements, Pleasant Valley has developed its budget accordingly. (**See Appendix #7**) (The gifted and talented funding formula for FY10 is \$54.00 per certified school enrollment. The required local match is \$18.00).

Typically, in any given budget year, the personnel costs for the program expend the majority of the funding generated by the state's formula. Minimal monies to fund in-service, travel, materials and supplies are budgeted separately and/or expended from other district funds.



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### **ELP Program Evaluation**

The evaluation of Extended Learning Programming is a critical and instrumental part of the ongoing success of the services and key to their further development and refinement.

Using a variety of metrics, both quantitative and qualitative, the following elements of the program and its services will be evaluated:

- The effectiveness and comprehensive nature of the identification procedures
- The quality and scope of the service delivery options
- The collaborative efforts between the ELP and regular classroom teachers in differentiating classroom instruction
- The effectiveness of the program for promoting student growth/achievement
- The opportunity for and scope of professional development

The following measures will be taken to evaluate the success of the programming and the services delivered:

- ELP Service Rosters will be completed annually indicating the number of students served and for what extensions or enrichment topics. **(See Appendix #8)**
- Formal Identification Metrics will be calculated annually to determine the percentage of gifted students served. **(See Appendix #5)**
- Data from the Performance Goals and Progress Indicators will be maintained annually. **(See Appendices #1a-1e)**
- The number of AP classes offered and taught as well as student enrollment will be assessed annually. AP exam scores will also be recorded.
- ITBS/ITED scores for identified gifted students will be noted for programming options and other opportunities.
- Parent and Teacher perceptual survey data will be tabulated during alternating years beginning with the staff during the 2009-10 school year. **(See Appendices #9 and #10)**
- Student reflective participation data will be collected annually. **(See Appendix #11)**

Program evaluation data will be reported to each building administrator and to the district advisory group on an annual basis. Areas of ongoing concern will be addressed by the advisory group or the individual building as applicable. Concerns may result in programmatic changes or revisions.