



Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Douglas County School District's Discovery Program is designed to meet the needs of gifted elementary school students who require intensity of instruction and acceleration beyond what can reasonably be expected from the regular school gifted programming. These students have likely exhausted the gifted education resources provided by their general education setting and may be identified by the following characteristics:

- They make connections between and among disciplines and concepts beyond what may be expected among their age peers.
- They are able to learn quickly and require appropriately paced instruction.
- They are usually inquisitive and often passionate about one or more areas of interest.
- They have interests beyond those expected of their age peers.
- They are advanced academically in literacy and numeracy concepts.
- They have academic needs that require modifications beyond what can be expected in the regular classroom.
- They display a high level of cognitive potential.
- They have social and emotional needs which are suited to grouping with intellectual peers.

The Discovery Program will address the needs of students who require intense gifted programming by:

- Allowing for both acceleration and enrichment in multiple areas of the curriculum, ensuring student progress commensurate with ability.
- Stressing academically rigorous content in order to excel in meeting or exceeding state and national grade level standards in identified areas of strength.
- Supporting unique academic, emotional, and social needs.
- Fostering self-motivation, responsibility and self-confidence, and establishing patterns of independent lifelong learning.

Application

The application process may be initiated by a teacher or other professional, parent or student. All portions of the application are to be submitted by **November 22, 2019**. Information about the application process and all materials may be found on the DCSD Gifted Education Webpage on the Discovery Program Tab.

Homeschool Parents

Please see enclosed instructions regarding achievement test results, current teacher rating form, and writing sample requirement.



Advanced Academics and Gifted Programming
Natasha Langjahr Straayer, Director

Placement Process

Due to the intensive nature of the Discovery Program, a body of evidence is needed to determine the best match between student and programming. Information considered includes documented cognitive ability, standardized achievement data, classroom performance data, student, parent, and teacher input.

Three major criteria for placement are **1) Exceptional intellectual/cognitive ability, 2) Documented above grade level performance in multiple content areas, and 3) no below grade level performance in any content area.** Multiple criteria will be considered in the placement process to provide evidence of the best match between student academic need and the rigorous environment of the program. For the 2020-2021 school year, the Elementary Discovery Program will be located at the following school sites:

Northridge Elementary
555 Southpark Rd.
Highlands Ranch, CO 80126

Renaissance ELOB
3960 Trail Boss Ln.
Castle Rock, CO 80104

Pine Lane Elementary
6450 East Pine Lane Ave.
Parker, CO 80138

While every effort is made to place students **at the site in their feeder area and/or closest to their neighborhood school**, placements may be offered based on space availability. *(Note: The Discovery Program could be relocated to other sites due to the needs of the District.)*

Please contact our office with any questions or concerns.

Christina Levesque
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Program Assistant
Lead, Gifted Education

303-387-0191
303-917-3377

Sincerely,

Natasha Langjahr Straayer
Director, Advanced Academics and Gifted Programming