

Gifted & Talented

Districtwide Family Newsletter



2026-2027 School Year - Volume 1, Issue 2

From the Houston ISD G/T Department

We're excited to continue connecting with our G/T families with important information, resources, and opportunities that support our gifted learners across the district.

This month, we're highlighting how gifted learning comes to life through G/T Capstone Products and Campus & District G/T Expos, while also sharing strategies families can use to support gifted learners' growth mindset and executive function skills.

Throughout the school year, G/T students engage in learning experiences that challenge them to think critically, explore their interests, conduct research, solve complex problems, and create advanced-level products. In this edition, families can learn more about the G/T Capstone process and how students will have an opportunity to showcase a project or Capstone Product at their Campus G/T Expo. We'll also share how top campus projects can advance to the Houston ISD District G/T Expo, where students from across the district will come together to celebrate gifted learning and achievement.

Because supporting gifted learners extends beyond academics, this issue also introduces our SEL Spotlight, a dedicated feature you'll find in each G/T Family Newsletter. Each spotlight will explore a social-emotional learning topic connected to the unique needs of gifted learners and provide families with practical strategies for support.

We hope this edition helps our G/T families stay informed, connected, and engaged while providing a clearer picture of the learning experiences and opportunities available to gifted students across Houston ISD.

SEL Spotlight: Growth Mindset & Executive Function

Each month, our **SEL Spotlight** will highlight a different social-emotional learning (SEL) topic to help families better understand and support the unique needs of gifted learners.

This month's focus is **Growth Mindset & Executive Function**.

Did You Know?

Gifted learners thrive when they develop not only strong thinking skills, but also the skills and habits needed to manage challenges, organize their learning, and persevere when things do not come easily.

A growth mindset is the belief that abilities and skills can develop through effort, practice, effective strategies, and learning from mistakes. Gifted students may be accustomed to learning quickly, so they can sometimes feel frustrated or discouraged when they encounter a task that requires additional effort or persistence. Developing a growth mindset helps students view challenges as opportunities to learn rather than signs that they are not capable.

Executive function refers to the mental skills that help students plan, organize, manage time, focus their attention, regulate emotions, and follow through on tasks. While gifted learners may demonstrate advanced abilities in certain areas, they can still need support developing these important self-management skills.

Together, growth mindset and executive function skills help gifted learners:

- Approach challenging tasks with persistence and confidence.
- Use strategies to maintain focus and manage frustration.
- Learn from mistakes and adjust their approach when something does not work.

How Families Can Help

Families play an important role in helping gifted learners develop a growth mindset and strengthen executive function skills. You can support your child by:

- Creating consistent routines for homework, chores, extracurricular activities, and downtime.
- Praising effort, persistence, effective strategies, and improvement - not only correct answers or high grades.
- Encouraging your child to reflect on what worked, what was challenging, and what they might do differently next time.

Family Conversation Starter

"Tell me about something that challenged you this week. What strategies helped you work through it, and what might you try next time?"



G/T Learning in Action...

G/T Capstone Products:

Showcasing Gifted Learning

As part of Houston ISD's G/T programming and state expectations for gifted education, all G/T-identified students participate in the development of advanced-level products and performances throughout the course of the school year that allows them to demonstrate their learning in meaningful and authentic ways.

The G/T Capstone Product provides students an opportunity to explore an area of academic interest, investigate a meaningful question or idea, and apply advanced research, critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills to create a product that reflects professional-quality work.

What Does a G/T Capstone Include?

Throughout the Capstone process, students will:

- Select a meaningful topic connected to their interests.
- Research & Investigate a question using advanced research and critical-thinking skills.
- Create an advanced-level product that demonstrates their learning and conclusions.
- Document their learning and progress through a process record.
- Present their completed work through a public presentation or showcase.

Capstone products can take many forms, including research papers, prototypes, exhibits, performances, multimedia projects, podcasts, documentaries, artistic works, and other discipline-specific products. Projects may be completed individually, with a partner, or as part of a group of up to four other peers.

Families can support the process by asking students about their Capstone topic, research, progress, challenges, and upcoming opportunities to showcase their work.

Be on the lookout for additional information from your child's campus regarding G/T Capstone expectations and presentation opportunities throughout the school year!



Celebrating Gifted Learning: Campus & District G/T Expos

Every Houston ISD campus serving G/T-identified students will host a Campus G/T Expo on or before March 25, 2027. The Expo gives gifted learners an opportunity to showcase a project or G/T Capstone Product they have developed throughout the school year while sharing their creativity, research, critical thinking, and learning with an authentic audience.

Following each Campus G/T Expo, the top project will be selected to represent the campus at the Houston ISD District G/T Expo, bringing together gifted learners from across the district to celebrate their accomplishments and advanced-level work.

Save the Date!

Houston ISD District G/T Expo

Thursday, May 6, 2027

6:00–7:30 p.m.

HISD Delmar Fieldhouse

2020 Mangum Road
Houston, Texas 77092

Families should be on the lookout for additional information from their child's campus regarding their Campus G/T Expo date, participation expectations, and showcase details.

Stay Connected!

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting Houston ISD's gifted learners. Together, families, campuses, and the district play an important role in ensuring our students are challenged, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.

If you have questions about Gifted & Talented services, please contact your campus G/T Coordinator or the Houston ISD Gifted & Talented Department.

We look forward to continuing to share resources, opportunities, and important updates with you in future editions of our Family Newsletter.



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