



SHOREWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Advanced Learning Handbook

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Note: For more details about specific enrichment programs, current updates, and Advanced Learning staff contact information, please consult the Advanced Learning [Website](#) located under the “Academics” portion of the District’s website.

Shorewood School District: Equity, Growth, and Excellence for All

The Advanced Learning Program is an important facet of our larger mission, which is to provide equity, growth, and excellence for all students.

Belief Statements

- We believe that equitable identification is essential to serving a diverse population of Advanced Learners.
- We believe that the Advanced Learning Department should offer a continuum of interventions that are aligned with the district's EMLSS (Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Support) model.
- We believe that Advanced Learners are entitled to rigorous and relevant opportunities appropriate to their needs, interests, and abilities.
- We believe that a partnership between students, parents, teachers, and the school district is essential to meet the needs of Advanced Learners.

Introduction

The Shorewood School District provides a liberal arts education responsive to each student’s interests and abilities. We recognize that all students have unique gifts and talents, the ability to learn and achieve, and the need for opportunities to fully develop their potential. Advanced learners are capable of high performance and often require differentiated and challenging educational services beyond those provided in the general school program.

According to Wisconsin State Statutes, advanced learners/gifted and talented students are defined as “Pupils enrolled in public schools who give evidence of high-performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, or specific academic areas and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided in a regular school program to fully develop such capabilities.” (from s. 118.35(1), Wis. Stats.)

Identification of Advanced Learners

The purpose of providing programming and enrichment services for advanced learners is to ensure that students who have mastered specific skills and benchmarks or could benefit from more depth and/or complexity in a given subject area are provided opportunities to promote continued growth. Identifying advanced learners is an ongoing process for discovering potential and providing appropriate programming activities.

Multiple measures are used to assess students and determine if they might benefit from additional challenges. Standardized assessments, classroom assessments, teacher observations, and parent feedback all inform decisions about possible programming/enrichment options for students.

If parents/guardians have questions or concerns or think that their child might be eligible for advanced learning services, they should initially contact their child's classroom teacher. The classroom teacher will then consult with the Advanced Learning Coordinator to further discuss the student and determine the next steps appropriate to the child's needs. Parents/guardians will be included in these discussions and made aware of options available to their child.

Equity Initiative

The Advanced Learning Program is especially vigilant and proactive in identifying advanced learners among student populations, gender included, that have been historically underrepresented in district enrichment, interventions, and advanced coursework. These historically underrepresented populations include students who are disadvantaged economically, students from racial or ethnic minorities, multilingual learners, underachieving students, and students who receive special education services.

In the pursuit of equity and proportional allocation of resources and services, the department may utilize identification processes for subject acceleration, grade-level acceleration, or intervention eligibility that consider factors outside of standardized testing or teacher recommendation. Departmental identification processes will be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of our assessment tools in identifying historically marginalized students.

The Advanced Learning Department will work with the Special Education Department and school counselors to identify and serve gifted students with IEPs and/or 504 plans. No student should be excluded from Advanced Learning programming or services on the sole basis of their disability. Often categorized as Twice Exceptional Students, these students are traditionally underrepresented in advanced programming.

The Advanced Learning Department will work with the Multilingual Learner (ML) department to identify and serve gifted multilingual learners (ML). No student should be excluded from Advanced programming or services solely because of their language abilities.

The Advanced Learning Department will conduct an annual demographic analysis of its student enrollment that will be made available to the public and presented to the Shorewood School Board. This demographic analysis will present information on the racial/ethnic, language, disability, gender, and socioeconomic makeup of students enrolled in the Advanced Learning Department's intervention and enrichment programming. Identified disproportionality will be addressed through an action plan to increase equitable representation.

Enrichment Programming

In keeping with our belief that students are entitled to rigorous and relevant opportunities, the Advanced Learning Department is committed to offering various options to extend their learning beyond the traditional subjects or framework of the classroom. Enrichment programming may consist of clubs, competitions, or courses, and students may elect to participate in activities that interest them. For a complete list of current enrichment programming, consult the Advanced Learning Department page on the district website.

Partnership Between School and Home

To know and provide for our students effectively, we encourage a strong partnership between the student, family, and teachers. Students benefit when families and schools collaborate to recognize and respond to their advanced learning needs. Families are encouraged to speak with classroom teachers first. They may also contact the Advanced Learning Coordinator if they would like to discuss and share observations about their child's strengths and interests. Families are encouraged to provide learning experiences for their children and find activities they love outside of the typical school day.

Math Acceleration Process

The School District of Shorewood understands that students deserve a mathematics curriculum and instruction that is responsive to individual needs and abilities. Advanced mathematics learners will require ongoing enrichment activities and, in some cases, acceleration in their math studies. What follows are guidelines for the acceleration process in mathematics.

1. The Advanced Learning Coordinator will administer the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) published by the Riverside Publishing Company to all 3rd graders.
2. Students scoring in the 97th national percentile or higher in 2 of the three testing categories (Non-Verbal, Quantitative, and Composite) will be eligible for math acceleration. Other data that factor

into acceleration decisions include FastBridge screening/Forward state assessment scores and teacher feedback on student work habits.

3. The Advanced Learning Coordinator will talk with families to review the data and make a placement recommendation before starting the student’s 4th grade school year. The Advanced Learning Coordinator will work with staff to develop a plan to facilitate the transition and provide any ongoing support the student may need.

Shorewood School District Math Pathways

A student may qualify for math acceleration (accelerated pathway) after completing the CogAT at the end of 3rd grade. Placements into accelerated pathways will occur during the summer between 3rd grade and 4th grade. Another option for math advancement is the compacted pathway during a student’s 6th grade year. Teacher recommendations, assessments, and classroom performance are all considered when determining students' placement in this compacted pathway.

Grade	Math Class	
4	4th grade math	5th grade math
5	5th grade math	6th grade math
6	6th grade math	Pre-Algebra
7	Pre-Algebra	Algebra
8	8th grade Algebra	Geometry
Freshman	Geometry	Algebra 2
Sophomore	Algebra 2	Pre-Calc
Junior	Pre-Calc	<i>Junior 3rd year math requirement</i>
Senior	<i>Senior elective course</i>	<i>Senior elective course</i>

 = 8th grade Algebra pathway  = accelerated pathway

Support and Accountability for Accelerated Pathway

As a district, we want to ensure that students are placed at an appropriate academic level and that the students’ grades reflect this. To that end, students who are eligible for acceleration will maintain the grade of a B average on the accelerated pathway. If a student struggles to maintain a B average, the Advanced Learning Coordinator, teacher, administrator, parents, and students will meet to discuss and implement an intervention plan to support the student. Ultimately, if a student continues to struggle, the team may determine that the acceleration pathway is no longer the most appropriate for the student and his/her needs.

Whole-Grade Acceleration

The Shorewood School District recognizes that in some exceptional cases, a student may require an acceleration of their complete academic program, a process known as whole-grade acceleration. This process results in a student skipping an academic grade level. The Shorewood School District also recognizes that this process has a considerable impact on the student’s learning program, both academically and emotionally, so consideration is only given in truly exceptional cases.

Process:

- 1) Before whole-grade acceleration is considered, significant efforts are made to differentiate student learning within the classroom and through intervention, enrichment, and subject-acceleration programming. A teacher, principal, School Psychologist, or Advanced

Learning Specialist may recommend a student for whole-grade acceleration if this differentiated program proves insufficient for a student's needs.

- 2) Parent permission for testing will be obtained before testing begins. Parents may provide a parent feedback form. Testing will be completed, and a recommendation will be made within 60 calendar days of the request for testing. This testing will be done under the guidance of the School Psychologist.
- 3) To determine student eligibility for whole-grade acceleration, the Shorewood School District uses the Iowa Acceleration Scale (IAS) to gather appropriate data and develop a cumulative score that predicts future success as an accelerated student. The School Psychologist and Advanced Learning Coordinator work with the student's parents, teachers, and administrators to gather the required information to complete the IAS. This group will be established as the Acceleration Team.
- 4) The Acceleration Team holds an in-person meeting to review the testing process, students' IAS scores, and other information provided. The school principal makes the final eligibility decision, taking into account the IAS results and feedback from the acceleration team.
- 5) The Acceleration Team holds a second in-person meeting with parents to discuss the IAS results and present its determination for/against whole-grade acceleration.
- 6) Should the student be eligible for acceleration, a plan will be developed outlining the transition timeline and periodic check-ins from the school counseling department, administrative team, teachers, and/or the advanced learning coordinator.

Other Program Options Utilized by Advanced Learners

- A. Early College Credit Program (ECCP): The ECCP statute allows Wisconsin public and private high school students to take one or more courses at an institution of higher education for high school and/or college credit. Under this section, "institution of higher education" means an institution within the University of Wisconsin System, a tribally controlled college, or a private, nonprofit institution of higher education in the state. If interested in ECCP, please talk to the SHS counselors. More information can be found at <https://dpi.wi.gov/dual-enrollment/eccp>
- B. Part-Time Open Enrollment: A pupil enrolled in a public school in the high school grades may attend a public school in a nonresident school district to take a course offered by that district. A pupil may attend up to two courses at any time in nonresident school districts. If interested in Part-Time Open Enrollment, please contact a SHS counselor. More information can be found at <https://dpi.wi.gov/open-enrollment/ptoe>
- C. Distance Education: The Shorewood School District believes that learning occurs in various situations, environments, and locations. The emergence of distance education presents extraordinary opportunities for access to information and knowledge, both within and outside the walls of public schools. The District recognizes distance education (online, e-learning, virtual, correspondence, etc.) as an appropriate instructional delivery system. A student may

utilize Distance Learning if/when the District does not offer a desired course or when scheduling conflicts exist. More information about the District's official policy regarding Distance Learning can be found on the District's website [here](#).

Glossary of Terms

Ability Grouping - When students of a similar ability or achievement level are placed in a class or group based on observed behavior or performance. Ability grouping is not the same as tracking.

Academic Competitions - Competitions that include, but are not limited to, Math Olympiads, Battle of the Books, and Spelling Bees.

Acceleration - A strategy of progressing through education at rates faster or ages younger than the norm. This can occur through grade skipping or subject acceleration (e.g., a fifth-grade student taking sixth-grade math).

Achievement Tests - Tests designed to measure what students have already learned, mostly in specific content areas. An example of an achievement test is the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS).

Advanced Placement (AP) - A program developed by the College Board where high schools offer courses that meet criteria established by institutions of higher education. In many instances, college credit may be earned with the successful completion of an AP exam in specific content areas (as this credit varies between colleges and universities, it is suggested that questions about this process be forwarded to the college or university of the student's choice).

Aptitude - An inclination to excel in the performance of a particular skill.

Aptitude Test - A test predicting a student's future performance in a particular domain. One such test is the SAT Test.

Asynchrony - A term used to describe disparate intellectual, emotional, and physical rates of growth or development often displayed by gifted children.

At-Risk - A term used to describe students whose economic, physical, emotional, or academic needs go unmet or serve as barriers to talent recognition or development, thus putting them in danger of underachieving or dropping out.

Authentic Assessment - Evaluating student learning through student portfolios, performance, or observations in place of or in conjunction with more traditional performance measures such as tests and written assignments. The process allows students to be evaluated using assessments that more closely resemble real-world tasks.

Concurrent or Dual Enrollment - Most often refers to high school students taking college courses, often for college credit. Dual enrollment is viewed as providing high school students benefits such as greater

access to a wider range of rigorous academic and technical courses, savings in time and money on a college degree, promoting efficiency of learning, and enhancing admission to and retention in college.

Creativity - The process of developing new, uncommon, or unique ideas. The federal definition of giftedness identifies creativity as a specific component of giftedness.

Criterion-Referenced Testing - An assessment that compares a student's test performance to his or her mastery of a body of knowledge or specific skill rather than relating scores to the performance of other students.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students - Students from diverse backgrounds, including those of black, Hispanic, and Asian descent, those learning English as a second language, and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Often, these students are considered to be underrepresented in gifted programming. They can sometimes be referred to as culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse (CLED) students.

Curriculum Compacting - An instructional technique that allows teachers to adjust curriculum for students by determining which students already have mastered most or all of the learning outcomes and providing replacement instruction or activities that enable a more challenging and productive use of the student's time.

Differentiation - Modifying curriculum and instruction according to content, pacing, and/or product to meet unique student needs in the classroom.

Distance Learning - When a student takes a course remotely (most commonly over the Internet) from a school or teacher different from his or her local/home district. These can come in the form of online high schools, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), courses for dual credit through universities, or courses offered by Talent Search programs.

EMLSS - Equitable Multi-level Systems of Support is a model developed by the Department of Public Instruction that communicates a vision of behavioral, social, emotional, and academic support, considers the whole child and system, and attends to equitable access, opportunity and outcomes.

Enrichment - Activities that add or go beyond the existing curriculum. They may occur in the classroom or in a separate setting such as a pull-out program during lunch/recess or other times of the day.

Flexible Grouping - An instructional strategy where students are grouped together to receive appropriately challenging instruction. True flexible grouping permits students to move in and out of various grouping patterns, depending on the course content. Grouping can be determined by ability, size, and/or interest.

Gifted and Talented Students - The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act defines gifted and talented students as "Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities." [Title IX, Part A, Definition 22. (2002)]

Heterogeneous Grouping - Grouping students by mixed ability or readiness levels. A heterogeneous classroom is one in which a teacher is expected to meet a broad range of student needs or readiness levels. Also referred to as inclusion or inclusive classrooms.

Homogeneous Grouping - Grouping students by need, ability, or interest. Although variations between students exist in a homogeneous classroom, the intent of this grouping pattern is to restrict the range of student readiness or needs that a teacher must address.

Identification - The process of determining students qualified for gifted or advanced programming, identification most commonly occurs through the use of intelligence or other testing. Many researchers place emphasis on using multiple pathways for identification, adding teacher, parent, or peer nominations or authentic assessments such as portfolios of student work to the process.

Independent Study - A self-directed learning strategy where the teacher acts as guide or facilitator and the student plays a more active role in designing and managing his or her own learning, often on a topic of special interest to the student.

Individual Education Plan (IEP) - An IEP is a document that delineates special education services for special-needs students. The IEP includes any modifications that are required in the regular classroom and any additional special programs or services. Federal law and the majority of states do not require IEPs for gifted learners.

Intelligence - The ability to learn, reason, and problem solve. Debate revolves around the nature of intelligence as to whether it is an innate quality or something that is developed as a result of interacting with the environment. Many researchers believe that it is a combination of the two.

Multilingual Learners (ML) - Students who are learning English as an additional language. Special consideration should be taken to identify these students properly for gifted programming.

Norm-Referenced Testing - An assessment that compares an individual's results with a large group of individuals who have taken the same assessment (who are referred to as the "norming group"). Examples include the SAT and Iowa Tests of Basic Skills.

Northwest University Midwest Academic Search (NUMATS) - A testing and programming tool that may be administered to 4-8th graders who score in the 95th percentile or higher on a standardized test. This tool allows the young student to take the ACT (or EXPLORE or PLAN) or SAT test out of level for the purpose of discerning specific learning needs. It may also lead to recognition, and/or high-level summer programming options for the student.

Portfolios - An alternative or supplement to traditional measures of giftedness, portfolios offer a collection of student work over time that can help to determine achievement and progress. Many of the elements found in portfolios cannot be captured by a standardized test.

Social-Emotional Needs - Gifted and talented students may have affective needs that include heightened or unusual sensitivity to self-awareness, emotions, and expectations of themselves or others, and a sense of justice, moral judgment, or altruism. Counselors working in this area may address issues such as perfectionism, depression, low self-concept, bullying, or underachievement.

Talent Development - Programs, curricula, and services for gifted and talented students that can best meet their needs, promote their achievements in life, and contribute to the enhancement of our society when schools identify students' specific talent strengths and focus educational services on these talents.

Twice- Exceptional - A term used to describe a student who is both gifted and disabled. These students may also be referred to as having dual exceptionalities or as being gifted with learning disabilities (GT/LD). This also applies to students who are gifted with ADHD or gifted with autism.

Underachievement - A term used to describe the discrepancy between a student's performance and his or her potential or ability to perform at a much higher level.