

**Morning Sun Community School District  
Talented & Gifted (TAG) Program**

Honors and Enrichment  
Program Resource Guide

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Program Philosophy
- Committee Members
- Program Responsibilities
- What is the Honors Program?
- What is the Enrichment Program?
- Program Goals
- Program Scope

### **PART 1: PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION AND LEGISLATIVE INTENT**

### **PART 2: STUDENT IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT**

1. Honors Identification procedures
2. What evidence is used to identify students for the Honors Program?
3. What are the categories for identification of Honors students?
4. Who makes the final determination about Honors pupil eligibility?

### **PART 3: INSTRUCTION AND DIFFERENTIATION**

1. What are the types of advanced student instruction and class differentiation?
2. What are the definitions for the service options for differentiation and the Honors student?

### **PART 4: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **PART 5: EVALUATION OF PROGRAM**

### **PART 6: BUDGET**

## INTRODUCTION

### Program Philosophy:

The Morning Sun Community School District is committed to providing educational opportunities for all students in the district. Therefore, in the fall of 1981, the district began a TAG program. Currently, the Morning Sun School District provides an Honors program that allows unique educational opportunities for high-achieving pupils in the elementary school. Honors students are challenged both in the classroom with differentiated instruction and in a pull-out program. The school district's governing Honors committee determines the criteria it will use to identify students for participation in the Honors program.

### Committee Members:

Amanda Clark – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher  
Steve Hollan – Principal  
Jeremy Kral – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher  
Nancy Martin – TAG Coordinator  
Sandy McElhinney – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher  
Alaura Rappenecker – School Counselor

### Program responsibilities are a collaborative effort:

- Board of Education: adopts policies, approves program development
- Administration: provides support and leadership in decisions
- TAG Coordinator: develops programming, provides classroom support in differentiating curriculum, monitors student achievement
- Classroom Teachers: serves as student's primary educational leader and provides appropriate educational opportunities to meet individual needs
- Parent/Guardian: serves as student's primary guide, advocate, and talent developer
- Student: shares ideas with parents, school staff, and peers while taking advantage of learning opportunities and endeavors to succeed

### What is the Honors Program?

Elementary students in grades 3-6 that are identified for Honors participate in a pull-out class designed to challenge high ability students. The program is designed to develop critical and creative thinking, independent inquiry, research skills and affective learning. Through the use of a challenging curriculum, the program provides an opportunity to develop individual interests and abilities for the students. In grades 3-6, identified students spend two, 30-45 minute class periods a week in the Honors classroom, participating in thematic units of study that extend and enrich. For example, thematic units of study have focused on Problem Solving, Critical Thinking, FIRST LEGO League Robotic Competition, Light and Solar Energy, and Creative Writing. Students may explore personal interests and some selected have been: Electricity, Google SketchUp, Constellations, Black Holes, Waste Water Treatment, Symphony Concerts, Chess, Interactive Technologies, Chemistry, and viewing Historical Sites. There are team-building activities such as the LEGO League, School-wide Recycling, Hot Lunch Food Waste Watch, and Mind Benders for group challenges.

### What is the Enrichment Program?

At the beginning of the school year elementary students in grades 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> receive Enrichment Activities: Pupils remain in their regular classrooms but participate in supplemental educational activities planned to augment their regular educational programs. In these supplemental educational activities, the pupils' use advanced materials and/or receive special opportunities from persons other than the regular classroom teacher. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes have an Enrichment Class once a week for a 30-minute lesson. These lessons consist of units from Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) for higher level thinking, KOI activities and Thematic Units. Beginning the second semester, the Kindergarten classroom also receives these lessons.

## Program Goals

### Student Learning Goals:

1. Develop creative and intellectual abilities.
2. Exhibit a healthy self-concept.
3. Exhibit skills and attitudes needed to be a life-long, self-directed learner and contributing member of a global society.
4. Pursue own interests within a small group and as an individual.

### Curriculum and Instructional Goals:

1. Provide modification and differentiation within regular classrooms to meet student needs.
2. Provide a pull-out program for identifies students that will provide opportunities:
  - a) To work with other talented students in small groups.
  - b) To develop process skills that lead to self-directed learning and independent study.
  - c) To practice creative thinking.
  - d) To increase self-awareness.
3. Provide opportunity for study of advanced concepts and content.
4. Maintain a student file with a complete record of past activities and the current Personalized Education Plan.

### Program Management and Administration Goals:

1. Develop parent awareness, understanding of, and involvement with the Honors program and their gifted children.
2. Familiarize classroom teachers and administration with the needs of gifted children and their responsibilities to the students.

### Program Development Goal:

1. Evaluate the program and strive to improve.

## PART 1: PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION AND LEGISLATIVE INTENT

What are the elements of Talented and Gifted Programs in Iowa? IAC 257.22 states that:

Gifted and talented children are those identified as possessing outstanding abilities that are capable of high performance. Gifted and talented children are children who require appropriate instruction and educational services commensurate with their abilities and needs beyond those provided by the regular school program.

## PART 2: STUDENT IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT

1. What are the responsibilities for identification of Honors students?

Each school district has the responsibility for developing a method for the identification of pupils as gifted and talented. The method of identification is included in the district's Handbook and conforms to these general principles:

  - a) The standards ensure the identification of pupils who possess a capacity for excellence far beyond that of their chronological peers.
  - b) Methods are designed to seek out and identify those pupils whose extraordinary capacities require special services and programs.
  - c) Methods are designed to seek out and identify gifted and talented pupils from diverse linguistic, economic, and cultural backgrounds.
2. What evidence is used to identify students for the Honors Program?

Prior to identification, pertinent evidence as to a pupil's capacity for excellence far beyond that of chronological peers is compiled. The range of data should be broad enough to reveal gifts and talents across cultural, economic, and linguistic groups.

- a) Appropriate data to be collected by the school district include one or more of the following categories for identification:
- Cognitive Abilities Test given in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades and scores need to be at least 130 or above as indicators of giftedness
  - ISASP given mid-year in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades and scores need to be in the Advanced Level
  - Teacher recommendation from performance data
  - K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade students are observed during enrichment by the Honors teacher
3. What are the categories for identification of Honors students?  
The following categories are used for identification of the pupil's extraordinary capability in relation to the pupil's chronological peers:
- a) Intellectual Ability: A pupil demonstrates extraordinary or potential for extraordinary intellectual development.
  - b) Creative Ability: A pupil characteristically:
    1. Perceives unusual relationships among aspects of the pupil's environment and among ideas
    2. Overcomes obstacles to thinking and doing
    3. Produces unique solutions to problems
  - c) Specific Academic Ability: A pupil functions at highly advanced academic levels in particular subject areas.
  - d) High Achievement: A pupil consistently has advanced ideas and products and/or attains exceptionally high scores on achievement tests.
4. Who makes the final determination about Honors pupil eligibility?  
The final determination of eligibility of a pupil rests with the Honors Committee of the school district.
- a) The Honors Committee shall base a decision upon the evaluation of the pertinent evidence presented by the Honors Teacher, and a classroom teacher familiar with the schoolwork of the pupil, and, when appropriate, a credentialed school psychologist.
  - b) These individuals may review screening, identification, and placement data provided for recommendation.
  - c) If the student develops difficulties completing regular classroom assignments or there are dramatic changes in scores and work, the student will be reevaluated by the committee concerning participation in the Honors program.

### **PART 3: INSTRUCTION AND DIFFERENTIATION**

1. What are the types of advanced student instruction and class differentiation?

Programs are planned and organized as integrated, differentiated learning experiences within the regular school day. The program services may be augmented or supplemented with other differentiated activities related to the core curriculum. The school district provides programs for gifted pupils consisting of:

- Pull-Out Honors Class
- Enrichment
- Cluster Grouping
- Independent Study
- Acceleration

Each teacher determines the most appropriate curricular components for participating pupils.

2. What are the definitions for the service options for differentiation and the Honors student?

- a) Honors Class: A pull-out Honors class for gifted and talented pupils consists of one or more class periods a week.
  1. It is composed of pupils identified as gifted and taught by the Honors teacher.
  2. It is especially designed to meet the specific academic needs of gifted pupils for enriched or advanced instruction and is appropriately differentiated from other classes in the same subjects in the school.
  3. It is a beneficial time to meet the affective needs for the gifted and talented pupils through social interactions with others having similar interests and abilities or experiences, including same-age peers and mentors or experts.
  4. It is opportune collaboration time with Honor students' families through out-of-school learning that matches students' abilities and interests.

- b) **Enrichment Activities:** Pupils participate in supplemental educational activities planned to augment their regular educational programs. In these supplemental educational activities, the pupils use advanced materials and/or receive special opportunities from persons other than the regular classroom teacher.
- c) **Cluster Grouping:** Pupils are grouped within the classroom setting and receive appropriately differentiated activities from the regular classroom teacher.
  - Guided Reading Groups placed by abilities K-3<sup>rd</sup>
  - Leveled Spelling Lists 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>
  - Study units for curricular areas 2nd-6th
- d) **Independent Study:** Pupils are provided with additional instructional opportunities and differentiated activities from the regular classroom teacher.
  - Accelerated Reading (AR) in grades K - 6th
  - Khan Academy for Math in grades 2nd – 6th
  - Math Olympiads in grades 4th – 6th
  - *Go Math* Skills Tutor in grades 3rd – 6th
  - Curricular Research Projects in grades 3rd – 6th
- e) **Acceleration:** Pupils are placed in grades or classes more advanced than those of their chronological age group and receive special counseling and/or instruction outside of the regular classroom in order to facilitate their advanced work.
  - Advanced Math
  - IXL
  - Khan Academy

#### **PART 4: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Implementation activities for professional development:

- Staff development will be provided. Classroom teachers will be in-serviced on differentiating curriculum for gifted students in the regular classroom. Subsequent in-services will be in response to needs identified by discussion. The Honors teacher may choose to attend ITAG Conference or other workshops as needed.
- Staff – Differentiation in-service
- Honors Teacher – Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Training Day

#### **PART 5: EVALUATION**

The evaluation of this program will be a constant and on-going process in order to ensure continual review and improvement.

- Parents – Annually parents will be given a survey to evaluate the Honors program and offer suggestions for improvement.
- Students – Honors students fill out a year-end assessment for the units covered and suggest changes and future topics.
- Teachers – Evaluation and questionnaire are filled out and discussions are held with classroom teachers for requests and suggestions for additional classroom enrichment and Honors programming.

#### **PART 6: BUDGET**

Funding and monies for Gifted Students will be allocated for salary and supplies.