

# SEEK

(Gifted Education)

# Handbook

Searching, Expanding, Enhancing Knowledge



Gasconade County R-2 School District

Owensville, Missouri

*Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation.*

*~John F. Kennedy~*

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to SEEK!

I hope you are just as excited as I am about our school year together. Our curriculum will be challenging, but I believe you will thoroughly enjoy our units of study while learning about new things. You will also begin to understand your greatest abilities and reflect on your future contributions to your communities.

This handbook has been prepared to help you become more familiar with the SEEK program. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Heather Vinyard

SEEK (Gifted Education) Teacher



## Who Are Gifted and Talented Students?

In his August 1971 report to Congress, former U.S. Commissioner of Education Sidney P. Marland, Jr. stated:

*Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contributions to self and society.*

Then in January of 2002, No Child Left Behind legislation created a new, achievement-based definition of giftedness.

*The term “gifted and talented”, when used with respect to students, children, or youth, means 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 service or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop these capabilities.*

Today, the state of Missouri defines gifted children as “those children 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.”



Regardless of which definition you wish to follow, most definitions agree: gifted children are a population who has unique intellectual development as well as different educational needs.

## Gifted Characteristic Descriptors

Linda Silverman, Ph.D. is a licensed psychologist and directs the Institute for the Study of Advanced Development, and its subsidiary, the Gifted Development Center in Denver, Colorado. She has studied assessment, psychology, and education of the gifted since 1961 and has contributed over 300 articles in this field. According to Silverman, the following are characteristic descriptors of Giftedness.

- Reasons well
- Learns rapidly
- Extensive vocabulary
- Excellent memory
- Long attention span
- Sensitive
- Shows compassion
- Perfectionist
- Intense
- Morally sensitive
- Strong curiosity
- Perseverant in their interests
- High degree of energy
- Prefers older companions or adults
- Wide range of interests
- Great sense of humor
- Early or avid reader
- Concerned with justice, fairness
- Judgment mature for age *at times*
- Keen observer
- Vivid imagination
- Highly creative
- Tends to question authority
- Facility with numbers

- Good at jigsaw puzzles

## How Does Our District Identify a Gifted Student?

During the spring semester of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, students will be administered the Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary School Students (SAGES) Test. Students scoring within the top 10% on this individual battery are identified and further screening is conducted for possible evaluation and identification.

### Screening

- Within top 10% on SAGES Test in 2nd grade
- In years subsequent to 2nd grade, MAP scores of Advanced in both CA and Math may be used to screen students
- 95<sup>th</sup> percentile on achievement test (iReady)

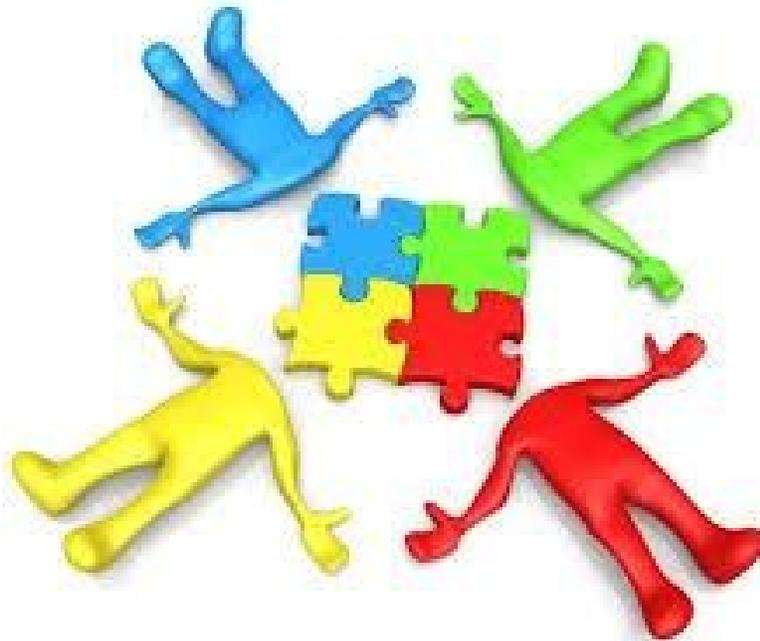
### Evaluation and Identification

- Full Scale IQ score on an individual intelligence test at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile
- 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on a nationally normed individual achievement test
- 182 or higher on the Renzulli Scales (teacher referral)
- Two documented teacher recommendations/nominations
- Students must have the ability to maintain academic progress while participating in a pull out program.

In the event that more students qualify than there are spaces available, students will be accepted in rank order and a waiting list will be maintained.

## What do Gifted Students Need?

- Activities which enable them to operate at complex levels of thought and feeling
- Opportunities for divergent production
- Challenging group and individual work which demonstrates process/product outcomes
- Discussions with intellectual peers
- Special courses in areas of strength and interest which accelerate the pace and depth of the content
- Greater exposure to new areas of learning within and outside the school structure
- Opportunities to apply abilities to real problems
- Skills in critical and creative thinking, research, problem solving, coping with exceptionality, decision making, and leadership



## Philosophy of Curriculum for SEEK:

Our curriculum philosophy of gifted education has four important dimensions:

- A content-based curriculum which allows students to explore in academic areas of their interest
- A process/product/research dimension which encourages in-depth, independent learning
- An abstract concept dimension which allows for the exploration of issues, themes, and other varied curriculums in a higher order thinking environment
- A social/emotional dimension which allows for the exploration of self and relationships with others

## Curriculum will Consist of:

1. Unit of Study
2. Independent Project
3. Thinking Skills Curriculum
4. Affective Needs Curriculum



## Unit of Study

The major unit of study has typically been the centerpiece of gifted program curriculum. It is almost entirely the creation of the teacher FOR the gifted. Unlike thinking and affective curriculum, where the teacher has a scope and sequence of skills, the unit of study begins from the passion the teacher or student has about a particular topic. Thinking and affective skills will be reinforced and used in the unit, but the “big ideas” of a particular theme or topic are the musings about which students think, create, and gain insight. Our major units of study will have the common theme of global literacy, which we will approach through geography.

## Independent Project

Independent projects will allow for students’ interests and self-direction. Each student will choose a topic having to do with their current interests and skill level. They will then create a plan for completing their project. Time will be given during each class period for the students to gather information and work on their project. The culmination of their work will result in a product/presentation to the class, teacher, or other audience as decided by the teacher and student.



## Thinking Skills Curriculum

*“Thinking skills curriculum in every aspect of the curriculum will sharpen children’s capacity to make connections and draw distinctions, to define and to clarify, to assess factually information objectively and critically, to deal reflectively with the relationships between facts and values, and to differentiate their beliefs and what is true from their understanding of what is logically possible. These specific skills help children listen better, study better, learn better and express themselves better. They, therefore carry over into all academic areas. A thinking skills program must help children think both more logically and more meaningfully.”*  
(Lipman, Sharp, Oscanyan)

The critical, creative, organizational and analytical thinking skills will be taught specifically and within the current unit of study.

## Affective Curriculum

The term affective appears to encompass everything that cannot be considered purely cognitive or intellectual in nature. Affective development refers to all of the personal, social, and emotional aspects of learning. The goal of affective curriculum will be to help the student:

- Understand what being gifted means
- Develop strategies to strengthen personal capabilities
- Develop awareness of and gain insights into interactions between self and others
- Develop life skills



## Student Maintenance in Program (Academics)

The student must maintain a grade average of at least a 80% average (B) on semesterly grade reports, or he/she will be ineligible to participate in the SEEK program. The student will remain in their regular classroom (on SEEK day) in order to raise his/her grade to the required 80% by the next reporting period. If the student fails to raise his/her grade, he/she will be ineligible to participate in SEEK. Repeated failure to meet the minimum grade requirement may result in permanent removal from the SEEK program. Grade expectations for students who fall into the category of “twice exceptional” will be reviewed by the SEEK team.

## Guidelines for Classroom Teachers

- Weekly class work exceptions should total the equivalent of a student’s time in SEEK. The student is to be responsible for all tests, long term projects, and looking over material that is covered by the regular classroom teacher while in SEEK. When possible, teachers should avoid scheduling tests and important activities on days when students will be attending SEEK. If the classroom teacher feels that a student must prove their proficiency in a particular subject matter, then the student will be responsible for completing a **modified** portion of said subject matter in the form of a pretest. If the student cannot show proficiency, then they must complete the entire homework assignment for said subject matter.

## Behavior Expectations

Exemplary Behavior is expected of all students who participate in the SEEK program.

- Students are expected to participate in SEEK activities in a responsible manner.
- Students are expected to demonstrate age appropriate maturity, self-discipline and responsibility.
- Students are expected to show respect for the dignity of self and others.
- Students are expected to work independently or in small groups with limited supervision.
- Students are expected to work successfully with other students in challenging and competitive activities.
- Students are expected to engage in behaviors that are supportive to the learning environment and do not interfere with the learning environment of others.
- Students are expected to be respectful of the work and property of others.

## Behavior Consequences

- Multiple referrals to the Buddy Room will result in a 2 week suspension from SEEK.
- Continued poor behavior reports from staff will result in a 2 week suspension from SEEK.
- 1 referral to Team Focus will result in a 4 week suspension from SEEK.
- An office referral that results in an After School Detention will result in a 2 week suspension from SEEK.
- An office referral that results in an ISS will result in a 4 week suspension from SEEK.
- An office referral that results in an OSS will result in removal from the SEEK program for the remainder of the semester.
- Any time a student has been suspended from SEEK for more than 4 weeks cumulatively, he or she will be removed from SEEK for the remainder of the semester.

When a student is suspended from SEEK he or she is not allowed to attend SEEK class or participate in any SEEK related activity, including competitions and field trips. Reinstatement into the SEEK program is subject to review by the SEEK team.



## Field Trips and Guest Speakers

To fulfill the need that gifted students have of “greater exposure to new areas of learning within and outside the school structure” it would benefit the students to participate in experiences which would enhance their learning.

Field trips would be scheduled to give parents as much advance notice as possible. A field trip permission slip would have to be filled out and signed in order for your child to participate.

Guest speakers can be an effective means to raise issues, impart real-life experiences, and drive home a specific lesson. Speakers will be utilized whenever possible. Parents will be notified when a guest speaker is scheduled to visit our classroom.



## SEEK Program Schedule

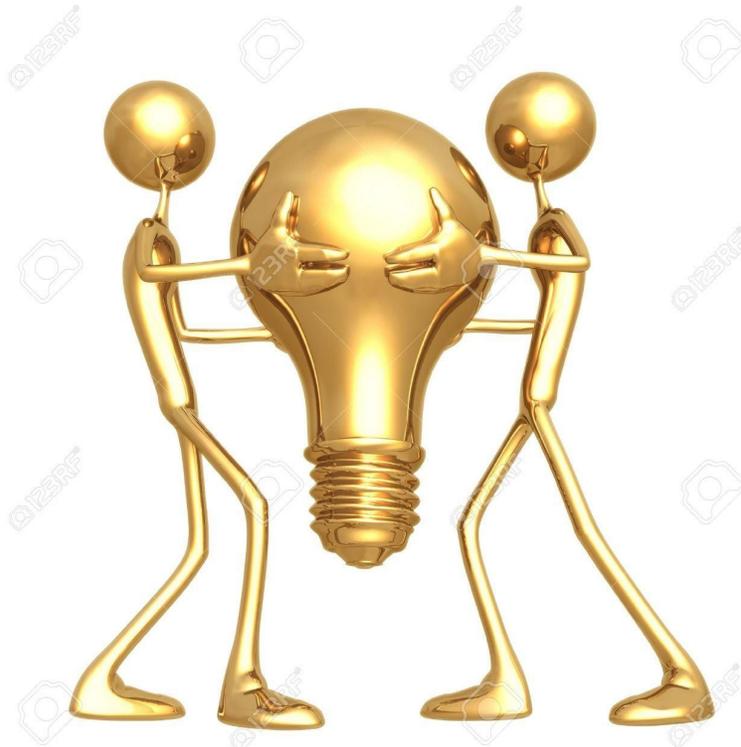
Second graders will participate in a push-in program throughout the school year, where the instructor of SEEK presents a series of thinking skills and enrichment lessons in each classroom. Students will be screened and identified for further testing during the second semester, and will begin a pull-out program at the beginning of third grade. Grades 3-8 participate in a half day pull-out program one day a week.

Monday – 3rd grade

Tuesday – 4th and 7th grades

Wednesday – 5th and 8th grades

Thursday – 6th grade



# **Testing Letters, Forms, and other Documents**

The following pages contain samples of parent letters for notification of screening and testing, and forms for evaluation and identification purposes, and policies for acceleration and re-evaluation.

Gasconade County R-II School District  
SEEK Gifted Education Program  
P.O. Box 536  
Owensville, MO 65066

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child, \_\_\_\_\_, has been referred as a candidate for a district program that provides enrichment services to students that excel in Math, Reading, and Language Arts. In order to determine eligibility for this program we need to administer an individual standardized intelligence test. The information will be held in strict confidence for use by professional school personnel only.

In order to qualify for the screening process your child needed to score Advanced on the MAP test for 2 consecutive years in at least one category, score in the 95th percentile on the iReady diagnostic, has been recommended by a teacher, or has scored in the top 10% of the SAGES test administered to each second grade student. Your child has met the requirement and thus qualifies for additional testing. It is important to remember that this is a screening process. If your child successfully qualifies, then we will notify you of the next step in the process.

Eligibility criteria for the program require documentation that the student excels in the following specific areas:

- Behavioral Characteristics (Learning, Motivation, Creativity, and Leadership)
- Academic Achievement
- Intelligence/Cognitive Ability

The tests to be administered may include the following:

- Renzulli/Hartman Scale of Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students
- Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition
- Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence, 2nd Edition
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale of Children IV
- Woodcock Johnson III Test of Cognitive Abilities
- Other individual achievement tests (Key Math, WRMT-3, WIAT-3, etc.)

If you wish to have your child participate in this testing process, please complete the permission form below and return it to school as soon as possible. The sooner you return the form, the sooner we can begin testing your child. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Heather Vinyard  
SEEK Program Teacher  
(573) 437-2172  
hvinyard@dutchmen.us

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\_\_\_\_\_ I do agree to my child's participation in the SEEK screening process.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree to my child's participation in the SEEK screening process.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Confidential Internal Document**  
**SEEK Program Screening Form**  
**Gasconade County R-II School District**

**General Information:**

Referral Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent / Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step One:** Academic Screening (SAGES Assessment/iReady Diagnostic). SAGES score must be above 111 or in the top 10% of students screened. iReady scores must be at or above the 95th percentile; at least 760. MAP Scores must be advanced in at least 1 category for 2 consecutive years. 'Other' may refer to a number of individual achievement tests.

Test	Date	Achievement	Subject(s)
SAGES			
iReady Diagnostic			
MAP			
MAP			
Other:			

**Step Two: Nominating Teacher Referral (Renzulli Scales for Rating the Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students)**

Teacher Name	Date	Total Percent Behavioral Characteristics

Learning Subscale: \_\_\_\_\_ Creativity Subscale: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Motivational Subscale: \_\_\_\_\_ Leadership Subscale: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total: \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_% (Must be 80% or higher and/or have two  
 228 qualifying years of achievement to continue the screen.)

**Step Three: Administration of the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (KBIT II)**

**KBIT II**

	Standard Score	Confidence Interval	%ile
Vocabulary			
Matrices			
<b>Composite</b>			

**Step Four: Additional IQ**

Test Given: \_\_\_\_\_

Scoring Information:

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**Eligibility Criteria:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility criteria met  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Parent letter sent on \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility criteria **not** met  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Parent letter sent on \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

(Did Not Qualify)

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child was recently screened for participation in the Gasconade County R-II School District's program for gifted and talented students. The KBIT-II Intelligence Test was administered. District and state guidelines require that students score at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile on such a test. **Your child did not meet that requirement.** We are aware that student performance can vary, and that on any given day, true potential may not be measured.

However, we would like to take this opportunity to compliment both you and your child. Although your child did not qualify at this time, it is important to remember that only those students who met referral requirements were screened. **This is an excellent achievement, and should encourage your student to continue to do their very best.** They have already proven that they are capable of accomplishing great things.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss your child's scores, please feel free to contact me by phone (573) 437-2172, or by email [hvinyard@dutchmen.us](mailto:hvinyard@dutchmen.us). Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Heather Vinyard

Gifted Education Teacher

Gasconade County R-II School District

(Qualified Letter)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Welcome to SEEK! I hope you are just as excited as I am about our time together. Our curriculum will be challenging, but I believe you will enjoy our units of study while learning about new things. You will also begin to understand your greatest abilities and reflect on your future contributions to your communities.

Our curriculum is made up of several pieces, including thinking skills, affective learning, independent research, and units of study. There will be opportunities to learn many different ways, individually and as a group. This class will provide you with learning opportunities that you would not have in your regular classroom. It will also provide you with the opportunity to challenge yourself, and to work with intellectual peers.

You are capable of so much, and I have high expectations of you! While participating in SEEK, you will be expected to maintain at least a C average on your quarterly grades. If you drop below a C average, you may be placed on probation for one quarter, after which we will reevaluate. You are also expected to show good behavior in all of your classes. Two office referrals may result in probation for the remainder of the semester.

You will attend SEEK for one half day each week. You will receive a letter from me the first week of school to let you know which day, and when we will begin meeting for the year.

I am looking forward to a great journey together. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone (573) 437-2172 or by email [hvinyard@dutchmen.us](mailto:hvinyard@dutchmen.us).

Sincerely,

Heather Vinyard

Gifted Education Teacher

Gasconade County R-II School District

**SEEK Program for Gifted and Talented Students**

Gasconade County R-II School District

P.O. Box 536

Owensville, MO 65066

(573) 437-2177

This student has qualified for placement in the SEEK program based on the following state approved guidelines:

1. Achievement Test Scores
  2. Teacher/Parent Rating Scales
  3. Intelligence Test Scores
- OR
4. Transfer student from state approved gifted program

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL BUILDING: \_\_\_\_\_

CLASSROOM TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT / GUARDIAN: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

The 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students will attend SEEK one half day each week. Weekly class work exceptions should total the equivalent of a student's time in SEEK. The student is to be responsible for all tests, long term projects, and looking over material that is covered by the regular classroom teacher while in SEEK. If the classroom teacher feels that a student must prove their proficiency in a particular subject matter, then the student will be responsible for completing a **modified** portion of said subject matter in the form of a pretest. If the student cannot show proficiency, then they must complete the entire homework assignment for said subject matter.

Parents, students, and teachers must also be aware that students must maintain at least a C average in all of their classes in order to participate in the program. If a student's grade in any subject area falls below a C on a semester report, that student may be placed on probation.

STUDENT SIGNATURE:

\_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN:

\_\_\_\_\_

(Parental signature indicates consent to place the student in the SEEK gifted education program.)

CLASSROOM TEACHER SIGNATURE:

\_\_\_\_\_

(Teacher signature indicates specific allotment of time to equal grade level exemptions.)

GIFTED TEACHER SIGNATURE:

\_\_\_\_\_

## Reevaluation

Only one re-evaluation is possible for any given student in the district. A re-evaluation can be requested based on the following circumstances:

1. At least eighteen months have elapsed since the previous intelligence test was administered.
2. The student had a previous score at the 84th percentile, 115 standard score, or above.
3. If applicable, a physician provides written documentation that a child was tested prior to being diagnosed with a disability that could have adversely affected testing performance.

Requests for re-evaluation must be submitted in writing by February 1st for the student to be re-evaluated for the following school year.

## **Acceleration**

“Double Promotions,” that is, acceleration beyond the normal grade placement, are approvable for students who are working at an academic level of more than a year above placement and are sufficiently mature, socially and emotionally, to work with students of the advanced grade. Parent/guardian, teachers and administrators must agree that it is in the best interest of the student under consideration. This could take the form of single subject or whole grade acceleration.

In recommending promotion, these factors will be considered:

1. Academic achievement in all subject areas, especially attainment of objectives, as determined by tests, teacher assignments, and work samples.
2. Chronological age
3. Study habits
4. Attendance
5. Social and emotional maturity
6. State-mandated requirements for primary/middle school students