

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
DIVISION OF LEARNING SERVICES  
2009-2010**

**Application for Program Approval for Gifted/Talented Education**

County Carroll District Name Berryville LEA Number 08-02

**NOTE: INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED TO THE DISTRICT**

**AUTHORIZATION:** *To the best of my knowledge, the information in this application is correct and reflects a district-wide philosophy. The assigned personnel responsible for directing and/or completing application activities will have the necessary support and authority for doing so and will comply with the State expectations and all application commitments.*

Signature of Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent's name (please type) Dr. Randy Byrd

Signature of GT Administrator/Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please type Administrator/Coordinator's name as it appears on teacher license

Janet Ruth Scheel E-mail address jscheel@bobcat.k12.ar.us

Yes, the GT administrator holds a Curriculum/Program Administrator License in gifted/talented education. [Licensure codes 314 and 315 (current) or 340 (old)].

No, the administrator does not hold a Curriculum/Program Administrator License in gifted/talented education, but has filed an Additional Licensure Curriculum/Program Administrator Plan (ALCP) with the Office of Teacher Licensure. **Please attach a copy of the ALCP to this application.**

Yes, the GT Coordinator holds a license in gifted/talented education (Licensure codes 305 and 306).

No, coordinator is not licensed but has filed an Additional Licensure Plan (ALP) with the Office of Teacher Licensure. **Please attach a copy of the ALP to this application.**

**Our district has a GT Administrator, GT Coordinator, and/or one or more GT teachers on an ALP for GT. Attached is a copy/are copies of the current Waiver to Teach Out-Of-Area from the Office of Teacher Licensure.**

**\*Total number of Identified students must equal number noted in Programs and Practices (A)**

**PROGRAM ENROLLMENT**

\*Total GT # 92

Female # 45 = 49 % of GT Program

Male # 47 = 51 % of GT Program

Black # 0 = \_\_\_\_\_ % of GT Program

White # 82 = 89 % of GT Program

Asian or Pacific Islander # 0 = \_\_\_\_\_ % of GT Program

Hispanic # 10 = 11 % of GT Program

American Indian or Alaskan Native # 0 = \_\_\_\_\_ % of GT Program

Free or Reduced Lunch # 22 = 24 % of GT Program

**For ADE use only:**

\_\_\_\_ Superintendent's Signature

\_\_\_\_ G/T Administrator/Coordinator Signature

\_\_\_\_ Program and Practices (A)

\_\_\_\_ Programs and Practices (B)

\_\_\_\_ Programs and Practices (C)

\_\_\_\_ Evaluation Summary (D)

\_\_\_\_ Program Summary (E)

\_\_\_\_ Financial Data (F)

\_\_\_\_ Licensure Verification

\_\_\_\_ Program Enrollment Verification

\_\_\_\_ Report total \_\_\_\_\_ SIS total

\_\_\_\_ 5% ADM Verification

\_\_\_\_ quarter ADM = \_\_\_\_\_

5% = \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**PROGRAM APPROVAL APPLICATION DUE OCTOBER 15, 2009**



**PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES (B)**  
**2009-2010**

Please provide a brief narrative description of your gifted program (attachments are acceptable). Your response **MUST** include these identifiable components and address all parts of the questions:

**1. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION:** Briefly describe the extent to which the options listed on the Programs and Practices (A) page are to be used, or the way in which they are combined, for each of the following grouping of students: elementary, middle/junior high, high schools. **Give specific examples of how students' needs are being met and how the program is meeting (must include all elementary grades including K) and/or exceeding the standards for this area.** Also clearly explain who delivers the GT Services: classroom teacher; GT teacher – provide name and GT licensure code; combination of classroom teacher and GT teacher – provide name and GT licensure code; secondary content teacher; Pre-AP teacher; AP teacher; etc.

**ELEMENTARY (Grades K-5), (must include all elementary grades including K):**

In the 2008-2009 school year, new buildings dictated changes in grade configurations as well as G/T services. Formerly, K-3 was housed on the west side of town, with grades 4 and 5 on the east side near the middle and high schools. A new intermediate school building for grades 3-5 opened in August of 2008. At the K-2 campus the G/T teacher/coordinator (only G/T employee in the district) taught lessons once each month in each grade, rotating grades each week. This proved to be much easier for all concerned because in the past so many holidays and in-service days were held on Mondays that it was often difficult for the teacher to rotate through all four grades in a given month. For the other lessons of the month, the regular classroom teachers delivered lessons provided by the G/T teacher or designed lessons that included G/T frameworks standards. Documentation is provided by the G/T teacher for lessons delivered and distributed by her. Teachers who choose to substitute lessons document their application to G/T frameworks in the notebook provided by the G/T teacher to classroom teachers. Each year teachers have become more adept at recognizing how to extend a regular lesson to include G/T framework components. Lessons in kindergarten encompass all G/T frameworks except research, with an emphasis on communication skills. Students in grade 1 and 2 are taught terminology of thinking skills (fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, analysis, etc.) and participate in activities individually, in small groups, and in whole group. The lessons address vocabulary and math as well as the specific skills enumerated in the G/T frameworks. Some lessons are taken from *Are They Thinking?* or the P.E.T.S. program. The G/T teacher provides supplementary activities for teachers when she notices their study of units for which she has lessons not planned for the whole grade—for instance, linking study of fairy tales to science.

Berryville had a third-grade G/T class for the first time in 2008-2009. It met, as did grades 4 and 5, for 150 minutes per week in a pull-out class. At this level, formal research is introduced. The third graders studied human body systems, learned how to do more difficult puzzles and activities that were introduced at K-2, and learned to play chess, participating in two chess tournaments. They particularly enjoyed examining their lost teeth, hair, skin cells under microscopes and dissecting pig hearts. Fourth graders studied the environment and economics, incorporating lessons in art, poetry, and math additionally. Field trips included working with the United States Forest Service and visiting a farm where the owners have worked extensively with methods that are environmentally friendly as well as economically sound. The students' final projects were presentations for their fourth grade classmates, the G/T students dressing as famous environmentalists and sharing through power point, posters, photographs displayed with Elmo, etc.

Fifth graders began the year learning how to use various methods and sources while writing essays for the Daughters of the American Revolution annual essay contest. Three of the students won the top three places in the county chapter's contest, and the county winner's essay placed second in state competition. The students were invited to share their essays with the school board as well as all the students in their school. For the third consecutive year, fifth graders then chose to study medieval history. After some whole-group instruction, each student assumed a medieval identity and presented to the class specific information learned through research in an oral presentation. Each person also prepared a visual demonstration. For instance, the archer built a model castle, the cook prepared a medieval cookbook, and the artist made a

mosaic. Still in character, the students joined fifth graders from Green Forest and Eureka Springs for the third annual Carroll County Medieval Faire. The class learned to use a catapult, created costumes, built a castle façade, learned to play medieval music on recorders, and wrote and performed a miracle play based on the book of Jonah. Learning stations at the faire introduced bocce ball, medieval justice, jousting, coin making, and a Punch and Judy show.

Students in grades 3-5 attended plays at Arts Center of the Ozarks, including *Hansel and Gretel*, *Anne of Green Gables*, and *Granny's Victory Garden*. Sixth graders won the state KMO championship. The fifth- and sixth-grade quiz bowl team won third place, and the third- and fourth-grade quiz bowl team placed first. Fourth and fifth graders participated and earned recognition for high performance in Continental Mathematics League competition. A fifth grader placed second in the county Spelling Bee competition, and teams won trophies at Math Carnival. Students often stayed after school to work on completion of projects.

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**MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH (Grades 6-8 ):**

Identified G/T students in middle school are enrolled in one or more pre-AP classes, taught by teachers who have attended either the two-day pre-AP training or the week-long summer institute. In addition to these classes, students meet with the G/T teacher one period a week. In those classes, students choose the area of study. In 2008-2009 sixth graders chose to study local history. They prepared a power point presentation and taught social studies for a day, sharing with their sixth-grade classmates. Seventh graders began the year choosing to study sports and then in October began wondering how placards to spell out messages—that they had seen in stadiums—could be used in our district's new arena. The students figured out how to make the message "GO CATS"—GO when placards were held in one position, CATS when flipped over-- work, painted 18" x 18" placards for an upper section of the arena, and completed the project successfully. Then they made a smaller version of the project to enter in the Design & Build at Math Carnival, winning third place. Eighth graders chose to study humor. Since the national election was so interesting to all, students began by analyzing current political cartoons, then looked at examples through 150 years. Coincidentally, PBS was presenting a series on humor, which was used for background. Finally, the students formed groups and wrote and performed in humorous sketches, which they presented for their friends and family on an evening in May.

Students at the middle school level participate in KMO, Quiz Bowl, Continental Mathematics League, Math Carnival, Spelling Bee, and other activities related to their chosen areas of study, all coordinated through the G/T Department. An eighth grader was Carroll County Spelling Bee champion, and the quiz bowl team advanced to state competition. In the spring seventh and eighth graders went to Washington D.C. Seventh graders attended Heifer Ranch Global Gateway. All groups attended performances at Arts Center of the Ozarks.

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**HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 9-12 ):**

High school students in 2008-2009 were enrolled in pre-AP or AP courses or in concurrent credit courses. All teachers on the Berryville High School campus teaching these courses have attended the pre-AP training or the summer institute. Some students took additional AP courses on-line. The G/T teacher plans activities for monthly meetings. In 2008-2009, these included performances at Arts Center of the Ozarks, information about Arkansas Governor's School, and information shared by a senior G/T student who had attended a Dale Carnegie workshop. High school students also participate in Quiz Bowl, KMO, and Mock Trial. The quiz bowl and Mock Trial teams both advanced to state competition.

**PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES (C)**  
**2009-2010**  
**(continued)**

**1. Identification**

*Make sure your response addresses the following in detail:*

- A. Describe the key features of the identification process in detail.
- B. Describe how the identification process is communicated to parents and other stakeholders.
- C. Provide the measures, including non-biased measures, that are used for identification.
- D. Describe the procedures that are used for exiting students from the district's program.

**A.** The Berryville School District's identification process includes soliciting nominations from teachers, parents, students' peers (at the secondary level), students themselves, and community members. **B.** Announcements are made at the annual community meeting and posted to teachers through e-mail and personal contact from the G/T coordinator. For the past two years there have been many students transferring into the district whose parents have inquired about participation in the G/T program. Formal identification begins in third grade. **C.** Instruments used in identification include teacher and parent questionnaires. Torrance or Williams creativity assessment, group achievement test scores (SAT-10 for the latest nominees), Arkansas Benchmark scores, grades, and two ability measures, one group and one individual. Also included are examples of work—or teachers' notes if the lesson did not include paper or other product that could be saved—of students who showed exceptional ability during full-class enrichment lessons in grades K-2 as well as any products from the regular classroom or from contests, performances in academic competitions, etc. Those who nominate are encouraged to include specific anecdotal information that addresses the nominees' exceptional ability in creativity, motivation, intellect, or leadership.

The identification committee is made up of classroom teachers and counselors from primary, intermediate, and secondary levels, a building principal, and is chaired by the G/T coordinator. All parents of nominated students, both those who are placed and those who are not, are encouraged to schedule a conference with the G/T coordinator to review the data used in the identification process. Students who are not initially placed are frequently given opportunity to participate in competitions which serve their particular strengths, such as Math Carnival, Spelling Bee, Quiz Bowl, Mock Trial, TIP, etc. Teachers, both those who currently have the students and those who nominated them, are given a list of children who were placed. Most elaboration on the process is conveyed to teachers in small groups at lunch or individually. The G/T coordinator is not given any time during district in-service to speak, possibly because G/T is not mentioned in the district's ACSIP plan. And because one teacher/coordinator serves the entire district, that person is unable to attend team meetings.

**D.** All identified students are reviewed annually, although a student may exit the program at any time. If a student indicates that he/she wishes to exit the program, parents are contacted for a conference before the exit is made. Parents may also initiate the exit procedure, and there is a place on the end-of-year survey for parents to indicate that they do not wish a child to continue participation the following year. Parents who complete this section are contacted for further information regarding the reason for exit. If the classroom teacher or G/T teacher feels that G/T services are not appropriate for the student, the G/T coordinator confers with parents, counselors, and the identification committee. District policy dictates that secondary students who *choose* not to take at least one pre-AP or AP course when one is available to meet their needs are exited from the program because the one G/T teacher/coordinator cannot meet state time requirements for those students. Those students and their parents are reminded of the policy so that they may reconsider schedules before they are exited.

Students who are recommended for continued services after the annual evaluation must have written parent permission to continue participation. Student records reflect types of exit and dates of exit.

## **2. Stakeholders**

*Make sure your response addresses the following in detail:*

- A. Describe how and in what form you distributed information about your program to your stakeholders (through the gifted and talented handbook, flyer, tri-fold, newspaper, newsletter, school-wide letter, etc.)
- B. Describe specifically which stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, administration, community, school-wide, district-wide, etc.) this information was distributed.

**A.** Information about the Berryville G/T program is distributed in various ways. A brief description of the program is in building-level handbooks, which all parents receive, and there is a separate G/T handbook containing greater detail, which is made available to those who attend the annual community meetings. Notice of the meeting is placed in the local newspaper, and letters are sent to parents of G/T students. Administrators are invited to attend. Since in-service concerning G/T is not available to teachers otherwise, classroom teachers are encouraged to attend the community meeting. This year the intermediate principal offered in-service credit for 3-5 teachers to attend the meeting. Copies of the G/T frameworks are also given to teachers.

**B.** Information pertinent to the students is shared with G/T students during G/T classes.

The annual program approval report is posted on the district's website, accessible to all stakeholders.

**PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES (C)**  
**2009-2010**  
**(continued)**

### 3. Curriculum

*Make sure your response addresses the following in detail:*

- A. When was the last time your Scope and Sequence was revised?
- B. Describe the exemplary unit(s) you used this year.
- C. Is there evidence of multicultural diversity in the curriculum? If so, in what ways? Provide specifics.

**A.** The program's scope and sequence is reviewed and revised, if necessary, annually. 2008-2009 was the second year for teachers to use a trifold for documenting differentiation in pre-AP classes and for all services delivered by the G/T coordinator/teacher. Teachers continue to prefer it to the former document. When skills are introduced earlier than they had been in the regular classroom, the G/T classroom will make a complementary adjustment to provide acceleration at the appropriate level.

**B.** Some units are used annually, though with adjustments to fit each class, because they have proven to be exemplary. Fourth graders study environment and economics, but the unit actually covers many more bodies of study. Especially, dealing with use of taxonomy establishes a foundation for further scientific understanding. Each year students have rated the fifth-grade medieval unit highly. It allows them to work together yet focus on individual interests. For instance, this year's cook was a student who had been interested in cooking for a long time. She not only produced a medieval cookbook and prepared the dishes but made her own costume. While the students are conducting individual research, they also make connections and often enter into serious discussions that concern universal, enduring topics such as power and its use and misuse. The seventh graders found great satisfaction in their arena placard project because it was so complex and because it required a great deal of cooperation. They remarked that they learned a lot about each other as well as about working with the public, and they recognized the pressure that came with the possibility of failure. (It's not easy to risk public humiliation when in middle school!) Eighth graders took another risk no other class had by attempting to be funny. Eighth-grade boys filmed themselves acting in a spoof called *Middle School Musical*, another group did a parody of *Twilight (Dusk)*, a third filmed a lengthy infomercial complete with out-takes, and the fourth group surveyed a number of persons, asking them to relate on camera the funniest thing they could think of. The new third-grade class did well with their academic science unit but also profited greatly from learning chess. Our excellent teacher from the community was able to teach them not only the game but also courtesy and expressions from chess that are used in so many other settings.

**C.** Although no group studied multicultural diversity so directly as we had in the past, we made our annual visit to Heifer Ranch and followed it with a fundraiser to raise money for the group's efforts. One activity that students do is write in "Life-long Notebooks." A section of the notebook is called "Provocative Quotes." We found it very interesting to contemplate quotes from Mexico, Guatemala, etc., countries the students' parents or even the students themselves had lived in. One of our resource books in the humor unit was about Chinese humor, and it was interesting to read about what was considered funny in China.

#### **4. Diversity**

*Make sure your response addresses the following in detail:*

- A. Describe how your program addresses and promotes access to gifted program services for ethnic, low-income, and twice exceptional gifted learners.
- B. Describe the diversity issues you addressed this year and how you resolved them.

- A.** A program goal is “Procedures and processes will provide for nomination and identification of students from traditionally underserved populations.” The district provides in-service concerning students eligible for services from the special education department and from the ESL department each year. Many faculty members have attended in-service based on Ruby Payne’s work with children from low-income (as defined by eligibility for free or reduced lunch) homes. Berryville is a Title I district. The coordinator/teacher and identification committee encourage nomination of students from traditionally underserved groups. The G/T coordinator works closely with the director of ESL programs, having communications translated, usually into Spanish, and receiving nominations from educators in the ESL department. This week a family enrolled three children through ESL, and the ESL director made sure they were aware of G/T services, calling the G/T coordinator, who met with the parents and explained program goals and services.

There are identified G/T students who also receive services from special education and 504 programs. Their success in the program has made teachers more comfortable with considering other twice-exceptional children for nomination and the identification committee more comfortable with placing them.

Names of students who receive free or reduced lunches are confidential, but the G/T coordinator submits to the Food Services director a list of names of children nominated so that the identification committee is assured that there are potential participants from that population. In the spring of 2009 approximately 40% of the nominees were eligible for those programs, three fourths of that group for free lunch.

- B.** As has been true in other years, sometimes parents of ESL students receive the permission-to-test forms for G/T and still do not fully understand the program even though the papers are translated into Spanish. Again this year the ESL office contacted the parents, spoke with and answered questions for them, and had the papers returned. All nominated ESL students’ parents did return the paperwork.

**PROGRAMS AND PRACTICES (C)****2009-2010****(continued)****5. Professional Development**

*Make sure your response addresses the following in detail:*

- A. What professional development did you and/or other certified GT teachers provide and/or deliver to district personnel?
- B. What professional development courses (such as graduate courses in gifted education or advanced work in your subject area) did you and/or other certified GT teachers participate in?

**A.** The G/T coordinator/teacher is not given time during district in-service to inform teachers about the program and is unable to attend team meetings because of class schedules. Therefore, most information about the program is delivered individually or in small groups to teachers at lunch, etc. Although the intermediate school principal offered in-service credit for attending the annual community G/T meeting, no intermediate teacher attended, while some from other campuses did. Pertinent articles are shared with teachers. The G/T coordinator/teacher has encouraged some teachers to take G/T coursework. There is a small library of resources for teachers, but they have been less than optimally accessible because the G/T room flooded regularly and many things had to be stored in boxes on high shelves. Currently that room is being renovated, and all those materials are in long-term storage. It is hoped that when renovations are complete, teachers will have greater access to helpful books and articles.

**B.** The one G/T employee, who has a master's degree in Gifted Education, did not take additional coursework this year. She did attend co-op G/T meetings, including the Videoconference, AGATE conference, etc. and is serving on the state Quiz Bowl board.

**END OF YEAR PROGRAM EVALUATION SUMMARY (D)  
2008-2009**

**\*Note: Please indicate the NUMBER of stakeholders participating in each of the program evaluation formats.**

Stakeholders Participating in Program Evaluation	Questionnaire/ Surveys	Interviews	Focus Groups	Other
Superintendent	1	1		
Principals	4	1		
Teachers, K-2	13			
Teachers, Intermediate	17			
Teachers, Middle School	6			
Teachers, High School	5			
Counselors, Support Staff	2			
Parents, Elementary	20		2	
Parents, Middle School	17		3	
Parents, High School	3		3	
Students, Elementary	27			
Students, Middle School			27	
Students, High School			22	
Community Members	8			
School Board Members	1			
GT Advisory Council and ID Committee	10			

**To whom and in what form are program EVALUATION RESULTS disseminated? This program approval application is posted on the district website, accessible to all patrons. A brief summary is given at the annual community meeting.**

**Additional Comments: It is not possible to know exactly how many view the program approval application on the website. However, stakeholders do rather frequently tell the coordinator/teacher that they read all or part of it on the site.**

**END OF YEAR PROGRAM EVALUATIONS SUMMARY (E)  
2008-2009**

Please provide a brief narrative description of your evaluation results. **Use percentages to accurately report your results.** Your response should be based on your evaluation of your gifted program and include your stakeholder questionnaires and/or surveys that were distributed at the end of the last school year, student outcome data and program approval standards. Your response **MUST** address all parts of the following questions:

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**1. What did the results indicate about the gifted programs and services offered at the elementary level, middle/junior high level, and high school level? Be specific and address EACH level.**

Attached to this report are copies of the questionnaires and focus questions used for surveying various groups.

Student Evaluation

Students at the elementary level (grades 3-5) completed a questionnaire at the end of the school year. Third graders had some difficulty making evaluations, so approximately 10% of the answers were DK, "don't know." Fourth and fifth graders had very few DK answers. Over-all, more than two thirds of the responses were either "4" or "5." After accounting for the DK answers, there were few statements that the students did not agree with, and those responses were isolated. The only response that had a noticeably lower score was #13: "The district's resources are utilized appropriately and sufficiently in supporting G/T activities/classes." These low responses were concentrated at fifth grade, where the students already knew that when they moved to middle school G/T would meet only one class period a week. Following are comments from the student responses:

"I think G/T is a very rewarding and great opportunity because kids are recognized and they get the high-level assignments they need."

"I think the activities are fun and better...interacting with other people."

"I really like quiz bowl because you learn a lot of new things. D.A.R. really lets you know how people are much different today."

"The G/T program is doing a good job."

"The activities I participated in were fun but challenging. A challenge is what kids our age need, especially people who catch on to things faster than others."

"I think Berryville School District should very seriously consider their support to the G/T program...not a whole lot of support."

"I really liked G/T this year, especially KMO, Math Carnival, and the medieval fair. They were challenging, but I like that."

"The D.A.R. essay was challenging but fun. I am glad that I am in G/T because I need to be challenged and have fun at the same time."

"I wish we could have dissected more stuff!"

"I really liked how we did activities. I also liked how we learned more about stuff. I would like to do those things again next year."

"I think I learned more than I did in the regular classroom."

"I really like chess. I would like to go on even more trips."

"I want to do more puzzles and brain teasers."

"G/T has taught me to take responsibility in my work. It's also taught me about trees!"

"G/T classes are a lot more challenging than the regular classroom."

"In G/T we learned so many things I never knew—like a lot of the CML questions."

Interestingly, a student who asked to exit the program rated the program highly in all phases. One who chose to remain in the program said he/she (anonymous forms) found it was difficult for him/her to keep up in the classroom.

Middle school students used focus group questions that had been used with high school students previously. By this time most of the students have been in the program long enough that their responses address the questions asked on the questionnaire, but there is more discussion and clarification.

Since our school has only one large ethnic minority, we did discuss inclusion of Hispanic students. Both the Hispanic students and the others agreed that representation in G/T was effective and that the students participate fully. At one grade level students had completed such a public project that required so many steps, students did notice that there was a lack of full participation by one or two students and all agreed that it is an obligation of the program to participate in activities. The conclusion was that the only way identification is sometimes not effective is that some students may have the abilities required but choose not to use them.

There was some difference of opinion about how well the middle-school G/T service met students' needs in 2008-2009. Those who participated in Quiz Bowl, Math Carnival, KMO, etc. were enthusiastic about all the competitions. All classes were very satisfied with their major projects conducted directly through G/T. They felt that the projects they chose were challenging and that they required skills needed beyond school: responsibility, risk taking, etc. The majority of the students also praised their pre-AP classes, noting that the challenges were appreciated. However, depending upon the particular course, some students believed that the classes were not challenging enough or that the work was not substantially different from the regular classes. All did agree that being in class with motivated, achieving students—whether identified G/T or not—was an advantage. One student said the classes were much more "focused," and another said, "I had to think of more outcomes and possibilities." Another noted, "These classes made my learning more efficient," and elaborated that being able to move faster and also with greater depth was what separated the pre-AP classes from the regular classes. There was consensus that students did not like the increased benchmark practice. They felt that they did not need the additional practice. Some students believed that the failure of pre-AP classes to fully meet their needs was due to the teachers' being required to give the TLI tests and therefore not have time for greater acceleration and enrichment in their specific units of study.

An awkward part of this evaluation occurred because the focus questions were asked of ninth graders (August, 2009) who were to consider their eighth-grade service. Their culminating activity had occurred so close to the end of school that it was impossible to complete the evaluation while they were in eighth grade.

During the summer the decision was made to change the format of pre-AP classes at the high school (9-12) level. Thus, the students who had been in pre-AP classes with G/T and/or high-achieving students while in middle school were scheduled with the whole school population in ninth grade. The students had read books and prepared for customary pre-AP classes and were surprised to find that their preparation would not be part of a class activity. Some of them found themselves the only person who had been scheduled in what was pre-AP in what is perceived as a regular classroom since all classes are now labeled pre-AP if the teacher has received pre-AP training. While these students gave high ratings to their service in eighth grade, they were unhappy with the change. Many noted that they could already see a difference in being able to move faster or more deeply into or through content. They were to be given different assignments than the other members of their classes but believed that being the only one or one of few—the largest concentration of G/T students in one class is four-- in a class doing a particular assignment would not allow for one of their most valued parts of the former pre-AP arrangement: class interaction, discussion and extension. As this report is filed, the students do not like the change, but that will be part of next year's evaluation process.

When asked to give evidence of how G/T has been beneficial to them, the students cited primarily the depth and difference of content as well as the very different processes and products. Many of them said they did not think they could accomplish what they were able to do and were now ready to try even more difficult tasks. One said she found out she could be a leader because she was forced to be. Many said they had just learned so many things that they otherwise would have been unaware of. One noted that in G/T she was tested over what she had really learned "in a real way." They praised the trips to Washington D.C., Heifer Ranch, plays, etc. One said he thought he understood things much better after G/T experiences.

The one numerical evaluation in the focus questions was rating the over-all program. The average score in middle school was 8.3, with students often giving justifications for their scores: "would have been higher if pre-AP classes had been a little harder," "need more time for G/T class." "More time for G/T class/projects/activities" was the greatest difference the students would like to see in the program for next year. Somewhat nostalgically, they talked about the many outdoor activities they had done in past years and wished they could do more of those as well as take trips to various points of interest.

High school students also did evaluations in August 2009. They, too, had been affected by or had heard about the change in pre-AP and had difficulty separating their past service from the present format.

Like the middle-school students, high-school students believed that identification was effective. Some noted that those who perhaps should not have been in the program were no longer there.

In evaluating their service, opinions varied widely when discussing pre-AP and AP classes. Some were highly praised while students believed that teachers were not fully prepared for others. One strong point of agreement, however, was that simply by being in classes with those who wished to learn was a great advantage. Students mentioned, for instance, the stimulating discussions in a pre-AP class. The three students in that grade who had been unable to take the class said their class in the same course was nothing like the one where students chose to be in a more challenging environment. Students did have very positive comments to make about competitions. These students emphasized that their time is valuable and that they do not want to spend it in less-than-worthwhile activities. They liked Quiz Bowl, Mock Trial, KMO, and the trips the group went on. Quiz Bowl and Mock Trial students reported satisfaction with learning more and learning team and leadership skills. One student said G/T had been beneficial by "opening minds." On a scale of 1-10, the students rated the program an 8, with comments saying it would be higher "if there were more time for G/T," "if not for \_\_\_\_\_ class," etc.

When asked about differences they would like to see in the program, many of the students wanted to know if they were supposed to regard that question as if it had been asked in May 2008. If so, they said, they wanted no changes. These students are unhappy with the change in pre-AP format. They believe that the

previous scheduling provided better preparation for AP classes and for college. Somewhat oddly, the students most outspoken about returning to the previous scheduling arrangement were the seniors, who stressed how important the laddering of pre-AP classes had been to them and were disappointed that students behind them would not get the same advantage. All grades wished there would be more time provided for G/T activities.

## Parent Evaluation

No formal evaluation is done at K-2, but some parents have approached the G/T teacher/coordinator with comments about the lessons their children tell them about in those grades. One parent shared that her daughter had brought home an activity that she found rather challenging herself and was interested to hear her child explain how she figured out the answers.

Parents at the intermediate school (grades 3-5) evaluated the program positively. Twelve percent of the responses were DK, as some parents chose not to attend the community/parent meeting, visit the G/T teacher during parent conference time, or accompany the group on trips. (On one parent's questionnaire, half the responses were DK.) Otherwise, there was one response below "3," and 71% of the responses were "5." The one "2" was from the parent who had the high number of DK answers and was a response to "Parents are given opportunities to view activities and products." The few "3" responses were scattered.

Parents of intermediate school G/T students made these comments:

"Awesome experiences for children!"

"I say the same thing every year: (Coordinator/teacher) does a tremendous job, especially considering the load she is expected to bear. Field trips are great!"

"I don't know much about G/T. This was my son's first year in the program, and I don't think he fully understood how the program worked. I was a little disappointed by how little communication there was between school and home. Hopefully next year I will be more involved."

"I think my child is on the lazy side and could use a little harder push sometimes. Mom usually is not a pusher. He has the brains but is not motivated. He enjoys the trips and what he learns in G/T. Mom was impressed by the medieval carnival. It was fun but informative..."

"G/T has challenged (student), which doesn't happen very often in her regular classes. I appreciate that this is done by having her work on a topic that interests her and not just by piling on more work. I also appreciate the financial support. It's great that kids are able to participate without the parents having to worry about the financial part, since this could cause some students to be excluded."

"Great program, and we appreciate (coordinator/teacher) for her great effort."

"Very good program! My child has expanded her creative thinking skills through this program. She is naturally reserved but seems to have more confidence in expressing herself."

"G/T is a wonderful program. I feel that it is necessary for those students who are not challenged in regular classes. It has been very good for my daughter, challenging her for the first time in school and giving her the confidence that even when challenged, she succeeds!"

“My son commented frequently throughout the year that G/T classes were his favorite part of the week. He would not root for a snow day if it was going to be on his G/T day. He talked excitedly and in great detail about every activity he did.”

“My child thoroughly enjoyed GT.”

Middle school parents returning questionnaires also evaluated the program favorably. These parents' children had been in the program longer, so there were only 2% DK responses. Only 3% of the responses were below “4,” with 71% of the responses being “5.” The only score below “3” was a “2” in response to “The school district’s resources are used appropriately and sufficiently in supporting G/T classes/activities.” The few “3” scores, like those on the intermediate campus, showed no pattern.

Comments from middle-school parents follow:

“Just wish there was more time for middle school”

“Awesome experiences for children!”

“(Coordinator/teacher) does a wonderful job covering K-12 and makes many sacrifices so that funds are directed to student programs.”

“I think my daughter has really enjoyed the G/T program. It has broadened her educational experiences.”

“The trip to D.C. was very educational for the children—enjoyed it as an adult also. Keep up the creativity. Thanks!”

“I think (coordinator/teacher) does a wonderful job! I wish my child had more time with (her).”

“Lack of district funds for G/T is school’s fault.”

“My daughter procrastinates and doesn’t involve us (parents) with her assignments. I am not sure if notes are sent home for that or not.”

“District does not prioritize G/T as it should. The kids are our future leaders...even if scoring “advanced” instead of “proficient” doesn’t help us with AYP, these children still deserve our support.”

“Although (child) has benefited greatly from this program, he feels it is time to bow out gracefully. We are huge supporters of the G/T program and don’t want its resources to be spent on someone who isn’t participating fully. Thank you for all you’ve done!”

“Fantastic program—highlight of my child’s week.”

As usual, few high school parents returned questionnaires, making it difficult to assess their feelings. There are, however, parents of high school students on G/T committees, who were part of focus groups, reported later.

The only “3” returned from high school parents was in response to “G/T classes/activities offer opportunities for students to serve as leaders.” All other responses were “4” or “5.” Comments noted that the parents wished there were more time for direct G/T services to high school students and that the field trips were excellent.

## Faculty/Staff Evaluation

Although the G/T program evaluation from faculty/ staff in the K-2 building was positive, there were 17% DK answers, indicating a need for teacher in-service. There were only five responses below a “3” on the questionnaire, with only two of them being in the same area: district’s resources being utilized appropriately and sufficiently in supporting G/T classes/activities. Sixty percent of responses were “4” or “5.” Comments made by those responding follow:

“We need more than one G/T teacher. (Coordinator/teacher) is probably the only woman in America who could be so successful with a one-woman show K-12, but it’s not fair to over-burden her.”

“(Coordinator/teacher) is professional, patient and kind with students. She is fair. Her activities are creative, fun, and interesting. (She) is a tremendous asset to our academic team.”

“I enjoy (coordinator/teacher) coming into my room. She has the students think in interesting and creative ways.”

“More resources should be given.”

“The teacher is fantastic. I don’t know how she does it all! I wish we had a school-wide publication at least each semester that could highlight and share the students’ accomplishments in this program with the entire school.”

At the intermediate school responses were decidedly mixed. Some were quite positive and other quite negative. This was the first year for a third-grade pull-out class, and this building has an exceptionally large number of new teachers. Perhaps those two factors contributed to the difference of opinions. Four of the evaluations were quite negative, while 12 were very positive, and one was split rather evenly between “5” scores and “1” scores, indicating in comments that he/she thought the program was run well—“awesome!”—but that too many classroom teachers do not realize that “advanced on the benchmark does not mean gifted. Gifted is open thinkers, creative, leaders.”

Three of the negative questionnaires were turned in folded together and held identical scores. They gave a score of “1” on the following items:

“The identification system is fair and impartial.”

“The identification system correctly identifies gifted students.”

“Staff development provides information for meeting the needs of gifted students.”

“Gifted education information and resources given to classroom teachers are sufficient and appropriate.”

“Scheduling of G/T classes/activities is appropriate.”

This group also marked “2” when considering the following items:

“Faculty and staff are given opportunity to provide input into gifted education activities that affect them.”

“The over-all design of the program provides children with appropriate experiences.”

“The different options provided at various grade levels are an appropriate mix.”

The only comment that accompanied the three forms was, “I don’t think the teacher works around schedules. She takes it out on teachers when something does not work out.”

Among the positive responses—72% of which were “4” or “5”—the only notable concentration of scores below that level were in response to Questions 3-5 on the questionnaire, all addressing need for staff development and greater communication between G/T and regular classroom. Comments from those faculty/staff members are these:

“It seems to me there is a large student load on the G/T instructor.”

“Great program!”

“I am concerned about the lack of support for the G/T program at times. For example, what about a room for the children in this program? The district seems to be supportive only when the students make the administrators look good.”

“I think the scheduling would be better in one block rather than split between days.”

A much smaller number of questionnaires were returned by middle-school teachers than in previous years. Most of the teachers at middle school were busy packing up to move to other rooms or even other buildings because of building renovation and perhaps were not able to find time to complete the form. Ninety-three percent of the responses were either “4” or “5” with the few others addressing lack of staff development and opportunity to provide input into gifted education. Comments were also few:

“Compare dollars spent on G/T students to those spent on resource students, for instance. There needs to be some equity in support.”

High school teachers, as usual, returned few questionnaires. Not unexpectedly, 20% of the responses were DK. Of the remainder, 16% were below “4.” Those again concerned the areas of staff development and information/resources. The exception to that was one person who linked his/her low scores with arrows by noting how different options, over-all program design, scheduling, lack of resources, and failure of evaluation results being used to modify the program all lead back to one factor: “Impossible for one G/T teacher to cover the needs of all students!” The only other comment from high school faculty/staff was, “I wish I knew more about the program and what I should do to help my G/T students.”

#### Administrator Evaluation

Administrators returning the questionnaire marked 90% of their responses “4” or “5,” 70% of those “5.” Their areas of concern were the same as their faculties and staffs: lack of staff development concerning G/T and appropriate and sufficient use of district resources being devoted to the program. There were no comments.

#### Committee Member Evaluation

Unlike the administrators, the committee members returned many comments. Their number scores were all “4” and “5” with one exception: Members believe that district resources are not appropriately and sufficiently allocated for support of the G/T program. Comments follow:

“Our kids are really being served and are taught extremely well. My concerns are that the district may not be supporting the G/T program fully.”

“(Coordinator/teacher) is very knowledgeable in running the G/T program. She is amazing in running this huge program K-12 all by herself.”

“The weakness is the scheduling of all the students—especially the elementary students.”

“Administrative support lacking—too much work for one person.”

“So much to do –so little time. Hard-working, dedicated children deserve challenging activities in our schools.”

“Strength is varied learning situation.—weakness not enough resources. We need more for these amazing, self-motivated children.”

“There is a significant lack of administrative support for G/T in this district.”

“Strength is variety of activities/opportunities offered, creativity in use of budget funds...weakness lack of district funds supporting the program, over-extended teacher who needs administrative support.”

“A concern is lack of space for the program.”

“A strength is resources from our community are used very creatively and wisely.”

“Too much work for one person.”

“Good participation in outside competitions”

“Time not enough for K-2”

“Teachers always say ‘Why are they G/T?’ and vice versa. Sometimes what shows up on the identification paper does not show up in the class. I think we do identify the fairest way possible even if it seems otherwise at times to teachers. I used to think the way they do, but now I see it differently. There is not a way to assure we hit it ‘right on the nose’ to please everyone.”

“Strength is a teacher that works hard with a no-nonsense attitude and does the best she can to provide services.”

“Scheduling will always conflict when you are K-12. That is beyond our control.”

“I am a realist and know the program is doing all it can do.”

“A strength is the identification process, and the coordinator manages her situation well with organization. Weaknesses are space and resources.”

“The exposure to experience the students receive is outstanding in my viewpoint.”

“I think having only one G/T teacher for a district our size is a drawback, but they may also allow for some of the exposure—i.e., the budget.”

“I would like to entertain having a class in the high school for G/T.”

**2. As a result of the evaluation, what activities, strategies, objectives, and goals will be addressed during the current school year? In other words, where do you go from here? How will you improve weaknesses and showcase strengths?**

*Make sure your response addresses the following in detail:*

- A. State your specific program goals based on your end of program evaluation (as outlined in #1).
- B. State your objectives for each goal and include strategies and/or activities you will use to meet these objectives/goals? Provide details.

It is difficult to say where we will go from here. As one of the questionnaire respondents noted, evaluation doesn't really matter if the recommendations are not followed. The weaknesses identified in the evaluation of services for 2008-2009 and how they might be handled are these:

- A. There is only one person employed in the G/T program, limiting services.
  - B. Response: Only one superintendent—the district has had three during the years from August 2006-May 2009—has indicated that he believed the district needed another G/T employee. He, however, like the others, said he did not think any district funds should be allocated for the program. Since the state funds that now are the sole support of the program—other than small fundraisers for special projects—would not cover another salary, there seems to be no solution to this identified weakness.
- A. Communication from, to, and about the G/T program should be increased.
  - B. Response: This is, of course, related to the first weakness. One person cannot adequately communicate with all stakeholders as effectively as those who have much smaller pools of people with whom to communicate. Teachers who say they would like more information about the program choose not to attend G/T informational meetings even when offered in-service credit for attending. As some teachers have noted, they are required to attend so many hours that they fulfill their necessary hours with the required in-service and do not want to acquire more hours than necessary. Parents who are sent lengthy letters about activities and are invited to visit class or accompany students on any trips choose not to. It is difficult to see how greater opportunity could be offered. Again, busy people make choices.

Perhaps the part concerning communication about the program will be improved this year. The one employee does not have time to maintain a website properly informing stakeholders about all G/T programs, successes, etc. However, the seventh-grade G/T class has recently asked to develop and maintain such a site as their G/T project this year. If that permission is granted by the district, improvement should follow. Parents are also exploring forming an AGATE affiliate group, which would be a tremendous asset to the program.

- A. There is a lack of administrative support for G/T.
  - B. Response: Since G/T is not even mentioned in the district's ACSIP plan, it is clear that the program is not considered an integral part of the district. The coordinator/teacher has inquired several times about the reason G/T is not in the plan and requested that it be included without success. Efforts have been made by the coordinator/teacher, some administrators, parents, and students to increase support and recognition. To date, those efforts also have not been successful. Efforts will continue.
- A. Scheduling is not always satisfactory.

**B. Response:** Once again, having only one employee makes this difficult to address. Two years ago, scheduling for upper elementary was easy—the one block that a respondent mentioned was used. However, the scheduling system was changed, creating district-wide difficulties. At each campus, the G/T program is the last class scheduled—after all activities, other classes, etc. When the intermediate schedule changed, it became necessary to meet in two or even three separate sessions for each grade, meeting at different times and spread over two or three days to schedule the required 150 minutes of service. This is extremely difficult for students—especially third graders—because they may meet for 40 minutes one morning, then another 35 a second session (different time, day) and another different time/day for the remainder. Teachers also find it difficult to remember the schedule. TLI testing has tremendously complicated the scheduling as well. When TLI is given, students then have to be moved to yet another time/day, and the confusion increases. Since the coordinator/teacher serves K-12, when one group has to move, sometimes it becomes dominos, and it takes a great deal of time to re-arrange the schedule. Approximately 25% of the time the weekly schedule must be adjusted. With the present policy that no child may miss an activity period to come to G/T in intermediate school, this is unlikely to change.

Concerning showcasing strengths, many efforts are already made toward that end. The local newspaper is usually willing to print pictures and stories provided by the G/T Department. The G/T coordinator/teacher speaks at the annual Honors Banquet. Community members are invited to be part of G/T activities. Maybe the seventh-grade website development and the potential AGATE affiliate will be helpful, too.

**END OF YEAR PROGRAM EVALUATIONS SUMMARY (E)**  
**2008-2009**  
(continued)

**3. Describe how you used student outcome data to aid in the evaluation of the gifted program?**

*Make sure your response addresses the following in detail:*

- A. How did you use gifted students' benchmark scores and/or other forms of assessments in evaluating your program?
- B. What changes will you make as a result of your student outcome data? Be specific.

**A.** How well students do on tests cannot be definitively linked to any specific cause. G/T classes are operating at an accelerated level. It is speculative to suggest that participating in higher-level thinking directly leads to improvement on tests that are grade-specific. It is also impossible to say whether a student would have scored somewhat higher if he/she had remained in the classroom working on grade-level skills and specific content skills rather than attending a G/T pull-out class directed toward acceleration and enrichment rather than mandated content.

Students participating in the G/T program scored at the advanced level in more than 90% of exams given, with the others scoring proficient. Many of the G/T students' scores were nearly perfect. Those results indicated that G/T should continue offering accelerated, challenging opportunities and not duplicate obviously effective benchmark preparation in the regular classroom. School year 2008-2009 was the first year the district implemented TLI, a program designed to increase practice and therefore increase scores on the benchmark tests. Many of the G/T students did not like the increased practice and felt they did not need it since they had always scored so high on the tests. The addition of TLI to the regular classroom and the G/T students' high performance also indicates that G/T should be *different* in content, process, and product since so much of the regular classroom work is directed toward increasing test scores.

**B.** No changes are expected since the G/T program has always followed the above indications.

**4. As a result of the year-end program evaluation, what are your evaluation questions for NEXT YEAR?**

In 2007-2008 focus groups were used for the first time in evaluation. In 2008-2009 younger students used focus groups rather than questionnaires with numerical evaluations. Sharing ideas while also turning in notes jotted on paper during this process seems to elicit more useful data. The elaboration is more meaningful than numbers unsupported by comments. It is, however, much more difficult to get members of some groups together for focus groups. The questionnaire document may be amended to include fewer, more comprehensive questions. Perhaps interviews with members of some groups that tend not to turn in questionnaires could be used. (Again, there is that problem of time since there is only one G/T employee.)

Especially given the change of pre-AP status at the high school, we will need to address whether our programming options are continuing to serve the needs of all students, including the gifted.

LEA Number 08-02

District Berryville

**END OF YEAR FINANCIAL DATA (F)  
2008-2009**

The amount of money districts are required to spend for gifted and talented programs is as follows according to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-20-2208, Second Extraordinary Session of 2003 (Act 61):

Local school districts **shall expend** from state and local revenues not less than the following amounts on gifted and talented programs, in accordance with rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education; the previous year's average daily membership participating in gifted and talented programs, **up to five percent (5%) of the previous year's average daily membership, multiplied by fifteen hundredths (.15) times the foundation funding per student.**

**Briefly explain how gifted/talented program needs were met by the district's expenditures:**

<p>Personnel: The salary and benefits of the one G/T employee are paid from state G/T funds.</p>	<p>Staff Development: All G/T staff development was paid for from state G/T funds. The G/T teacher/coordinator is not permitted use of Act 59 funds.</p>
<p>Purchased and Contracted Services: State G./T funds paid for trips to Heifer Ranch, Washington D.C., several events at Arts Center of the Ozarks, registration for Spelling Bee, all Quiz Bowl teams, Mock Trial, HOBY registration fees, ACT and TIP fees for those who could not afford them. Funds were sent to Educational Tours at the end of the year as a deposit for a trip to Atlanta in spring of 2010.</p>	<p>Equipment/Supplies/Materials: State G/T funds paid for basic supplies in two classrooms, books and materials for all class studies and projects, building and craft supplies for projects, and additional books for the use of classroom teachers and parents.</p>
<p>Other: Fuel and bus driver expenses required a large amount of money in 2008-2009. State G/T funds also paid for most meals on G/T trips, snacks for after-school practices and work sessions, shirts for competition teams. Funds were also given to AGS students.</p>	<p>Briefly explain how additional local revenue was used</p>

Advanced Placement:

- Have any AP or Pre-AP courses in your district received money for equipment/materials?  
Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_  
1a. How many AP courses 2 Pre-AP Courses \_\_\_\_\_
- What percentage total AP exams were a 3 or better: May 2009 78%, May 2008 60%, May 2007 18%
- What percentage of students enrolled (during the 2008-2009 school year) in College Board Advanced Placement classes participated in the AP Exams in May 2009? 100%
- How many teachers attended professional development training during the past year?  
AP 3 Pre-AP 3

**What program development(s) would improve services to students if additional funding were to become available in gifted/talented education? You may use the back for your response.**

Clearly, the program's greatest need is additional personnel. The choice has been whether to advocate for an additional employee and sacrifice programs that could no longer be paid for. Since the community is already saturated by fundraising from other school groups, it is unreasonable to expect that fundraisers could provide the experiences that all stakeholders find so valuable for the G/T students—as well as students who are not identified as G/T but participate in activities funded by the G/T budget. Since the Berryville G/T program is funded solely by state funds, additional funding would benefit us tremendously.