



**Kennedale Independent School District  
Gifted & Talented Handbook  
2023-2024**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

[MISSION STATEMENT](#)

[TEXAS GOALS for SERVICES](#)

[GIFTED and TALENTED STUDENTS](#)

[ENSURING EQUITY](#)

[IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES](#)

[SERVICE DESIGN](#)

[PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT](#)

# MISSION STATEMENT

## **KISD Mission Statement**

The mission of the Kennedale Independent School District is to provide a diverse, engaging, and safe environment where all stakeholders are responsible and accountable for student success.

## **GT Program Mission Statement**

The mission of the Gifted and Talented (GT) program is to foster progressive educational opportunities through partnerships with students and families, innovative instructional practices, and enriched learning experiences. KISD is committed to addressing the unique intellectual, social, emotional, and creative needs of all students.

### **Julie Vu, Ph.D.**

Assistant Superintendent  
Curriculum & Student Services

### **Andrea Volding**

Director of Instructional Services

### **Denell Dickey**

Instructional Programs Coordinator

### *Campus Coordinators*

#### **Michelle Reed**

James F. Delaney Elementary

#### **Kristi Murrell**

R. F. Patterson Elementary

#### **Jennifer Hamilton**

Kennedale Junior High

#### **Dr. Chelsea Allison**

Kennedale High School

#### **Dr. Rachel Lomax**

CCMR Coordinator  
Kennedale High School

## **TEXAS GOALS for SERVICES**

Students who participate in services designed for gifted/talented students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that reflect individuality and creativity and are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment. High school graduates who have participated in services for gifted/talented students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services.

*(Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students - April 2019)*

## **GIFTED and TALENTED STUDENTS**

A gifted/talented student is a child or youth who performs at or shows the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment. A gifted/talented student also:

- exhibits high performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area;
- possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or
- excels in a specific academic field.

*(Texas Education Code §29.121)*

# ENSURING EQUITY

The Gifted and Talented State Plan (2019) states:

- 2.24 Access to assessment and, if needed, gifted/talented services is available to all populations of the district (19 TAC §89.1(3)).
- 2.25 The population of the gifted/talented services program is closely reflective of the population of the total district and/or campus.

Kennedale ISD supports equitable representation in the GT program and is committed to providing GT screening opportunities to students from a variety of linguistic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. The district will utilize mid-year universal screener data to identify the top 5% of K-5 students to participate in our GT screening process annually. Students who receive behavioral and/or academic accommodations will be evaluated according to their documented 504, IEP, or LPAC committee recommendations.

# IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

## Identification & Qualifying Criteria

Students are referred for services by parents, teachers, counselors or other interested parties. Referral information may be requested via the campus GT Coordinators. Prior to assessment, referrals are reviewed by the campus student support team. This committee may include the principal, assistant principal, counselor, campus interventionists, and/or teachers, at least three of whom have received training in the nature and needs of gifted and talented students. The student support team determines whether the student profile meets district guidelines for continued evaluation. Students are assessed using three or more evaluation instruments, including both quantitative and qualitative measures. Written parental consent must be obtained prior to assessment.

## Referrals

Per KISD Board Policy EHBB (LOCAL), criteria shall be specific to the state definition of gifted and talented and shall ensure the fair assessment of students from all populations, including students with special needs, such as the culturally different, the economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities. Teachers, counselors, and parents may refer a student for GT screening. Referrals are accepted throughout the year. Identification will be based upon review of input from teachers, input from parents, and evaluation data.

The identification, screening, and evaluation process takes place throughout the year with notification to parents regarding qualification taking place in the spring.

## Screening

Students must meet the following criteria to proceed with further assessment:

- Demonstrate proficiency at one or more grade levels above in math and/or reading as determined by MAP Growth; and
- Meet or exceed a score of 3.0 on the Renzulli Motivation Scale.

### *Grade 2 District-wide Screening*

All students enrolled in second grade will participate in the CogAT screener every spring. Students who score 124 or higher will proceed with GT identification assessments. The district guidelines for identification, assessment, and placement are listed below.

## **Identification, Assessment & Placement**

Students are assessed using multiple instruments, which may include:

- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT)
- Test of Nonverbal Intelligence (TONI)

A student who scores 93rd percentile or a Student Ability Index score of 124 on two of four measures is automatically admitted into the program.

Students will be assessed no more than once a year.

Additionally, if a student scores 93rd percentile or a Student Ability Index score of 124 on one of four measures, additional subjective assessment tools including creativity tests, behavioral checklists completed by teachers and parents, conferences, and portfolios of work products may be considered for eligibility.

### **Admission**

The campus student support team (SST), which will include a minimum of three professional educators who have completed six hours of nature and needs training and are current with their annual six hour GT training update, will determine which students qualify for admission. The SST will make selections based on the qualifying screening and assessment data. Parents and students shall be notified in writing regarding the results of the identification assessment. Written parental consent is required prior to placement in the GT program.

The campus GT Coordinator will create and maintain a GT documentation file for identified students. The campus GT Coordinator will sign off on files when all documentation is complete, and files will be placed in the student cumulative file. Assessment documents for students not identified are kept for a minimum of five years. Assessment results for qualifying and non-qualifying students will be documented in the student portfolio of DMAC.

### **Transfer Students**

When a student is identified as GT by a previous school district and transfers to Kennedale ISD, he/she will be referred for services automatically. The student will be evaluated using Kennedale ISD district criteria within 30 days of enrollment. The campus GT Coordinator will compare previous testing documentation to the Kennedale ISD identification criteria. If the student documentation aligns, the student is admitted to the GT program. If the documentation partially aligns or does not meet the district criteria, the campus GT Coordinator will reevaluate the student in part or in whole. The campus student support team will make a final determination whether previous district assessments meet local identification criteria.

## **Furlough/Leave of Absence**

GT students who score Approaches on STAAR will be furloughed for a minimum of nine weeks. GT students who score Did Not Approach (STAAR) will be furloughed for one year.

GT students may also be placed on furlough as determined by the Student Support Team (SST) based on behavior and/or academic performance. The SST will determine the length of a furlough; however, furlough shall not exceed one year.

A furlough is provided to allow a student the opportunity to attain academic and/or behavior performance goals. Upon completion of a furlough, the student's progress shall be reevaluated. Based on the evaluation of student progress, the student will be readmitted to the gifted program or exited from the program.

### **Exit Provisions**

If it is determined that gifted services do not meet the needs or are not in the best interest of the student, the student will be removed from the program. The SST will use multiple criteria, including student performance data, to make a final decision on removal from the GT program. If a parent requests removal, the SST shall meet with the parent before honoring the request.

If a teacher recommends a student be placed on furlough or exit the program, the teacher must complete the *GT Furlough & Leave of Absence Form* and submit to the GT Coordinator and SST. The committee may consider the following pieces of documentation in their decision-making process:

- Communication with parents/guardians of student alerting them of the possible inappropriate placement in a particular GT class or gifted service
- Evidence of frustration, anxiety, anger, etc.
- Evidence of the child's inability to produce expected work

### **Appeals**

A parent may appeal any final decision of the SST regarding the selection of or the removal from the GT program. Appeals shall be made first to the SST. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with FNG (LOCAL).



### **Program Evaluation**

The effectiveness of the GT Program shall be evaluated by Kennedale ISD's Gifted and Talented Advisory Committee (GTAC) each year. The goal of GTAC is to ensure continuous improvement through an annual review of quantitative and qualitative program data, including student feedback. This committee will be composed of a variety of stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. A program evaluation will be conducted and shared with the KISD School Board annually.

### **Community Awareness**

Kennedale ISD shall ensure that information about the GT program is available to parents and community members. Information regarding the program will be available through the district websites, campus awareness sessions, district and campus newsletters, KISD Annual Showcase, student presentations, and social media. Sharing this information widely creates an opportunity to cultivate an understanding of and support for the GT program.

### **GT Report Card (K-5)**

Campus GT Coordinators will complete the GT Report Card for each student enrolled in the program. Report cards will be sent home every grading period with district report cards.

## **SERVICE DESIGN**

### ***KINDERGARTEN***

Identified students remain in assigned classes and are served by the GT-trained kindergarten teacher. The campus GT teacher will push in to the classroom. Students will participate in Challenge Lab as described below.

### ***GRADES 1-5***

Identified students will be serviced through cluster grouping and pullout.

#### ***Cluster Grouping***

Cluster grouping will provide services for GT students in the general education setting. Identified gifted students are grouped in a classroom with teachers who have 30 hours of professional development in GT education and have maintained their 6-hour update. Clustered students will be served in the 4 core areas using GT aligned materials/strategies. The GT student in a regular class will work both individually and in a group with other gifted students. Teachers work with the students to ensure accelerated instruction, advanced learning opportunities, and student progress monitoring.

### *Pullout Program*

The campus GT coordinator provides students specialized instruction through the pullout program. Identified GT students meet with the GT teacher in grade-level study groups for at least 240 minutes every 2 weeks. These classes provide learning opportunities in intellectual, creative/artistic, leadership, and multi-disciplinary fields. The campus GT teacher is responsible for utilizing the GT Curriculum provided by the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) to support students in creating products students will present in the Annual Showcase and monitoring participating students' academic growth.

### *Twice Exceptionality*

The term "twice-exceptional" is used to describe gifted children who demonstrate characteristics of gifted students with the potential for high achievement and also show evidence of one or more disabilities as defined by federal or state eligibility criteria. Twice exceptional students who are in our special education, dyslexia, and dysgraphia programs may receive pull out services to target specific learning disabilities in addition to gifted and talented services.

### *Services for Twice Exceptional Students*

When pull out services for twice exceptional students overlap, conflict, or interfere with student progress due to missed Tier 1 instruction, pull out services that target foundational skills needed for long term success (e.g. dyslexia, dysgraphia, speech therapy) will be prioritized for a period of time as recommended by the program-specific guidelines. Parents of twice exceptional students will be offered an opportunity for their student to receive differentiated support from a GT certified teacher within the classroom and/or reduced minutes for gifted and talented pull out services while students are being served in more than one program.

### *Showcase*

Students will have the opportunity to present advanced level products at an annual district showcase each spring. Community members and stakeholders are invited to attend the showcase.

### *Classwork and Projects*

Students are expected to turn in classwork and projects on time unless they have made special arrangements with the teacher in advance. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to turn in missed assignments according to the district grading policy. Students who are failing classwork, have excessive absences, or are unable to meet minimum requirements in their cluster group classroom will be recommended for furlough/leave of absence.

### *Missed Class Assignments*

Students are responsible for mastering the concepts covered in their core content classes. However, they are not responsible for any assignments missed while pulled out for GT instruction. Students will not be penalized nor will they be required to make up missed assignments.

### **GRADES 6-12**

#### *GT Course Offerings*

GT students at secondary campuses are served through advanced course options, including AP and Honors courses as well as courses offered by institutions of higher education through CTE and concurrent enrollment. Students may also earn advanced credit through Independent Study and acceleration through Credit by Exam. GT students must be enrolled in at least one GT-coded course section each semester. This will be verified by the campus GT coordinator.

If a student chooses not to enroll in a GT course offering, the student may apply for a leave of absence for one semester. A leave of absence may be granted for a variety of extenuating circumstances, including unique family conditions, illness, emotional challenges, or anything that would inhibit a student's performance while receiving GT services. A leave of absence must be approved by the school counselor, GT campus coordinator, and campus administrator. The student's parent or guardian must also be notified. Once a leave of absence has been granted, the counselor shall complete the form and place it inside the student file.

After returning from a leave of absence, the student must enroll in at least one GT-coded course or be placed on furlough for one semester. In the case of a furlough, the school counselor will complete the furlough form and place it inside the student file. The student will be coded in PEIMS as furloughed for GT services. The student's parent or guardian must also be notified. Once the furlough term expires, the student will either 1) enroll in one GT course offering to remain in the program, or 2) complete the furlough process and exit the GT program. In the case of program exit, an exit letter will be sent home to notify parents. Students who exit the GT program may not reenter without a full screening and reevaluation.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## *Required Professional Development*

All K-12 teachers working with identified GT students as part of Kennedale ISD's GT program are required to have 30 hours of gifted and talented staff development, along with an annual 6-hour update. Texas law requires that educators providing services to gifted/talented students have the following qualifications as stated in the [Texas Administrative Code §89.2](#):

*School districts shall ensure that:*

- (1) prior to assignment in the program, teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted students have a minimum of 30 hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students;*
- (2) teachers without training required in paragraph (1) of this section who provide instruction and services that are part of the gifted/talented program must complete the 30-hour training requirement within one semester;*
- (3) teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted students receive a minimum of six hours annually of professional development in gifted education; and*
- (4) administrators and counselors who have authority for program decisions have a minimum of six hours of professional development that includes Nature and Needs of Gifted/Talented Students and program options.*

Campus administrators, counselors, and K-5 teachers working with identified GT students outside of KISD's program of GT services must obtain 6 hours of professional development in the nature and needs of GT students.

## *KISD Professional Development*

Teachers may earn the required GT hours through ESC 11 Gifted and Talented/Advanced Academics designed training. In addition, with pre-approval by the district Instructional Programs Coordinator, teachers may earn GT hours from external vendors. All K-12 teachers who are working with identified GT students as part of KISD's program of services must obtain 6 hours annually of Gifted & Talented professional development. Secondary teachers may use AP Summer Institute (APSI) to obtain Gifted & Talented hours, but must have the Nature & Needs credit and Identification & Assessment credit as part of their 30-hours.

Information regarding GT training requirements and offerings is provided on the district professional learning website or through inquiry with the campus or district GT coordinator.