



2025 – 2026

Talent Development Report to School Board

Excellence, Equity, Empowerment. Every Student, Every Day.



MANKATO AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MISSION & CORE VALUES

MISSION

Excellence, Equity, Empowerment. Every Student,
Every Day.

CORE VALUES

- Courage
- Student Centered
- Integrity
- Accountable
- Inclusive Practices



Strategic Directions: Focus of Our Improvement Efforts

- A. Improving our professional practices so that each learner achieves at high levels in an inclusive educational model that is relevant and flexible
- B. Enhancing our student support structures to meet academic, social, behavioral, and mental health needs
- C. Recruiting, developing, and retaining staff to ensure positive learning experiences for students
- D. Strengthening our parent/caregiver partnerships and connections
- E. Ensuring safe, efficient and effective operations

District Mission & Talent Development Programming

The district mission for Mankato Area Public Schools provides the foundation for Talent Development Programming: *“Excellence, Equity, Empowerment. Every Student, Every Day.”* As part of accomplishing this mission, we believe that education should help students discover their gifts and talents.

Talent Development goals include:

- meeting students where they are at in order to bring out students’ potential
- nurturing students’ passions and strengths to engage students in learning
- challenging students in order to provide them with a purposeful and motivating education

These goals provide the foundation of Talent Development work throughout the district.

Talent Development Overview

The role of a Talent Development Program is to support the education of children and youth who demonstrate these high levels of achievement or potential ability in general intellectual areas, specific academic subjects, creativity, leadership, and visual and performing arts.

Talent Development Professional Development

Teachers who work with academically talented students receive ongoing professional development and support for the unique needs of these students. This training includes the following areas:

- understanding the characteristics of academically talented students
- meeting the learning needs of academically talented students
- utilizing best practices in meeting the needs of academically talented students including:
 - focusing on higher order thinking skills, not more of the same;
 - using the 4Cs Framework for meeting the needs of academically talented students;
 - compacting curriculum and using replacement activities;
 - increasing the complexity of learning activities;
 - incorporating critical thinking into learning activities;
 - embedding creative thinking into learning activities;
- using specific district curricular resources
- using flexible grouping of students to meet the needs of academically talented students

Talent Development Implementation 25–26

- Elementary staff/admin workshop week
- Mentor Coach collaboration to support teachers & students
- Personalized Learning plans with coordinator and admin
- Elementary and Middle School Professional Development for teachers of highly capable students (fall and spring)
- Middle School update of MCT material into Canva
- Elementary and Middle School meetings with TD coordinator to review teacher responsibilities and expectations and implementation fidelity
- Teaching & Learning Talent Development Website updates
- Online administration of the CogAt
- Enrollment into TD opportunities

Talent Development Services in Elementary School

- Differentiated instruction in K–5 classes
- Differentiated curriculum resources
- Early Entrance to Kindergarten option for eligible students
- Grade K–2 Enrichment Activities delivered by Talent Development Services
- Grade 3–5 Cluster classrooms in reading and math
- Academic challenge activities
- Academic challenge competitions and events in reading, math, and science
- Rising Scholar Services

Talent Development Services in Middle School

- Differentiated instruction in 6–8 classes
- Differentiated curriculum resources
- Grade 6 Cluster Classrooms in reading and math
- Grade 6 Rising Scholar Service
- Grade 7–8 enriched and accelerated math options
- Grade 7–8 cluster classrooms in English
- STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) approach to learning
- Academic Challenge Opportunities: Math Counts, Math League, Spelling Bee, Geography Bee, Knowledge Bowl, Drama Club, Debate, Student Council

Talent Development Services in High School

- Differentiated instruction in 9–12 classes
- Grade 9–10 enriched classes in English, math, and social studies
- AP courses in 12 subject areas
- Concurrent enrollment classes in 7 MNTC goal areas (11 Courses)
- AVID
- Project Lead the Way Engineering Program
- Elective courses in multiple subject areas
- Fine Arts & Activities: Connection Choir, Orchesis, Debate, Jazz Band, Knowledge Bowl, Math League, and Speech
- Clubs and Organizations: Science Club, DECA, Drama Club, HOSA, Link Crew, National Honor Society, Student Council, VEX Robotics, Visual Arts, Yearbook



Thank You!

Questions?

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