

WHITNEY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Gifted and Talented Program Plan

2026-2027



Whitney Independent School District

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Whitney ISD does not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law.

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WHITNEY ISD MISSION

Whitney ISD's objective is to become student-centered in all classes where we will give every child every chance to become a champion every day.

WHITNEY ISD VISION

In Whitney ISD, our goal is to prepare our students to acquire the necessary skills to meet the challenges of the 21st century by making learning authentic, inspiring, engaging, innovative, and relevant.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Identification of gifted and talented students in Whitney ISD will begin in kindergarten and will be ongoing through grade 12, using multiple criteria to assess general intellectual ability. Students will participate in the gifted and talented program only with signed parent permission, and once identified for the program, will continue in the program through graduation without further re-identification at any grade level.

STATE DEFINITION OF A GT STUDENT

According to the state definition, 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. A "Gifted and Talented" student is likely to:

- Exhibit high performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area
- Possess an unusual capacity for leadership
- Excel in a specific academic field

STATE GOAL FOR SERVICES FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

Students who participate in services designed for gifted 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 students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services.

REFERRAL PROCEDURES

Students may be nominated/referred for the gifted and talented program at any time by teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons. Referral forms will be available in the counselor's office at each campus. Forms should be completed and returned to the campus counselor. Referrals will not be accepted if turned in after the due date which is noted on the referral form.

SCREENING

Any student not yet identified for GT services may be nominated at any time; however, the screening timeline outlined below will be followed.

Written parental/guardian consent will be obtained before any formal testing or individual assessment is conducted as part of the program screening.

- If the permission slip is returned and grants the permission for evaluation, WISD will begin the process with the following quantitative identification measure: Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). If further data is warranted, the

Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students 3 (SAGES 3) will then be administered. Likewise, WISD will use the following qualitative identification measures: Scales for Identifying Gifted Students 2 (SIGS - 2) and the Profile of Creative Abilities (PCA). Finally, other data that may be reviewed by WISD includes state assessment data, benchmark data, grades, and student portfolios.

DATA COLLECTION

The campus GT coordinator or another designee will be responsible for collecting nomination forms and gathering data. Assessment for the GT program will include measures collected from multiple sources for each area of giftedness served by Whitney ISD. Data and procedures used to identify students for the GT program will include both qualitative and quantitative measures and will assure that all populations have access to assessment and, if identified, services offered as part of the program.

EVALUATION

WISD will use the following quantitative identification measures:

- ❖ **Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)** The CogAT is a reasoning and problem-solving test commonly used for qualifying Kindergarten - 12th grade students for gifted and talented programs. The CogAT measures the level and pattern of cognitive development of a student compared to same age peers and same grade peers. These general reasoning abilities, which start developing at birth and continue through early adulthood, are influenced by experiences gained both in and out of school. In addition, the CogAT measures learned reasoning abilities in the three areas most linked to academic success in school. CogAT does NOT measure such factors as effort, attention, motivation, and work habits, which also contribute to school achievement.

CogAT measures three different cognitive abilities:

Verbal Battery

Measures flexibility, fluency, and adaptability in reasoning and verbal materials and in solving verbal problems. These reasoning abilities play an important role in reading comprehension, critical thinking, writing, and virtually all verbal learning tasks.

Quantitative Battery

Measures quantitative reasoning skills, flexibility and fluency in working with quantitative symbols and concepts, and the ability to organize, structure, and give meaning to an unordered set of numerals and mathematical symbols. These reasoning skills are significantly related to problem solving in mathematics and other disciplines.

Non-Verbal Battery

Measures reasoning using geometric shapes and figures. To perform successfully, students must invent strategies for solving novel problems. They must be flexible in using these strategies and accurate in implementing them.

- ❖ **Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students 3 (SAGES 3)** The Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students 3 (SAGES 3) assesses aptitude and achievement to identify gifted students. The Reasoning subtest measures aptitude; the Mathematics/Science and Language Arts/Social Studies subtests measure achievement. Test terms on the SAGES 3 require not only recall, but also understanding and application of ideas and concepts in the content areas.

WISD will use the following qualitative identification measures:

- ❖ **Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)** The SIGS is a norm-referenced rating scale designed to assist school districts in the identification of gifted students. The measure assesses seven areas: general intellectual ability, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, creativity, and leadership. Each area is assessed at home through a parent/guardian inventory and at school through a teacher inventory.
- ❖ **Profile of Creative Abilities (PCA)** The PCA is a measure of creative ability, designed specifically to

- Identify students gifted in the area of creative thinking
- Monitor progress in classes of creative thinking
- Serve as a research tool

Other data that may be reviewed by WISD include:

- ❖ State Assessment Data
- ❖ Benchmark Data
- ❖ Grades
- ❖ Student Portfolios

Gifted and Talented Screening Process

1. All screening will begin with the CogAT.
 - a. The CogAT is assessment includes a verbal section, a quantitative section, and a non-verbal section.
 - b. In order for a student to move to the next portion of the screening process, he/she must receive a Standard Age Score of 124 or higher on two of the three categories in CogAT.
2. The next step of screening includes the Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students (SAGES) 3, the Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students (SIGS) 2, and the Profile of Creative Abilities (PCA).
 - a. SAGES has four subtests: 1 (Nonverbal Reasoning), 2 (Language Arts/Social Studies), 3 (Verbal Reasoning), and 4 (Mathematics/Science). There are examiner record forms for scoring and reporting.
 - b. SIGS 2 has a home rating scale form, a school rating scale form, and a summary form. The home rating scale is sent to the parent/guardian to complete, and the school rating scale is sent to the teacher to complete. The summary form is used to record and score the home and school scales.
 - c. PCA has two student subsets (drawing and categories), a home rating scale for the parent/guardian to complete, and a school rating scale for the teacher to complete. There are student forms to record and score the subsets and rating scales.

REFERRAL AND TIMELINE

Kindergarten	
Screenings and assessments will be conducted after written parental permission is obtained.	The deadline to nominate is January 31st.
GT Committee meets to review screenings and assessments.	February
Notification letter will be mailed home.	February
Services begin for identified students.	March 1st

1st - 12th Grades	
Screenings and assessments will be conducted after written parental permission is obtained.	February - May
GT Committee meets to review screenings and assessments.	May
Notification letter will be mailed home.	May/June
Services begin for identified students.	First Day of the following School Year

SELECTION

Each campus will have their own GT Committee comprised of at least three professional educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students. After all evaluations are completed, the campus GT Coordinator will plot evaluation results on the identification profile and take it to the GT Committee. The committee will be responsible for reviewing the information and making determinations on identification.

General Norms on the SAGES and SIGS will be used rather than Gifted Norms.

Students whose primary language is not English, will be assessed in the language they understand or with nonverbal based tests.

If needed, the GT Committee may consider additional criteria to determine placement.

QUALIFYING MEASURES

- ❖ A recommended Standard Age Score of 124 or higher on two of the three categories on the CogAT.
- ❖ A recommended Quotient Score of 121 or higher on one out of three categories from the SAGES 2.
- ❖ A recommended score of 120 or higher on the SIGS Parent Inventory or the SIGS Teacher Inventory.

PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION

Parent/guardian will be notified in writing whether the student does meet GT criteria or does not meet GT criteria. The district will obtain written permission from parent/guardian before the identified student is served through the GT program.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

If an identified student from Whitney ISD transfers out of the district, WISD will send documentation of GT identification along with other records of the student to the receiving district.

When a student transfers into the district identified as GT, the campus GT coordinator will review the student's records. If the records indicate that a student was served through GT in the previous school, the committee will convene to determine if the student will be placed in the district's program.

EXITING THE PROGRAM

The District shall monitor student performance in the program. If at any time the selection committee determines it is in the best interest of the student and his or her educational needs, the committee may exit a student from the program. If a student or parent/guardian requests removal from the program, the selection committee shall meet with the parent/guardian and student before honoring the request.

FURLOUGH POLICY

The District may place on a furlough any student who is unable to maintain satisfactory performance or whose educational needs are not being met within the structure of the gifted and talented program. A furlough may be initiated by the district, the parent/guardian, or the student.

In accordance with administrative regulations, a furlough shall be granted for specified reasons and for a specified period of time. At the end of a furlough, the student may reenter the gifted program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.

APPEALS POLICY

A parent/guardian or student may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted program. Appeals shall be made first to the selection committee. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with FNG(LOCAL) beginning at Level Two.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

WISD will provide an array of learning opportunities for GT students in kindergarten through grade 12 and will provide instructional and organizational opportunities that enable identified students to work together as a group, to work with other students, and to work independently. WISD will also provide a continuum of learning experiences designed to develop and reinforce skills in logic and problem solving, research and communication, divergent thinking, and critical and creative thinking.

In Whitney ISD, identified elementary and intermediate school students will be placed in cluster groups within classrooms and are

provided with differentiated instruction from qualified teachers who participate in continuous improvement focused on meeting the needs of gifted students. Additionally, students identified for program services will meet regularly with a pull-out teacher extensively trained in the nature, needs, and social and emotional development of gifted students. The pull-out teacher will use the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) and the G/T Teacher Toolkits provided by the Texas Education Agency as resources for providing differentiated instruction and enhanced academic opportunities for GT students.

At Whitney Middle School, students will be provided with differentiated instruction from qualified teachers who participate in continuous improvement focused on meeting the needs of gifted students. In addition, students will meet with a pull-out teacher extensively trained in the nature, needs, and social and emotional development of gifted students. The pull-out teacher will use the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) as a resource for providing differentiated instruction and enhanced academic opportunities for GT students.

Ninth through twelfth graders will be provided with differentiated instruction from qualified teachers who participate in continuous improvement focused on meeting the needs of gifted students. In addition, students will meet with a pull-out teacher extensively trained in the nature, needs, and social and emotional development of gifted students. The pull-out teacher will use the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) as a resource for providing differentiated instruction and enhanced academic opportunities for GT students.

High School students will also be given the opportunity to take advantage of dual credit classes.

Once qualified, services will be available during school days for the entire school year. Every campus may also provide multiple opportunities for students to participate in a variety of activities like: UIL Academic activities, Science Clubs, History Clubs, Math Clubs, field trips, and afterschool enrichment. Parents will be informed of the educational options available to identified students.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers who provide instruction and services as part of the GT Program will complete the 30 hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of GT students, assessment of student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students. In addition, teachers will complete the 6-hour update training each year. Likewise, the district will continue to provide opportunities for both GT teachers and regular education teachers to attend workshops, seminars, and conferences to enhance their ability to serve identified students.

Administrators and counselors who have authority for program decisions will also have a minimum of six hours of professional development that includes nature and needs and program options for GT students.

FAMILY COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Information about the Whitney ISD GT Program will be available to parents and community members to encourage the opportunity to develop an understanding of and support for the program. Families will be advised of written policies on identification procedures and learning opportunities through student handbooks, district policy, newsletters, meetings, website, or other appropriate methods.

The district will encourage community and family participation in services designed for GT students. Likewise, products and achievements of gifted students will be shared with the community through presentations, newspaper articles, newsletter articles, public displays, and other appropriate measures.