

Program Evaluation:

LEAP (Gifted) Program 2023-2024



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Pupil Services District Liaisons for LEAP: Dr. Amy Cordova

Leadership

- How is our mission determined?
- What is our purpose?

The purpose of the LEAP (Logic, Enrichment, Academics, Problem-solving) Program is to provide opportunities for gifted students to experience rigorous and relevant educational challenges by using higher-order critical and creative thinking skills, preparing them for future endeavors. The purpose statement for the LEAP Program was collaboratively developed.

During the 2022-2023 school year, the LEAP department moved away from STAR and began using FastBridge to identify potential gifted students. Several students were identified and the LEAP demographics are beginning to more closely mirror the demographics of the district as a whole. After rebranding the gifted program from DELTA to LEAP, the LEAP Handbook was published on the district website. Additionally, the website was updated through the lens of parent education. Two new part-time team members were added to the department and successfully onboarded. During the 22-23 school year, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released Missouri Gifted Learner Outcomes, also known as the Portrait of a Gifted Learner. The LEAP department analyzed current practices in relationship to the MO GLO. The results are being used to improve the program.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the LEAP department was able to transition one of our part time positions into a full-time position as we strive to meet the growing needs of the district. Additionally, we replaced one full time team member. Having four team members allowed the LEAP department to split teaching responsibilities such that each team member either focused on elementary or secondary students. Additionally, the LEAP department was able to dedicate one secondary facilitator to serve a half time position at the high school. The high school provided a dedicated room for this individual.

During PLDs this year, the LEAP department has focused on social emotional education as well as developing the teacher's craft of facilitating instruction for identified LEAP students. Byrdseed.tv was purchased and has been used to facilitate this learning. Additionally, content for Gifted360, purchased in 2022, is being used. Finally, the team is studying material published by experts on gifted learner intensities as well as twice exceptional students to meet the individual needs of our gifted learners.

Team Members

Dr. Jennifer Beutel, Lisa Thomsen, Dr. Amy Cordova (District Liaison), Wendy Rust, Jill Marriott, Sarah Harris

CSIP Goal

Develop and enhance quality educational/instructional programs to improve overall and individual student



academic performance.

Objective A-1

The percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the MAP-EOC will increase annually.

Customer Focus

- Who are our customers relative to this program?
- How do we determine the needs of the customer?
- What are the needs of the customer?

Eligibility for LEAP is aligned to Missouri state requirements as gifted children are “those who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued education growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum.” (SHB 474, Section 162.675 RSMo)

Referral

All students in the Platte County R-3 School District will take FastBridge “aReading” and FastBridge “aMathematics” as a universal academic screener. Universal screening occurs three times a year and allows school personnel to get a snapshot of student learning. FastBridge assessments combine valid and reliable assessments in the form of both Computer Adaptive Tests (CAT) and Curriculum-Based Measures (CBM) to help educators identify students' academic needs (www.illuminateed.com). Students who score in the 95th percentile in reading or mathematics on FastBridge may be considered for further screening. Evaluation for placement consideration exists in stages.

Stage 1 Evaluation: Achievement in the 95th percentile or higher in either Reading or Mathematics.

All students in the Platte County R-3 School District will be administered a universal screener three times per year. Results from the universal screener's fall and winter national window will be utilized. Currently, Platte County R-3 administers the following universal screener:

- FastBridge Reading
- FastBridge Mathematics

A review of existing data is completed on all students who score in the 95th percentile or higher on the Universal Screener. Students who show consistent performance in Mathematics and/or Reading are placed in a talent pool for further evaluation. Parents are notified in writing through a Prior Written Notice. A Permission to Assess document will be included. A signed consent for further assessment must be returned before a student may proceed in the evaluation cycle.

Stage 2 Evaluation: Academic Ability; Creativity, Reasoning, and Problem-Solving Ability; Other

- SAGES-3. The SAGES-3 is a norm-referenced test used to identify students who are gifted and/or talented in general intellectual ability and academic aptitude. The SAGES-3 has two levels: K-3 and 4-8. During the second tier of evaluation, building level gifted facilitators will administer the SAGES-3 to assess academic ability in Reading/Social Studies and Mathematics/Science. SAGES-3 is also used to assess verbal and nonverbal creativity, reasoning, and problem-solving.
- The Formal Observation of Exceptional Performance Questionnaire (completed by classroom teachers



and parents) is used to provide evidence of exceptional performance in other areas.

Students who score in the 95th percentile or higher in two out of the three categories are eligible to proceed to the Tier 3 evaluation. Written notice is provided to parents with results of the Tier 2 Assessments.

Stage 3 Evaluation: *General Mental Ability*

- Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI) or Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI): Both of these tests are used to measure General Mental Ability (often known as IQ). The test is administered individually by district personnel.

Placement

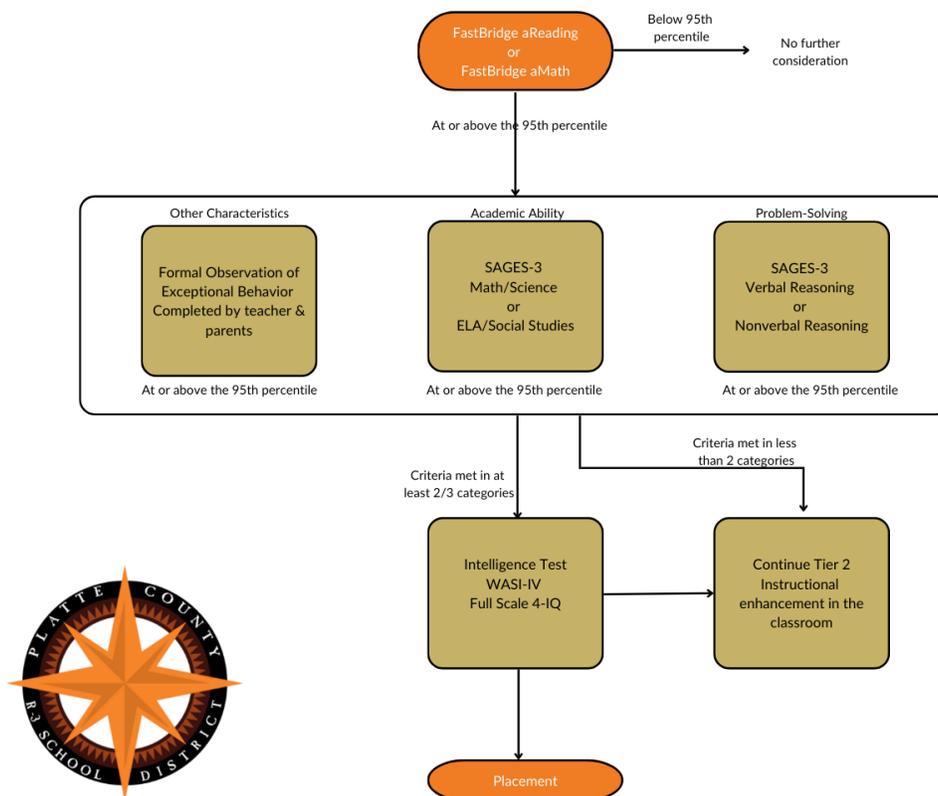
Students who score a 130+ full scale IQ qualify for placement into the gifted program. Written notice is provided to parents with results. Permission to place is also sent to parents whose students meet all eligibility requirements. Upon receipt of written permission, the student is placed in the LEAP program at the student's corresponding school. In compliance with state guidelines, students must achieve in 3 of the 4 designated target areas with the inclusion of 130 full scale IQ on the intelligence test.

Focus Areas

- Proactive screening process based on data
- Focus on relevance and critical thinking skills
- Increased focus on social emotional needs of gifted students
- Current LEAP students: 144 (2015-2016), 138 (2014-2015), 112 (2016-2017), 142 (2017-2018), 154 (2018-19), 196 (2019-20), 158 (2020-21), 172 (2021-22), 188 (2022-23), 198 (2023-2024, to date)
- Analyzing placement data to identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement
- First Lego League (Robotics)
- Battle of the Brains (real world learning)
- Noetic Challenge Math provides advanced problem solving opportunities
- Shapegrams and 3D printers provide opportunities to develop perceptual reasoning skills.
- 150 minutes per week for elementary, class period for middle school, support and consultation for high school
- Additional college and career readiness support at the high school through a ½ FTE with a dedicated space.



LEAP Identification Process



Workforce Focus

- How do we determine our staff needs?
- What are we doing to support our staff to achieve our goals?

LEAP staff need collaboration time to calibrate pacing and delivery. Participation in building specific professional development and activities has increased general education collaboration, but taken away from LEAP-specific collaboration. To address the need for ongoing collaboration, LEAP staff will continue to have monthly meetings. With the additional time structured into our PLD, the LEAP department has purposefully divided operational and professional meetings. Operational focus occurs during the monthly meetings. Professional development occurs during PLD afternoons. Area-wide professional development for LEAP teachers has been beneficial and should be prioritized. The use of [Gifted360 PD](#) has also enhanced professional development opportunities for our gifted facilitators, allowing for individualization and personalization of the adult learning experience. During the 23-24 school year, LEAP staff have focused on the curiosity module. Additionally, subscriptions to Byrdseed.tv were purchased for each teacher after piloting it with one teacher last year. Byrdseed.tv provides many open-ended gifted activities that can be utilized to meet the needs of the gifted student, thus improving the craft of the LEAP facilitator.



Process

- What process/improvement actions did we focus on last year to improve this program?

Prior Process Improvement Actions

- Additional staff member has allowed for increased collaboration, instructional efficiency, parent partnerships and high school advisement
- Data, advocacy, and college and career readiness for LEAP students beyond middle school
- Added parental observation to identification criteria

Process Improvement Actions

- Development and implementation of Fidelity Protocols
- Completion of a LEAP Handbook and roll-out to all staff: [LEAP Program Gifted Education Handbook](#)
- High School programming and support aligned to the needs assessment
- Shift in identification processes to use FastBridge universal screening data
- Collaboration on acceleration planning for all students outside of the LEAP classroom
- Scaffolded spiraling instruction on the social-emotional needs of the LEAP student
- Purposeful and targeted professional development

Measurement/Analysis/Knowledge

- What are the results of our SWOT analysis for this year?
- What are our measures to determine progress/success?

We currently use the following measures to analyze our progress:

- Parent Survey
- SWOT Analysis
- Missouri Assessment Program (MAP), End-of-Course (EOC)

LEAP Program SWOT ANALYSIS Themes

- The use of the District Liaison has created opportunities for leadership and assisted in onboarding new team members. As a result of creating this process, we learned that we need to replicate this process for LEAP students. This onboarding process needs to be scaffolded and spiraled throughout K-8.
- FastBridge screening has increased the number of students referred for possible consideration. Additional analysis needs to be conducted at primary levels to determine why so many students are not identified until 4th-6th grade. This analysis will provide guidance on the identification process.
- Ongoing collaboration with area-wide Gifted teachers for alignment, updates and development of curriculum resources
- High school support is now available ½ time each day in a dedicated space. Additional, targeted communication with students and parents has encouraged students to seek out assistance. Many high school seniors sought help with the college admissions process. In December, students began seeking advice on class selection. This time has also allowed for individualized support of high risk LEAP students. However, because times do not overlap with the PLT block, students must miss class time in order to receive support. Additionally, if the assigned LEAP staff member at the high school is testing at the



elementary level, this dedicated time of ½ day is diminished.

- Increased opportunities through work with Real World Learning Initiatives and Post Secondary Advisor
- Deployment of a unified handbook will formalize conversations and serve as a place for questions to be answered outside of staff
- Increased parent/teacher communication. A virtual parent open house was provided to educate parents on what to expect from LEAP services while in grades K-8.
- Opportunity to collaborate on acceleration for students needs to occur, especially in relationship to math.
- With the new block schedule and alignment between the two middle schools, every student was supposed to be enrolled in 3 elective blocks/classes. However, middle school LEAP students are limited on their elective choices to 2 instead of 3 as LEAP is only available during the elective block. We need to look at other options so that the LEAP student is able to take full advantage of elective choices and experiences.

Results

- How are we doing? How have we done over time? How have we done compared to others (if applicable)?

Parent Survey Data

I am satisfied with the services from LEAP, the District's gifted program. (Parents)				
Building	2019-20 SPI	2020-21 SPI	2021-22 SPI	2022-23 SPI
<i>Pathfinder</i>	396.77	428.57	411.76	422.73
<i>Barry</i>	415.38	400	400	446.88
<i>PCMS</i>	440.63	402.94	444	435.48
<i>PCHS*</i>	272.22	288.89	328	329.63
<i>Siegrist</i>	462.50	425.00	375	430.77
<i>Compass</i>	440.63	442.86	400	417.24
<i>District-Wide (# respondents)</i>	407.35 (136)	386.29 (124)	392.31 (117)	412.42 (110)



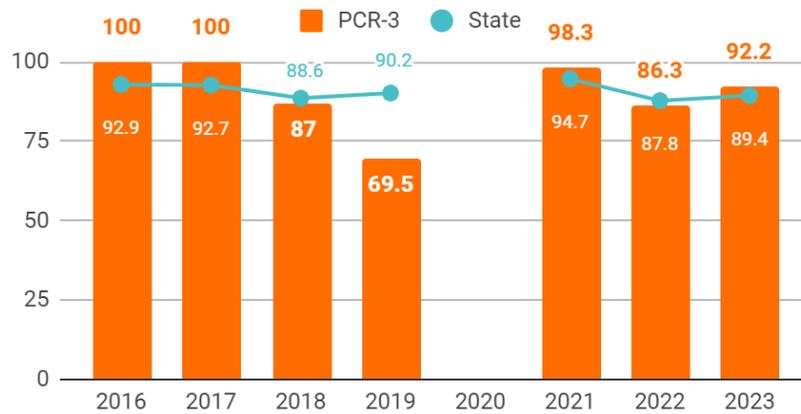
District Level MAP and EOC Assessment Results for LEAP students

Data shown as % of students in the Top 2 Levels

Gifted Students - ELA: Percentage in Top 2 Levels



Gifted Students - Math: Percentage in Top 2 Levels



Strategic Planning

- How are goals developed?
- What are our long-term goals?
- What are our short-term goals?
- What are our objectives to determine progress?



LEAP program goals flow directly from Tier 1 instruction and are aligned with the National Association of Gifted Children Standards. Instructional activities are aligned to the goals and meant to increase achievement of students already demonstrating proficiency in the general education classroom. In 2022, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released [Missouri Gifted Learner Outcomes \(M-GLO\)](#). An analysis and comparison of current LEAP practices to the M-GLO revealed a lack of specific creativity goals. LEAP facilitators are providing opportunities in the classroom for students to meet these goals. A specific creativity goal will also be added to the program guidelines.

LEAP Program Goals

- The LEAP Program will increase the number of students who scored advanced on the MAP/EOC assessments.
- The LEAP Program will facilitate challenging learning opportunities that prepare students for future career and college readiness.

Objectives

- Annually, 95 percent of LEAP students will score advanced on the MAP/EOC assessments.
- Feedback will be gathered each year on parent satisfaction and will be used to analyze and improve gifted programming.

