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Curriculum for Academically Talented Students (CATS) Gifted Education

Philosophy

The Logan-Rogersville R-VIII School District is committed to meeting the individual student's needs. This commitment includes providing opportunities for students who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential-the academically gifted. The school district recognizes that since these students possess extraordinary abilities to think creatively and critically, their cognitive and affective needs can best be met by providing a differentiated, interdisciplinary curriculum.

Purpose

The Logan-Rogersville R-VIII School District CATS program for grades 1-6 is designed to enhance the student's intellectual and academic talents and to encourage the development of creative thinking and leadership by providing the student with:

- Opportunities for learning experiences not ordinarily included in the regular curriculum.
- Development of critical/creative thinking, problem-solving, leadership, and communication skills.
- Development and expansion of independent, self-directed learning skills.
- Guidance in the development of personal and social awareness.
- Provision for gifted students to interact with intellectual peers without being isolated completely from the regular school program.

Program Goals:

To provide learning experiences not ordinarily included in the regular curriculum, the CATS program will offer:

- New and challenging information and ideas to broaden the cognitive base of the student's special interest areas.
- Activities that allow the student to operate at complex and creative levels of thought.
- Time for the student to pursue ideas in depth.
- Opportunities to share ideas in depth in group activities with adult experts.
- Opportunities for the student to have more independence and responsibility in their education process.

To facilitate development of critical/creative thinking, problem-solving, leadership and communication skills the program will provide instruction in the following:

- Higher level thinking techniques involved in such methods as brainstorming, SCAMPER, inductive-deductive reasoning, Bloom's Taxonomy, analogies and convergent-divergent thinking.
- Problem-solving techniques such as creative problem-solving, decision-making, forecasting techniques, scenario writing and the scientific process.
- Leadership techniques such as reading body language, asking questions that promote conversations, listening so others will talk, handling criticism constructively and learning to delegate and assist rather than command.
- Process skills and practices that facilitate communication such as typing, photography, computer literacy, public speaking, map and chart making, and expressing ideas in written form.

To help in the development and expansion of independent, self-directed learning skills, the program provides:

- Practice in setting realistic short and long-term goals.
- Guidance in accepting setbacks as part of the learning process and in learning to overcome obstacles when possible.
- Activities that allow the student to solve problems in diverse ways and to be exposed to the natural consequences of choice.
- Encouragement in accepting responsibility for producing quality products and for the completion of the task.
- Experience in developing the criteria for self-evaluation of products.

To meet the need for guidance in the development of personal and social awareness the program:

- Provides an atmosphere of acceptance that allows for and encourages questioning.
- Encourages students to examine new ideas on their own merit.
- Provides activities that help the student become more aware of his/her own strengths and learning style.
- Provides readings and experiences with a variety of people that illustrate different kinds of career choices and life styles.
- Encourages awareness of social problems facing all mankind.

Provision for gifted students to interact with their intellectual peers is provided in the following ways:

- The service model of the CATS program.
- Provision for opportunities to work in small groups and with adult experts.
- Opportunities to participate in academic contests and events.
- Opportunities to move out into the community for information.

Service Model for Grades 1-6

The Logan-Rogersville R-VIII School District CATS program for grades 1-6 is a “pull-out” type program. All students spend four days a week in a regular academic program at their own school. One day a week CATS students will receive services in the CATS classroom in their respective buildings. In the event there is a small number of students in one building, those students may be transported to another building to participate with that particular group of students. This determination will be made annually after testing and student identification has occurred.

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