

Santa Fe ISD

Gifted and Talented

Parent/Student Handbook



EDUCATION OF GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS

[District Philosophy](#)

We believe that GT students are a special population with differing academic and affective needs. We believe that the needs of GT students are best met through the

collaborative efforts of students, community members, parents, and appropriately trained educators. We believe that GT students should be provided a differentiated curriculum, which will be accelerated, challenging, and relevant. We believe that GT students have the potential to become our future leaders and contribute to the success of our society.

State Definition of Gifted/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 and who

- 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](#))

Program

Students identified as gifted in SFISD will:

- develop and use critical and creative thinking skills to produce a variety of advanced level products.
- will conduct advanced levels of research, communicating the results in appropriate modes of expression.
- develop a variety of problem solving skills resulting in creative, appropriate solutions.
- develop their potential through enrichment and acceleration.
- acquire learning skills needed to become self-directed lifelong learners.
- develop healthy self-concepts and skills of interaction, including skills of leadership.

Program Services

Students identified as gifted in SFISD will be provided services as follows:

Elementary

- Students will be clustered in classrooms with teachers that have the required 30-hour GT training.
- Students will be provided enrichment services in class in small group instruction.

Secondary

- Students will be in classrooms with teachers that have the required 30-hour GT training.
- Students will have the opportunity to participate in Advanced classes at the Junior High level.
- Students will have the opportunity to participate in Pre-AP/AP classes at the High School level.

Student Assessment and Identification

Referrals

Students may be referred for the Gifted & Talented program at any time by parents, teachers, students, counselors, principals, or any adult familiar with a student's abilities. Assessment opportunities are available to students at least once per school year for elementary students and once a semester at the secondary level (2.15.1)

Written parent consent will be obtained before any assessment is conducted.

Assessment

Data will be collected through both objective and subjective assessments to determine individual eligibility for the program. Assessment tools may include but not be limited to the following: rating scales completed by both teachers and parents; non-verbal abilities test; creative abilities test; and aptitude and achievement tests.

All Kindergarten students will be screened in the Fall semester and if warranted, qualifying students will be assessed in the Spring semester. Students may also be referred for a full assessment by parents, teachers, or anyone with knowledge of the student at any time during the school year. Kindergarten students shall be identified for services by March 1 of each school year.

Selection Committee

Student data from qualitative and quantitative screening is plotted on the GT Identification Matrix. This data will be presented to the district selection committee.

A selection committee shall evaluate each referred student's data according to the established criteria and shall select those students for whom gifted program placement

is the most appropriate educational setting. The selection committee is formed of members who have completed training as required by 19 TAC §89.2.

Note: Grades are not used in the GT screening process. While grades may be indicative of above-average ability, there are many ways to obtain good grades without having unusual ability.

Notification

Parents/guardians shall be notified in writing upon completion of the assessments. If students qualify for the gifted and talented program, written parental permission shall be obtained before placement in services. Participation in the gifted and talented program is voluntary and parents/guardians may decline services.

Appeals

Parents or students may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or removal from the gifted program. Appeals shall be made first to the selection committee. The appellant must submit a letter of appeal to the selection committee. The decision of the committee will be presented to the parents by the principal.

Transfers

Students documented as gifted in an academic program that transfer from a previous school district will be placed in the program on a temporary basis. Transfer students (from outside this district) will be properly assessed and appropriately placed following notification of enrollment in the district.

Furloughs

Students who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the gifted and talented program due to extenuating circumstances, may be placed on furlough by the selection committee. The purpose of such a furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the selection committee. A furlough may also be granted at the request of the student and/or parent. Furloughs apply only to the current school year.

Exits

Students may be exited from the gifted and talented program when the selection committee determines that it would be in the best interest of the student to discontinue the student's participation in the program. Exiting of services will be based on multiple criteria, including performance in response to services. Exiting of services is finalized by committee decision after consultation with parents and the student. Once exited from the program a student must requalify to enter the program again.

Professional Learning

1. Teachers who provide instruction and services to gifted/talented students are required to have a minimum of 30 hours of professional learning that includes nature & needs of gifted/talented students, identification of gifted/talented students, and curriculum and instruction for gifted/talented students.
2. Teachers without the training are required to complete the 30 hours within one semester.
3. Teachers who provide instruction and services to gifted/talented students receive a minimum of six hours annually of professional learning. The timeline for the yearly 6-hour update training will be the first day after the last day of instruction to the last day of the school year.

4. Administrators and counselors who have supervisory duties for program decisions are required to have a minimum of six hours of professional learning that includes nature & needs of gifted/talented students and service options.
5. Annually, each new teacher to the district receives an orientation to the district's gifted/talented identification process, as well as the district's services for gifted/talented students.

GIFTED/TALENTED WEBSITES

Texas Education Agency www.tea.state.tx.us

Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented www.txgifted.org

National Association for Gifted Children www.nagc.org

American Mensa www.us.mensa.org

The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
<https://nrcgt.uconn.edu/#>

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children
www.world-gifted.org

National Society for the Gifted and Talented www.nsgt.org

Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted www.sengifted.org

Gifted and Talented www.giftedandtalented.com

CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED STUDENTS

- + Unusual alertness as early as infancy
- + Rapid learner; able to put thought together quickly
- + Retains much information; very good memory
- + Unusually large vocabulary and complex sentence structure for age
- + Advanced comprehension of word nuances, metaphors, and abstract ideas
- + Enjoys solving problems that involve numbers and puzzles
- + Largely self-taught reading and writing skills as a preschooler
- + Unusual emotional depth; intense feelings and reactions; highly sensitive
- + Thinking is abstract, complex, logical, and insightful
- + Idealism and sense of justice appear at an early age
- + Concern with social and political issues and injustices
- + Longer attention span, persistence, and intense concentration
- + Preoccupied with own thoughts; daydreaming
- + Impatient with self or others' inabilities or slowness
- + Ability to learn basic skills more quickly and with less practice
- + Asks probing questions; goes beyond what is being taught
- + Wide range of interests (though sometimes extreme interest in only one area)
- + Highly developed curiosity; limitless questions
- + Interest in experimenting and doing things differently
- + Tendency to put ideas or things together in ways that are unusual or not obvious (divergent thinking)
- + Keen and sometimes unusual sense of humor, particularly with puns
- + Desire to organize things and people through complex games or other schemas
- + Imaginary playmates (preschool age children); vivid imagination

A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children, by James T. Webb, Janet L. Gore, Edward R. Amend, Arlene R. Devries. ©2007
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- + The above characteristics are stereotypical and all characteristics do not apply to all students.