

Elementary IMPACT Handbook

*Independence Missouri Program
for the Academically and Creatively Talented*

Location:

Blackburn Elementary
17302 E. RD Mize Rd, Independence, MO 64057

Building number:

816-521-5395

Instructors:

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Program Principal:

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What is IMPACT?

IMPACT is an acronym for Independence Missouri's Program for the Academically and Creatively Talented. IMPACT is designed to introduce students to new areas of learning outside the scope of the regular classroom curriculum. The program also develops skills in complex and creative thinking to develop independent learners. IMPACT is an accelerated, instructional supplement to help enrich the student's growth and development to maximize their fullest potential.

IMPACT Mission Statement

Independence Missouri's Program for the Academically and Creatively Talented will inspire gifted students to take risks to challenge themselves and learn new material and skills.

IMPACT Goals

By the end of fifth grade, gifted students in the Independence School District will have had the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills to:

- become independent learners.
- gather, analyze, and apply information and ideas.
- communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom.
- recognize and solve problems.
- make decisions and act as responsible members of society.
- apply creative and critical thinking skills.
- develop skills to work in a team situation.

IMPACT believes and values:

- gifted students have unique academic and emotional needs that require additional services outside of the regular classroom.
- within the gifted population itself, there is a diversity of needs.
- gifted students need support in the recognition and development of their own abilities to become architects of their own learning.
- gifted students have the right to pursue new learning.
- gifted students have the right to pursue their highest potential.
- interaction with intellectual peers (other gifted students) is crucial to the social, emotional, and intellectual development of the gifted student.

Therefore: We believe modification of the school structure and curriculum is necessary for gifted students to reach their full potential.

Learning Expectations

All students have the opportunity to learn and be successful. Teachers, counselors, and the administrative staff strive to provide students with the best education possible. To achieve this goal, school expectations have been created in order to support an environment that is safe and promotes an atmosphere of learning. IMPACT students are expected to follow both the

Blackburn Elementary and IMPACT expectations. The IMPACT teachers will go over area expectations with students the first week. All expectations fall under:

- Practice Safety (Respect other student's space)
- Act Responsibly (Give your best effort)
- Work Together (Help others, share materials, invite ideas from others)
- Show Respect (Raise your hand, follow directions, listen)

How are Students Referred for IMPACT Screening?

Teachers, parents, counselors, or a student can initiate a referral to IMPACT. The deadline for referrals for IMPACT is January 15th. When a student is referred for screening, parent permission is required. In deciding whether to initiate screening for a particular child, parents and teachers should remember two important points:

- Students who perform well in the classroom are not necessarily gifted. Most children with average ability, family support and sufficient motivation can be expected to meet the requirements of the school curriculum. Not all of these students have the necessary aptitudes to apply their learning to the creation of new ideas and products. Not all have the driving curiosity about learning to invest one day each week away from their teacher and classmates.
- Some students who are unsuccessful in the classroom are gifted. These students sometimes think in such a divergent way that they have trouble focusing on one correct answer. Their minds may operate so quickly that they fail to take the time to work neatly or to check for accuracy. Their interest may be so strongly developed that they do not exercise the self-discipline to follow through with external requirements. They may be so aware of the ways in which they are different from other children; they choose to suppress their talents. Their internal standards may be so unrealistically high that they actively avoid taking risks of any kind.

IMPACT students do not have to re-qualify to continue participating in the program. Students may leave the program if it is determined by the school and/or parents that the program does not meet the needs of the student at a particular time.

How are Students Chosen for IMPACT?

IMPACT teachers work with parents, classroom teachers and building principals to identify students in grades 1 - 5 who should be **referred** for IMPACT. The Independence School District screens all students in first and third grades. Referred students in 2nd, 4th and 5th grades will be **screened** 2nd semester.

Students who pass the screening can participate in further testing to determine if they meet criteria for the ISD gifted program (IMPACT). Qualifying students, who are tested outside of the screening window, shall be placed in the program at the beginning of a new semester.

Students will not be screened/tested more than twice, and those students scoring below a 120 IQ score will not be tested again.

The Missouri Department of Education has established the identification criteria for participating students. **To qualify for IMPACT, students must meet both the state and Independence School District guidelines.**

To qualify for IMPACT:

- IMPACT candidates, who have met the screening requirements, must have an observation form from the classroom teacher.
- Screening Assessment (grades 1st and 3rd)
- Screening Assessment (grades 2nd, 4th/5th)
- A global measure of intelligence from an approved IQ assessment.

If a student participated in a gifted program in their previous school district, the qualification criteria will be reviewed and determination made based upon that information regarding participation within the ISD IMPACT program.

Retesting of Students for IMPACT

Students who are testing a second time for IMPACT must meet the following criteria:

- at least one year between testing sessions
- an IQ score of 120+ on a previous test is **required** to be considered for retesting.
- Students will not be screened/tested more than twice. This does not include grade level screenings unless they result in testing.

Students with Additional Needs

Students on a 504 plan, IEP, behavior plan, or have ELL support will be given equal opportunities to be considered for the IMPACT program. All plans, accommodations, and modifications will be considered and upheld within the IMPACT program as they are in any school setting. IMPACT teachers will work with the sending school to make sure proper documentation and understanding of needs are communicated.

Continuation in IMPACT

Once a child has qualified for IMPACT, s/he does not have to be tested again to remain in the program during future years; however, all students who qualify for IMPACT may not necessarily do well in the program. A student may have difficulty keeping up with his/her classroom work, may put pressure on him/herself to compete with others, or may experience other problems.

If a question should arise about your child's continued participation in IMPACT, please contact the IMPACT teachers. Most problems can be resolved so that your child may continue in the program. After meeting with the IMPACT teachers (as well as the classroom teacher, counselor, and principal, if appropriate), you may decide it would be in your child's best interest not to continue in IMPACT. If a decision to withdraw your child from the program is made, a written request should be made and turned in to the home school principal.

Reporting an Absence to IMPACT

It is very important for us to know where all of our students are and why they are not attending IMPACT for the day. Parents are asked to email the IMPACT teachers or call IMPACT before 9:00 a.m. at 521-5395 and leave a voice message for the IMPACT teachers when your child is not attending IMPACT. Please tell us if your child is sick or is staying at his/her home school for a special activity. Students may not decide if they attend or miss IMPACT. Students are expected to maintain good attendance with exceptions of illness or a special activity at school.

IMPACT teachers will ask for a phone conference with the parents of any IMPACT child who misses two or more IMPACT days in a row. Multiple absences from IMPACT may be an indicator of an issue that needs to be addressed.

Arrival at IMPACT

After morning arrival at their home schools, all IMPACT students are asked to first check in with their classroom teacher, then board the district bus that will transport students to the IMPACT Center.

An adult must sign-in children who arrive at IMPACT after the start of school. If a parent must bring his/her student to IMPACT during the school day, he/she must walk the child into the Blackburn office and sign in at the secretary's desk. **Parents will need a photo ID in order to enter any Independence Public School during school hours.**

Parents, please be aware that if your child is late for his/her home school, he/she will not have district transportation to IMPACT. If you are able, we would encourage you to bring your child to Blackburn so your child will not miss an entire day of IMPACT.

Bad Weather

IMPACT will be closed when the Independence Public Schools are closed. If the schools close early because of bad weather, buses will be sent early to IMPACT so students can return to their home schools in time for dismissal.

Lunch

The lunch payment process will function the same as the student's home building.

Nurse/Medicine

Medication is not allowed to be transported by a student. Parents should bring medication in its original container along with the doctor's written instructions for dispensing medication.

Medication should include the following:

- Child's name
- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Doctor's directions for giving – including the dates and times to be given
- Indicate if medicine should be refrigerated

Progress Reports for IMPACT

Students will receive a progress report from IMPACT at the end of each semester (twice a year). Reports will be sent home with the student. Skills noted on the progress report include teamwork, task commitment, organizational skills, and critical thinking.

Technology Use in IMPACT

Technology will be used as it fits into the IMPACT curriculum and in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy of the district. **Students must have a signed Acceptable Use Policy for IMPACT in order to use the technology at IMPACT.**

Students who misuse the school's technology will receive consequences according to the nature and severity of the misuse. Consequences will be similar to the consequences for violating other school rules and may include being given limited or no access to technology for a specified amount of time.

Regular Classroom Homework

The elementary gifted instructional time is considered as a substitute for regular education class time. While the student is **not required to make up the work missed**, he/she must demonstrate understanding of the new concepts presented. The **classroom teacher** has the responsibility to explain any new concepts. **Gifted students** have the responsibility to demonstrate understanding of the concepts presented. A student having difficulty keeping up with his/her regular classes while attending IMPACT is encouraged to talk to his/her classroom teacher and IMPACT teachers.

IMPACT Homework

Due to the nature of the program, students will not be assigned homework for IMPACT.

Visits to IMPACT Class

Instructional time is reserved for focused learning and as such cannot accommodate visitors or guests. The teachers will not be able to use instructional time to conference about specific concerns. If you would like to set up an appointment to meet with your child's IMPACT teachers please contact the teachers directly.

Communication with IMPACT Teachers

The IMPACT teachers welcome and encourage parent and classroom teacher communication. If your student is experiencing a problem with IMPACT or the classroom, it is important to contact the appropriate person. Your first contact should be the IMPACT teacher and/or the classroom teacher who will be glad to talk with you about any concerns. If necessary a team may be convened to help address concerns and find solutions.

Communications from the IMPACT Teachers

Parents and classroom teachers may expect the following communications from the IMPACT teachers:

- Fall Open House meeting for IMPACT families (August)
- IMPACT website information
- Voicemail contact
- Project evaluation sheets/rubric evaluations
- Fall and spring Student Led conferences (October/March)
- Phone calls, notes, or e-mails if your child is having difficulty with curriculum, socialization skills, etc. while at IMPACT
- A phone call or email if the student's behavior resulted in a trip to the focus room
- Information concerning parent/teacher organizations and workshops focusing on gifted
- Program Facebook page (www.facebook.com/IMPACT4gifted/)
- Twitter Accounts - @IndepIMPACT and @katrina_godinez
- Seesaw Online Portfolios