

South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD)



Gifted & Talented (G/T) Education Services Guide 2026-2027

SOUTH SAN ANTONIO 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.

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STATE LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND GUIDANCE

Texas Education Code ([TEC §29.121](#))

§29.121 DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "gifted and talented student" means 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.

Texas Administrative Code ([TAC §89](#))

§89.1 Student Assessment. School districts shall develop written policies on student identification that are approved by the local board of trustees and disseminated to parents. The policies must:

1. include provisions for ongoing screening and selection of students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment in the areas defined in the Texas Education Code, §29.121;
2. include assessment measures collected from multiple sources according to each area defined in the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students; 3. include data and procedures designed to ensure that students from all populations in the district have access to assessment and, if identified, services for the gifted/talented program;
3. provide for final selection of students to be made by a committee of at least three local district educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students; and
4. include provisions regarding furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement.

§89.2. Professional Development. School districts shall ensure that:

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 staff development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students;
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
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 options.

§89.3. Student Services. School districts shall provide an array of learning opportunities for gifted/talented students in kindergarten through Grade 12 and shall inform parents of the opportunities. Options must include:

1. instructional and organizational patterns that enable identified students to work together as a group, to work with other students, and to work independently;
2. a continuum of learning experiences that leads to the development of advanced-level products and performances;
3. in-school and, when possible, out-of-school options relevant to the student's area of strength that are available during the entire school year; and
4. opportunities to accelerate in areas of strength.

§89.5. Program Accountability. School districts shall ensure that student assessment and services for gifted & talented students comply with accountability standards defined in the Texas State Plan for the Education of the Gifted/Talented.

Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted & Talented Students ([TSP](#))

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

DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY

Purpose and Definition

SSAISD strives to provide students with an exemplary GT educational experience. Our GT services are designed to provide appropriate educational experiences for students who perform at a remarkably high level of accomplishment or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to students of similar age, experience, or environment. Our GT services deliver rigorous curriculum and instruction using enrichment models and methods designed to challenge and push students to reach their full potential. This is coupled with high expectations for student participation, motivation, and progress.

Goals:

1. IDENTIFICATION - Identify students in grades K-12 who demonstrated an academic need for gifted services using the criteria established by the district, approved by the board, and in compliance with the state mandates.
2. SELF-DIRECTED LEARNERS - Reinforce students' intrinsic motivation and develop their confidence in their ability to research and process information, as they create products, performances, and demonstrations that communicate their learning.
3. COMPLEX THINKING SKILLS - Enhance and refine the abstract and complex thinking and reasoning of these students through more sophisticated creative and critical thinking activities as they reflect and refine their own thinking processes.
4. APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES - Provide students with multiple opportunities to participate in learning experiences using advanced content (within the four core areas and world languages) which are defensibly differentiated in depth, complexity and range through modification to content and/or process and/or product. Students will be able to work independently, with groups of other gifted students, and with groups of non-gifted peers.
5. PRODUCTS, PERFORMANCES, AND DEMONSTRATIONS - Provide students with opportunities to produce advanced, college-level products, performances, and demonstrations of professional quality as part of their program services.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Gifted & Talented Identification Process

- October- identification referral window
- November- identification testing window
- December- identification committee meeting

Showcase Dates

- Dec. 8th: Fall GT Showcases
- May 11th: Spring GT Showcases

SOUTH SAN ANTONIO ISD ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2026-2027

INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS

1ST 9 WEEKS 8/10/26
42 DAYS 10/8/26

2ND 9 WEEKS 10/13/26
43 DAYS 12/18/26

SEMESTER 1 = 85 DAYS

3RD 9 WEEKS 1/6/27
39 DAYS 3/5/27

4TH 9 WEEKS 3/15/27
51 DAYS 5/27/27

SEMESTER 2 = 90 DAYS

TOTAL DAYS = 175

JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S

LABOR DAY SEPT 4, 7

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY OCT. 12

VETERANS DAY NOV. 9

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY NOV. 23-27

WINTER HOLIDAY DEC. 21 - JAN. 4

MLK JR. DAY JAN. 18

DISTRICT HOLIDAY FEB. 8

PRESIDENTS DAY FEB. 15

SPRING BREAK MARCH 8-12

EASTER HOLIDAY MARCH 26, 29

BATTLE OF FLOWERS APRIL 23

STUDENT/TEACHER HOLIDAY

STUDENT HOLIDAY/STAFF DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING

OCTOBER 9 **JANUARY 5**

FEBRUARY 9

BAD WEATHER MAKE-UP DAY

APRIL 23

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL:
AUGUST 10

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL:
MAY 27

NEW TEACHER ACADEMY

STUDENT HOLIDAY/STAFF DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING

TEACHER WORK DAY

BOY STAFF DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT CONVOCATION

STUDENT/TEACHER HOLIDAY

5622 RAY ELLISON
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78242
210.977.7000
SOUTHSANISD.NET

G/T IDENTIFICATION

Overview

SSAISD assesses students for GT services each year within a defined identification window. Students may qualify to participate in GT services based on evidence of a remarkably high level of performance compared to their peers or their potential for a remarkably high level of performance compared to their peers.

Disseminating Information

Parents, guardians, and staff are informed of the GT referral window, assessment window, and service timeline through the GT Program Guide, the SSAISD website, and informational meetings to be hosted online and/or in-person.

Eligibility for Referral

- Students must be currently enrolled in the South San Antonio Independent School District and must participate in the selected GT assessments. Enrollment must continue until the GT Identification Committee has made a final placement determination.
- Students who are referred will be assessed for GT services once per academic year.
- Parents or guardians who wish to refer a student must complete all questions in the parent/guardian referral forms.
- Teachers, counselors, administrators, or other district staff who wish to refer a student must complete all questions in the staff referral form.

SSAISD GIFTED AND TALENTED (GT) EDUCATION REFERRAL

Please click on the link below to complete a referral for G/T:

[2026 G/T Referral Link](#)

SSAISD G/T Referral 2026

Please complete this form to refer a student for Gifted and Talented.
Por favor completa este formulario para recomendar que un estudiante para Super Dotados y Talentosos.

jennifer.hurtado@southsanisd.net [Switch account](#) 

* Indicates required question

Email *

Your email

G/T COMMITTEE: IDENTIFICATION, DENIALS, & APPEALS

GT Identification Committee

Student data will be reviewed by a committee of at least three district or campus educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted & talented students as well as selected parents, guardians, and/or community members. This committee will make the final determination if GT services are the best way to meet the educational needs of the student based on a preponderance of evidence as demonstrated on approved district assessments and activities.

Notification of Denial and Appeals

Parents/guardians shall be notified in writing upon denial of the student for GT services.

It is the right of the community to appeal the decision of the G/T Committee if they do not agree with the placement determination of services. The appeal process is designed to ensure that quality and appropriate decisions are made in the best interest of the learners and according to district guidelines of services. Level 1 Appeals should contain new information supporting that one or more of the following appeal conditions exist:

- There is substantial new evidence to introduce that, when added to the existing information, creates a compelling 'preponderance of evidence' regarding the student's need for program services.
- There is substantial evidence to show that an inconsistent or improper application of the identification process has occurred.

It is the right of the community to appeal the decision of the G/T Committee if they do not agree with the placement determination of services. If the member of the community is not satisfied with the Level 1 Appeal outcome, they may make a Level 2 Appeal to the District G/T Coordinator.

G/T FURLOUGHS AND EXITING

Furlough

A furlough is a temporary "leave of absence" from GT services designed to meet the individual needs of an identified student. A parent, guardian, student, teacher, counselor, or administrator may request a furlough. A student may be furloughed for a period of time deemed appropriate by the district GT administrator with consultation from GT staff and campus administration. At the end of the furlough, the student's progress shall be reassessed, and the student may re-enter GT services, be exited from GT services, or placed on another furlough. Furloughs are designed to be short-term and temporary and should not be used for an entire school year.

A furlough does not indicate a permanent exiting of the program. Furloughs may be utilized for a variety of extenuating circumstances which would inhibit or curtail the student's performance in GT services and the mainstream classroom. A furlough provides the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the campus and is arranged to meet the individual needs of the student. Parents/guardians shall be notified in writing of any change in status for GT services furloughs.

GT ASSESSMENTS

SSAISD utilizes a battery of assessments and activities to test for the traits of gifted and talented learners. Through the evaluation of multiple measures, the district generates a holistic overview of student traits to evaluate the need for GT services. Students must demonstrate a preponderance of evidence of this need to the GT identification committee to achieve placement in GT services. The following assessments are examples of the tools that may be used in our identification process:

Cognitive Abilities Test ([CogAT](#))

The CogAT measures reasoning and problem-solving skills in three different areas: verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal. Reasoning skills develop gradually throughout a person's lifetime and at different rates for different individuals. Reasoning abilities are good predictors of success in school and are important outcomes of good schooling.

G/T SERVICE DESIGN

SSAISD GT services are designed to provide an academically challenging education for learners who perform or show the potential to perform at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to other learners of the same age, experience, or environment and exhibit high performance capability in an intellectual or creative area and/or excel in a specific academic field.

SSAISD offers a variety of learning experiences and opportunities for Gifted & Talented students in grades K-12 which meet the unique needs of our students. These services include, but are not limited to, integrating depth and complexity into the curriculum, requiring advanced level products, performances & demonstrations, and allowing identified Gifted & Talented students the opportunity to work with other identified students.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL G/T SERVICES

Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) are a set of performance standards, curricula, and assessments for differentiating instruction and deepening academic learning. TPSP enhances G/T programs from kindergarten through high school.

GT Showcase Events offer our Gifted and Talented students an opportunity to engage in research throughout the school year to further their academic knowledge and to develop and foster research skills. Once a semester, students have an opportunity to showcase their research at the showcase.

UIL A+ Academics includes 20 different events for grades 2-8. These events span the curriculum and are designed to complement and expand upon what students learn in the classroom.

Spelling Bees (English and Spanish) help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct language usage that will help them all their lives.

MIDDLE SCHOOL GT SERVICES

Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) are a set of performance standards, curricula, and assessments for differentiating instruction and deepening academic learning. TPSP enhances GT programs from kindergarten through high school.

Honors Courses group students with peers of higher ability and motivation, so that enrichment and acceleration can occur.

Pre-AP Courses allow students to slow down and focus on the most essential and relevant concepts and skills. Across these courses, students experience shared instructional practices and routines that help them develop and strengthen the important critical thinking skills that will help them achieve their full potential.

UIL A+ Academics includes 20 different events for grades 2-8. These events span the curriculum and are designed to complement and expand upon what students learn in the classroom.

Spelling Bees (English and Spanish) help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct language usage that will help them all their lives.

HIGH SCHOOL GT SERVICES

Honors Courses group students with peers of higher ability and motivation, so that enrichment and acceleration can occur.

Pre-AP Courses allow students to slow down and focus on the most essential and relevant concepts and skills. Across these courses, students experience shared instructional practices and routines that help them develop and strengthen the important critical thinking skills that will help them achieve their full potential.

AP Courses are classes developed by the college board to give high school students an introduction to college-level classes and also gain college credit before even graduating high school.

Dual Credit Courses are classes through which a student may earn high school credit for successfully completing a college course that provides advanced academic instruction beyond, or in greater depth than, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for a corresponding high school course.

Spanish Spelling Bees help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct language usage that will help them all their lives.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

South San Antonio Independent School District 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 these students obtain appropriate training for educating gifted and talented students. The district will require at least the minimum hours of training as mandated by the state and aims to reach an exemplary level of service as defined by the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students.

30 Hour Nature and Needs

The Texas Education Code requires teachers who provide instruction and services to gifted and talented students in the four core subjects to complete 30 hours of training over the nature and needs of gifted and talented learners. In SSAISD, this means that all teachers of record who work with gifted and talented students must have completed their 30 hours of required coursework within one semester of receiving a GT student in their classroom.

The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students also mandates that counselors and administrators who work with and make educational decisions for gifted and talented students complete 30 hours of training over the nature and needs of gifted and talented learners. In SSAISD, this means that Teachers as well as administrators who have supervisory duties for service decisions are required to complete a minimum of six (6) hours of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students and service options for gifted/talented students (19 TAC §89.2(4)). 5.9 Counselors who work with gifted/talented students are required to complete a minimum of six (6) hours of professional development that includes the nature and needs of gifted/talented students, service options for gifted/talented students, and social emotional learning (19 TAC §89.2(4)).

Six Hour Updates

The Texas Education Code requires teachers who provide instruction and services to gifted and talented students in the four core subjects to complete a six hour annual update of training for GT learners. In SSAISD, this means that all teachers of record who work with GT students must have completed their six hours of required coursework each year they serve GT students in their classroom.

The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students also recommends that counselors and administrators who work with and make educational decisions for GT students complete a six hour update of training for GT learners. In SSAISD, this means that all counselors and administrators who make educational decisions for GT students must have completed their six hours of required coursework each year they serve GT students.

Professional Development Tracking

It is the responsibility of teachers, counselors, administrators, and other staff to track their professional development for gifted and talented students in Eduphoria. Certificates of completion should be scanned and uploaded within one semester of student enrollment. In addition, teachers, counselors, administrators, and other staff are required to send a copy of their certificate to the GT Specialists.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

SSAISD will annually evaluate GT services by surveying all stakeholders including students, parents/guardians, and teachers. Annual evaluation activities are conducted for the purpose of continued service refinement. Curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development for gifted and talented students is modified based on these annual evaluations.

GT Program Evaluation Committee

Each year, GT services will be reviewed by a committee of at least three district or campus educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted/talented students as well as selected parents, guardians, and/or community members. This committee will review all data collected and make a determination if GT services are meeting the educational needs of students. The committee will make recommendations for refinements to GT services to the director of teaching and learning.

GT STAFF

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