

## **Gifted Education Program Evaluation**

### **December 2025**

#### **Evaluator(s):**

Dr. Montize Aaron, Director of Elementary Education

Dr. Cara Hiripitiyage, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

#### **Program Context:**

The gifted program evolves from a strong philosophical basis defining gifted education as a broad spectrum of specialized services to maximize an individual student's intellect and creativity. The primary purpose of the gifted program is to address the special needs of gifted students and to further student potential. This gifted program consists of Advanced Learning for Pattonville High Achievers (ALPHA), serving students in grades K-5 in a center; Students In Gifted Minded Activities (SIGMA), serving students in grades 6-8; and the high school gifted program, serving students in grades 9-12. In addition, Pattonville is the North Campus for the Program for Exceptionally Gifted Students (PEGS).

The Pattonville School District is committed to challenging all students to reach their full potential. Pattonville has participated in the state-assisted program for gifted students since 1981. The gifted program, designed to address the special needs of gifted students and to further student potential, currently serves approximately 8.4% of the district's students. Student selection is consistent with Missouri state guidelines and is based on a combination of achievement and aptitude scores and nominations from parents and staff.

Elementary students in grades 1-5 attend the ALPHA Center one day per week. ALPHA teachers complete lessons in the kindergarten classroom through Kindergarten Outreach Network Nurturing and Extending Children's Talents (KONNECT) to identify possible candidates for the program. Middle school students at Pattonville Heights and Holman attend SIGMA on alternating days. Remington Traditional students in grades 6-8 follow the middle school curriculum with services provided by a half-time SIGMA teacher at their site. High school students have the opportunity to attend a Gifted Honors English class for grades 9-11 and receive weighted English credit. In addition, Pattonville High School gifted students may take a Gifted Honors Research class that allows them to research a topic of interest for weighted elective credit. Thus, Pattonville provides a full range of K-12 gifted programming.

Pattonville also serves as the (PEGS) North Campus and the Lindbergh School District serves as the South Campus. Both programs serve students from St. Louis and St.

Charles County. Both programs provide a full-time, multi-age, enriched, and extended academic program for those exceptionally gifted students who need an alternative to the regular elementary classroom. In Pattonville, the 29 elementary students are served by two PEGS teachers at Rose Acres Elementary. Seven middle school students are being served at Holman and Heights. Nine high school students are also being served at Pattonville High School. By collaborating with parents, teachers, and students, we have provided various options to meet their gifted needs. All PEGS students have an individualized plan for instruction that addresses their unique needs and offers a system for attaining social and emotional growth.

Currently, the Pattonville gifted program is serving 475 students, with 216 in the ALPHA Program, 126 in the SIGMA Program, and 133 in the High School Program. Nine certified gifted teachers serve the gifted program. An administrative assistant provides for the daily needs of the ALPHA Center and provides district-level program support. We are seeing an increase at the elementary level, and the PEGS class has doubled. There are some grade levels that are at or exceeding the recommended class size for a gifted classroom according to the state guidelines. The recommended class size is 15:1.

Students who participate in gifted programming are encouraged to explore their passions and potential through a variety of enriching opportunities. They are challenged with advanced materials and complex problems that foster critical thinking and creativity. Additionally, students have the autonomy to choose classes aligned with their unique interests and needs, and they may even pursue independent study projects. These experiences allow students to connect with like-minded peers and delve deeper into subjects that inspire them.

	2023-2024	2023-2024	2024-2025	2024-2025	2025-2026	2025-2026
	% of students in gifted education	% of total enrollment	% of students in gifted education	% of total enrollment	% of students in gifted education	% of total enrollment
<b>Asian</b>	6.1%	3.4%	5.9%	3.2%	5.5%	3.04%
<b>Black</b>	13.7%	35.2%	13.8%	35.6%	13.7%	36.2%
<b>Hispanic</b>	4.9%	13.2%	4.8%	13.8%	5.3%	14.36%
<b>Multiracial</b>	13.1%	11%	14.0%	11.5%	15.4%	11.44%
<b>White</b>	62.1%	36.6%	61.4%	35.6%	60.2%	34.61%

Demographics of students identified as gifted prove stable over the three years of data provided.

### **Recommendations from the 2024 Program Evaluation**

1. Research and recommend staffing as the needs of the students are changing. **(COMPLETE)**

**Rationale/Explanation:** Last school year, we eliminated a middle school position at the Academy of Innovation due to small class sizes, and for the current school year, we filled the school psychologist role by compensating a retired teacher at the substitute teaching rate, a strategy informed by an August study of area district pay. We now have a valuable opportunity for the 2025-2026 school year, as one of our current gifted (ALPHA) teachers will complete their school psychologist certification in May. I recommend that we transition this individual into a hybrid role, serving as .5 school psychologist and .5 ALPHA teacher, which allows us to provide the district with a fully certified psychologist at a competitive salary while retaining a dedicated teacher for the gifted program. This hybrid model will necessitate the hiring of an additional teacher to cover the remaining instructional classes, thereby fully restoring the capacity required to support the ALPHA and PEGS program.

2. Provide professional development and identify best practices when working with all gifted students. **(ONGOING)**

**Rationale/Explanation:** all elementary teachers and one middle school teacher have participated in the cohort training from i4PL. The elementary teachers are in their second full year of the cohort and are receiving coaching. All teachers have selected goals to work on that focus on personalized learning. Teachers have taken time to revisit lessons which support personalized learning through coaching and create opportunities for more student agency, voice and choice in projects.

3. Expand on and continue to identify strategies and structures that support personalized learning. **(ONGOING)**

**Rationale/Explanation:** This school year, ALPHA teachers began implementing competency based grading (CBG) through the Empower platform. To prepare for this shift, the teachers worked diligently this past summer, creating new learning targets and detailed proficiency scales for assessing student learning. The new targets align to the Missouri Gifted Learning Outcomes. As the team becomes more comfortable with the new competency-based structure, the next planned

step is to fully integrate and share these scales directly with students to promote self-assessment and clarity around learning objectives.

### **Recommendations for the 2025 Program Evaluation**

1. Research and recommend staffing as the needs of the students are changing.
2. Provide professional development and identify best practices when working with all gifted students.
3. Expand on and continue to identify strategies and structures that support personalized learning.