

# BROOKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL

## GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION HANDBOOK

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

#### **Philosophy:**

The Brookland School District believes that within its boundaries are students for whom the regular classroom goals and objectives are not appropriate. There are students whose levels of intelligence, creativity, and motivation are so high that the regular program is too slow and inadequate to meet their needs. It is the belief of the district that their educational programs must be qualitatively modified to challenge these students to meet the potential they exhibit. These modifications should include advanced subject matter, thinking skill development, exposure to things outside the classroom, and meeting their special affective needs.

#### **Definition:**

For purposes of participation in the Brookland School Gifted/Talented Program, a gifted or talented student shall be defined as one who demonstrates above average mental ability, a high degree of creativity, and a high potential for task commitment in an area of interest. A student may also exhibit marked talent in art, music, drama or any of the arts or sciences. The district will also make every effort to seek and identify gifted or talented students who are disadvantaged, handicapped or a member of a minority group, since it is recognized that these may not exhibit their gifted behavior or potential on standard means of measurement.

#### **Goals and Objectives:**

- 1) Develop subject area knowledge in selected areas by means of mini-units to instill interest in these area.
- 2) Increase cognitive skills by means of group activities in critical thinking and instruction in logic.
- 3) Encourage affective development by using group activities and individual counseling.
- 4) Expose students to a variety of social, intellectual, and cultural activities to make them more aware of their world.
- 5) Develop creativity with group and individual activities.
- 6) Encourage students to select, plan, and complete one or more long-range projects in an area of interest or study.

### **Identification:**

The identification process for placement in the program is multiple faceted. Creativity, ability, teacher assessment, achievement, benchmarks scores, Observation Inventory, grades, and parent assessment are used in the decision for placement. The decision is made by a committee comprised of counselors, teacher of the gifted, administrator, and teachers. The district will make every effort to seek and identify gifted or talented students who are disadvantaged, handicapped, or a member of a minority group.

At the present time elementary students are not identified for placement in the program until the end of the third grade. All students in Kindergarten and grades one, two and three have whole group enrichment activities with a certified gifted and talented teacher. Students in grades four, five, and six are served through a pull-out program for a minimum of 150 minutes a week. The secondary program is implemented through secondary course content classes, PreAP/AP, and concurrent enrollment classes.

The Brookland Gifted and Talented Program will differentiate by involving students in instructional possibilities that include, but are not limited to: discussion, problem solving, programmed instruction, simulations and games, independent study, and other strategies which emphasize high-level thought processes, and quality student products. The curriculum is comprised of activities involving creative thinking, critical thinking, research, communication, and affective development. Products are the end result of a learning experience. Gifted students will be encouraged to develop products that use new techniques, materials, and forms. Students may share products with class members and any other appropriate audiences.

### **Identification Assessments:**

Standardized Mental Ability Test  
Standard Achievement Test  
Test of Creative Ability  
Checklist from Parents  
Renzulli Behavioral Checklist from Teachers  
Grades

### **Identification Procedure:**

Formal identification of gifted students begins at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. Nominations are solicited from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. Students may also be nominated by teachers and/or parents. Data is collected and recorded on numbered data sheets. The case studies will be considered by an identification committee.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Brookland School District will have a partnership between school personnel and other members of the community. A key element in any successful program is the continuing communication and support among the school staff, administration, parents, students, and the community. The community is invited to the classroom during open house, during parent/teacher conference time, and parent meetings. Community members are invited to attend programs presented by the students such as science fair and other events.

The district will have an Advisory Committee for the gifted program made up of school personnel, parents, as well as community members. The council helps the program serve the needs of gifted students by working closely with program teachers. The council will meet each semester.

The G/T Coordinator will report on the G/T program at the Annual Public Community Meeting. This event provides an opportunity for parents and community members to ask questions, make suggestions, and gain information about the G/T program. Agendas of the meeting will be kept on file.

The Brookland School District will provide ongoing opportunities for community awareness and involvement of our gifted program through our local newspaper, brochures, and handbooks. Information concerning the G/T program will also be included in packets of materials distributed at the Annual Business Expo on the campus of Arkansas State University.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Brookland School District will provide ongoing and continuous opportunities for growth in the area of Gifted and Talented by organizing a flexible and varying program to meet the individual needs of the school personnel.

The district G/T coordinator will be responsible for staff development through formal sessions, faculty meetings, handouts, and professional literature. The coordinator will also make arrangements for consultant services and provide information about regional and state workshops and conferences. Training for the teacher of the gifted will be provided as needed.

The G/T staff will be trained in various areas of gifted education, such as:

1. Characteristics and needs of the gifted
2. Identification procedures
3. Teaching strategies
4. Creativity
5. Affective

The coordinator and teacher will be encouraged to attend regional, state, and national workshops and conferences which provide staff development opportunities for the G/T teacher and other interested staff members.

The staff will be encouraged to attend staff development sessions provided by the Crowley's Ridge Educational Cooperative which are conducted by professionals with special training in gifted education.

Less formal staff development will be encouraged by adding books and journals on gifted education to the school's professional library, placing reprints of pertinent articles in teacher boxes, presenting short, specific classroom demonstrations and teaching techniques at regular building-level faculty meetings, and sharing gifted students' projects with all staff.

All staff teaching PreAP and Advanced Placement Classes will have the required training provided by the College Board Advanced Placement workshops.

## PERSONNEL

The Brookland School District is an equal opportunity employer and shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability. In the event of an opening in the district gifted department the Superintendent and/or Assistant Superintendent will advertise the position, accept applications and interview applicants. A recommendation is made for hire by the Superintendent to the board. The applicant is hired by the School Board.

Staff Selection Procedures:

The criteria used for selection of the staff for the Brookland School Gifted & Talented Program:

1. High degree of interest in G/T education
2. Experience in the field of education
3. Satisfactory evaluations
4. Ability to work with G/T students
5. Ability to solicit community and staff support
6. Administrative approval
7. A willingness to accept responsibilities as stated in job description

Personnel teaching G/T identified students must hold current Arkansas Teaching Certification with an add-on endorsement for Gifted Education and meet standards as set by the State of Arkansas.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

The Gifted and Talented Program Coordinator is responsible for planning and administrating the gifted and talented program in consultation with teachers, administrators, and parent. These duties include the following:

1. Provide general guidance for administration of program in accordance with policy
2. Oversee budget, including purchasing for the program
3. Coordinate staff development activities with administration
4. Be responsible for seeing that all appropriate documentation is available for review by administration and ADE
5. Keep and maintain security on student records
6. Oversee and coordinate identification process
7. Be responsible for due process and appeal procedures
8. Keep administration and teachers award of new developments and opportunities for professional growth
9. Coordinate field trips and student activities

The Gifted and Talented Program Teacher is responsible for duties in the gifted and talented program that include the following:

1. Teach objectives established by the program
2. Maintain discipline in the classroom
3. Maintain class records, including attendance
4. Communicate with parents and community
5. Consult with coordinator about field trips, supplies and materials, speakers, needs, problems, etc.
6. Assist with identification process
7. Evaluate students' progress
8. Suggest improvements in curriculum, procedures, etc.
9. Be willing to grow professionally by participating in workshops, college classes, etc.
10. Work in conjunction with counselor to provide guidance and help for students.

Coordinators and teachers of the gifted will be provided regularly scheduled times for duties other than direct services to identified students. A copy of schedules will be on file.

The G/T Coordinator must hold current Arkansas Teaching Certification with an add-on endorsement for Gifted Education and meet standards as set by the State of Arkansas.

## IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES

The identification process at Brookland Public School strives to be nondiscriminatory in identification of students from all cultural and economic backgrounds with demonstrated or potential above average academic ability, high levels of task commitment and/or motivation, and high levels of creativity. The purpose of careful and comprehensive identification procedures is to find and serve as many students as possible who need a special program to develop their exceptional abilities.

The Brookland School uses a case-study method for its screening and identification procedure. The selection of approximately 5% of the student population to be identified as gifted/talented which will be served according to state guidelines.

Identification of students begins with referrals from teachers, parents, students, or community members. Information about the program and about the referral and identification process is sent out to teachers by email and information is also placed in all principal's offices. Any student is eligible for referral and considered for placement at any time during the year. Information concerning the program is available throughout the school year by contacting the G/T Coordinator/Teacher. Referrals are sought from a variety of sources to ensure that all potentially gifted and talented students have an opportunity to be considered. Students completing third grade or older may be considered for placement.

Once a student is referred, parent permission is obtained in order to continue the identification screening process. Parents are also provided with information about the program. Information sent home to the parents includes an overview of the program goals and objectives, assessment measures, and identification process. Various forms of data are collected from multiple sources. An evaluation of characteristics observed at school is completed by the student's classroom teacher. An evaluation of characteristics observed at home is sent to the parent to complete. Data is also collected during the course of enrichment lessons (Kindergarten through third grade) and compiled for each referred student.

The following instruments are used as data sources:

1. Achievement test battery
2. Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test
3. Creativity Assessment
4. Renzulli-Hartman Scales (ability, motivation, creativity)
5. Parent nomination forms (developed by staff)
6. Written statements by teacher, students, parents, and community members
7. Grades
8. Benchmark Scores
9. K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade observational data compiled by K-3 teacher

All available student data are collected and recorded on numbered identification data forms. The G/T Coordinator/Teacher is responsible for gathering and completing the profile forms for each student. The identification committee, using a case study approach, reviews all the information collected for each student to make its decision.

According to guidelines, no one test score will be a valid basis for exclusion from the program. The objective is to find students who are above average in mental ability, have a high degree of creative potential, and have potential to be task-committed in a field of interest. Information regarding membership in underserved populations will be noted on students' profile sheets in order to ensure equity, but all other information will be blinded. Students will receive consideration without discrimination because of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or handicap. Members of the identification committee is composed of at least five educators and chaired by the G/T Coordinator. Members of the committee are made aware of the local identification policies and procedures and the nature of the program to make decisions in the best interest of each child.

Students transferring into the Brookland School district may be referred at any time. The identification committee, using a case study approach, reviews all the information collected to make its placement decision. If additional testing is needed this is done with parent/guardian permission. Brookland reserves the right to administer its own measures if there is any question concerning the appropriate measures or other information received. An appropriate placement recommendation will be made when the necessary data is available and has been reviewed. Students transferring from another G/T program will be considered for participation, but not automatically placed.

A review of student's placement in the gifted and talented program is made annually. The annual review will include a review of student participation and performance in the gifted and talented classroom and the regular classroom.

Parents are notified by letter of the committee's decision concerning their child's placement. Students selected for program participation are provided with a parent consent form. Parents receive information explaining their child's creativity and ability testing data. Teachers will be notified of the committee's decision concerning placement and new roster will be sent to all faculty members.

The decision of the committee may be challenged in accordance with the due process appeals procedures.

Student information is kept in files with access limited to staff concerned with the education of the student and to the parents of the students. Student data and placement decisions are kept on file for a minimum of five years or as long as needed for educational decisions and then destroyed appropriately to maintain confidentiality of information.



## **DUE PROCESS AND APPEALS GIFTED/TALENTED PROGRAM BROOKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL**

It is the policy of Brookland School to inform the parent/guardian of the identification process. The parent/guardian shall have the right to refer a student for consideration and ask the committee to consider any pertinent information or data. Before any testing (unique to G/T identification) is done, permission shall be obtained by the G/T Coordinator for testing that student. After the identification and placement decisions have been made, the parent/guardian shall be informed as to whether the student has been placed in the G/T class. The data summary sheet shall be available for parent/guardian inspection, but those of other students shall not.

If a parent/guardian disagrees with or questions a placement decision, a conference may be requested to discuss the data used in the placement decision. Conference attendees will include the G/T teacher, building principal, and parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian still disagrees with the decision, a written appeal should be filed with the rationale of why the student should be placed. The identification committee shall be reconvened to consider the placement of the student. All data used in the initial decision and any additional data, including at least 2 objective and 2 subjective assessments (data must include a creativity assessment) will be used to determine placement. The decision of the committee will be communicated to the parents. This process shall be done in a timely manner.

Students not placed may exhibit a greater need for the program at a later time. They will have opportunities to be considered for participation in the program throughout their school experience.

## **EXIT POLICY**

Every attempt will be made to place only students who have educational needs that can be met by the Gifted and Talented Program. However, if it becomes necessary for a student to exit from the program the following procedures will be used.

Exit from the program may be initiated by student, parent/guardian, G/T personnel, classroom teachers, counselor, or administrator.

When the G/T teacher or school personnel initiate exit procedures, multiple criteria must be collected. Results from two objective and two subjective measures will be part of the collected data. Data collected must contain a measurement of creativity. No single criteria can be used to exclude/exit a student. The G/T teacher will document reason(s) and collect data to beginning the exit procedures.

Before exiting the G/T program the G/T teacher, G/T coordinator, student, and parent will develop an improvement plan to provide the student with guidance in ways to improve. The student is made aware of areas of needed improvement with improvement goals clearly stated and a timeline is set for a specified level of improvement.

During the collection of data and throughout the improvement stage, the student will continue to participate in the gifted and talented program.

If progress following the timeline is not adequate and gifted services are determined inappropriate for the student, placement in the program will be terminated. A committee of at least five school personnel who are involved with this student will meet to review the required data. The data will include the two objective measures and two subjective measures (one of which will measure creativity) along with observations, student academic performance, and G/T participation. The decision will be based on what placement would be most appropriate for meeting the needs of the student.

A conference with parents will be held at the conclusion of the timeline and after the committee determines the placement.

Students removed from the G/T program have the opportunity for consideration of placement at any time.

A student or parent may also express a need to exit the program. A student's concern would be discussed with the parent before any decision was made. If a parent decided that they no longer wanted their child to participate in the program, the child would not be required to participate. The parent will send written documentation requesting the dismissal of the child from participation in the G/T program.

## **PROGRAM OPTIONS**

The gifted and talented curriculum is intended to provide a curriculum that is both differentiated and appropriate for the specialized needs of students who are advanced in their thinking and learning processes. The students are provided opportunities to interact with their peers and work on projects that challenge their abilities and encourage them to expand their creativity. G/T instructors have received certification through the Arkansas Department of Education.

All students in Kindergarten and grades one, two, and three will participate in whole group enrichment and identification. The delivery of services to the students will be 40 minutes weekly and be delivered by the Elementary G/T teacher. The Kingore Observation Inventory will be used in identifying students with gifted characteristics.

Identified students in grades 4-6 are serviced through a resource room for 150 minutes each week.

The elementary G/T curriculum differentiates from the regular classroom curriculum. The curriculum is comprised of activities involving higher order thinking skills, productive thinking, problem solving, and creative writing. The G/T students are exposed to various units of study which creative and critical thinking, research, and communication skills are stressed.

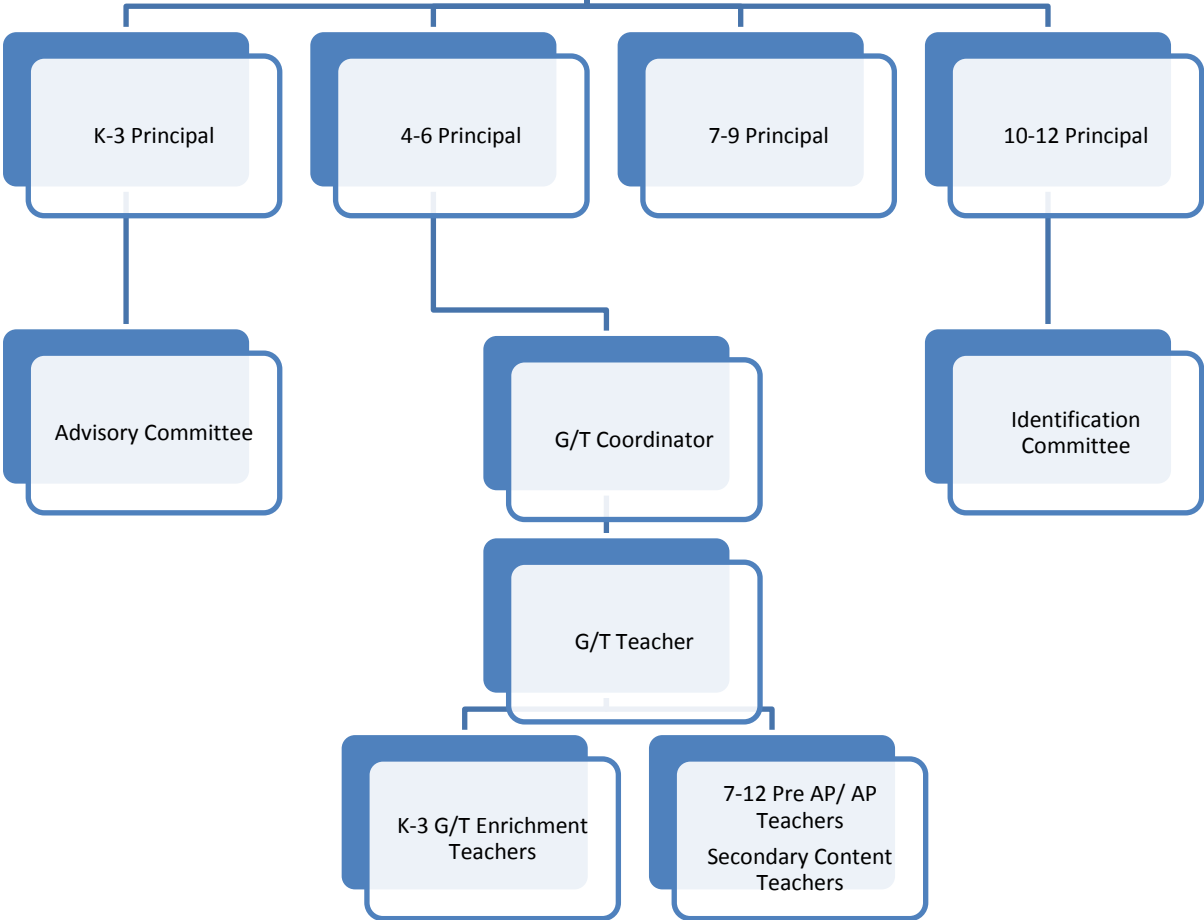
Products and projects are an integral part of the G/T program. Students use higher level thinking skills in their products and projects that are relevant to the units being studies. Many activities are centered around a unit of study which allows the students the opportunity to study topics in greater depth. Additional activities are offered such as Quiz Bowl, Chess, Science and History Fairs.

Students in grades 7-12 have the option of participating in Pre-AP/AP classes, secondary content classes, or concurrent enrollment classes.

BROOKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL GIFTED AND TALENTED ORGANIZATION CHART

Board of Education

Superintendent



## **CURRICULUM DESCRIPTION**

### **Kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Whole Group Enrichment and Identification:**

A trained and licensed gifted and talented teacher goes into each kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and third grade classroom 40 minutes each week. The teacher provides an enrichment activity with all of the students in the classroom. The enrichment curriculum is differentiated in content, process, and product. The activities are intended to encourage each student to become higher level thinkers, creatively and intellectually. During this time the teacher gathers information that will aide in the future identification process for students entering 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Pull Out Program:**

Students meet with the gifted and talented teacher daily for 30 minutes for a total of 150 minutes weekly. Students are given an opportunity to work at the level of their abilities and in areas of interest. Learning experiences are designed to encourage creativity and thinking on a higher level.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Secondary Content:**

Students participant in secondary content class taught by a teacher trained in a core area of English, Math, Science, or Social Studies. The curriculum is differentiated in content, process, and/or product. Teachers provided quarterly documentation. A G/T teacher meets will students once monthly.

### **8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-Advanced Placement:**

Students participate in Pre-AP classes with a trained teacher in a core area of English, Math, Science, and/or Social Studies. Students receive instructional services that are differentiated from those provided in the regular class curriculum. Services are documented quarterly. A G/T teacher meets with students once monthly.

### **10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Advanced Placement:**

Student work with trained teachers and are given an opportunity to pursue college level courses in the core areas of English, Math, Science, and/or Social Studies. Students receive instruction from teachers that follow an approved College Board Syllabus. Students must take the AP exam to get weighted credit and count the class as an AP class. A G/T teacher meets once a month with the students.

### Endorsed Concurrent Enrollment Courses:

Students are enrolled in a college level course offered by an institution of higher education in the state. Upon completion, the student will qualify for academic credit in both the institution of higher education and the public high school following ADE AP/IB Rules 3.05-3.05.03 and 10.00-10.07 (Secondary). A G/T teacher meets once a month with the students.



A. Analysis		I	I	M	R		
B. Synthesis		I	I	M	R		
C. Evaluation		I	I	M	R		
D. Decision making		I	I	M	R		
E. Following instructions		I	I	M	R		
F. Test-taking skills		I	I	M	R		
G. Logic problems		I	I	M	R		
<b>Strand 3 - Research</b>							
A. Questioning		I	I	I	M		
B. Information Gathering			I	I	M		
C. Organizing			I	I	M		
<b>Strand 4 - Communication</b>							
A. Non-Verbal			I	I	M		
B. Verbal		I	I	I	M		
C. Written			I	I	M		



Strand 5 - Affective Development							
A. Self-Concept							
B. Interpersonal Relations							
C. Coping with Failure							

## **EVALUATION**

The gifted and talented program will be evaluated each spring. The evaluation will be from: students, parents, and teachers. Also, community members, advisory board, and administrators will be involved in the evaluation.

Evaluation of the gifted and talented program is conducted through questionnaires, checklists, or interviews. Focus groups may also be used in the evaluation process. Evaluations are gathered and tabulated by the gifted program coordinator. Results from the evaluations are analyzed to find areas of strengths and weaknesses.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Program evaluation is necessary in all phases of education and especially in programs for gifted students. If gifted programs are to be maintained or expanded, the success of the program must be demonstrated to all audiences who are concerned. This would include parents, community members, administrators, school board members, students, and state or federal funding agencies.

Evaluation is defined as a disciplined inquiry which produces information that enables one to make value judgments about a given observable element.

The purpose of a program evaluation as related to the Brookland School is multifaceted. The following are some considerations.

1. To document the fact that the program is operational as specified in the goals and objectives.
2. To document that the students are receiving instruction in appropriate curriculum areas.
3. To obtain information to assist in any revision of the program data proved to be needed.
4. To document the impact of the program to justify additional funding request to the school board.
5. To document the results of the program for the State Department.
6. To enable good decision making to occur.
7. To provide a valid manner to closely examine the program.
8. To enable good reasonable judgments to be made about the effectiveness of the program.

## **EVALUATION REPORT**

The evaluation report is both narrative and statistical in nature, with data collected being qualitative and quantitative. Data from evaluation instruments will be tabulated and analyzed by the gifted program coordinator. A report showing the strengths and weaknesses of the gifted program will be written. This information is used to determine improvements and goals.

The report will be available for all interested stakeholders.

## **STUDENT EVALUATION**

The evaluation of students' progress in the G/T Program will be based upon their achievement of program objectives and goals. The objectives are outlined in the program Scope and Sequence. The students' progress will be evaluated as well as the quality of their products and participation in the program. The G/T teacher will send evaluation reports at the conclusion of each semester to the parents identified G/T students that attend pull-out classes. The students' progress in developing skills in the areas of creativity, affective growth, content of material, and evidence of higher level thinking skills will be evaluated. At the end of each school year and/or beginning of the next school year, the G/T teacher will review standardized ability test scores and performance in class as a basis for continuation or termination of placement. If the data compiled indicates that there may need to be a change in placement, exit procedures will be followed.

G/T participation will be documented on all permanent records.

The Evaluation process is one way to keep parents informed of their child's progress, but also to gain information that will enable the program to more effectively meet the needs of gifted and talented students.

The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guide in program development and implementation of the Brookland Gifted and Talented Program. Revisions will and should occur as teachers, students, parents, and administrative personnel interact and react to the program evaluations and curriculum.

The Gifted and Talented Handbook was approved by the Brookland Public School Board of Education on Monday, October 19, 2015.