

HG HANDBOOK

ROGERS PARK HIGHLY GIFTED PROGRAM

Mission

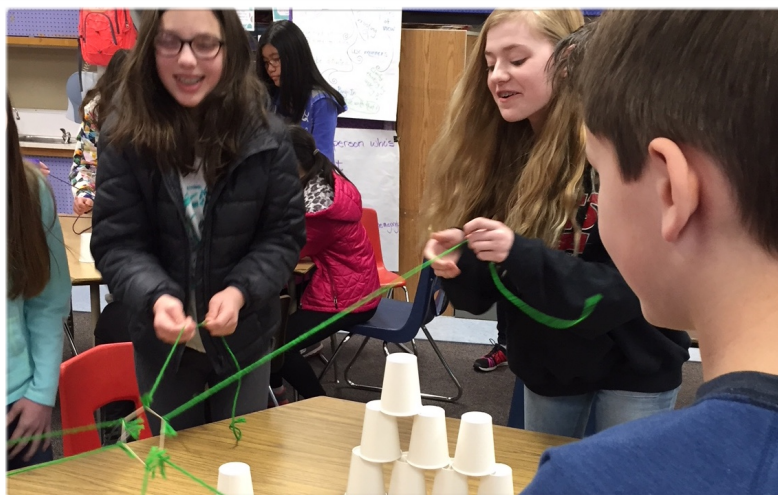
The HG Program strives to provide a learning community that meets the unique academic and social emotional learning needs of highly gifted children.

Philosophy

The HG Program nurtures and inspires children to become thoughtful, reflective, self-directed learners with the capacity to be productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

Goal

The HG Program at Rogers Park Elementary School offers qualified students in K-6th grades an opportunity to excel and to explore their unique talents and abilities. The goal of HG is to challenge, stimulate, motivate, and educate highly able students by providing an abundance of information, materials, and appropriate learning experiences. Using the community as a resource, we strive to produce a well-balanced, self-directed learner.



HG Objectives

Basic Skills: Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens and speaks for different purposes

A. Reading - locates, understands, and interprets written information. This may be in prose, documents, manuals, graphs, or schedules.

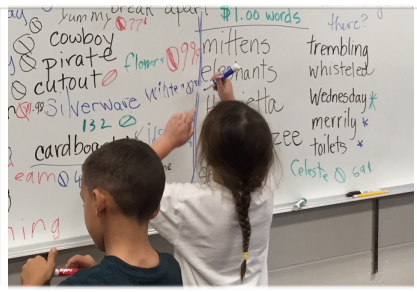
B. Writing - communicates thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing; creates a variety of written products such as essays, stories, letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts.

C. Mathematics - performs basic computations and approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques.

D. Technology - works effectively with a variety of technological resources

E. Listening - receives, attends to, interprets and responds to verbal messages and other cues

F. Speaking - organizes ideas and communicates orally; speaks effectively for a variety of purposes



Curriculum Overview & Instructional Delivery Part 1

The highly gifted program features an interdisciplinary differentiated approach to instruction following the basic ASD curriculum and Common Core State Standards. Our curriculum is enhanced and enriched with increasing depth and complexity to meet the needs of our students. Emphasis is placed on students achieving excellence in their work and taking personal responsibility for their learning.

Differentiated instruction within our program is achieved through variation of content, process, and/or product. Delivery is based upon student skills, needs, and interests and strives to provide students novelty, variety, and choice. Our program offers accelerated or advanced content in reading, math, language arts, science and social studies. Project based learning is a core element of our instruction with a focus on real world applications. We compact grade level curriculum so teachers can offer extended opportunities and enrichment.

Thinking Skills: Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, and knows how to reason

A. Creative thinking - generates new ideas

B. Decision making - specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, evaluates, and chooses best option

C. Problem solving - recognizes problems, devises, and implements strategies

D. Seeing things in the “mind’s eye” - organizes and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, and other information

E. Using scholarly conduct - uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills

F. Reasoning - discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it in solving a problem

Personal Qualities: Displays responsibility, self-esteem, social skills, self-management, integrity and honesty

A. Responsibility - exerts a high level of effort and perseverance toward goal attainment

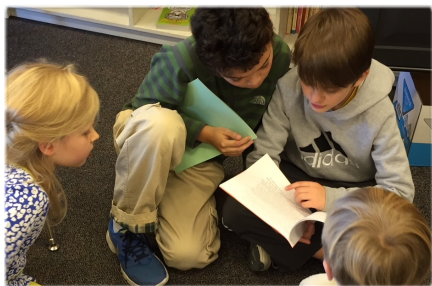
B. Self-esteem - believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self

C. Social Emotional Skills - demonstrates understanding, friendliness, acceptance, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in diverse group settings

D. Self-management - assesses self accurately, sets personal goals, monitors progress, and exhibits self control

E. Integrity and honesty - chooses ethical courses of action





Curriculum Overview & Instructional Delivery Part 2

Students work in large groups, small groups, and independently. They learn through various instructional methods such as discovery, direct instruction, scientific method, simulations, fieldwork, and real life applications. Community experts are often incorporated into instructional delivery.

By the end of sixth grade, students will have been taught all critical concepts. Due to the likelihood of combination classes, teachers often modify curriculum in order to ensure that all concepts and skills are taught, though the actual topics may vary from year to year.

Specific information about ASD curriculum in each instructional area can be found on the website listed below or from the liaison.

<http://www.asdk12.org/curriculum/curriculuminstructionhome/>

Language Arts - Reading, Writing, Listening, & Speaking

The highly gifted program uses a workshop model to assist in the reading and writing progression of our students. This structure encourages engagement, independence, and the flexibility to serve students at their optimal instructional level. Lessons are aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

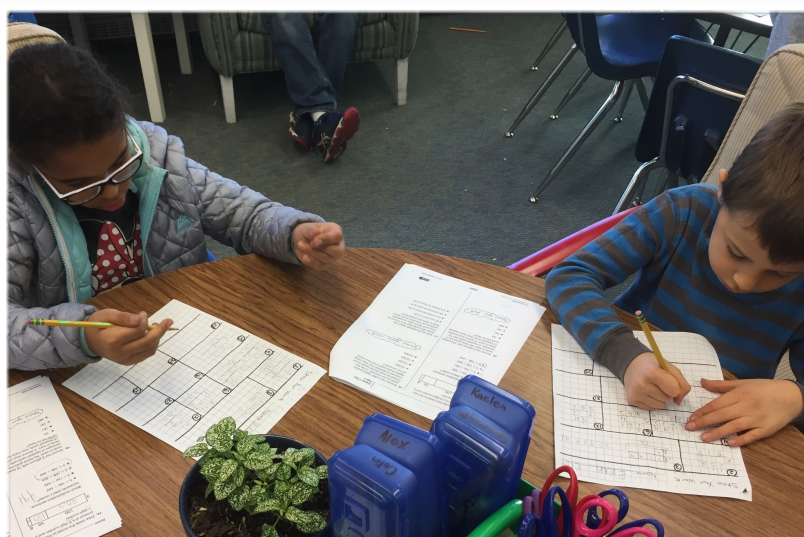
https://www.asdk12.org/media/anchorage/globalmedia/documents/commoncore/CCSS_LanguageArts.pdf

Mathematics

The highly gifted program offers acceleration in mathematics including high school algebra and geometry, based on student skills, readiness, and interest. All highly gifted students attend math classes at the same time each day, with teachers who specialize at specific levels. Students attend the class best suited to their math ability, performance, and motivational levels.

Prior to math placement, students' current computational skills, conceptual knowledge, problem solving, and communication skills are assessed. Parents sign a provisional placement agreement prior to a student's advanced math placement. The teacher carefully monitors student progress and accommodations are made to differentiate instruction as needed. If at any time a student's placement is no longer appropriate (e.g. student has mastered all concepts at the current level, or the current level is too difficult), students may be placed at a more appropriate level. All instruction aligns with the Common Core State Standards.

https://www.asdk12.org/media/anchorage/globalmedia/documents/commoncore/CCSS_Mathematics.pdf





Self-Directed Learner Expectations

The highly gifted program emphasizes academic achievement and high learning standards. It is the expectation that students work to their highest ability, are developing skills as a self-directed learner, and take responsibility for their actions.

The highly gifted program adheres to and supports the Rogers Park Elementary student behavior expectations and discipline procedures. Please refer to the ASD Student Handbook for student and classroom expectations.

<http://www.asdk12.org/forms/uploads/EShandbook.pdf?pdf=ElementaryHandbook>



Science

Science curriculum in the Anchorage School District teaches students the content, skills and processes they need in order to be scientifically literate citizens. The highly gifted program works to extend the scope of these and other science topics. Students in grades K-5 are required to participate in the schoolwide science fair.

<https://www.asdk12.org/stem/sciencedepartment/elementarylearningoutcomes/>

Social Studies

The ASD Social Studies curriculum explores history, geography, civics and government. The highly gifted program expands on these concepts through integration of reading and writing and project based lessons.

<https://www.asdk12.org/socialstudies/elementarycurriculum/>

Service Learning Projects

Each class will decide on a service learning project to be completed during the school year. Projects will be increasingly student-driven. Students will do the majority of the planning and follow-through. Project goals may include:

- Understanding the importance and satisfaction of doing for others
- Developing a sense of empathy
- Realizing our abilities and responsibilities as members of a larger community
- Seeing the benefits of teamwork in accomplishing a shared task
- Seeing a project through from beginning to end
- Exploring the dynamics of leadership roles in a group

Explorations

During specified times of the year, the Rogers Park staff will offer special in-depth exploration topics. Explorations may be one day or several days in length, with students attending these in lieu of their regular classes. Community members often assist in offering these enhanced learning opportunities, and we invite parents to be actively involved. Students choose topics of individual interest from a list provided. Most of the Explorations are free, or of little expense to the student. Scholarships are available, however, to any student in need. Past Explorations have included: Winter Survival, Geocaching, Babysitting Certification, Chess, Construction and Deconstruction, and Triathlon.



Homework Practices

The highly gifted program values the development of self-directed learners. Work completed at home can reinforce skills and reinforce time management, responsibility, and self-discipline.

Students who need additional time to complete assignments may be asked to finish their work at home. Homework generally should not exceed 10 minutes per grade per day. For example, a 3rd grader may have 30 minutes of work to complete each day, depending upon their time management at school. Many students taking advanced math coursework may need extra time to complete assignments.

Teachers encourage parents and children to read together daily. Parental involvement and teacher communication are the keys to academic success.

Social Emotional Learning, Growth Mindset, and Habits of Mind

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Our program is committed to helping students develop their social and emotional abilities. We use the ASD adopted program, “**Second Steps**,” as well as a variety of lessons, games, and activities designed to target specific areas of concern for highly gifted children, such as perfectionism, underachievement, and anxiety. *(For more information on the Second Steps program go to www.cfchildren.org/second-step)*

Mindset

The HG program works to cultivate a growth mindset in our staff and students. Mindset is an idea developed by Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck, who found that people with a **fixed mindset** (those who believe that their intelligence and talents are fixed) avoided challenges and were not able to persevere through setbacks. They were averse to doing things that take mental effort or practice. In contrast, people with a **growth mindset** are open to new learning and assume that they will be able to improve with practice. By encouraging children to develop a growth mindset, we not only prepare them for accomplishing their goals, we allow them to explore with pleasure and confidence even when they “fail”. People with a growth mindset believe that their intelligence and talents are a starting point, and that by working hard and trying new things, they will expand their interests and abilities. Students with a growth mindset enjoy learning, are prepared to try difficult tasks, and are resilient when they struggle. *(For more information go to www.caroldweck.com)*

Habits of Mind

The **Habits of Mind** are sixteen specific problem solving strategies which we integrate into our regular curriculum and specifically teach in various ways. Our goal is to help students develop and successfully use the most appropriate strategies when faced with a challenge. The Habits of Mind were developed by researchers Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick, who found that teaching these habits can sharpen everyone’s skills in solving complex, multi-layered, or critical problems. Using the habits successfully requires strategic reasoning, insight, self-awareness, curiosity, perseverance, creativity, and pride of craftsmanship. *(for more information go to www.artcostacentre.com)*

The 16 Habits of Mind

- Persisting**; Following through, maintaining focus and stamina. Looking for alternate ways of accomplishing the goal after a failure. Never giving up!
- Managing Impulsivity**; Thinking carefully before acting. Being calm under stress. Not jumping at the first option. Having consideration for other people's needs.
- Listening with Understanding and Empathy**; Being open to the ideas and feelings of others. Considering how to make connections and maintain relationships.
- Thinking Flexibly**; Changing perspectives using additional information. Being open to unusual solutions. Weighing options.
- Striving for Accuracy**; Taking pride in exactness and craftsmanship. Checking for areas to correct or improve. Adjusting to find a better solution.
- Questioning and Posing Problems**; Questioning assumptions and attitudes. Looking for missing information. Considering how to best define the problem.
- Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations**; Building on previous experience. Bending the known to fit new situations. Looking for parts of a solution in the work of others.
- Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision**; Striving to be clear in speech and writing. Being specific and avoiding generalizing or distorting information.
- Gathering Data Through All Senses**; Taking note of what can be learned through seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. Being aware of the situation, the surroundings, and the effects of actions.
- Creating, Imagining, Innovating**; Trying to be original. Being ready to change or adapt expectations to find a novel solution. Looking to others for inspiration.
- Responding with Wonderment and Awe**; Being intrigued and fascinated by the beauty and power of the universe. Appreciating both small and large miracles. Being inspired by the surprising uniqueness of situations.
- Taking Responsible Risks**; Willing to try something that is safe but scary. Bargaining that the benefits will outweigh the downsides. Not being stopped by fear of failure. Working outside of the comfort zone of past experience.
- Finding Humor**; Seeing the whimsical, absurd, ironic and unexpected in life's challenges. Laughing at the mysteries of why things don't work out the way we expected. Letting humor help us forgive the mistakes of others.
- Thinking Interdependently**; Welcoming the input and perspective of others. Showing kindness and patience with others while exploring solutions. Understanding that group decisions require compromise. Being willing to share or release responsibility.



-**Remaining Open to Continuous Learning**;
Understanding the limitations of one person's knowledge and experience. Knowing when to seek help. Believing that the more you learn about something, the more interesting it becomes.



Transportation

Busing is currently provided for all qualified students. The liaison will provide a transportation request form to parents when they sign the initial Student Learning Plan. The processing period for this request is approximately two weeks. At the close of each school year, parents must renew the transportation request on forms provided by the classroom teacher and returned to the liaison.

The goal of bus operators is to take no more than one hour from the time of pick up at home to the time of drop off at school (a bit longer for those outside of the Anchorage Bowl). The same is true in reverse for leaving school and returning home.

Students are picked up at a stop near their home, transfer to a bus at the nearest middle school, and then are transported to Rogers Park. If a bus is off schedule, or you have questions or concerns, contact the liaison at 742-4818. Please allow several weeks at the beginning of the school year for buses to work out their routes before contacting Transportation.

HG Sixth Grade Rite of Passage Experiences (ROPEs)

Rite of Passage Experiences (ROPEs) is a required opportunity for our sixth graders to use the skills, knowledge and habits of mind acquired during their time in the program. The focus of ROPEs is on independent learning and connecting academics to real life experiences. The goal is for students to independently demonstrate a growth mindset and the habits of mind as self-directed learners now ready for middle school.

ROPEs requires students to individually design and complete an in-depth project that involves a responsible risk and a personal challenge. This might be an investigation into an academic area, a potential career path, a form of art or craft, or a skill to be developed. The project is then narrowed to a specific topic that can be completed during the school year. After discussion and approval by sixth grade teachers and parents, ideas are displayed on posters, giving the students an opportunity to celebrate and publicly announce their project commitment. Students get assistance selecting a coach or guide and then meet with their coach over the year, generally outside the school day.

Upon completion in the spring, students write reflective essays and relate their ROPES journey to the Hero's Journey they've been studying in literature and film. They also prepare a presentation of their learning that shares the process, successes, difficulties and problem solving strategies of their project. Sixth graders then practice their presentation in front of fifth graders who will provide feedback. Additionally, ROPEs coaches provide written evaluation of students.

During an individual appointment in May, each ROPES candidate presents the results of his/her project to a panel of three trained community members. Panelists first read a student's essay and coach evaluation and then listen to the student's presentation. The panelists work to foster a "grand conversation" and provide the student with detailed feedback.

Essential elements for success of ROPEs are:

- School staff, parents and community members serve as coaches for the students as they develop and complete projects.
- ROPEs, Mindset, and Habits of Mind are an integral part of the regular instructional program.
- A high degree of parent, community, and business support.
- Scaffolding and safety nets to assure student success.



Tardiness and Attendance Policy

Please note that school begins promptly at 8:50 AM. Students are not allowed in the building before then. Students arriving after 8:50 AM create a disruption, as well as miss vital information at the beginning of each day. Tardiness often leads to increased stress levels for both students and teacher. Please work to insure your child arrives on time to class each day.

Please refer to the ASD Student Handbook regarding the ASD attendance policy.

<http://www.asdk12.org/forms/uploads/EShandbook.pdf?pdf=ElementaryHandbook>



Progress Monitoring and Parent Communication

Teachers provide regular feedback to parents on student progress and achievement. Parents are encouraged to access the online grading program called “Q Parent Connection” to stay abreast of student work completion and grades. You can get your “Q” password from the Rogers Park attendance secretary. It is recommended that you become familiar with your teachers’ patterns of use regarding the posting of assignments and grades. Teachers welcome open communication.

Fifth and Sixth grade students are encouraged to develop a habit of checking “Zangle” to monitor their own progress using their student password. This is one way of developing the executive skills of organization and time management.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments are administered three times per year to measure learning progress of standards and growth over time. The results of these adaptive online assessments help guide instruction and offer students goal setting opportunities. Results are shared with parents and teachers in a timely manner.

In order to be effective as teachers, communication with parents is critical. Conferences provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to work together to explore the student’s progress, behaviors, strengths, and areas for improvement. Parents may offer specific information about their child, which will help the teacher best meet the student’s needs. The teacher will inform parents of support needed from them to encourage their student’s success. The principal, Gifted Program supervisor, and/or liaison may attend these meetings if requested.

Biannual parent - teacher conferences are scheduled online. Parents should contact the teacher to schedule any additional meetings. A planned conference will lead to a better understanding of your child’s educational process. Teachers may request additional meetings if there is a need.

The liaison for the highly gifted program works in conjunction with the program supervisor, the Rogers Park principal, teachers, parents, and students to ensure that every opportunity for educational success is achieved. If parents continue to have questions or concerns, after first meeting with the classroom teacher, please notify the liaison in a timely manner.

Rogers Park Running Wolves #HOWL when we...



Rogers Park HG Website Resources

Please explore the Rogers Park website for further resources related to the Highly Gifted Program.

<http://rogerspark.asdk12.org/hg/>

Student Testing and Program Qualification

Details on testing and eligibility can be found at the following websites:

Grades PreK-1

<http://rogerspark.asdk12.org/hg/prek-1testingandqualification>
[s/](#)

Grades 2-6

<http://rogerspark.asdk12.org/hg/2-6testingandqualifications/>

Parent Involvement and Support

Parents provide a vital role in a student's success. Student progress is enhanced by a sense of collaboration between parents and teachers. Staff appreciate parent flexibility and understanding. Parents are encouraged to positively and openly communicate with teachers. Program goals are achieved most effectively when parents work with the student's teacher in reinforcing positive academic behaviors at home and school.

Positive parent involvement is an asset to the classroom environment. Fostering and maintaining mutual respect and trust is an important part of this process. If issues arise, please speak first with the teacher, then the gifted liaison, and then the principal. Most issues can be addressed by talking with the classroom teacher.

Confidentiality in all areas is critical!

It is recommended that parents refrain from sharing concerns with other parents and/or community members. If a parent is volunteering and helping in school, please refrain from sharing student related concerns with others. If you have questions or concerns, please address them with your child's teacher or the liaison.

Please give the classroom teacher notice prior to coming to the classroom. It is disruptive if a lesson has to be stopped to give parent-volunteer instructions. Your help will be most effective if the teacher is able to plan ahead for your help.

Some ideas for parent/teacher volunteers:

- helping correct student work
- working with individuals and small groups to reinforce skills
- contacting a resource person
- gathering needed information from library or community resources
- presenting special demonstrations or sharing talents or interests
- gathering materials to teach about specific curriculum
- helping with special programs (Explorations, Challenger Mission, Lego Robotics, etc)
- copying or gathering materials for teacher lessons
- teaching a foreign language activity
- mentoring students on individual and small group investigations
- helping with hands-on science activities
- supervising/assisting teachers during field trips
- sharing your talents in assemblies or classes
- assuming room parent responsibilities
- monitoring computer use
- assisting in researching needs
- serving as a ROPEs panelist or coach

Students will become more resilient, responsive and respectful of others when they...

Kindergarten

- Carry their own backpacks
- Load and unload their backpacks at school and put things neatly in their “homes”
- Put lunch on the cart
- Turn in important paperwork to the teacher
- Independently write their name
- Return library books on time
- Use proper hygiene to safeguard against germs (wash hands after using a tissue or bathroom, keep hands off of nose and out of mouth, sneeze or cough into their elbow and away from peers)
- Utilize the bathroom independently
- Independently tie their shoes
- Independently dress themselves for recess (zip coats, snap snow pants, etc.)
- Ask for help when needed and routinely pick up after self
- Wait patiently in line or to be called on during discussions
- Use their manners with both adults and peers (“Thank You”, “Please”, “Excuse Me”, etc.)
- Exhibit good manners and behavior for guests, in the hall, and at assemblies
- Make eye contact and respond appropriately when spoken to
- Follow classroom and school routines and expectations
- Use a kind voice with peers and adults
- Provide others with grace when mistakes are made
- Raise hand and wait to be called on to speak

First Grade

- Follow all K expectations
- Follow classroom routines independently; remember & do classroom job
- Follow adult directions promptly with a smile and without debate
- Continue recognizing and incorporating Habits of Mind in daily situations
- Share and take turns without adult support or guidance
- Pick up after self and develop a nature of helpfulness towards others
- Assess own work based on effort and completion (Avoid asking “Am I done?”)
- Increasingly become an independent learner, i.e., “Ask 3 before me” if unable to problem-solve on one’s own

Second Grade

- Follow all K-1 expectations
- Enter and leave classroom on time in the A.M. and P.M. without help
- Turn in work completed at home and notes from parents without prompting
- Walk and wait in hallway respectfully
- Organize work to go home in folder and give all notes from school to a parent each night
- Show understanding and empathy of other people’s feelings
- Show respect to adults and other students (eye contact, greeting, polite tone)
- Use appropriate voice level depending on activity
- Solve minor conflicts independently and calmly use “I” messages and Kelso’s Choices

Third Grade

- Follow all K-2 expectations
- Solve most social conflicts kindly without adult intervention
- Lose a game or contest with dignity (without crying or tantrum)
- Use put ups and avoid put downs
- Demonstrate ability to play with a variety of friends
- Transition smoothly in 30 seconds

Fourth Grade

- Follow all K-3 expectations
- Organize self effectively and efficiently upon entering the classroom
- Envision self as a scholar, rather than a student
- Demonstrate respect of multiple perspectives, opinions, values and beliefs

Fifth Grade

- Follow all K-4 expectations
- Arrive to school on time with a positive attitude
- Start the day prepared: pencils sharpened, work turned in before announcements
- Respect and appreciate the range of abilities they and their peers exhibit
- Complete and turn in all work on time

Sixth Grade

- Follow all K-5 expectations
- Understand their position as a role-model for others
- Lend a hand to help teachers and classmates without being prompted
- Speak their truth in a respectful manner demonstrating scholarship and leadership
- Honor, respect and validate the contributions of classmates
- Accept criticism as an opportunity to develop a growth mindset

Program Background

The Highly Gifted Program started in the early 1980s and was originally housed at Lake Otis Elementary School. The program was developed and implemented to meet the unique educational needs of students (kindergarten through sixth grade) whose abilities and behaviors indicate educational needs beyond those which can typically be addressed in the regular classroom setting.

The focus for identification of students in the HG program is exceptionally high ability and achievement. Highly able children in this setting are identified and carefully followed to assure that their educational needs are being met. Research by Dr. Joyce Van Tassel-Baska and other researchers confirm the widespread understanding that students who are highly gifted have special needs including:

- to be challenged by learning situations or more cognitively complex levels of thought.
- to be challenged with divergent thought involved in problem solving and decision-making.
- to be challenged through cooperative and individual tasks which require sustained concentration on systematic inquiry and the integration of information and ideas.
- to be challenged by thoughtful and focused discussions among intellectual peers and adults.
- to be challenged in areas of strength and interest which accelerate the pace and depth of content.
- to develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, coping with exceptionality and leadership, while applying knowledge and abilities to real problems.
- to benefit from the education offered and ensure they are not being adversely affected by this placement.

Contact Information

Resource	Contact Information
ASD Gifted Office ASD Education Center 5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99504	
Peter Ljubicich Supervisor of Gifted Services The gifted program supervisor is responsible for the Anchorage School District Gifted Program, and works in conjunction with the Rogers Park principal to monitor gifted services for students in the highly gifted program. This coordination includes student qualification, teacher hire, curriculum support, and budgetary allocations.	phone 742-3794 fax 742-4778 email ljubicich_peter@asdk12.org
Rogers Park Elementary School 1400 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99508	
Nuri Johnsen Rogers Park Principal The Rogers Park principal is responsible for overseeing teacher hiring and evaluation, teacher room allocation, scheduling, classes, and daily activities. The principal also oversees student behavior.	phone 742-4800 fax 742-4815 email johnsen_nuri@asdk12.org
Traci Caves Liaison, Highly Gifted Program The liaison for the highly gifted program works in conjunction with the program supervisor, Rogers Park principal, teachers, parents, and students to ensure that every opportunity for educational success is explored.	phone 742-4818 fax 742-4815 email caves_traci@asdk12.org
ASD Transportation ASD buses (2-digit numbers)..... Reliant buses (3-digit numbers up to 699)..... Reliant buses (numbers in 700's - Eagle River).....	742-1200 278-4287 696-4287
Parents may call bus dispatch as a courtesy if their child is not riding the bus on a given day.	