

Palacios Independent School District

2024-25



Procedures for Academically Gifted & Talented Students

Revised 9/20/2024

Nondiscrimination

Palacios ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, economic status, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Palacios ISD Gifted and Talented Contacts

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Program Overview

The Gifted and Talented Program for Palacios ISD is for academically and intellectually gifted students in grades K-12. Students that are enrolled in grades K-2 receive services for Gifted and Talented through a Talent Pool setting. Students in grades 3-12 receive services either through differentiated instruction, a pull-out program or through the advanced courses, advanced placement, or dual credit college courses.

A continuum of learning experiences are provided which leads to the development of advanced-level products and/or performances such as the Texas Performance Standards Projects. The opportunities the program provides are commensurate with the abilities of the gifted and talented students and emphasize content in the four (4) core academic areas.

The State Definition of Giftedness

A gifted and 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:

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/Talented Students

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.

Fidelity of Services

Palacios ISD has policies and procedures in place to comply with gifted/talented accountability standards and monitor for the effectiveness of assessment and services for GT students. Funding is allocated to support the GT program and the program guide is updated periodically.

Student Assessment

Informational Sessions

Yearly, PISD provides an informational session for parents before the referral period opens to learn about the GT program provided in Palacios ISD and how to complete the referral paperwork.

Identification and Placement

Students in grades 3-12 may be referred by teachers, parents, or guardians in the fall of each year. For a student to be identified and placed in GT services within the same school year the following deadlines must be met. If a referral is received after the indicated deadline, testing and services may not start until the following school year. See chart below for deadlines

Palacios ISD Identification Timeline:

	Kindergarten-1st	2nd going into 3rd	Grades 3 - 12
Referral procedures published	October	January	September
Referrals accepted from parents, teachers, community members, others		January-February	September-October
Assessments conducted after written parental permission obtained	Talent Pool selections following beginning of year assessment	February-April	September-November
Gifted/Talented committee meets to review student profiles		May	December
Written parental		May	December

permission for services obtained for identified students			
Services begin for identified students		Fall of following School Year	January

*Students new to *Palacios ISD* and who have not been identified in a previous school district will be considered in the fall on a case-by-case basis.

**Referrals will be accepted throughout the school year following the publication of referral procedures. However, referrals for students received after the indicated deadline may not start their GT placement in the same school year.

Testing consists of both qualitative and quantitative data to be used for qualifying a student for GT services. Once testing is complete, all student data is compiled on a student profile sheet where multiple criteria is included such as the tests noted below:

- NNAT-3 - Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test
- CogAT - Cognitive Abilities Test
- SIGS - Scales for Identifying Gifted Students
- Logramos - Cognitive Abilities Test for EB's (in place of CogAT)
- IOWA - IOWA Assessment for GT (Junior High assessment only)

Students scoring at or above the district level on their quantitative assessment (NNAT or CoGAT/Lagramos) in grades 3-12 may qualify for the program. A GT committee composed of principals, counselors, GT teachers, and classroom teachers who have received training in the Nature and Needs of Gifted students reviews the testing information and selects those who qualify for placement in the program. Parents or guardians are notified in writing upon selection of the student for the program and written permission is obtained before a student is placed in the gifted and talented program.

Students in grades Kindergarten-2nd are administered a screener at the beginning of each academic school year. Students who score in the top 10% of their grade level will be pulled for the "Talent Pool" by the GT teacher for that academic school year only. This does not mean that students qualify for the actual Gifted and Talented program. Official testing for the program is in the Spring of 2nd grade. Those who qualify based on the guidelines, will begin receiving GT services in fall of 3rd grade. Students who are identified for the GT program continue in the program each year without retesting.

Appeals Process

Parents may appeal the decision of the GT committee within 10 days in writing to the Assistant Superintendent. A review of the data will be conducted at that time and a meeting held.

Transfer Students

Students who transfer to Palacios ISD from another GT program are admitted to the program when proof of testing and qualification is obtained from the previous school district and the GT committee has reviewed that information to determine if placement in the program is appropriate.

Student Progress/Performance

Palacios ISD GT students will receive a progress report every grading cycle providing information on student performance and accomplishment of skills.

Furlough Policy

A furlough is a temporary “leave of absence” from the Gifted/Talented Program designed to meet the individual needs of an identified student. A student, parent/guardian, teacher, counselor, or administrator may request a furlough from the program for a period of one semester. Reasons for a furlough could include, but are not limited to, the following reasons:

- Increased demand upon time caused by scheduling or extra-curricular activities
- Emotional or physical problems stemming from self, school, or home

Not keeping up with work in the regular classroom is not a reason for a furlough.

A furlough should not be used as a disciplinary tool and should be granted without adding undue pressure or prejudice to the student. Multiple criteria will be used to determine the furlough decision. The decision to furlough will be made by a committee composed of the student (when appropriate), parent(s)/guardian(s), and teacher(s), principal and/or counselor.

Re-Entry Policy

If the student is granted a furlough, the date of re-entry to the program must be stated. A furlough may be extended beyond the stated time if deemed appropriate by the GT committee, but never longer than a year. If the student elects to exit the program at the end of the furlough, Exit Policy procedures should be followed. Re-entry is then accomplished through the Identification Process.

Exit Policy

Petition for removal from the GT program may be initiated by the student, parent/guardian, GT teacher, regular classroom teacher, or principal. A parent conference must be held at the request to exit the program. At minimum the conference should be attended by Parent/guardian, GT Teacher, Campus Administrator, and teacher who made the recommendation for exit if applicable. Documentation to support the exit must be provided by the teacher if the exit is initiated by the teacher

Curriculum and Instruction

The Gifted and Talented Program ensures an array of appropriately challenging learning experiences which lead to the development of advanced-level products and/or performances such as those in the Texas Performance Standards Projects. These learning opportunities are comprehensive, structured, sequenced, and challenging. Flexible pacing is employed, allowing students to learn at the pace and level appropriate to each student's abilities and skills.

The GT program focuses on teaching creative and critical thinking skills, logic, and problem-solving, accomplished through a differentiated curriculum. Students are provided the opportunity to develop a level of competency consistent with their aptitudes and interests. Students in the GT program are provided with both cognitive and affective activities.

Cognitive Skills

Research

Affective Skills

Self-understanding

Critical Thinking Skills
Creativity
Communication
Reasoning
Intuition

Responsibility
Independence
Leadership Skills
Social Skills

At the elementary, intermediate, and junior high levels, students engage in self-directed learning through research, project presentations, and demonstrations. Projects are centered on open-ended tasks that show depth and complexity. They are designed to encourage higher-level thinking that provides opportunity for creative and unique ideas.

At the high school level, students engage in advanced courses, advanced placement courses, and dual credit courses which provide for the necessary rigor, depth and complexity needed for gifted students. In these classes instructors differentiate the curriculum for the gifted learners to encourage higher-level thinking and opportunities for the gifted students to be creative and unique. GT students must enroll in a minimum of one advanced course per semester, to remain in the GT program. GT students are encouraged to enroll in more advanced courses as their schedule and needs permits.

Student progress in the program is monitored and periodically assessed with this information being communicated to the parents or guardians through the use of a GT progress report.

Evaluation

The district evaluates the effectiveness of the GT program annually and uses the data to modify and update the program to best serve the needs of the students.

Communication

The district and/or campuses provide orientation and periodic updates for parents of students who are served in the GT program. They are informed of the array of learning opportunities provided to GT students in grades kindergarten through grade twelve.

Professional Learning & Development

Palacios ISD is committed to providing its staff with appropriate and meaningful

professional development which enables the staff to meet the unique and individual educational needs of all students including services for gifted/talented students. It is important that all staff who are responsible for formally servicing identified Gifted/Talented students obtain appropriate training for educating the gifted child. The district will require at least the minimum hours of training as mandated by the state:

Texas Administrative Code §89.2. Professional Development

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 Foundational Training that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students.
 - a. At the high school level AP teachers who have successfully completed Advanced Placement Summer Institute (APSI), and provided said documentation to their campus administrator, may count APSI as 18 hours toward the 30-hour requirement. If counting APSI hours, said teacher still must attend:
 - i. Nature and Needs of GT Students Training
 - ii. Assessment/Identification of GT Students Training
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
 - a. Summer AVID training will count toward the six-hour annual update for GT
 - b. APSI and On Ramps training will count toward the six-hour annual update for GT
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 option

Palacios ISD will encourage all teachers to attend the 30-hour GT training, have administrators attend the nature and needs training, and have counselors attend GT training as well. The members of the GT selection committee will be trained in GT services before serving on the committee. Counselors will focus on the social emotional learning needs of gifted students to provide support for these learners.

Family/Community Involvement

Palacios ISD will involve family and community members in services of the GT program throughout the year. In the fall the orientation meeting will educate parents on the GT testing process. In the spring a GT program evaluation will be conducted with stakeholders input. Projects and productions of GT students will be shared with the community at the GT Showcase yearly and recommendations from parents will be used to enhance the district GT program.