New to GT in Fort Bend ISD

PARENT GUIDE

MY STUDENT WAS IDENTIFIED FOR GT SERVICES.

NOW WHAT?

First, welcome to GT in Fort Bend ISD. We are pleased that you and your family are joining our community. This Parent Guide was created to serve as a starting point for new parents and students, created in partnership with current Fort Bend ISD GT parents. We asked these parents to share some of the questions they had when their child was first identified for GT services, and we compiled those questions (and their answers) in this guide. We encourage you to contact your campus representatives with questions, learn about parent groups, get involved with our family series events, and stay informed through our monthly newsletters and quarterly reports.

We look forward to working with you and your child.
- Fort Bend ISD Gifted and Talented Department

What does GT mean?

A "gifted and talented" student is a child or youth who performs at or has the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment 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

Who are my campus resources?

GT administrator: (find yours) Oversees the campus scheduling for GT courses and clusters.

GT counselor: (find yours) Coordinates master scheduling and parent inquiries regarding campus GT services and counseling.

Champion of Gifted Services (COGS): (find yours) A teacher who coordinates the implementation the Texas State Performance Standards Project, responds to parent inquiries regarding the Texas Performance Standards Project, and communicates with parents regarding the GT opportunities at campus and district levels via campus newsletters.

When do GT services start?

GT services begin in August of the school year following identification (e. g. Identified in 2020-2021 school year, services begin in the Fall of 2021-2022 school year). Kindergarteners are the lone exception; GT services begin in March of the Kindergarten year.

Does my child have to be retested every year?

Your student does not need to be retested yearly. Once identified, the GT identification remains with your child as long as he/she is enrolled in FBISD. If a GT student withdraws from the district and returns, the student must be retested for GT services upon return.

In which content areas are GT services provided?

Services are provided for students identified in the content areas of **Language Arts and Social Studies** and/or **Math and Science**. Your child's GT profile indicates the area(s) of identification. If your child is identified in one area and would like to be re-evaluated for services in the other area, he/she may be re-evaluated during the Spring Evaluation Referral Window. Parents need to submit an online referral and pay for this re-evaluation.

How will this GT designation change my student's school experience? Is it just more work?

GT students will explore topics at greater levels of depth and complexity while mastering their grade-level skills. Students identified for gifted services are served by a GT-trained
teacher and grouped together for their social and emotional development. GT teachers provide advanced projects and differentiated instruction, and they have a firm understanding that these services are meant to challenge students rather than to increase their workload.

Is participation optional?

Students who are identified for gifted services may choose to furlough for one school year. A furlough is a temporary "opt-out" for one school year. After a furlough, students must return to gifted services or exit the GT program.

How are teachers trained and prepared to teach GT learners, both academically and socially/emotionally?

The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students requires that any teacher who works with GT students receive 30 hours of training through specific gifted education courses that address all aspects of gifted learners. In addition, teachers must receive six hours of training yearly.

How is my child graded?

GT students' academic grades are reported on progress reports and student report cards, just as every student's progress is reported. Students receiving gifted services do not receive additional credit for being identified for gifted and talented services.

How is my child impacted if he/she participates in any other special program(s) (Special Education, 504, ESL, etc.)?

GT identification has no impact on special services your child may already be receiving.

What support is available to me as a GT parent?

There are several resources listed in our Supplemental Resources web page on the meaning of Gifted and Talented; local, state, and national support groups; and detailed information about GT programming in Fort Bend ISD. The Gifted and Talented Parent Advisory Committee is also a valuable resource for parents, as it consists of parent representatives from each campus in the district (see below for more details).

How do I get involved with the GT program in Fort Bend ISD?

Parents can get involved in the GT Program through the GT Parent Advisory Committee. This group of parent volunteers consists of a maximum of three parent representatives per campus who meet monthly with GT staff to receive updates and information regarding GT programming and communication. These parents serve as liaisons between the GT Department and the campuses. The Parent Advisory Committee also hosts an annual Parent Symposium that is hosted by parents - for parents. This is an opportunity for parents to share expertise and/or learn from other GT parents. You may learn more about the Parent Advisory Committee on their web page.

Gifted and Talented Website

@FBISDGT