



Gifted and Talented Parent Handbook



Galena Park Independent School District

Revised April 2021

DEDICATION

This parent handbook is dedicated to **Dr. Jill McComb**, previously the Advanced Studies Director in the Galena Park Independent School District (retired in the Summer of 2011). Through her leadership and advocacy, the gifted program was created and has continued to improve in its efforts to provide appropriate education for this special student population. Her leadership in the area of gifted education can best be expressed by the following thought:

To achieve all that's possible, we must attempt the impossible.

John C. Maxwell

GIFTED AND TALENTED PARENT HANDBOOK
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MISSION STATEMENT

To implement a program that meets the unique social, emotional, and intellectual needs of gifted and talented students that ensures opportunities for maximum growth and development for lifelong success.

PROGRAM GOALS

The gifted/talented students will:

become increasingly proficient in performing historical, descriptive, and experimental research.

exhibit increasing ability to use creativity, especially in forming new patterns and structures.

demonstrate an increasing ability to use higher order thinking processes in contrived and real situations.

demonstrate an understanding of emotional development through interpersonal relations.

NATIONAL, STATE, AND DISTRICT DEFINITIONS OF GIFTED AND TALENTED

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF EDUCATION

“Gifted and talented children are those identified by professional qualified persons who, by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society.”

Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination:

1. General Intellectual Ability
2. Specific Academic Aptitude
3. Creative or Productive Thinking
4. Leadership Ability
5. Visual and Performing Arts

It can be assumed that utilization of these criteria for identification of the gifted and talented will encompass a minimum of three to five percent of the school population.

Evidence of gifted and talented abilities may be determined by a multiplicity of ways. These procedures should include objective measures and professional evaluation measures which are essential components of identification.

Professionally qualified persons include such individuals as teachers, administrators, school psychologists, counselors, curriculum specialists, artists, musicians, and others with special training who are also qualified to appraise pupils’ “special competencies.”

(From EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED. Report to Congress of the United States by the U.S. Commissioner of Education. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 1972.)

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

“...’gifted and talented students’ 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.

(From Texas Education Agency, TEXAS STATE PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED, 2019.)

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

“(the gifted and talented are) ...those students who exhibit superior academic achievement or ability, talent in any esthetic area, mechanical ability, potential for leadership, and qualities of creativity.”

(From State Board of Education, PRIORITY AERA: EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED, August 1975.)

DISTRICT’S DEFINITION

The Galena Park Independent School District’s program for gifted and talented students is provided for those who perform or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment and who excel in the areas of general intellectual ability and creative and productive thinking.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

EHBB
(LEGAL)

A district shall establish a process for identifying and serving gifted and talented students and shall establish a program for those students in each grade level. Under this provision, a district may establish a shared services arrangement with other districts.

A district shall adopt a policy regarding the use of funds to support the district's program for gifted and talented students.

Education Code 29.122

Definition

“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.

Education Code 29.121

Identification

Students shall be identified as gifted/talented in accordance with a written policy that includes:

1. 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 Education Code 29.121.
2. Assessment measures collected from multiple sources according to each area defined in the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.
3. Data and procedures designed to ensure that students from all populations in a district have access to assessment and, if identified, to services provided for the gifted/talented program.
4. Provisions 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.

5. Provisions regarding furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement.

19 TAC 89.1

**Learning
Opportunities**

A district shall provide an array of learning opportunities for gifted/talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 and shall inform parents of the opportunities. Options shall 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.
4. Opportunities to accelerate in areas of strength.

19 TAC 89.3

**Certification
and
Reporting**

A district shall annually certify to the commissioner of education that the district has established a program for gifted and talented students as required by Education Code Chapter 29, Subchapter D and that the program is consistent with the state plan.

If the commissioner determines that a district has failed to comply for a school year, the commissioner shall reduce the total amount of funding as described by Education Code 29.124(b). The commissioner may restore to a district all or part of the funding withheld if during the school year the district complies with the program requirements.

At the same time that a district makes the certification described above, the district shall report to the commissioner regarding the use of funds on the district's program for gifted and talented students as provided by State Board of Education rule.

Nothing in these provisions may be construed as limiting the number of students that a school district may identify as gifted and talented or serve under the district's program for gifted and talented students.

Education Code 29.124

Note: See DMA(LEGAL) for training requirements for teachers of gifted and talented education.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

EHBB
(LOCAL)

Referral	Students may be referred for the gifted and talented program at any time by teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons.
Screening and Identification Process	<p>The District shall provide assessment opportunities to complete the screening and identification process for referred students at least once per school year.</p> <p>The District shall schedule a gifted and talented program awareness session for parents that provides an overview of the assessment procedures and services for the program prior to beginning the screening and identification process.</p>
Parental Consent	The District shall obtain written parental consent before any special testing or individual assessment is conducted as part of the screening and identification process. All student information collected during the screening and identification process shall be an educational record, subject to the protections set out in policies at FL.
Identification Criteria	The Board-approved program for the gifted and talented shall establish criteria to identify gifted and talented students. The criteria shall be specific to the state definition of gifted and talented and shall ensure the fair assessment of students with special needs, such as the culturally different, the economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities.
Assessments	Data collected through both objective and subjective assessments shall be measured against the criteria approved by the Board to determine individual eligibility for the program. Assessment tools may include, but are not limited to, the following: achievement tests, intelligence tests, creativity tests, behavioral checklists completed by teachers and parents, student/parent conferences, and available student work products.
Selection	A selection committee shall evaluate each referred student according to the established criteria and shall identify those students for whom placement in the gifted and talented program is the most appropriate educational setting. The committee shall be composed of at least three professional educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students, as required by law.
Notification	The District shall provide written notification to parents of students who qualify for services through the District's gifted and talented program. Participation in any program or services provided for gifted students shall be

voluntary, and the District shall obtain written permission from the parents before placing a student in a gifted and talented program.

Reassessment If the District reassesses students in the gifted and talented program, the reassessment shall be based on a student's performance in response to services and shall occur no more than once in elementary grades, once in middle school grades, and once in high school grades.

Transfer Students Interdistrict When a student identified as gifted by a previous school district enrolls in the District, the selection committee shall review the student's records and conduct assessment procedures when necessary to determine if placement in the District's program for gifted and talented students is appropriate.

[See FDD(LEGAL) for information regarding transfer students and the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children]

Intradistrict A student who transfers from one campus in the District to the same grade level at another District campus shall continue to receive services in the District's gifted and talented program.

Probations and Furloughs The District may place on probation or 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. Probation may be initiated by the District, the student's teacher, or the building principal. In response to extended student illness or family problems that impact academic performance, a furlough may be initiated by the parent or the student.

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

Exit Provisions The District shall monitor student performance in response to gifted and talented program services. If at any time the selection committee or a parent determines it is in the best interest of the student to exit the program, the committee shall meet with the parent and student before finalizing an exit decision.

Appeals A parent, student, or educator may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted and talented 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.

Program Evaluation The District shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of the District's gifted and talented program, and the results of the evaluation shall be used to modify and update the District and campus improvement plans. The District shall

include parents in the evaluation process and shall share the information with Board members, administrators, teachers, counselors, students in the gifted and talented program, and the community.

The District's gifted and talented program shall address effective use of funds for programs and services consistent with the standards in the state plan for gifted and talented students.

The District shall annually report to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) regarding funding used to implement the District's gifted and talented program. The District shall annually certify to TEA:

1. The establishment of a gifted and talented program by the District; and
2. That the District's program is consistent with the state plan for gifted and talented students.

**Community
Awareness**

The District shall ensure that information about the District's gifted and talented program is available to parents and community members and that they have an opportunity to develop an understanding of and support for the program.

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GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM DESIGN

The Galena Park Independent School District identifies and serves gifted and talented students who excel consistently or who show the potential to excel in the areas of **general intellectual ability** and **creative and productive thinking**.

The district serves students in grades kindergarten through twelve. Every effort is made to place students in the most appropriate educational setting.

Journeys is level one of the GT program in Galena Park ISD; this is a talent pool of identified students in kindergarten through fifth grade. It is an enrichment program designed to serve four to seven percent of the student population at each grade level at each campus capable of high performance. Students are placed with a small cluster of other Journeys students and served by their regular classroom teachers in the four core content areas. These students are provided appropriate instruction at their individual campus.

Once a Journeys student has been identified and is participating successfully in the program, he/she will not need be re-evaluated each year unless the child transfers to another campus.

The goal of each Journeys class is to develop tools for learning with an emphasis on higher level thinking, problem solving, creative thinking, research, and the social and emotional needs of the gifted child.

Fourth and fifth grade students identified for and served in Journeys may or may not qualify for the level two GT program, Encounters.

Beginning in the fourth grade, students are eligible to participate in the **Encounters** program, the level two GT program, which consists of approximately three to five percent of the total district population. This provision is maintained through grade nine. Students in the fourth and fifth grade Encounters program participate in a pull-out program one full day per week at a designated school. The top three to five percent of the district's students in grades six through nine participate in the Encounters program as a class on their home campus.

Just like Journeys, once a student has been identified and is participating successfully in the Encounters program, he/she will not be re-evaluated unless the child transfers to another campus.

The District's Encounters program identification process is designated to admit students who are gifted in the areas of general intellectual ability and/or creative/productive thinking. Students in Encounters are identified as students who can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program. These are students who consistently perform at a high level in the classroom and engage in divergent thinking that results in unconventional responses to conventional tasks.

Encounters instructors follow a curriculum that is designed to provide differentiation for gifted students. Students are accelerated through the standard curriculum and provided opportunities to work at a high level in the Encounters curriculum. Through these activities, the gifted students:

- become increasingly proficient in performing research.
- exhibit an increasing ability to use creativity.
- demonstrate an increasing ability to use higher order thinking processes in contrived and real situations.
- demonstrate an understanding of emotional development through interpersonal relations.

Students in grades six through twelve participate in Advanced courses and Advanced Placement program through classes offered in specific academic areas. Students also participate in other options at the high school level (Dual Credit and/or independent study) appropriate to their educational endeavors.

Advanced Courses encourages parents and students to begin thinking about Advanced Placement enrollment as early as middle school. These courses, which involve extensive reading and writing, gives students access to a well-focused and performance-based college preparatory curriculum.

Advanced courses are offered for all students, including students identified for gifted and talented, beginning in the sixth grade. Identified GT students will be expected to take these courses to lead to either Advanced Placement or Dual Credit courses (or both) in high school. These advanced courses prepare and motivate students for AP

classes and college-level. Teachers of Advanced courses encourage critical and creative thinking as they encourage intelligent, free discussion and analysis of issues, and production of new ideas, products, and performances. The students in Advanced courses who acquire analytical thinking and communication skills are more likely to succeed in academically challenging Advanced Placement courses.

The **Advanced Placement (AP)** program is a cooperative educational endeavor among secondary schools, colleges, and universities. It allows high school students to undertake college-level academic learning in high school. It also affords them the opportunity to show that they have mastered the advanced material by taking AP exams after taking an AP course. This program allows students to earn credit and/or advanced placement from participating colleges and universities through passing the aforementioned exams.

Galena Park ISD offers a wide array of AP courses starting in the 9th grade. These courses make substantial academic demands on students as they are required to do a considerable amount of outside reading and assignments. Students will be pushed to demonstrate analytical skills and writing abilities expected of first-year students in strong college programs.

A study at the University of Texas revealed that students who complete AP courses are:

- better prepared academically;
- more likely to choose advanced majors;
- more likely to complete more college course work in four years;
- performing significantly better than cohorts who did not take AP courses;
- more likely to apply leadership skills;
- more likely to graduate with a double major and with honors; and
- twice as likely to enter into advanced study (Ph.D. programs, medicine, law).

In May, AP students may choose to take College Board AP exams. A student who earns a grade of three (3) or better on an AP exam is generally qualified to receive credit for the equivalent course at a college or university participating in the AP Program. The associated cost savings can be as much as \$2500 per course.

Dual Credit courses are also an option for academically talented students. This program allows students to be awarded credit toward high school graduation through

completion of selected college courses. The Galena Park Independent School District has established a dual credit program with San Jacinto College North. Students may enroll in specific college courses taught by qualified college professors.

Students are also provided opportunities relevant to their areas of strength out of school through various academic competitions, academic programs, summer camps, etc. Some of these activities are open to all who want to participate and some require specific qualifications.

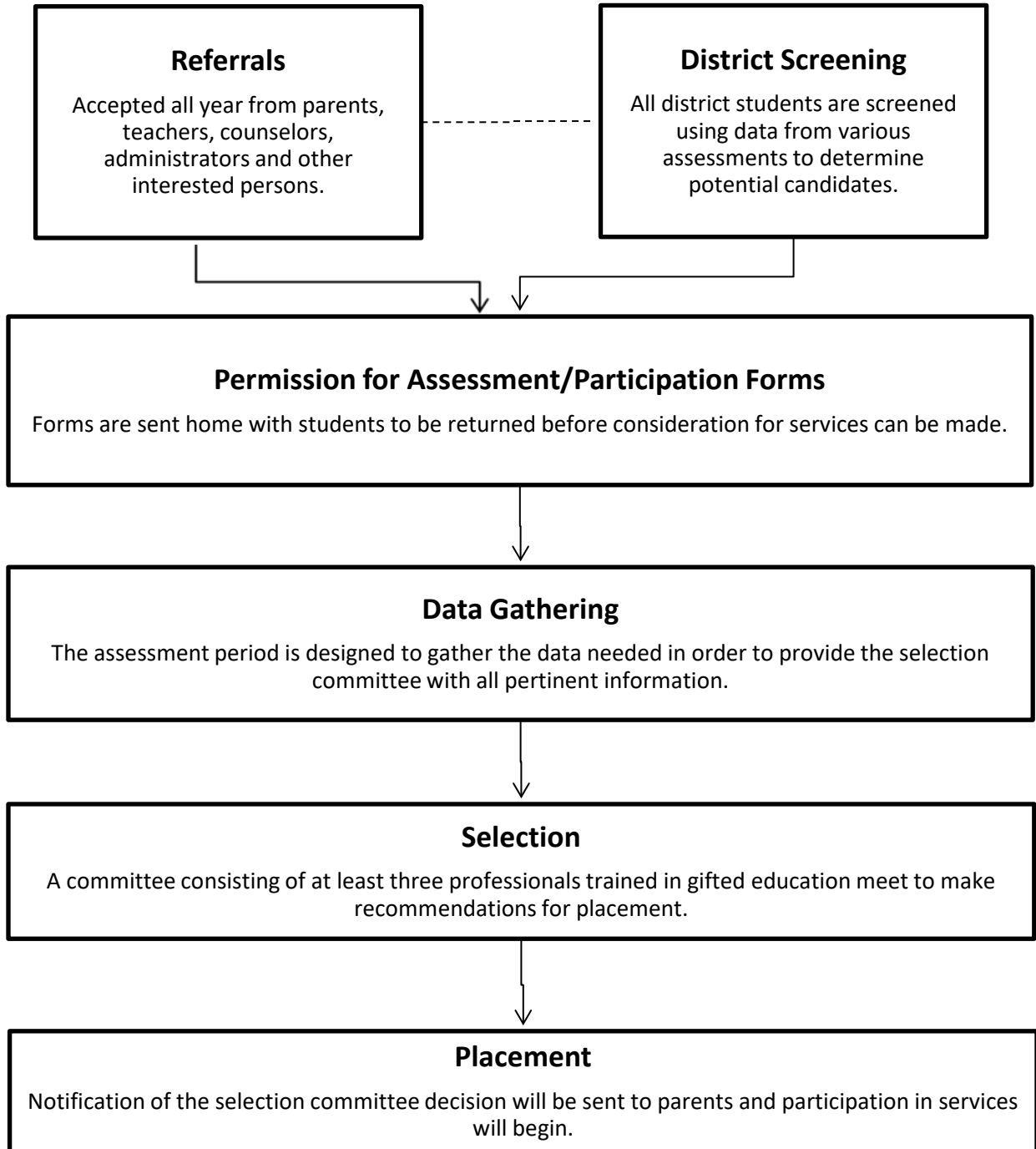
IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

All students in Galena Park ISD are eligible to go through the identification and assessment process for the Gifted and Talented program on a yearly basis, if necessary. Once a student is identified for a specific service, Journeys or Encounters, they will remain a part of that program until it ends or until they are exited per the district's guidelines. The information below explains the process.

1. Referral Process – Referrals for testing are open to all students in Galena Park ISD. Students may be referred for the gifted and talented program at any time by teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons. If you are considering referring your child for GT testing, please review this packet for information on gifted characteristics and all other things related to gifted education. Parents wishing to have their child tested for GT may contact their child's teacher or the Advanced Academics' office to request testing.
2. Screening Process – In order to create a preliminary list of students to test, the district level GT administrators use data readily available to them to provide an initial screening of every student in Galena Park ISD. The data used includes various assessment information in which every student in the grade level had the opportunity to participate. This may include standardized test scores, ability test scores, or information from assessments designed to measure a student's reading level.
3. Assessment Period – Once the screening and referral process is complete, the assessment period begins. Data is collected through both objective and subjective measures to determine individual eligibility for the program. This process is designed to be student-centered and to collect a preponderance of data to determine if a student is in need of gifted services. Data collected in the form of the objective and subjective criteria is utilized to determine student eligibility. Identification criteria may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Achievement test scores (state test scores used are from the previous school year)
 - Ability test scores
 - Creativity test scores
 - Teacher referral scores
 - Past records
 - Student work products, if available; and

- Outstanding accomplishments in school, the community, or the like.
4. Selection – Students are selected by a committee comprised of at least three individuals with training in the nature and needs of gifted children. The District selection committee may include, but is not limited to, a parent, a counselor, the Director for Advanced Academics, the Program Director for Advanced Academics, the Gifted and Talented Specialists/Teachers, and other trained individuals. All principals serve as ad hoc committee members. Students who are being considered for the program are assigned a number for selection purposes in order to maintain anonymity.
 5. Testing/Selection Timeline – Testing windows vary by grade level. Current Kindergarten students will be tested late in the fall with the hope of identifying students early in the second semester. All other students are tested throughout the spring with selection set to take place at the end of the school year. Students selected during spring testing will begin in the GT program at the beginning of the next school year. In order not to invalidate the test, students may only be tested one time per school year.
 6. Notification – The District shall provide written notification to parents of students who qualify for services through the District’s gifted and talented program. Participation in any program or services provided for gifted students shall be voluntary, and the District shall obtain written permission from the parents before placing a student in a gifted and talented program. Written notification will be sent once all testing is complete and selection has occurred.
 7. Appeals – Students that do not qualify for services may submit an appeal with supporting evidence that provides additional information for the identification committee to consider. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Program Director for Advanced Academics within one month of receiving notification.

IDENTIFICATION PROCESS



AREAS OF GIFTEDNESS

Gifted children shall be defined as those who consistently excel or show the potential to consistently excel above the average in one or more of the following areas of human endeavor to the extent they need and can profit from specially planned educational services.

1. General Intellectual Ability. The child possessing general intellectual ability consistently demonstrates high performance in school and on tests to the extent that he/she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program.
2. Specific Academic Aptitude. The child possessing a specific academic aptitude is one who has an ability in a specific subject area that is exceptionally above the expectations for a grade level to the extent that he/she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school system.
3. Creative Thinking. The creative thinking child is one who consistently engages in divergent thinking that results in unconventional responses to conventional tasks to the extent that he/she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program.
4. Leadership Ability. The child possessing leadership ability is one who not only assumes leadership roles, but also is accepted by others as a leader to the extent that he/she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program.
5. Visual and Performing Arts Ability. The child possessing visual and performing arts ability is one who, by his/her consistently outstanding aesthetic production in graphic arts, sculpture, music, or dance, needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school program.

The District's gifted and talented program identification process is designed to admit students who are gifted in the areas of **general intellectual ability and/or creative thinking.**

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GIFTED INDIVIDUAL

Since wide variation exists among the gifted, any list of characteristics must be a very general description of the group as a whole. Gifted individuals may possess one or more of the following traits.

1. Is intellectually curious, innovative, and playful with ideas.
2. Enjoys the challenge and involvement of intellectual and creative tasks.
3. Has a keen and sometimes unique sense of humor.
4. Is an independent thinker and seeks to act independently.
5. Develops at an early age inner control and satisfaction which may lead to divergent and nonconformist behavior.
6. Formulates abstractions while very young and shows facility in moving from concrete to abstract levels of thinking and communicating.
7. Prefers complex tasks and processes information in complex ways.
8. Reads at an early age and comprehends with advanced understanding.
9. Reads widely and reads intensively in areas of special interest.
10. Acquires basic skills rapidly and with a minimum of practice.
11. Comprehends advanced ideas, concepts, and implications.
12. Has an unusual ability to memorize.
13. Is impatient with detail and drill, which may result in gaps in basic skills.
14. Resists requirements of unnecessary detail in the completion of tasks.
15. Explores wide-ranging and special interests not usually associated with children of their age and relates well to peers and adults who have similar interests.

16. Expend much energy and time in pursuing special interests and may be involved in numerous projects and activities.
17. Employs high intellectual and creative skills in assessing his/her physical and social environment, in solving problems, and in creating products.
18. Generates many ideas and multiple solutions to problems.
19. Copes with environmental situations in resourceful and creative ways.
20. Expresses himself/herself fluently, clearly, and forcefully with words, numbers, and creative products.
21. Demonstrates richness of imagery in informal language and brainstorming.
22. Has capability for extraordinary leadership and tends to assume leadership responsibility.
23. Becomes excited about new ideas, but may not carry them through completion.
24. May tend to be a loner at least part of the time.
25. May have a sense of his/her own uniqueness which leads to feelings of loneliness.



SOME LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

“Since we cannot climb inside a student’s mind, we can only determine their giftedness from their behavior and performance” (For Parents and Teachers of Gifted and Talented Children). Most students are identified as gifted based on school performance. Students’ scores on achievement tests, intelligence tests, and other standardized tests are the most frequently used methods to identify the gifted and talented.

In addition to general academic ability, gifted students are often identified based upon personal traits and characteristics. Although each gifted student is unique, most gifted students:

- have a keen power of observation
- are interested in inductive learning and creative problem solving
- share an ability to see relationships and make connections quickly
- like structure, order, and consistency
- learn quickly with rapid mastery and instant recall
- are verbally proficient with an interest in reading
- have a questioning attitude and intellectual curiosity
- have the power of critical thinking, using that ability to evaluate self and others
- are creative and inventive
- are persistent with a desire to excel
- are sensitive, intuitive, and empathetic with a need for emotional support from others
- have a high energy level with a preference for complexity and diversity
- need freedom and independence in work and study
- have a sense of humor which often leads to non-conforming behavior
- dislike drill, practice, and routines



STRATEGIES AND PROCESSES APPLIED IN GALENA PARK ISD'S GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

LOGICAL THINKING

Sample Logic Problem

A green house, a pink house, a white house, and a yellow house are all in a row. The yellow house is not first. The pink house is between the green house and the white house. The green house is between the yellow house and the pink house. What is the position of each house?

	1	2	3	4
G				
P				
W				
Y				

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Benjamin Bloom's six-level process of acquiring, assimilating, and applying information and ideas are:

1. Knowledge – recalling a fact or idea in approximately the same form as it was learned
2. Comprehension – interpreting an idea or event
3. Application – relating ideas from several sources to new situations
4. Analysis – breaking down ideas into component parts to find unique characteristics
5. Synthesis – creating new ideas/things or using existing ideas/things in a new way
6. Evaluation – rating, comparing, and judging ideas, problems, and solutions

Experiences for gifted learners should especially involve the open-ended options of tasks or questions at the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation levels.

Taxonomy of Educational Objectives Handbook I: Cognitive Domain by Benjamin S. Bloom.
David McKay Company, Inc.

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

In the creative problem solving process, situations are dealt with in a systematic manner.

STEPS IN CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Recognize Problem – Realize there is a situation for which a solution is needed.
2. Define Problem – Fact find. Describe the situation, its effects, and possibilities.
3. Gather Ideas/Data – Brainstorm to generate many possible solutions.
4. Rank Ideas/Data – Analyze possible solutions from step 3. List in order of which ones might work best.
5. Test Ideas – Consider most likely solutions.
6. Draw Conclusion – Use results from step 5 to choose solution.
7. Evaluate Conclusions – Judge effectiveness and efficiency of solution.

Creative Problem Solving: Planning New Worlds. Sunburst Communications.

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming is a method for producing as many ideas as possible in a short period of time.

1. Criticism is ruled out. Adverse judgement of ideas must be withheld until later.
2. “Freewheeling” is welcomed. The wilder the idea, the better; it is easier to tame down than to think up.
3. Quantity is wanted. The greater the number of ideas, the more the likelihood of useful ideas.
4. Combination and improvement are sought. In addition to contributing ideas of their own, participants should suggest how ideas of others can be turned into better ideas; or how two or more ideas can be joined into still another idea.

Applied Imagination by Alex Osborn. Charles Scribner’s, New York, 1963, p. 156.

ELEMENTS OF CREATIVITY

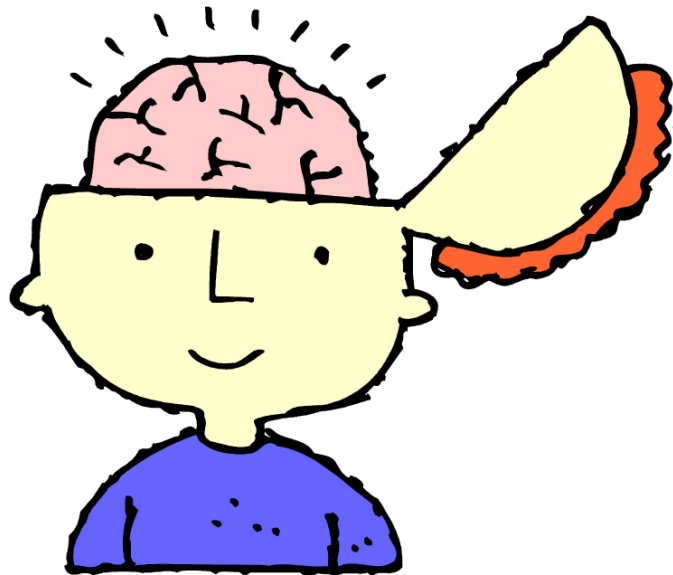
FLUENT THINKING consists of the generation of a quantity of ideas, plans, or products. The intent is to build a large store of information or material for selective use at a later time.

FLEXIBLE THINKING provides for shifts in categories of thought. It involves detours in thinking to include contrasting reasons, differing points of view, alternate plans, and the various aspects of a situation. A variety of kinds of ideas and differing approaches are considered.

ORIGINALITY is the production of unusual or unanticipated responses. It is characterized by uniqueness and novelty. Responses may be considered original if they are clever, remote, individual, uncommon, inventive, or creative in nature.

ELABORATE THINKING is the ability to refine, embellish, or enrich an idea, plan, or product. It involves the addition of new and necessary details for clear and complete communication. It is an elegant response, an ornamented idea, or an adorned expansion upon things. Elaboration provides illuminating descriptive dimensions, leaving very little to the imagination.

Sunflowering by Bob Stanish. Good Apple, Inc.



GIFTED AND TALENTED INDEPENDENT PROJECTS

Information Sources

encyclopedias	personal interviews
dictionaries	experiments
textbooks	investigations
record/statistic books	surveys or polls
biographies	internet
how-to books	speakers – programs
newspapers	TV/radio
magazines	pamphlets
films and filmstrips	Atlas/maps
field trips	almanacs
letters	catalogs
phone calls	1 st person experiences

Methods of Displaying and Sharing

charts	books	lessons
graphs	songs	programs
films and filmstrips	models	newspapers
slides	sculptures	diagrams
posters	dioramas	competitions
performances	illustrations	puppet shows
puzzles/codes	tapes	learning centers
flip charts	field trips	games
fold-outs	presentations	demonstrations
poetry	exhibits	mobiles
cartoons	magazines	debates

Adapted from Independent Projects by Villalpando and Kolbe.

ADVOCACY FOR THE GIFTED

Join the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented (TAGT)

TAGT Membership includes: access to Pulse, Tempo+, TAGT Connect, members-only resources, volunteer opportunities, and discounts on any of the in-person or online learning TAGT has available, including giftED, Gifted + Equity, Leadership Conference, TAGT On Demand, and webinars. If interested to join, visit TAGT's webpage at www.txgifted.org, call TAGT at (512) 499-TAGT, or write to:

TAGT Membership
PO Box 1918
San Antonio, TX 78297

Parent advocates are needed to support gifted education in Texas – if you do not want to join TAGT, you can still write and call your state representative to express your concerns and share your ideas about gifted education.

SUGGESTED PARENT RESOURCES

Delisle, J. (2018). *Understanding Your Gifted Child from the Inside Out: A Guide to the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Kids*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks Inc.

Delisle, J. (2018). *Doing Poorly on Purpose: Strategies to Reverse Underachievement and Respect Student Dignity*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

Delisle, J. and Galbraith, J. (2002). *When Gifted Kids Don't Have All the Answers*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

Douglas, D. (2017). *The Power of Self-Advocacy for Gifted Learners*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

Nilles, K., J. Jolly, and J. Franklin Smutney. (2020). *Success Strategies for Parenting Gifted Kids*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press, Inc.

Van Gemert, L. (2019). *Living Gifted: 52 Tips to Survive and Thrive in Giftedland*. Gifted Guru Publishing.

Walker, S. Y. (2002). *The Survival Guide for Parents of Gifted Kids*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

DISTRICT PROCEDURES FOR GIFTED & TALENTED

1. Reassessment – If the District reassesses students in the gifted and talented program, the reassessment shall be based on a student’s performance in response to services and shall occur no more than once in elementary grades, once in middle school grades, and once in high school grades.
2. Transfer Students
 - a. Inter-district Transfers - When a student identified as gifted by a previous school district enrolls in the District, the selection committee shall review the student’s records and conduct assessment procedures when necessary to determine if placement in the District’s program for the gifted and talented students is appropriate.
 - b. Intra-district Transfers – A student who transfers from one campus in the District to the same grade level at another District campus shall continue to receive services in the District’s gifted and talented program.
3. Furloughs – The District may place on probation or 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. In response to extended student illness or family problems that impact academic performance, a furlough may be initiated by the parent or the student. In accordance with the Board-approved program, a probation or furlough shall be granted for specified reasons and for a specified period of time. At the end of a probation or furlough, the student may re-enter the gifted and talented program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.
4. Probation - The District may place on probation or a furlough any student who is unable to maintain satisfactory performance, whose educational needs are not being met within the structure of the gifted and talented program, or who fails to make or maintain a passing average in a foundation class (reading, math, ELA, science, or social studies). Probation may be initiated by the District, the student’s teacher, or the building principal. In accordance with the Board-approved program, a probation or furlough shall be granted for specified reasons and for a specified period of time. At the end of a probation or furlough, the student may re-enter the gifted and talented program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.

5. Exit Provisions – The District shall monitor student performance in response to gifted and talented program services. If at any time the selection committee or a parent determines it is in the best interest of the student to exit the program, the committee shall meet with the parent and student before finalizing an exit decision. GPISD’s Board Approved Policies mandate the procedures that must be followed to withdraw a student from the gifted and talented program.

A student is withdrawn from the gifted and talented program and coding removed if:

- a student withdraws from the district
- the selection committee determines it is tin the best interest of the student and his/her educational needs
- a student or parent requests removal from the program: the selection committee shall contact the parent and student before honoring the request
- a student fails a foundation course (reading, math, ELA, science, or social studies)
- a student already on probation does not make adequate progress
- a student is not enrolled in at least one Advanced/AP or Dual Credit course

The gifted and talented indicator code is removed from the attendance accounting system by the central administration staff. The effective date of dismissal and reason for exit should be recorded.



GALENA PARK INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

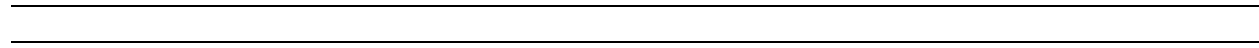
Gifted and Talented Program

ACADEMIC PROBATION PROCEDURES

One or more of the following reasons may constitute probation in the Gifted and Talented program:

Teacher(s) or parent/guardian determine by observation:

1. Student shows signs of extreme frustration.
2. Student shows lack of response and/or academic commitment.
3. Student performance falls below minimum academic standards. (A student earns an F in any subject.)



Probation Procedures

Person(s) Responsible

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Notification will be made to the principal and program director regarding the student’s problem. | Gifted and Talented Teacher |
| 2. Notification will be made to the parent regarding the student’s problem. | Gifted and Talented Teacher |
| 3. Completion of the G/T Probation form will document the action date. | Gifted and Talented Teacher, Parent(s)/Guardian(s), and Principal |

NOTE: If the student does not demonstrate progress in the probation period, action will be taken to exit the student from program.



GALENA PARK INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Gifted and Talented Program

EXIT PROCEDURES

Following a probation period, a student may be exited from the Gifted and Talented program for one or more of the following reasons:

Teacher(s) or parent/guardian determine by observation:

1. Student shows signs of extreme frustration.
2. Student shows lack of response and/or academic commitment.
3. Student performance falls below minimum academic standards. (A student earns an F in any subject.)

*Note: A student may be exited from the program at the end of the academic year if the student has failed to meet requirements for “Challenge of the Mind”. **No probation period is necessary for this action.**

Exit Procedures

Person(s) Responsible

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Notification will be made to the principal and program director regarding the student’s problem. | Gifted and Talented Teacher |
| 2. Notification will be made to the parent regarding the student’s problem. | Gifted and Talented Teacher |
| 3. Completion of the G/T Exit form will document the action date. | Gifted and Talented Teacher, Parent(s)/Guardian(s), and Principal |

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

1. School Board – Local district boards of trustees are to be trained to ensure program accountability based on the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students (19 TAC §89.5). Local district boards of trustees are encouraged to pursue professional development on the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.
2. Administrators – 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)). Administrators who have authority for gifted/talented service decisions are encouraged to receive six (6) hours annually of professional development in gifted/talented education.
3. Counselors – Counselors who work with gifted/talented students are required to complete a minimum of six (6) hours of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, service options for gifted/talented students, and social emotional learning (19 TAC §89.2(4)). Counselors who work with gifted/talented students are encouraged to receive six (6) hours annually of professional development in gifted/talented education.
4. Teachers
 - a. A minimum of thirty (30) clock hours of professional learning that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, identification and assessment of gifted/talented students, and curriculum and instruction for gifted/talented students is required for teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the district's defined gifted/talented services. Teachers are required to have completed the thirty (30) hours of professional learning prior to their assignment to the district's gifted/talented services (19 TAC §89.2(1)). Teachers without the required training who are assigned to provide instruction and services that are part of the district's defined gifted/talented services are required to complete the thirty (30) hour training within one semester (19 TAC §89.2(2)).
 - b. Teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the district's defined gifted/talented services receive a minimum of six (6) hours annually of professional development in gifted/talented education

that is related to state teacher gifted/talented education standards (19 TAC §89.2(3) and TAC §233.1).

5. New Teachers – Annually, each teacher new to the district receives an orientation to the district’s gifted/talented identification processes and the district’s services for gifted/talented students.
6. Schedule – Opportunities for gifted/talented training will be provided on a regular basis and information on the workshops will be disseminated to professionals in the district. Teachers needing the thirty (30) hours courses will have district-provided opportunities in both the summer and fall.
7. Documentation – Trainings and compliance will be documented by the Program Director for Advanced Academics with the assistance of the District’s workshop management program.
8. Evaluation of Workshops – Evaluation of professional learning activities for gifted/talented education is ongoing and related to state teacher gifted/talented education standards. The Program Director for Advanced Academics will have the final say with the use of the standards provided to deem if a workshop is appropriate for gifted/talented credit.

Campus Gifted and Talented Compliance and TEA Funding Audits

For a campus to be in compliance with GPISD Gifted and Talented Board Policy and Guidelines and with TEA state law, all gifted and talented students should be receiving program services from a GT trained teacher: and; therefore, be coded with the “GT Funding Indicator”. Once a student is identified for GT services in GPISD, he/she maintains that designation for the remainder of his/her educational career in GPISD.

There are only four exceptions to this, and the list below defines the exceptions:

- Entering 6th grade: The Journeys campus program ends at 5th grade. Many students will not qualify for Encounters. Therefore, the GT indicator must be removed.
- Exit Committee Decision: parent, student, teacher, principal, and Program Director agree that the program does not meet the educational needs of the student.
- Voluntary Exit: parent and student were conferenced, but still want the child removed from the program.
- A student above grade 9 who is not enrolled in at least one Advanced/AP or Dual Credit course.

RECORDS RETENTION POLICY

The Galena Park Independent School District’s Gifted and Talented Program will retain student records in accordance with Section 3-3 of the Retention Schedule of Records. Records of each student referred to or receiving services in a gifted/talented program, including referral and observation documentation, testing results, parental consents, committee reports and recommendations, and other records of services required under state regulation or pertinent to the identification of students for participation in gifted/talented programs will be kept through the cessation of service for the student plus five years.

Professional Learning documentation for teachers will be kept using the District’s workshop management system. Teachers may request additional documentation to show the completion of the required thirty (30) hours workshop if they transfer to another school district.