

Webb City R-VII School District

# GEM Handbook



Gifted Enrichment Model

## **PREFACE**

In 1984, upon the recommendation of a subcommittee on the study of curriculum in the elementary schools, the Webb City School System initiated a program to serve those children in the R-VII schools found to be academically gifted. The school district applied for and received approval from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to receive funding as provided by the state to assist in meeting the costs of the program.

In the original application, student levels targeted for the project were fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. The program was designed to be a “pull-out” format where each student in the gifted program would attend the gifted classroom located at a central location within the district. Later, services were expanded to include grades two through twelve.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The Webb City R-VII School District is committed to an educational program that recognizes the unique value, needs, and talents of each individual student. It recognizes, however, that the academically gifted students possess extraordinary abilities to think creatively and critically. These cognitive and affective needs can best be met by an environment that provides for a differentiated learning format. The Webb City R-VII Gifted Enrichment Model, or GEM Program, is for the academically gifted student, as defined by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Section 162.675, RSMO:

those students 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.

The GEM program is intended not as a reward or status symbol for selected students, but is intended to be an educational intervention for those who might benefit by it. It is, therefore, dedicated to meeting the needs of the gifted student by providing differentiated instruction suitable for their levels of intellectual, physical, and social maturity.

## **STAFF**

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## **RATIONALE FROM CURRICULUM GUIDE**

The Webb City R-VII School District is committed to providing for individual differences and the complete development of individual skills and abilities of intellectually gifted students. It recognizes that some students possess extraordinary abilities to think creatively and critically and may exhibit asynchronous development. It is recognized that gifted students need:

1. Activities that precipitate complex thoughts and feelings
2. Opportunities for divergent thinking and productivity
3. Challenging group and individual work
4. Discussions with intellectual peers
5. Variety of experiences
6. Opportunity to see interrelationships between bodies of knowledge
7. Special courses in areas of strengths and interests
8. Greater exposures to new areas of learning
9. Opportunities to apply abilities to real problems
10. Skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, research, problem solving, coping with exceptionalities, decision-making, and leadership

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

Students completing the Webb City School District Gifted Education Program will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to use skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, research, problem solving, and decision-making.
2. Demonstrate the ability to explore new ideas, practice analysis, synthesis, evaluation skills, and generate new ideas resulting in creative solutions to real problems.
3. Demonstrate learning that is integrated across content areas and differentiated in complexity from the regular education curriculum.
4. Demonstrate the ability to utilize technological tools to communicate or exchange information and ideas.
5. Demonstrate process/product outcomes through group and individual work.
6. Demonstrate the development of behaviors that will allow them to cope with the challenges and struggles of real life situations within and outside the school structure including acceptance of self, goal-setting, perfectionism, multi-potentiality, and learning styles.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of career options and pathways to realization of career goals.
8. Demonstrate the ability to participate as a team member in group discussions and interactions with intellectual peers.

The gifted education goals will be accomplished through the following curriculum strands: intellectual skill development, communication development, personal growth, and social development.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Primary Enrichment Program for grades 2-3 provides instruction through the use of a resource teacher located at Webb City Middle School. All 2nd and 3rd grade students will be bused to a program at the Webb City Middle School one day per week. The second and third grade students participate in a one-half day program. Transportation will be provided by the district. Students who participate in the program at this level will meet with the GEM teacher at least once per week.

The intermediate GEM teacher provides instruction four days a week to students in grades 4-6. One day is to be a planning/conference time whereby the GEM teacher will plan curriculum and confer with parents and teachers regarding individual student needs and progress. This class is located at the Webb City Middle School and transportation is provided by the district.

The junior high program is designed so that the GEM teacher meets with the seventh and eighth grade classes separately every other day.

Activities at the gifted classrooms will include units of study, individual and small group meetings, opportunities for using community resources, research materials and equipment, and may include exposure to a variety of competitions.

The GEM teacher in the high school program provides resources regarding college and career selection. Materials addressing the needs of the gifted are available for parents and students. The teacher is accessible daily. Students may meet with the teacher by appointment. If an appointment is not necessary, the needed materials will be delivered to the student. Parents may also schedule appointments with the High School GEM teacher.

## **MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Minimum eligibility requirements are in compliance with those of the state must be met by the student before placement in a program can occur. The total number of gifted students accepted into the program is not to exceed five percent of the total class population.

## **INITIAL IDENTIFICATION DURING FIRST GRADE**

Norm-referenced assessments are administered during the child's first grade school year. These results are used to determine eligibility for further testing. Those students meeting the criteria for advancement are given an I.Q. test near the beginning of their second grade year to determine final placement in the program.

## **ADDITIONAL IDENTIFICATION THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE**

Students who did not previously qualify or who transfer into the district at a later date will be monitored and considered for placement into the program if the gifted program has fewer than five percent of the total class population identified for that grade.

Those students referred to the student intervention team who meet two criteria of consideration are then given a selected I.Q. test to determine final placement in the program. For the purpose of identification for the gifted program, **Webb City will administer a selected I.Q. test no more than two times with the test dates being at least 12 months apart.**

### **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Students transferring into the Webb City R-VII School District who have appropriate documentation of having previously participated in a Missouri public school gifted education program will be allowed to participate in the R-VII GEM Program as long as the criteria in the previous school are at or above the standard set by the Webb City School District. Students transferring from another state that do not meet all of Missouri's criteria will be referred to the building student intervention team to review data for consideration.

### **PLACEMENT/REMOVAL FROM GEM PROGRAM**

Once a student qualifies and is placed in the gifted program, he/she may remain in the program without further testing.

A student may be withdrawn from the gifted program for any of the following reasons:

1. Classroom performance below grade level.
2. Student recommendation with parental approval.
3. Parent recommendation.
4. Gifted program teacher and the Director of Gifted Program recommendation.
5. Failure to complete assigned work.
6. Failure to behave according to classroom and school rules.

### **DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES**

In order to more effectively meet the needs of students in the GEM Program, the following hierarchy of disciplinary consequences have been established to address academic infractions when necessary.

First infraction: The student is warned by the gifted teacher.

Second infraction: A note will be sent home to be returned with a parent's signature.

Third infraction: The student will be required to telephone a parent, in the presence of the teacher, and explain the nature of the problem to the parent.

Fourth infraction: A conference will be held with the student, parent, administrator, and teacher wherein a contract that addresses the problem and potential remedies will be developed and agreed upon.

Fifth infraction: The student will be dismissed from the GEM Program for the remainder of the school year with re-admittance during a future school term, only upon approval from the program coordinator.

At the beginning of each school year, the student's record will be expunged of infractions incurred in the prior year.

Additionally, the following is a representative (but not necessarily complete) listing of possible problem areas which will be addressed under the area of behavioral misconduct:

- classroom disruption (acting out)
- disruptive communication (speaking out)
- cafeteria misconduct
- bus conduct
- lack of reasonable effort
- damage of school or school property
- disrespect/aggressive behavior toward staff or other students
- other infractions covered by the Webb City School Discipline Policy Handbook

A daily tally of misconduct may be kept in the GEM classroom. After four incidents of misbehavior, a student will be sent to the Principal's Office and parents will be notified. Three trips to the Principal's Office within the same school year may result in dismissal from the gifted class for the remainder of the school year as previously indicated.

It is hoped that no student encounters problems resulting in the necessity to enforce the above policy. The combined efforts of the students, parents, and teachers can help assure a successful school year for all.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Students will be transported to and from their home school to the gifted classroom by R-7 bus transportation, though parents may elect to provide their own transportation.

## **ATTENDANCE**

All absences will be reported by the elementary GEM teacher to the student's home school. The Junior High GEM teacher will report absences to the Junior High office. At the High School level, attendance will be dealt with in accordance with the attendance policy at the High School. A good attendance record is an asset to any student. It is noticeable that good attendance and consistent progress usually go together. A sequential curriculum necessitates regular and meaningful attendance to the gifted classroom.

## **LUNCH**

Fourth grade students may either bring their lunch or eat in the Webb City Middle School cafeteria. Payment will be deducted from their home school account.

Intermediate students will eat in the cafeteria at the Webb City Middle School. Students may either bring their lunch or eat in the cafeteria. Payment will be deducted from their home school account. Students will receive free or reduced lunch rates will retain that same privilege while at the GEM class. No special arrangements are necessary for students at the Junior High or High School.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be planned as a part of the GEM units of study. A permission form will be required of each student before they are allowed to participate in any of the field trips.

## **STUDENT GRADES**

Children do not receive grades for their work in GEM. In order to encourage the skill of self-evaluation, children are asked to evaluate their own work (under the close supervision of the gifted teacher). Parents will be kept informed of their child's progress through conferences and by written communication at the elementary and Junior High School level.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Elementary students are responsible for finding out about work missed in the regular classroom on the GEM day. Students are expected to make up tests and are responsible for new concepts introduced. **THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO MAKE UP DAILY ASSIGNMENTS, SUCH AS MATH ASSIGNMENTS, READING WORKSHEETS, OR LANGUAGE AND SPELLING EXERCISES.** (It is not uncommon for gifted students, for a variety of reasons, to work to stay up with all assignments, including those that are not required. However, this desire to "do all" is not to be taken by the classroom teacher as a standard, which would supersede the above statements). **CLASSROOM PROJECTS THAT TAKE MORE THAN ONE CLASS PERIOD TO COMPLETE ARE REQUIRED TO BE MADE UP FOR THE CLASS MISSED.** Parents: It is strongly suggested that as soon as possible after the beginning of the school term, you meet with your child's teacher to discuss this policy so there will be no misunderstandings about what is required in the way of make-up work. Because of the departmentalized scheduling of the Junior High School day, the Junior High GEM student should have this conflict only on very rare occasions.

All students are encouraged to perform at grade level in regular classroom subjects. Failure to do so may result in the student being placed on academic probation in the GEM program at both the elementary and Junior High levels and may lead to the student's dismissal from the program. If on grade level performance is not maintained, the student may be placed on probation for a period of nine weeks. At the end of the nine week probationary period, on

grade level performance or higher for the probationary quarter is expected. If on grade level performance is not attained, the student may be dismissed from the GEM program upon the recommendation of the GEM teacher and approval of the Coordinator of the Gifted Program.

Elementary, Junior High, and High School GEM students will be required to make up any work missed in regular classes due to GEM field trips. These absences are considered excused absences, and all work must be completed.

GEM students may miss some favorite activities. It is impossible to schedule around P.E., vocal music, art, band, and swimming. The band teacher may allow a child to continue if he or she can meet one time a week. Sometimes a choice must be made. GEM students will participate in regular classroom field trips scheduled on the GEM day; however, the student may have to make up work for the GEM class.