



Parent Handbook

# Gifted and Talented



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This manual is aligned with the Gifted/Talented (G/T) Policies and Services, as per the state's guidelines, New Braunfels ISD's vision, and the services' mission and goals for identified Gifted/Talented students.

The purpose of the policies and procedures outlined in this manual is to:

- Provide comprehensive information about NBISD's Gifted/Talented Services.
- Uphold a student-centered approach to services.
- Establish and maintain continuity in the delivery of services.
- Ensure internal consistency across all aspects.
- Demonstrate NBISD's adherence to the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.
- Establish a framework for accountability and continuous service improvement.



### District Contacts

Staff	Location	Contact Information
Veronica Arneson Advanced Academics and Gifted/Talented Specialist	District Office	Phone: 830-643-5765 <a href="mailto:VeronicaArneson@nbisd.org">VeronicaArneson@nbisd.org</a>
Stephanie Green G/T Teacher	Klein Road Elementary Walnut Springs Elementary	<a href="mailto:sgreen@nbisd.org">sgreen@nbisd.org</a>
Heather Mayer G/T Teacher	Seele Elementary Veramendi Elementary	<a href="mailto:hmayer@nbisd.org">hmayer@nbisd.org</a>
Emma Luckemeyer G/T Teacher	Carl Schurz Elementary County Line Elementary Lamar Elementary	<a href="mailto:eluckemeyer@nbisd.org">eluckemeyer@nbisd.org</a>
Stephanie Wommack G/T Teacher	Memorial Elementary Voss Farm Elementary	<a href="mailto:swommack@nbisd.org">swommack@nbisd.org</a>
Amanda Alden Secondary G/T Facilitator	New Braunfels Middle School	<a href="mailto:aalden@nbisd.org">aalden@nbisd.org</a>
Amanda Hunt Secondary G/T Facilitator	Oak Run Middle School	<a href="mailto:ahunt@nbisd.org">ahunt@nbisd.org</a>
Kerry Morris AP, Dual Credit, OnRamps, College Prep Courses	New Braunfels High School	<a href="mailto:kerrymorris@nbisd.org">kerrymorris@nbisd.org</a>



### **State of Texas Definition of Giftedness**

According to Texas Education Code §29.121, 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:

1. Exhibits high-performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area;
2. Possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or
3. Excels in a specific academic field.

### **State Goal for Services for Gifted Students**

Students who participate in services designed for Gifted and 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 and Talented students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services (Texas Education Agency, 2009, p. v)



## Traits of High-Achieving, Gifted, and Creative Learners

A High Achiever...	A Gifted Learner...	A Creative Learner...
Remembers the answers.	Poses unforeseen questions.	Sees exceptions.
Is interested.	Is curious.	Wonders.
Is attentive.	Is selectively mentally engaged.	Daydreams; may seem off task.
Generates advanced ideas.	Generates complex, abstract ideas.	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed.
Works hard to achieve.	Knows without working hard.	Plays with ideas and concepts.
Answer the questions in detail.	Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives.	Injects new possibilities.
Performs at the top of the group.	Is beyond the group.	Is in own group.
Responds with interest and opinions.	Exhibits feelings and opinions from multiple perspectives	Shares bizarre, sometimes conflicting opinions.
Learns with ease.	Already knows.	Questions: What if...
Needs 6 to 8 repetitions to master.	Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master.	Questions the need for mastery.
Comprehends at a high level.	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas.	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas.
Enjoys the company of age peers.	Prefers the company of intellectual peers.	Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone.
Understands complex, abstract humor.	Creates complex, abstract humor.	Relishes wild, off-the-wall humor.
Grasps the meaning.	Infers and connects concepts.	Makes mental leaps: Aha!
Completes assignments on time.	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments.	Initiates more projects than will ever be completed.
Is receptive.	Is intense.	Is independent and unconventional.
Is accurate and complete.	Is original and continually developing.	Is original and continually developing.
Enjoys school often.	Enjoys self-directed learning.	Enjoys creating.
Absorbs information.	Manipulates information.	Improvises.
Is a technician with expertise in a field.	Is an expert who abstracts beyond the field.	Is an inventor and idea generator.
Memorizes well.	Guesses and infers well.	Creates and brainstorms well.
Is highly alert and observant.	Anticipates and relates observations.	Is intuitive.
Is pleased with own learning.	Is self-critical.	Is never finished with possibilities.
Gets 'A's.	May not be motivated by grades.	May not be motivated by grades.
Is able.	Is intellectual.	Is idiosyncratic.



## Mission

Engage. Empower. Learn.

## Vision

Every Student. Every Day.

### Core Beliefs

Rooted in history, building a legacy, and growing toward the future.

Beliefs	Behaviors	Outcome
Passion for Growth	Embrace challenges Adapt and adjust Get better every day	Be the Best Version of You
Power of the Team	Invest time to listen, care, and connect Make each other better Think we not me	Stronger Together
Pride of New Braunfels	Everyone matters High expectations Act with purpose	Ready for Tomorrow

### Goals for Gifted/Talented Student Services

1. Gifted/Talented students will master specific disciplines' required concepts, skills, and processes through enrichment or advanced-level content with depth and complexity.
2. Gifted/Talented students will develop advanced abilities and complex thinking skills, including problem-solving, critical, creative, and productive thinking, through a meaningful curriculum that is differentiated from the regular curriculum.
3. Gifted/Talented students will develop the skills necessary for self-directed learning, conduct independent studies and research projects, and extend the regular curriculum to create advanced-level products.
4. Gifted/Talented students will gain an understanding and respect for each person's abilities, recognizing the similarities and differences between themselves and others, being both an advocate and supporter of both their ideas and the ideas of others.



### Timeline for Kindergarten to 11th Grade

August - September	<p>Transfer G/T students from any public/charter school district will submit documentation of G/T qualifications for consideration for G/T placement in NBISD.</p> <p>G/T District Selection Committee meets to review all G/T transfer student records to determine next steps.</p> <p>G/T services begin for secondary G/T students.</p>
September	G/T services begin for elementary G/T students.
November	The <a href="#">referral</a> window opens for kinder students.
December - January	Kinder data collected.
January	<p>The <a href="#">referral</a> window opens for 1st-11th grade students.</p> <p>2nd Grade will take a universal screener</p>
February	<p>Kinder recommendations completed; letters sent home.</p> <p>All formal Kinder student reconsiderations completed.</p>
March	Classroom G/T services begin for qualifying kinder students.
February - April	1st-11th grade data collected.
April - May	<p>1st-11th grade recommendations completed; letters sent home.</p> <p>District Evaluation of Services sent to parents, teachers, and students</p> <p>All formal reconsiderations completed</p>
August - September of next year	Services for students 1st-11th grade begin services





Students must be enrolled in a New Braunfels Independent School District school at the time of referral in order to be evaluated and considered for Gifted/Talented services. Referrals for Gifted/Talented services for grades Kinder-11 may be made by teachers, counselors, parents, self, and/or peers. Referrals are accepted during specific times of the school year. (Please refer to the [district master calendar](#) for dates.)

### **Assessments and Identification**

To ensure equity in the identification process for all learners, we adhere to the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.

Students may be evaluated for Gifted/Talented services each school year. Data will be collected as needed for screening students for identification for Gifted/Talented services. The district uses multiple assessments for identification which include both quantitative and qualitative measures such as

- A. General ability measures
- B. Achievement measures
- C. Shared experiences
- D. Inventory of gifted characteristics

Assessment data (identified only by student ID number) is reviewed, and the Gifted/Talented District Selection Committee will recommend an appropriate educational placement for each student. Written notification will be provided to parents of students who qualify for services. Kindergarten students qualifying for services will begin services on March 1st with written parent permission. All other students will begin services the following school year.

### **Transfers**

When a student identified as Gifted/Talented by a previous school district enrolls in NBISD, the Gifted/Talented Selection Committee shall review the student's records and conduct assessment procedures when necessary to determine if the student qualifies for NBISD Gifted/Talented services.

A student who transfers from one NBISD campus to another NBISD campus shall continue to receive services in the Gifted/Talented program.



## Formal Reconsideration/Appeal Process

A formal reconsideration of a qualification decision may be filed by the parent, teacher, or student ([Level One FNG Local](#)) per the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students and NBISD district policy for any decision made by the G/T District Selection Committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted and talented program.

The person initiating the appeal will

- 1) Meet with a professional staff member to review and discuss the student's qualification form.
- 2) Complete the Gifted/Talented [Request for Formal Reconsideration Form](#).
- 3) Include with this form any evidence that demonstrates Gifted/Talented qualities.
- 4) Return the form and supporting evidence to the school G/T teacher or counselor **within fifteen (15) days** of receiving the letter of non-qualification.

The G/T District Selection Committee will convene, and, **within ten (10) working days**, review any reconsideration request that has been filed. The decision of the committee will be communicated in writing to the parent. Appeals filed **after May 1** will be considered before the end of June. The person initiating the appeal may choose to appear before the committee, with supporting materials, or simply submit the completed [Gifted/Talented Request for Formal Reconsideration](#) and required evidence.

Should the person requesting reconsideration disagree with the G/T District Selection Committee's decision, a written request for review should be forwarded to the Superintendent or designee ([Level Two FNG Local](#)) **within ten (10) working days** following the communication of the committee's decision. The Superintendent or designee will appoint a hearing officer.

## **Furloughs**

The purpose of a *furlough* is to provide the student an opportunity to take a leave of absence from Gifted/Talented Services. A student may be furloughed from Gifted/Talented Services when it is determined by the G/T District Selection Committee that it is in the best interest of the student. This constitutes a **temporary** discontinuation of services. This may occur due to a student's health, personal/family crisis, or other circumstances that temporarily impede learning.

A furlough can be initiated by the District, a parent(s), a classroom or G/T teacher(s), or the student. The G/T District Selection Committee will make a recommendation based on the data received.



## Exits

If a student is experiencing difficulty with Gifted/Talented Service participation,

- 1) The teacher or parent(s) will communicate the concerns immediately. The G/T District Selection Committee submits and reviews all concerns and reports.
- 2) If the difficulty continues, a conference is held with the student, his/her parent(s), the classroom teacher, the counselor/assistant principal and/or principal, and other staff as appropriate.
  - a) The school personnel, student, and parent(s) work together to develop a written “growth plan” to ensure that the optimum situation is created for the student to improve.
    - i) The plan specifies expectations/goals, those responsible for helping, and target dates for reevaluating student progress.
      - (1) If the student has shown improvement but has not fully achieved expectations, another “growth plan” is completed with a new timeline.
      - (2) If the student fails to make a reasonable amount of progress toward the goals and objectives in the plan, the G/T District Selection Committee may consider “exiting” the student from Gifted/Talented Services.
      - (3) If exiting from services is recommended, the campus will notify the parent(s) who may request a conference and reevaluation of the student’s progress by the G/T District Selection Committee through the Level I Formal Reconsideration process. Students removed from services will be ineligible for **one year** and must be re-screened and identified before receiving services again.



<b>K-2</b>
<p>District curriculum with G/T differentiation within the classroom *</p> <p>Appropriate grouping with G/T trained teacher (33% of the classroom and no fewer than 4 students when 33% is not possible, per TEA)</p>
<b>3-5</b>
<p>District curriculum with G/T differentiation within the classroom *</p> <p>Appropriate grouping with G/T trained teacher (33% of the classroom and no fewer than 4 students when 33% is not possible, per TEA)</p> <p>Pull-out (min of 1 hour): Focusing on social-emotional aspects of the gifted, leadership, critical thinking, and professional products.</p>
<b>6-8</b>
<p>District curriculum with G/T differentiation within the classroom *</p> <p>Appropriate grouping with G/T trained teacher (33% of the classroom and no fewer than 4 students when 33% is not possible, per TEA)</p> <p>G/T grouped advisory: Focusing on social-emotional aspects of the gifted, leadership, critical thinking, and professional products.</p>
<b>9-12</b>
<p>Differentiation within advanced courses **</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Advanced Courses in Biology and English I</li> <li>● Pre-AP</li> <li>● AP</li> <li>● OnRamps</li> <li>● Dual Credit</li> <li>● Gifted/Talented Independent Research and Mentoring class</li> </ul> <p>Appropriate grouping with G/T trained teacher (33% of the classroom and no fewer than 4 students when 33% is not possible, per TEA)</p>

\*All G/T students are taught by teachers who have completed the required 30-clock hours of professional development in Gifted Education and an annual six-hour update thereafter.

\*\* All G/T students are taught by teachers (core) who have completed the required 30-hour gifted/talented professional development and thereafter, an annual six-hour update or have completed the required 12 hours of gifted/talented professional development combined with an AP or PreAP Institute training.



### **Acceleration**

Regardless of whether a student is identified for gifted services or not, there are opportunities for a student to accelerate. Students may receive credit for a course they have not yet taken, or students may skip a grade by demonstrating mastery of the grade. For more information, please refer to the [Credit by Examination Form](#).

### **Community Awareness**

NBISD will ensure that information about the district's Gifted/Talented program is available to parents and the community, so they have the opportunity to understand and support the program.

### **Program Evaluation**

Evaluation of services is a vital component of the Gifted/Talented model. Ongoing monitoring and improvement decisions will be based on annual evaluation results and research-based practices. The information received from evaluations will be shared with the Board, administrators, teachers, school counselors, students, and the community.

### **Resources**

#### **National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)**

[www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

NAGC empowers all who support children with advanced abilities in accessing equitable opportunities that develop their gifts and talents. We do this through advocacy, outreach, education, and research.

#### **Texas Association of Gifted and Talented (TAGT)**

[www.txgifted.org](http://www.txgifted.org)

The Texas Association for the Gifted & Talented connects and empowers educators and parents to meet the unique needs of gifted and talented individuals through awareness, advocacy, and action.

#### **Equity in Gifted/Talented Education**

<https://www.gtequity.org/>

Encouraging equitable representation of student populations in Gifted/Talented (G/T) programs throughout the state by providing tools and resources that inform and support families and educators.



**World Council for the Gifted and Talented Children, Inc.**

<https://world-gifted.org/>

The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, Inc. (WCGTC®) is a worldwide nonprofit organization that provides advocacy and support for gifted children.

**Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted**

[www.SENGGifted.org](http://www.SENGGifted.org)

SENG's mission is about empowering families and communities in reaching goals. SENNG focuses on the social and emotional needs of gifted individuals.

**Texas Gifted Education Family Network**

[www.giftededucationfamilynetwork.org](http://www.giftededucationfamilynetwork.org)

The Gifted Education Family Network of Texas supports excellence and equity in gifted education.

**American Association for Gifted Children at Duke University**

<https://aagc.ssri.duke.edu/>

Their mission is "to foster a better understanding of the needs and capabilities of gifted children, to encourage research in the field of education and nurturing of gifted children, and to accomplish and encourage other initiatives relating to the development of gifted children."