



Administrative Unit

Administrative Unit name: Santa Fe Trail BOCES - 64160	Region: Southeast	
Name of Executive Director: Sandy Malouff Name of Lead District Gifted Education Director: Sandy Malouff	Email: sandy.malouff@sftboces.k12.co.us	
Director's mailing address: P.O. Box 980 302 Colorado Avenue La Junta, CO 81050	Phone number: 719-383-2623	Fax: 719-383-2627

Number of Districts within Administrative Unit:	
Member District	Superintendent Name
Cheraw School District	Tonya Rodwell
East Otero School District	Rick Lovato, Jr
Las Animas School District	Elsie Goines
Rocky Ford School District	Kermit Snyder
Swink School Districts	Kyle Hebbard
Wiley School District	Dave Eastin

12.02(2) Comprehensive Plan “...The program plan shall be implemented by all constituent schools and districts of the AU. ... The Department shall review all program plans for completeness. An AU’s program plan shall be deemed complete if it addresses all elements specified in Section 12.02(2)(a) through 12.02(2)(l) of these Rules”

Directions:

Write the administrative unit’s description of how it implements each element of the Program Plan and how the AU plans to improve or enhance each element as appropriate. Write how the AU Key requirements of each section of the plan are listed as they are described in the Rules.

Procedures for Parent, Family and Student Engagement and Communication

Santa Fe Trail Board of Cooperative Educational Services (SFTBOCES), Administrative Unit (AU), is made up of six member districts since 2008. The member districts include Cheraw, East Otero, Las Animas, Rocky Ford, Swink, and Wiley. Santa Fe Trail BOCES serves as the flow through agent for the six-member district’s gifted education programs and funds. SFTBOCES provides leadership and technical assistance in the areas of identification, programming and services. SFTBOCES Gifted Committee consists of representatives from each member district and meets on a regular basis to collaborate on issues related to gifted students and their needs, as well as, researching ways to better support teachers of gifted students. Each member districts adheres to this unified Comprehensive Program Plan.



Information regarding GT programs is included in district handbooks. The GT building representatives present information to teachers annually at the beginning of the year, and also throughout the year when needed. Information regarding the Nomination Process for Gifted Students as well as the ALP process is communicated to educators at the building level by their respective GT building representative. GT building representatives meet on a regular basis as members of the SFTBOCES-wide GT Committee to maintain consistency in the information being presented throughout the SFTBOCES member districts.

Parents, Families, and Students are informed about identification procedures through multiple avenues: SFTBOCES website, member district websites that link to SFTBOCES website, SFTBOCES website links directly to the Colorado Department of Education's GT website, Advanced Learning Plans, parent and teacher conferences, parent brochures, teen brochures, elementary student brochures, district handbooks and the gifted handbook for parents and educators. In addition, these resources include ways for parents and families to learn about giftedness and the parenting of gifted students. Some of these resources include, but are not limited to, variety of book lists on the topic of gifted, the Colorado Department of Education website, Center for Bright Kids, National Association for Gifted Children, Pro Profs Brain Games, MENSA for kids, Byrdseed, Hoagie's Gifted Education Page, Gifted Guru, nRich Educational Consulting, and Global #gtchat by TAGT. Parent communications are available in Spanish and interpreters are utilized when needed.

SFTBOCES has determined ways to improve our parent, family and student engagement. Our focus is to improve communication regarding: information about involvement and progress reporting; programming options available that match students' strengths and challenges; information about concurrent enrollment and involvement in college and career planning directly in our gifted education communication; providing all communication in primary languages of the AU; and, finding additional ways parents and families can participate in the school community.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2018 Address all improvement areas listed above by adding to SFTBOCES website, published resources, and handbook. Promote parent engagement with Right 4 Rural, Depth & Complexity at home connection. Ensure all member districts websites are clearly linked to SFTBOCES Gifted Page with contact information for each building representatives. Provide that all communication be available in primary languages of the administrative unit.
- 2) 2018-2019 Complete an AU Program Evaluation looking at a variety of means to measure the effectiveness of all communication to guarantee engagement with family, parents and students. Analyze results and take action if any area of communication regarding gifted education is not transparent.
- 3) 2019-2020 Provide ongoing training to member district's gifted representatives to ensure that communication continues to be effective.
- 4) 2020-2021 Complete an AU Program Evaluation and provide ongoing assurances of communication on gifted education to entire SFTBOCES.

Definition of "Gifted Student"

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) utilizes the state's definition, which states...

"Gifted and talented children" means those persons between the ages of four and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services.

Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice-exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic and ethnic, cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these **areas of giftedness**:



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- General or specific intellectual ability
 - Specific academic aptitude
 - Creative or productive thinking
 - Leadership abilities
 - Visual arts, performing arts, musical or psychomotor abilities

This definition serves as the basis for the implementation of all other program plan elements.

TARGET:

- 1) 2017-2021 Continue to utilize this definition and be the basis for the implementation of all other program plan elements.

Identification Procedures, Criteria for Determining Exceptional Ability (Giftedness) or Talent Pool, and Identification Portability

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) utilizes the state's identification pathways to identify gifted students throughout the BOCES. We adhere to the 2014 rules of portability, and we have accepted students who were identified prior to this rule change with a note and communication to parents if they do not meet portability. We accept a variety of referrals from a variety of sources at multiple times throughout the school year. Once referred, a body of evidence is collected within 30 days that encompasses both qualitative and quantitative data. Data criteria that is at the 95th percentile is considered qualifying criteria or a rating of exceptional/distinguished on standardized measures. Through the state's multiple pathways: general intellectual, specific academic aptitude with or without cognitive, and talent are all utilized. One piece of data will not keep a student from formal identification, just as one piece cannot solely identify a student. Once the body of evidence is completed, the team (which is made up of at least one trained gifted representative) determines whether a student is formally identified, determined for talent pool designation, or determination to not identify. Once a decision is made, the parent/family is notified by letter within the 30 day timeframe since the initial referral, and such documentation is placed in the student's cumulative record. If determined that a student is formally identified, the team, along with parent(s) and student develop the Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) within 30 days. Annually, the ALP will be reviewed. A student can continue to be considered for other areas of gifted even after original identification. Students who are not identified will continue to be monitored to see if body of evidence is met for formal identification. SFTBOCES recommends to member districts to place students who are continued to be monitored into their Talent Pool, which should consist of students whose body of evidence includes criteria at a minimum of the 90th percentile or above. It is required by SFTBOCES that if a member district elects to have a Talent Pool, that they must provide programming for the student but does not place the student on a formal Advanced Learning Plan, and an ongoing process of looking at evidence to determine if body of evidence is met for gifted identification. If a student comes into the SFTBOCES from an outside Colorado Administrative Unit, a review of the student's body of evidence will be done to ensure portability has been met to continue with the student's identification. This review will occur within 45 days of the student starting in our BOCES, and communication to parents regarding findings and address needs of student will be done within 60 days of starting in the BOCES. During this time, if a student doesn't meet portability, the team will reevaluate the student with current data to make appropriate educational decisions for the student, and will consult with the former district during this re-evaluation process. SFTBOCES provides universal screening with a cognitive assessment to all second and sixth graders every year. This provides the opportunity to screen all students, which ensures equal and equitable access to identification for all students through the use of a valid and reliable universal screener. The process ensures that minority students, economically diverse students, culturally diverse students, students with limited English proficiency and children with disabilities all have equal and equitable access to



identification. We have processes and assessments to identify in all areas per our gifted identification. We recognize that we need to make improvements in the area of talent and identification with underreported populations. Since Fall 2016, we have implemented the Right 4 Rural Depth & Complexity model to assist in providing the opportunity to identify more students, specifically those in underrepresented populations. The majority of our member districts have provided the opportunity to train their entire staff in the Colorado Department of Education Identification training, so everyone is aware of the process and pathways for gifted identification.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2018 Complete final year of Right 4 Rural Grant, and develop plan to sustain Depth & Complexity throughout SFTBOCES. Monitor that all member districts are utilizing processes to identify in all areas of gifted identification based on our definition.
- 2) 2017-2018 Provide additional professional development in the area of talent identification pathway. Participate with the Southeast Region to host a Talent Showcase for expert juried opportunities for potential talent gifted students. Utilize Dr. Joanne Haroutounian books, rubrics, and observation tools as body of evidence assessments.
- 3) 2017-2021 Continue identification process consistent with rules of portability
- 4) 2017-2021 Continue to analyze demographic data to work towards mirror of member district demographics

Advanced Learning Plan Content, Procedures and Responsibilities

The ALP utilized in all of the SFTBOCES districts includes, but not limited to: a student profile, body of evidence, annual and measurable achievement goals, annual and measurable affective goals, description of programming (includes supplemental, activates, strategies, and or extended opportunities that support goals), progress monitoring of goals, personnel involved in the development of the ALP, and includes parental engagement. SFTBOCES utilizes Alpine Achievement to store all ALPs, and we are using the Colorado Standards-based Advanced Learning Plan in that system which is aligned to the new rules and regulations established in 2014. ALPs are written to indicate programming decisions for individual GT students and demonstrate the alignment of assessment data, services and programs to match individual student needs, strengths, and interests. A learning goal(s) and a social/emotional goal(s) are developed based on the student's strengths, interests and needs. Post graduate and career goals are also developed for high school aged GT students.

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) develops Advanced Learning Plans (ALP) for every identified gifted student according to the student's determined area(s) of giftedness, interests, and instructional and affective needs. Gifted students who are at transitional age/levels are developed with post-secondary readiness and programming aligned to their goals. Currently, we do not have a blended ICAP and ALP, but our Gifted Committee has had discussions regarding this as a possible future development. ALPs articulate a transition process when students move to the next grade level, and maintain compliant records to ensure that student ALPs travel with students when they transfer outside of our member districts. The SFTBOCES GT Committee periodically reviews the components and procedures of the ALPs to assure that all components are in compliance with the most current CDE guidelines to ensure portability. All progress of goals are reported based on member district reporting timelines. The district gifted representative is not the sole member of writing the ALP, but it is a collaborative process with the parent, student, teachers, and other appropriate personnel. All students are expected to be active participants in the development of their ALPs on an on-going basis. All parents are expected to be active participants in the ALPs process on an on-going basis as



well, and parent signatures are obtained to acknowledge involvement of parents. Parent and teacher conferences are the dominant way that ALPs are shared with parents.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2021 Continue on-going annual development of ALP and compliance with all key requirements of ALPs. Provide on-going professional development for development of Standards-based Advanced Learning Plans.
- 2) 2017-2018 Develop a standardized process for developing and revising ALPs that includes a checks-and-balance system for quality and clear plan of communication.

Programming

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) districts provide a variety of programming options and services for gifted students based on the student's areas of strengths, interests, educational and affective needs. ALPs are written to indicate programming decisions for individual gifted students and demonstrate the alignment of assessment data, services and programs to match individual student needs, strengths and interests. When the ALPs are written, there is collaboration between student, family and school staff which results in comprehensive and effective programming. SFTBOCES' Response to Intervention Procedures provide a problem solving process when a gifted student is underachieving or experiencing difficulties.

Programming options vary across the SFTBOCES districts; however, the following are programming options that are typically available to gifted students. At the elementary level, programming options include, but are not limited to, classroom flexible grouping, cross-grade grouping, general education with cluster grouping, pre-assessment for appropriate instructional levels, assessment alternatives, acceleration and monitoring, supplemental curriculum and University Enrichment Camps.

Differentiated instruction includes curriculum compacting, subject-based acceleration, content extension, and targeted critical thinking skills development, with affective guidance including personal competence, social competence, cultural competence, leadership and understanding giftedness. Programming options in creativity, leadership and the arts include competitions, creativity institute/summer programs, type III activities, community resources, student council leadership, direct instruction in domain skill development, and select domain specific groups. Other options at the elementary level include application of critical thinking to academic content tasks, exploration of interests, promoting ways to study, learn and create in interest area, and varied choices for product demonstrations or evidence of learning.

At the secondary level, programming options include, but are not limited to, classroom flexible grouping, cross-grade grouping, cluster grouping, online courses, college offerings, assessment alternatives, acceleration and monitoring, advanced/honors courses, supplemental curriculum, concurrent enrollment courses, advance placement, community resources, mentorships, and a variety of enrichment opportunities through businesses/organizations/agencies. Differentiated instruction includes curriculum compacting, subject-based acceleration, content extension, targeted critical thinking skills development, and college level courses, with affective guidance including personal competence, social competence, cultural competence, leadership and understanding giftedness. Programming options in creativity, leadership and the arts include competitions, specialized curriculum, creativity institute/summer programs, type III activities, community resources, improvisational training, internships, student council leadership, direct instruction in leadership skills, debate, mentorships, service learning, direct instruction in domain skill development, select domain specific groups, theater classes, and independent study with direct supervision. Other options at the secondary level include career and college planning, SAT assessment programs, advocating with experts, a variety of post-secondary options, application of critical thinking to academic content tasks, exploration of interests, promoting ways to study, learn



and create in interest area, varied choice for product demonstration or evidence of learning and content extensions that apply academic standards within and across disciplines.

All of the SFTBOCES districts participate in the Right 4 Rural Javits Grant. This provides educators with professional learning opportunities to learn and implement Depth & Complexity strategies in their classrooms. Participating in these high quality professional learning opportunities and implementing an on-going coaching support system provides the necessary framework that facilitates implementation of a process so teachers utilize instructional strategies proven to increase student learning, and increase identification in the underrepresented populations. This coaching system assists with the implementation of differentiated instruction, continual progress monitoring, higher order thinking skills, implementation of tiered programming and data driven dialogue.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2018 Continue the high level of educator and administrator participation in the Right 4 Rural Grant and continue the implementation of Depth & Complexity with fidelity.
- 2) 2017-2018 Collaboration with member districts to establish Acceleration Policies that are transparent. Provide resource bank of programming options, opportunities, and affective programming options.
- 3) 2017-2021 On-going professional development for all educators working with gifted populations to provide best practice instructional strategies and improve rigor with higher order thinking skills. Ensure transition practices between different grade levels or school buildings.

Evaluation and Accountability Procedures

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) abides by all evaluation and accountability procedures. SFTBOCES submits a unified improvement plan addendum which informs stakeholders of gifted student performance and how it is monitored and measured, disaggregates student achievement and growth in reporting, and includes performance targets and an action plan. This plan is aligned with state accreditation process. We ensure that gifted student performance is consistent with state accreditation and accountability, and take corrective action if performance falls below state averages. In addition, we monitor and measure student's affective growth on a continual basis through the development of Advanced Learning Plans. Gifted students' affective and talent goals are monitored and measured by a variety of methods to include: utilization of data sources (to include performance, district and state assessments, progress monitoring data, ALP goals); complete body of evidence (to include anecdotal data, student surveys, student career and/or college plans, individual portfolios); or consistent reporting procedures (to include analysis of state assessment data, identification of discrepancies in the data, goal setting and demonstration of growth).

SFTBOCES conducts periodic feedback and review from the self-evaluation process that is gathered from our stakeholders and in turn report out to our stakeholders of our findings.

SFTBOCES collects student data from each of our member districts to help determine and establish goals for the administrative unit, as well as identify priority targets for improving gifted student achievement based on disparities found in the data. This data also helps the Building GT Representatives determine the instructional focus for individual ALPs. The collected student data on student performance and growth indicators are disaggregated by various sub groups (to include but not limited to free reduced lunch, ethnicity, ELL and gender) to inform instruction and programming in accordance with the accountability/accreditation requirements for all student groups, including the underrepresented populations.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2021 Annual and/or Biennial submission to the Colorado Department of Education SFTBOCES Unified Improvement Plan
- 2) 2017-2021 On-going communication to stakeholders on achievement and affective performance



- 3) 2018-2019 Complete an AU Program Evaluation, analyze results and take action on findings, communicate with all stakeholders result of program evaluation
- 4) 2020-2021 Complete an AU Program Evaluation, analyze results and take action on findings, communicate with all stakeholders result of program evaluation

Personnel

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) Executive Director is also the Gifted Director who is responsible for the entire program plan which includes gifted instruction, counseling and coordination of gifted programming for all gifted students. In addition, SFTBOCES has hired a Gifted Consultant who is a part-time qualified person who also monitors and administers the gifted program. The consultant is knowledgeable in the characteristics, differentiated instructional methods and competencies in the special education of gifted students. Together, these individuals provide professional development for gifted representatives, as well as, educators throughout the BOCES in the area of gifted. Through the Right 4 Rural grant, every member district has multiple general education teachers who are implementing Depth & Complexity into their daily instruction. District and building administrators, as well as general education teacher leaders, participate in the Leadership Strand of the Right 4 Rural grant, to include training sessions. These training sessions are provided through a partnership with Denver University and focus on educating participants how to be leaders of change and improve cultural competency. Administrators and teacher leaders learn how to identify problems of practice in order to improve identification strategies, and as a result increase the equitable identification of all gifted learners. Each district has a GT representative(s) on the SFTBOCES GT Committee. This person is responsible for assisting with the coordination of the SFTBOCES GT program design as well as his/her respective school/district's program design. SFTBOCES collaborates and provides to all member districts opportunities at Otero Junior College and other colleges/universities in Colorado for professional development and/or gifted student opportunities. All personnel who are instructing gifted students meet federal requirements for being highly qualified. Paraprofessionals are not funded with gifted funds and are not sole instructional providers, they serve in supportive roles and not as primary instructional facilitators. SFTBOCES has an on-going model to complete a needs assessment in regards to providing future professional development based on the needs of the professionals to best serve their gifted populations.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2021 Continue to apply for CDE's Universal Screening & Personnel Grant to continue employing gifted consultant
- 2) 2017-2021 Continue to build capacity by working with educators in BOCES to become highly qualified as an endorsed gifted education
- 3) 2017-2021 Continue partnership with universities and colleges to support professional development and opportunities for gifted students

Budget

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) abides by budget requirements. We submit an annual budget adjusted and expended to the state which reflects collaborative efforts of our administrative unit and cost implementing the program elements. Our annual budgets detail funding committed by our administrative unit and funding requested from the Colorado Department of Education. The state funds are used to support one or more of the following: Salaries for licensed or endorsed staff the primarily serve gifted students; professional development for gifted education; program options to support Advanced Learning Plans; materials to support gifted programming; administrative costs; and technology and equipment not to exceed collectively 20% of state funds. We currently do not



contract with other Administrative Units to establish and maintain gifted programming, however, we do work together in our region.

The SFTBOCES Director consults with each district's GT Representatives, Superintendent, and Business Manager to develop an itemized budget expending the GT funds SFTBOCES flows to them. This budget is submitted to the SFTBOCES Director. The SFTBOCES Director monitors expenditures by requesting confirmation of actual expenditures and copies of their Audit Fund Report to ensure GT monies are being utilized as budgeted.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2021 Continue to submit annual budgets to the Colorado Department of Education and abide by rules governing state gifted funding allowances
- 2) 2017-2021 Continue to find the most cost effective ways to expend funds that will have the most significant impact on the Gifted and Talented Programs in the SFTBOCES and its member districts. Collaboration between the SFTBOCES and all the member districts will continue to be encouraged

Reports

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) abides by all reporting requirements. We submit to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) on an annual basis our expended and adjusted budgets. Also, we submit to CDE through the data pipeline the number of identified students served by gifted program which includes: grade level, gender, ethnicity, free and reduced lunch, areas of giftedness, twice exceptionalism, and percent of students in our administrative unit who are formally identified. We do not have early access, so we do not report on this area. Through CDE personnel reporting, we inform on an annual basis the qualified personnel by school level, district resource personnel and central administration. Through our Program Plan we share types of programming strategies utilized most commonly at each school level. Through the Unified Improvement Plan we report on methods and tools we use for accountability in monitoring of gifted achievement and growth. Lastly, SFTBOCES complies with the requirements of accreditation, pursuant to Article 11 of Title 22, C.R.S., with regard to gifted student achievement, identification of disparities in the data, instructional goals, growth and reporting.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2021 On-going submission of all budget reports to CDE
- 2) 2017-2021 On-going submission of Unified Improvement Plans either annual or biennial per state determination
- 3) 2017-2021 On-going submission of reporting on qualified personnel
- 4) 2017-2021 On-going submission of reporting through the data pipeline on gifted population
- 5) 2017-2021 On-going compliance with requirements of accreditation

Record Keeping

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) abides by all record keeping rules and regulations. Our financial records are kept in accordance with principles of governmental accounting. We maintain an inventory of all equipment for which funds were received. Student's Advanced Learning Plans are part of the student's cumulative records, and are housed in Alpine Achievement. Individually identifiable records of students referred, assessed, evaluated, and/or served through programming for gifted students in a member district and SFTBOCES are confidential and protected in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations. All gifted student records are maintained, retained, and destroyed consistent with ongoing systems of record keeping policies of our member districts and the SFTBOCES.



TARGET:

1) 2017-2021 All record keeping will continue to abide by federal and state rules and regulations. All member districts and SFTBOCES will abide by district and SFTBOCES maintenance of records policies.

Procedures for Disagreements

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) requires a process for resolving disagreements with parents/guardians, or students in regard to identification, programming and Advanced Learning Plans. All have a way to express issues and concerns, and means to discuss such disagreements in a timely manner. Parents and guardians who wish to appeal the decision of the Screening Committee have one month to do so following the receipt of any letters regarding eligibility. Those wishing to appeal must complete and submit an appeals form (available in hardcopy and on website) along with evidence to the gifted building representative. Parents and guardians will be notified within a two week window of the Screening Committee's decision. We provide notification of the decision given to the dispute, and ensure that all have an opportunity to be heard prior to decision being made and implemented. We recognize that at the BOCES level we need to be transparent about this process and have it posted for all stakeholders on the SFTBOCES website.

Disputes are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving identification and/or programming are as follows:

1. Building or District GT Coordinator
2. Superintendent
3. SFTBOCES Director

The matter should be discussed with the building or district GT Coordinator. If no agreement is reached between the parties, the disputed issue(s) shall be put in writing, dated, and signed by the parent. The parent shall submit the written disputed issue(s) to Superintendent. In the event a resolution is arrived at, it shall be put in writing with all interested parties receiving a copy. If no agreement is reached, the superintendent shall render a decision in writing to the parent and a copy to the SFTBOCES Director. The SFTBOCES Director shall schedule a meeting or conference call with the persons necessary for an appropriate resolution. In the event a resolution is arrived at, the Director shall put it in writing to the parent and a copy to all involved parties. If no agreement is reached, the Director shall render a decision in writing to the parent and a copy to the Superintendent.

Monitoring

Santa Fe Trail BOCES (SFTBOCES) complies with all state and federal laws and regulations regarding the program plan, identification and services for gifted students. SFTBOCES monitors annual and comprehensive plans, and annual enrollment. We submit all performance reports to the Colorado Department of Education. In addition, we prepare and participate in the Colorado Gifted Education Review, and participate in any follow up activities to correct non-compliance areas if found.

TARGETS:

- 1) 2017-2021 On-going compliance with state and federal laws and regulations
- 2) 2017-2021 Participate in follow up activities to correct non-compliance areas found from the 2016 Colorado Gifted Education Review
- 3) October 2017 Submission of Comprehensive Program Plan
- 4) 2020-2021 Prepare and participate in the Colorado Gifted Education Review