

Gifted Overview: AIM



District 24 Philosophy

Millburn District 24 is committed to providing educational experiences that “rigorously promote the realization of individual potential and excellence in achievement.”

District 24 AIM Philosophy

The philosophy of the AIM program is to provide a means to stimulate and develop the potential of gifted children to the fullest extent. Therefore, the AIM program is designed to provide a curriculum that is differentiated in pace, depth, complexity, and/or content level that also addresses the unique differences and individual needs of the gifted child.

AIM Program Beliefs

The curriculum is designed to recognize and meet the needs of gifted students. Some of these unique characteristics and needs include students who:

- learn more rapidly and can often concentrate more intensely, especially in their area of strength, therefore needing a modified curriculum in the level of content, depth and pace
- retain and use what is learned without repeated drill.
- possess superior abstract reasoning skills at an earlier age
- are intellectually playful.
- a great deal of curiosity about many subjects and often need opportunities to explore topics in depth.
- require time to be with peers who think as they do.
- are often intense, sensitive, and perfectionistic requiring teachers who understand and can support the gifted learner.
- need to have their gifts recognized, developed and supported with appropriate challenge as early as they are determined.

Verbal and Mathematically Gifted Children

In accordance with Illinois School Code, the AIM program provides services for verbally and mathematically gifted children.

Verbally gifted children:

- understand complex processes and abstract concepts in reading
- enjoy playing with words and language
- often speak and write with advanced vocabulary
- ask complex questions about their reading and understand the answers
- often have a large background of knowledge that they apply to their reading
- are often voracious readers

Mathematically gifted children:

- understand complex processes and abstract concepts in math
- can apply problem solving skills and generate alternative to difficult problems
- see discrepancies
- are mathematically intuitive
- are logical
- can find patterns and make connections

Gifted Services

AIM: Grades 3 – 8

- Reading:
 - Pull-out 2 – 3 times per week for grades 3 – 5
 - Novel studies, research skills, Junior Great books, etc.
 - Replacement class 5 times per week for grades 6 – 8
 - Grade level curriculum plus additional research, projects, novels, and other differentiated content
- Math
 - Accelerated math 5 times per week for grades 3 – 5
 - Appropriate math placement grades 6 – 8
- Middle School Pull-out
 - Integrated units, 21st Century Skills, research
 - Twice per week

Bookworms: Grades 1 – 2

- designed for advanced readers and writers
- pull-out 2 times per week
- teacher recommendation, test scores, and a screening with the AIM teachers are used to qualify students
- not a pre-requisite for inclusion in AIM

Kindergarten Enrichment

- offered as need arises and time is available
- generally once per week

Differentiation

- AIM staff members assist classroom teachers by providing support and materials in order that gifted students' needs are also met when they are not in the AIM classroom

Identification for AIM

Students are identified for gifted services starting at the end of 2nd grade. Multiple measures are used and may include Otis-Lennon (OLSAT) scores, Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT) scores, NWEA MAP scores, teacher observation, parent observation, Kingore Observation Inventory activities, portfolios, and observations by gifted personnel. Students may be tested in subsequent years if the need arises. There is an appeals process in place should a placement decision be questioned.

Once the information is gathered the AIM Review Committee meets to assess the information. The AIM Review Committee is made up of the AIM teachers, four classroom teachers who have some gifted background and experience, and at least one administrator.

More Information

More information is available upon request from the Gifted Education Coordinator. Also, the district's comprehensive plan contains more detail about all areas regarding gifted education. This document will be reviewed in the upcoming school year. However, a copy may be requested from the coordinator.