

MCCPTA GIFTED EDUCATION COMMITTEE

CES/ELC vs. Benchmark Advanced with Enrichment Guidance (Grades 4-5)¹

	<u>Center for Enriched Studies (CES) and Enriched Literacy Curriculum (ELC)</u>	<u>Benchmark Advance with Enrichment Guidance</u>
Full or Partial Enrichment?	Fully enriched, ELA materials cover advanced coursework	Partially enriched with non-BA materials; enrichment as an add-on to standard on-grade level curriculum (enrichment as replacement task may be possible)
When does advanced coursework start?	Above grade level enrichment and fast-paced learning is guaranteed and begins on day one (grades 4-5)	Enrichment is delayed until halfway through MP1 after the teacher has established classroom routines and flex groups and after the internal in-class assessments. (Parent does not have a formal opportunity to confirm their child's advanced coursework until the November conferences, unless an early conference is requested)
How much of the ELA block is dedicated to advanced coursework?	Whole ELA block of time (120 minutes) is dedicated to advanced studies.	No daily, dedicated ELA block for enrichment. Enrichment lessons may be used on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with Benchmark lessons. Differentiated small group instruction may occur less than once per week, but even when it occurs more frequently, it covers only a portion of the ELA block.
Minimum standards / Enrichment as required or recommended	Class is guaranteed to have advanced and enriched materials using grade level standards. Entire curriculum is designed for gifted learners, so students are ensured that they will receive the available enrichment materials.	Implementation of BA Enrichment Guidance is open to discretion, school may forgo or choose from a menu of options. Schools are not mandated to purchase all the enrichment materials necessary to implement the enrichment guidance. Central monitoring of enrichment is the work of the Office of School Support and Instruction Directors as part of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) process. Parent input should be a component of the SIP process.
Quality of Materials	All materials are sourced from gifted programs and include high quality reading materials and rigorous writing opportunities	GT students still have to cover BA, which lacks AGL, high quality reading materials and offer an inadequate writing program Some supplemental, non-BA materials are those utilized in CES/ELC learning experiences.
Advanced coursework in whole group / small group learning setting	Advanced studies offered to the entire class, thus in a whole group learning setting Small group instruction for further differentiation	Whole group instruction is all at grade level with BA. Advanced studies offered only in small groups IF school chooses to use BA enrichment guidance
Reading	Above-grade level novel study, with many options from which students can choose Critical reading and analysis, both oral and through writing assignments	While MCPS now has 4 novel studies per grade 2-5, they are not mandated. Novel studies only for small group instruction for advanced students based on student performance data.
Writing	Highly rigorous writing assignments Advanced research Writing using formal tone	Writing assignments that accompany enriched reading materials are not as advanced and are offered less frequently and for less duration BA focus on writing mini lessons does not meet the needs of GT students

¹ Specific classrooms may differ in how they implement the curricula, but this chart identifies baseline differences based on our research. MCPS has not published the curriculum frameworks for the Centers, ELC, or Benchmark Enrichment.

Projects	Rigorous and challenging year end capstone projects Inquiry Projects are part of the program, there's no discretion on implementation	Inquiry projects left to discretion of teachers and may not match depth of Gemstone projects BA Inquiry projects - smaller scale projects, 2 to 3 for each unit, can be tailored but do not offer the same level of rigor provided by capstone projects
Pace of Instruction	Whole class moves at fast-pace to match needs of gifted learners; gifted learners not expected to either sit and wait for others or do extra work to have enrichment/advanced work	Slower BA pacing, unless child receives additional work as compared to classmates (resulting in feeling penalized for giftedness) May work alone versus consistently grouped with same ability peers
Ability to meet social needs of GT students and provide peer learning opportunities	Gifted students are grouped together as a class to meet social needs and provide peer learning opportunities	Gifted students do not have enough opportunities to collaborate
Teacher Training	Teachers in AEI programs receive professional training on gifted education per COMAR requirements and AEI offers support	Teachers not required to take enrichment training
Vocabulary Study	In-depth vocabulary study through a variety of resources designed to increase knowledge base and apply to oral and written tasks ELC also has advanced word study tied to the novel studies and Junior Great Books in addition to a list of possible lessons to address every language grade level standard.	No advanced vocabulary study; vocabulary study tied to Benchmark Advance (on grade level)