

# Big Spring ISD

## Gifted and Talented Handbook

APPROVED DATE: May 31, 2023

# Policy Cross Reference Sheet

This handbook is an administrative procedure of the District and subject to policies adopted by the Board of Trustees. In case of conflict between administrative procedures and Board policy, policy shall prevail.

**Date of Superintendent Approval: May 31, 2023**

The contents of this handbook relate to the following Board policies:

Policy	Title	Page(s)
EHBB{LOCAL}	SPECIAL PROGRAMS GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS	*

\* The above listed policy relates to areas in which the special program, gifted and talented students, is necessary. This handbook speaks directly to these situations.

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## Big Spring ISD Vision Statement

Relentlessly STEERing students toward a successful tomorrow.

## Big Spring Mission Statement

The MISSION of Big Spring ISD is to instill respect and pride in all by empowering our community of learners – staff, students, and parents – to unite and commit to educational excellence.

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# GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

## Goal

The goal of the Big Spring Independent School District to provide an innovative curriculum with instructional programs and services that develop each student's potential to graduate as a life-long learner prepared for the post-secondary experiences and the challenges of a global society.

## Texas State Goal for Gifted and Talented Students

Students who participate in services designed for gifted students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as is 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, and environment. High school graduates who have participated in services for gifted/talented students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services.

## Procedures

Giftedness has been recognized by both federal and state governmental agencies as an area of exceptionality. The student population characterized by giftedness requires an educational program designed to meet their unique educational needs. The Texas Education Code Section 29.122 and the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students (Appendix D) mandate that each school district shall adopt a process for identifying and serving gifted and talented students in the district and shall establish a program for those students in each grade level. Campus staff will implement the Administrative Procedures with consistency and fidelity. District staff will monitor and support effective implementation of the Administrative Procedures. The Assistant Superintendent of Academics and Assessment along with the Director of Special Services will oversee the G/T program district wide.

## The Texas Education Code: §29.121 Gifted and Talented Definition

A "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.

## The Big Spring Independent School District's Gifted and Talented Definition

Gifted and talented students are those who excel consistently in general intellectual ability and/or in specific core subjects related to the curriculum of Big Spring ISD. They are students who require differentiated educational programs or activities beyond those normally provided by the regular school program. Big Spring ISD recognizes that students identified as gifted and talented come from all races, socioeconomic groups, geographical locales, and environments with no regard to learning disabilities.

# IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION

Criteria to identify students for gifted and talented services shall be aligned to the state definition of gifted and talented and shall ensure the equitable assessment of students of all populations (See Exhibit A). The identification of gifted students in BSISD is based on qualitative and quantitative measures. This cognitive abilities test serves as the quantitative measure of BSISD GT identification. In addition, research-based locally determined norms on this cognitive ability test may be used to facilitate equity on designated BSISD campuses. The qualitative measures include parent and teacher surveys.

The Campus Selection Committee must be comprised of a campus administrator, Gifted and Talented counselor/GT campus liaison, and at least one teacher who have met the training requirements for gifted and talented programs. The campus administrator or GT counselor will collect all data and forward information to the Campus Selection Committee. In evaluating all data, the Campus Selection Committee shall be mindful of the following guidelines:

1. Make professional decisions based upon a thorough review of the student's profile considering national, state, and District standards.
2. Reflect on the student's profile indicating strengths and program placement that best meet their immediate and long-term educational needs.
3. Notify the parents/guardians in writing of their child's gifted and talented evaluation decision.
4. Advise parents/guardians of their rights to appeal regarding gifted and talented evaluation decision.

A timeline for referral windows, testing windows, parent/guardian notification, appeals and placement is included in this Handbook (See Exhibit A).

## REFERRALS

The District shall provide assessment opportunities to complete the screening and identification process for referred students in a manner that is fair and equitable. Students enrolled in Big Spring Independent School District ("BSISD") who are not yet identified shall be screened on an ongoing basis for referral.

All non-identified District enrolled students in grades K-12 shall be considered for referral by the classroom teacher or a parent/guardian using criteria such as student products, teacher observations, previous achievement test data and/or previous mental abilities testing.

### Referral Procedures

A designated building counselor(s) or designated personnel will be the gifted and talented test facilitator(s) on each campus. The counselor shall be available for consultation on all aspects of the screening and assessment for students in grades kindergarten through twelve.

Listed below are the referral procedures for BSISD students.

1. Campuses will host an awareness session including information about traits of students with gifts and talents, as well as the procedures for referring students, assessment, and identification during the referral window.

2. Referrals will be accepted no later than the first school day in December and may begin as early as September 1. The actual date shall be announced through various District communications such as District website, campus websites, campus marquees, School Messenger, student folders, and/or campus newsletters.

3. Referrals for students enrolled after the fall window has closed will be accepted no later than the last school day in March and may begin as early as February 1. The actual date shall be announced through various District communications.

4. The designated campus GT counselor or trained personnel will collect and forward information to the Campus Selection Committee.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment of students for gifted and talented programs shall include quantitative and qualitative data collected from multiple sources for each area of giftedness served by the District. Assessment tools may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Cognitive abilities tests
- Behavioral inventories or observations completed by parents/guardians and classroom teachers

Referred students will be assessed in the areas of intellectual ability and specific academic fields using a minimum of three (3) appropriate criteria.

The designated GT counselor or trained personnel will coordinate testing and data collection including:

1. Qualitative data that may include, but not limited to, teacher and parent/guardian observation inventories.
2. Quantitative assessment data that may include, but not limited to, individual or group mental abilities tests.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

All referred students' profiles will be reviewed by the Campus Selection Committees. Unless otherwise noted, the student profile for grades K - 12 will initially include:

1. Scores from normed referenced assessments, aptitude, and reasoning assessments.
2. Scores from the Teacher and Parent/Guardian Inventories for the current identification period.



# REASSESSMENT

Parents/Guardians of students currently receiving Gifted and Talented services may request a GT reevaluation to add an area of identification during the spring referral window. If reassessment occurs at all, it is no more than once in elementary grades, once in middle school grades, and once in high school.

# TRANSFERS

## New Enrollment

Upon enrollment into the District, students from public, private, or homeschools shall have access to the program admission, assessment, and appeals process to determine the need to receive BSISD Gifted and Talented services in the immediate school year.

## Grades 1 –12

When a student in grades 1-12 identified for gifted and talented services by their previous public school district enrolls in the District, the District shall review the student's records within 20 school days to determine if the GT identification criteria used by the previous district coordinates with the criteria used by the District.

If the GT evaluation criteria used by the previous public school district does not coordinate with the District's criteria, the student shall be evaluated using District criteria during the District's next referral window. The Campus Selection Committee shall determine if placement in the District's program for gifted and talented students is appropriate. All available student data collected shall be placed on the Gifted and Talented Transfer Profile.

Prior to final determination, initial placement of the transfer student may or may not be in a gifted and talented class/course.

# FURLOUGHS

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.

A furlough shall be granted by the Campus Selection Committee for specified reasons and for a specified period of time. At the end of the furlough, the student may re-enter the gifted program, be placed on another furlough, or exited from the program. A timespan for a furlough may be one semester or one school year.

## Plan of Action

At any time during the year when a student is not performing at the expected levels within the specified curriculum, a gifted and talented teacher-parent/guardian conference can be requested by the parent/guardian or teacher. Parents/Guardians must request conferences in writing to the teacher(s). Conferences shall be scheduled with the parents/guardians being notified of the conference date and time within ten (10) school days of the request.

Student performance will be addressed and documented on a Plan of Action Form (See Exhibit C). A copy of the completed form will be sent to the campus counselor and parents/guardians by the gifted and talented teacher(s) within five (5) school days of the conference. Additionally, the student's gifted learning plan shall be reviewed and modified as determined by the parent/guardian and teacher.

1. Students who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance after being placed on a Plan of Action may be placed on furlough by the Campus Selection Committee for a minimum of one (1) semester to a maximum of one (1) school year from the effective beginning date.
2. The furlough will be documented on the Program Furlough/Exit Form (See Exhibit C). The completed form will be filed in the student's cumulative folder.
3. The academic performance of a student placed on furlough will be monitored by the campus GT counselor throughout the furlough period. The student will retain gifted and talented eligibility but will not receive program services.
4. At the end of the furlough period, the student's progress will be evaluated by the GT counselor and the parent/guardian. The Campus Selection Committee may decide to extend the furlough period up to a cumulative time period of one year, return the student to receiving program services, or exit the student from the program.

# EXIT AND RE-ENTRY

Students who have participated in the District's Gifted and Talented Program shall continue in the program unless they are unable to perform within the structure of the Gifted and Talented Program.

## **Exit by Campus Selection Committee**

If the Campus Selection Committee determines that the student's performance continues to be below expected levels within the specified curriculum, the Committee may decide to extend the time period for the Plan of Action, or may decide to exit the student from the program.

If the Campus Selection Committee decides it is most appropriate for the student to exit the program, the Committee will complete a Program/Probation/Furlough/Exit Form (See Exhibit C). No single criterion may be the determining factor for exiting the program. A meeting must take place with the student's parent/guardian to review the student's learning plan for possible modifications to prevent and/or exit, as well as the data on which any recommendation for exiting the program is made. The exited student will not receive Gifted and Talented Program services for the remainder of that academic year.

A student who has exited from the program may reenter the program at the beginning of the next school year only if he/she is retested according to the approved District testing calendar and qualifies for the program using the most recent Gifted and Talented qualifications standards.

The campus principal will be responsible for communicating the Campus Selection Committee's decision regarding program exit to the parent/guardian and for obtaining the parent/guardian's signature on the Program Probation/Furlough/Exit Form (See Exhibit C). When all signatures have been obtained, the form will be filed in the student's folder.

If the parent/guardian wishes to appeal the decision of the Campus Selection Committee, the parent/guardian must send a letter to the campus principal. The letter should state the reasons for not accepting the decisions of the Campus Selection Committee. The letter must be received within ten (10) business days of the documented date of parent/guardian notification. Until a decision is made on the appeal, the student will remain in the Gifted and Talented Program. (Refer to Appeals Procedure section on page 10 for continuation of the Gifted and Talented appeals process.)

## **Exit by Parent/Guardian Request**

The student may exit the program upon written parent/guardian request and after consultation with a representative of the Campus Selection Committee. The written request will be filed in the student's folder.

A student who is exited by parent/guardian request will not receive services for the remainder of the year, but may reenter the program at the beginning of the next school year with no additional testing and parent/guardian request in writing. However, if the student remains out of the program for longer than one (1) full academic year, the student must be reassessed for eligibility for the Gifted and Talented Program.

## **Withdrawn from District**

Students who withdraw from the District shall be administratively exited from the Gifted and Talented Program.

### **Re-Entry**

In order to re-enter the program, a student who has been administratively exited must be reassessed and qualify for the program by meeting the most current gifted and talented qualification standards.

## **APPEAL PROCEDURES**

A parent, guardian, designated representative, student, or professional staff member may appeal a probationary, furlough, exit or identification decision made by the Campus Selection Committee. Appeals shall be made first to the campus selection committee. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with FNG(LOCAL) beginning at Level Two. The student may be represented by a parent/guardian at any level of the complaint. The appeal must be submitted within ten (10) school days from the date of the Campus Selection Committee decision date.

Reasons appeals may be submitted are:

- Illness during testing with documentation of the illness.
- Emotional duress during testing due to family crisis.
- Testing irregularity – an inequitable or inappropriate application during the testing process is alleged or documented accommodations were not provided.
- Substantial evidence – representative has substantial evidence to introduce that when added to existing information creates a compelling preponderance of the evidence regarding the students' need for program services.

## **COMMUNITY AWARENESS**

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

1. Campuses will provide parents with information of the array of learning opportunities available to for G/T students in Kindergarten to grade 12 and disseminate written policies on student identification.
2. Campuses will provide orientation and periodic updates for parents of students identified for and provided G/T services.
3. Parents of students identified and provided G/T services will be included in the evaluation process of the G/T program.
4. The GT Parent Advisory Committee will meet to provide support and feedback to the campus/District regarding gifted and talented services.
5. Campuses will include strategies in Campus Improvement Plans to promote GT awareness within the community and will include strategies for family involvement.

# LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The District shall provide an array of research-based learning opportunities, including multiple and varied instructional arrangements, for gifted and talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 that meet their social, emotional, and academic needs. The available opportunities shall be consistent in practice for students across the District. Parents/Guardians shall be informed of the opportunities.

Teachers assigned to teach gifted and talented students shall be trained to work with gifted and talented students as required by the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented*. Selection of teachers serving gifted and talented students shall be based on the state requirements for G/T Teachers (See Exhibit B.)

These opportunities shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Flexible pacing and access to advanced materials in area(s) of identification to provide content acceleration commensurate with the student's need and abilities. These may include, but are not limited to, textbooks, articles, and applications that may typically be reserved for grade levels beyond the student's current grade. Students may be accelerated beyond the assigned grade level curriculum in identified areas.
2. Instructional and organizational patterns that support flexible grouping to maximize student growth and that facilitate identified students working together as a group, with other students, and independently.
3. Self-selected independent research projects (e.g. Texas Performance Standards Projects, GT Power Hour) evaluated by those with expertise related to the projects' fields of study.
4. A continuum of learning experiences that lead to the development of advanced-level products and performances that support content integration leading to mastery and development of critical attributes outlined in the District's Profile of a Graduate.
5. In-school, and when possible, out-of-school enrichment relevant to the student's area(s) of identification that are available during the entire school year.

## **Classroom Placement Strategies**

Campuses shall select from the following research-based classroom placement strategies to facilitate delivery of learning opportunities for gifted and talented students. The purpose of grouping gifted and talented students is to facilitate a teacher's provision of appropriately advanced, accelerated, and differentiated curriculum to gifted learners. Campuses shall select classroom placement strategies that best facilitate the delivery and support of the learning opportunities for gifted and talented students described above within their campus structures.

### ***Designated GT Classroom:***

Students identified as gifted and talented shall be placed in a classroom together. When the number of gifted and talented learners in a single classroom exceeds class size limits, students identified as gifted and talented shall be placed in classrooms based on their areas of identification (math, science, English/language arts, and/or social studies).

***GT Cluster Classroom:***

When there are more than six identified gifted and talented students at a grade level, a minimum of six students identified as gifted and talented shall be placed in a classroom as a cluster with other students. Gifted and talented students shall be clustered by area of identification, whenever possible, to facilitate students' access to advanced and accelerated curriculum as needed. The range of students who need instructional interventions shall be limited within a cluster classroom.

***Modified GT Cluster Classroom:***

When there are fewer than six identified gifted and talented students at a grade level, the students shall be placed in a classroom as a cluster. Highly capable students with a history of high achievement shall be placed in the classroom to increase the talent cluster to a minimum of six students. When there is only one identified gifted and talented student in a grade level, opportunities shall be provided to enable that student to work with other identified students across grade levels during the school day.

**Kindergarten**

Students identified for gifted and talented services in Kindergarten must begin receiving services no later than March 1. Kindergarten gifted and talented students shall receive differentiated instruction commensurate with their instructional needs which includes flexible pacing, in-class flexible grouping and flexible materials use.

# Exhibit A

## Gifted and Talented Identification and Selection Timeline

G/T Referral and Screening Timeline	
Fall Referrals	Referrals accepted from September through November.
Kindergarten Screening	December
Kindergarten Assessment	January
Kindergarten Parent/Guardian Identification Notification	February
Grades 1-12 Screening and Assessment	January - March
Grades 1-12 Parent/Guardian Identification Notification	April
Parent Submits Campus-Level Appeal Request	Within ten (10) school days of identification notification
Campus-Level Appeals Meetings	Kindergarten – March Grades 1 through 12 - April
Parent/Guardian Campus-Level Appeal Notification	Within ten (10) school days of appeals meeting
Parent Submits District-Level Appeal Request	Within ten (10) school days of campus-level appeal decision notification
Placement for Services	Kindergarten services begin on March 1 of tested school year. Grades 1 – 11, services will begin the first day of school of the following school year

# Exhibit B

## State Requirements for G/T Teachers

- Teachers who teach in the Big Spring G/T Program meet state requirements for completed professional development in the area of gifted education. Prior to assignment in the G/T program or within the first semester of instruction, teachers must 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.
- Teachers who provide G/T instruction and services receive a minimum of 6 hours annually of professional development in gifted education.
- Administrators and counselors who have program authority must have a minimum of six hours of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted students.
- Staff development records will be managed by the District GT Coordinator. Records will also be sent to the Human Resources office so that personnel records can be updated and maintained. These records will consist of copies of certificates of attendance at national, state, regional, and local workshops/conferences. Submission of records will be the responsibility of the teacher and will be maintained for the duration of employment in the district.



# Exhibit C

## Program Furlough/Probation/Exit Form

### BIG SPRING INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAM FURLOUGH/PROBATION/EXIT FORM

CAMPUS \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF ACTION \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF G/T IDENTIFICATION \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE \_\_\_\_\_ SUBJECT AREA \_\_\_\_\_

#### PURPOSE OF THIS ACTION:

(Check one)

- FURLOUGH \* (does not receive services)  
Specify length of time: \_\_\_\_\_
- PROBATION \* (receives services)  
Specify length of time: \_\_\_\_\_
- EXIT \*  
Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### SUBJECT AREA FOR THIS ACTION:

(Check all that apply)

- ENGLISH AND SOCIAL STUDIES
- MATH AND SCIENCE
- ALL AREAS

#### REASON FOR CAMPUS DECISION:

(Check one)

- A) FAILURE TO MEET G/T PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS
- B) PARENT/STUDENT REQUEST
- C) OTHER

#### EXPLAIN:

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#### RECOMMENDATION:

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# COMMITTEE

ADMINISTRATOR\_\_\_\_\_

PARENT\_\_\_\_\_

COUNSELOR\_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT\_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER\_\_\_\_\_

OTHER\_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER\_\_\_\_\_

OTHER\_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER\_\_\_\_\_

OTHER\_\_\_\_\_

\*NOTE: If student does not initiate re-entry after one year, he/she will automatically be exited from the program. If a student is exited, to re-enter they must be referred, tested, and qualified for Gifted and Talented services.

## Exhibit D

# *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*

*Revised June 2019*

*©Texas Education Agency*

*Pursuant to Section 29.123 of the Texas Education Code (TEC), the State Plan forms the basis of G/T standards of services and divides them into the categories of accountability and exemplary.*

*The accountability standards reflect actions required in state law and/or SBOE rule.*

### FIDELITY OF SERVICES

School districts comply with gifted/talented accountability standards and monitor the effectiveness of assessment and services for gifted/talented students.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
1.1 Student assessment and services are in compliance with the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students (19 TAC §89.5).	
1.2 Gifted/talented education policies and procedures are reviewed and recommendations for improvement are made by an advisory group of community members, parents of gifted/talented students, school staff, and gifted/talented education staff, who meet regularly for that purpose.	
1.3 To the extent that state funding is provided for gifted/talented student education, no more than 45% of state funds allocated for gifted/talented education is spent on indirect costs as defined in the Financial Accounting and Reporting Module (Financial Accountability Resource Guide). At least 55% of the funds allocated to gifted/talented education is spent on assessment and services for gifted students (19 TAC §105.11).	1.3.1 To the extent that state funding is provided for gifted/talented student education, additional funding from business partnerships, scholarships, parent group fundraisers, etc. is used to supplement the state and local funding.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
1.4 To the extent that state funding is provided for gifted/talented student education, local funding for gifted/talented education programs is used to supplement the state funding.	
1.5 Annual evaluation activities are conducted for the purpose of continued service development.	1.5.1 Ongoing formative and summative evaluation strategies, based on quantitative and qualitative data, are reviewed by the school board and used for substantive program improvement and development.
1.6 Long-range evaluation of services is based on evidence obtained through gifted/talented-appropriate performance measures such as those provided through the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP).	

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Gifted/talented identification procedures and progress monitoring allow students to demonstrate and develop their diverse talents and abilities

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
2.1 Written policies on student identification for gifted/talented services are approved by the district board of trustees and disseminated to all parents (19 TAC §89.1).	2.1.1 Board-approved policies are reviewed at least once every three years and modified as needed.
2.2 Referral procedures for assessment of gifted/talented students are communicated to families in a language and form that the families understand or a translator or interpreter is provided to the extent possible.	
2.3 Referral forms for assessment of gifted/talented students are provided to families in a language and form that the families understand, or a translator or interpreter is provided to the extent possible.	2.3.1 Referral forms for assessment of gifted/talented students are provided to families in language and form that the families understand, or a translator or interpreter is provided.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
2.5 An awareness session providing an overview of the assessment procedures and services for gifted/talented students is offered for families by the district and/or campus prior to the referral period.	
2.6 All family meetings are offered in a language families can understand or a translator or interpreter is provided to the extent possible.	
2.7 Provisions regarding transfer students, furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement are included in board- approved policy (19 TAC §89.1(5)).	
2.8 Policy ensuring that transfer students are properly assessed and appropriately placed following notification of enrollment in the district is included in board-approved policy. Transfers from campus to campus within the district are also addressed in board-approved policy.	2.8.1 Equitable access to gifted/talented services for transfer students is provided through board- approved policy that is developed in consideration of current best-practice recommendations.
2.9 When a gifted/talented student transfers to another district either in or out of Texas, that district is provided with the student’s assessment data by the sending district.	
2.10 Policy is adopted allowing student furlough (the opportunity for students to have a leave of absence from gifted/talented program services) for specified reasons and for a certain period of time without being exited.	
2.11 Policy related to reassessment of gifted/talented students is based on performance in response to gifted/talented services and if reassessment occurs at all, it is no more than once in elementary grades, once in middle school grades, and once in high school.	

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
2.12 Policy related to exiting of students from gifted/talented services is based on multiple criteria including student performance in response to services. Exiting of a student is finalized by committee decision after consultation with parents and student regarding the student’s educational needs.	2.12.1 Policy related to exiting of students from gifted/talented services is based on multiple criteria including student performance in response to services. Interventions are provided prior to committee decision. Exiting of a student is finalized by committee decision after consultation with parents and student regarding the student’s educational needs.
2.13 Policy related to appeals allows parents, students, and educators to appeal placement decisions in a timely manner and to present new data, if appropriate.	
2.14 Provisions for ongoing identification of students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment in each area of giftedness served by the district are included in board-approved policy (19 TAC §89.1(1)).	2.14.1 The identification process for gifted/talented services is ongoing, and assessment of students occurs at any time the need arises.
2.15 Assessment opportunities for gifted/talented identification are made available to students at least once per school year.	2.15.1 Assessment opportunities for gifted/talented identification are made available to students at least once a year at the elementary grades and once a semester at the secondary level.
2.16 Students in grades K–12 shall be assessed and, if identified, provided gifted/talented services (TEC §29.122 and 19 TAC §89.1(3)).	2.16.1 Students in grades K–12 are assessed and, if identified, served in all areas of giftedness included in TEC §29.121.
2.17 Data collected from multiple sources for each area of giftedness served by the district are included in the assessment process for gifted/talented services (19 TAC §89.1(2)). The assessment process allows for student exceptionalities to the extent possible.	

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
2.18 Based on a review of information gathered during the assessment process, students whose data reflect that gifted/talented services will be the most effective way to meet their identified educational needs are recommended by the selection committee for gifted/talented services.	
2.19 Students are assessed in languages they understand or with nonverbal assessments.	
2.20 All kindergarten students are automatically considered for gifted/talented and other advanced level services.	
2.21 At the kindergarten level, as many criteria as possible, and at least three (3), are used to assess students who performs at or shows the potential of accomplishment relative to age peers.	
2.22 In grades 1–12, qualitative and quantitative data are collected through three (3) or more measures and used to determine whether a student needs gifted/talented services.	
2.23 If services are available in leadership, artistic, and creativity areas, a minimum of three (3) criteria are used for assessment.	
2.24 Access to assessment and, if needed, gifted/talented services is available to all populations of the district (19 TAC §89.1(3)).	
2.25 The population of the gifted/talented services program is closely reflective of the population of the total district and/or campus.	

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
2.26 Final determination of students' need for gifted/talented services is made by a committee of at least three (3) local district or campus educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted/talented students and who have met and reviewed the individual student data (19 TAC §89.1(4)).	
2.27 The selection committee is formed of members who have completed training as required by 19 TAC §89.2.	2.27.1 The selection committee is formed of a majority of members who have completed thirty (30) hours of training and are current with the six-hour training update as required by 19 TAC §89.2(2-3).
2.28 A balanced examination of all assessment data collected through the district's gifted/talented assessment process is conducted and used by the selection committee in making identification decisions.	2.28.1 Additional data beyond that collected through the district's standard gifted/talented assessment process are considered, as needed, by the selection committee in making identification decisions in order to make the most appropriate placement.
2.29 Student progress/performance in response to gifted/talented services is periodically assessed using standards in the areas served and identified in the written plan. Results are communicated to parents or guardians.	

## SERVICE DESIGN

A flexible system of viable service options provides a research-based learning continuum that is developed and consistently implemented throughout the district to meet the needs and reinforce the strengths and interests of gifted/talented students.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
3.1 Identified gifted/talented students are assured an array of learning opportunities that are commensurate with their abilities and that emphasize content in the four (4) foundation curricular areas. Services are available during the school day as well as the entire school year. Parents are informed of these options (19 TAC §89.3(3)).	3.1.1 Specialists and advocates for gifted/talented students are consulted in the development of program policies and options.



<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
3.2 Information concerning special opportunities (i.e. contests, academic recognition, summer camps, community programs, volunteer opportunities, etc.) is available and disseminated to parents and community members.	
3.3 Services for gifted/talented students are comprehensive, structured, sequenced, and appropriately challenging, including options in the four (4) foundation curricular areas.	3.3.1 Services for gifted/talented students are comprehensive, structured, sequenced, and appropriately challenging, including options in the four (4) foundation curricular areas: arts, leadership, creativity, and career & technical education.
3.4 Gifted/talented students are ensured opportunities to work together as a group, work with other students, and work independently during the school day as well as the entire school year as a direct result of gifted/talented service options (19 TAC §89.3(1)).	
3.5 Flexible grouping patterns and independent investigations are provided throughout the program design/services.	
3.6 Out-of-school options relevant to the students' areas of strength are provided by school districts whenever possible (19 TAC §89.3(3)).	3.6.1 Options that meet the needs of gifted/talented students are available on a continuous basis outside the regular school day.
3.7 Local board policies are developed that are consistent with State Board of Education rules on credit by examination (19 TAC §74.24) and early high school graduation opportunities (TEC §56.203).	
3.8 Acceleration and flexible pacing are employed, allowing students to learn at the pace and level appropriate for their abilities and skills, and are actively facilitated by district administrators, counselors, and teachers.	
3.9 Local board policies are developed that enable students to participate in dual/concurrent enrollment, distance learning opportunities, and accelerated summer programs if available.	

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
3.10 A person who has thirty (30) hours of professional learning in gifted/talented education and annual six (6) hour professional learning updates as required in 19 TAC §89.2(1) is assigned to coordinate district level services for gifted/talented students in grades K–12.	3.10.1. A person or persons with a gifted/talented endorsement, supplementary certification, or advanced degree in gifted/talented education is assigned to coordinate the district’s K–12 gifted/talented education services.
3.11 Develop and implement services to address the social and emotional needs of gifted/talented students and their impact on student learning.	
	3.12.1 Gifted/Talented Education Plans for identified students detail the individual gifted/talented needs and services.

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Districts meet the needs of gifted/talented students by modifying the depth, complexity, and pacing of the curriculum and instruction ordinarily provided by the school.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
4.1 An array of appropriately challenging learning experiences in each of the four (4) foundation curricular areas is provided for gifted/talented students in grades K–12, and parents are informed of the opportunities (19TAC §89.3).	4.1.1 Curriculum options in intellectual, creative and/or artistic areas; leadership; and specific academic fields are provided for gifted/talented students.
4.2 Opportunities are provided for students to pursue areas of interest in selected disciplines through guided and independent research.	
4.3 A continuum of learning experiences is provided that leads to the development of advanced-level products and/or performances such as those provided through the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) (19 TAC §89.3(2)).	4.3.1 Students who have been served in a gifted program for one or more years are provided the opportunity, through gifted/talented curricula, to develop sophisticated products and/or performances assessed by external evaluators who are knowledgeable in the field that is the focus of the product.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
4.4 Participation in the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP), or other experiences that result in the development of sophisticated products and/or performances that are targeted to an audience outside the classroom, is available through gifted/talented curricula.	
4.5 Opportunities are provided to accelerate in areas of student strengths (19 TAC §89.3(4)).	
4.6 Flexible pacing is employed, allowing students to learn at the pace and level appropriate to their abilities and skills.	
4.7 Scheduling modifications are implemented in order to meet the identified needs of individual students.	
4.8 Provisions to improve services to gifted/talented students are included in district and campus improvement plans (TEC §§11.251-11.253).	4.8.1 Resources and release time for staff are provided for curriculum development for gifted/talented services.
4.9 Educators adapt and/or modify the core or standard curriculum to meet the needs of gifted/talented students and those with special needs such as twice-exceptional, highly gifted, and English learners.	
	4.10.1 Release time and/or extended contracts are provided to enable teachers at all levels to form vertical teams that coordinate gifted/talented services in the district.

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

All personnel involved in the planning, creation, delivery and administration of services to gifted/talented students possess the knowledge required to develop and provide differentiated programs and services.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<p>5.1 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)).</p>	
<p>5.2 Teachers without 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)).</p>	
<p>5.3 Teachers are encouraged to obtain additional professional learning in their teaching discipline and/or in gifted/talented education.</p>	<p>5.3.1 District support in the form of release time or tuition assistance is available for graduate studies in gifted/talented education for teachers who provide services to gifted/talented students.</p> <p>5.3.2 Teachers are encouraged to pursue advanced degrees in their teaching discipline and/or in gifted/talented education.</p> <p>5.3.3 Release time is provided for teachers and administrators to visit campuses or districts that have model services for gifted/talented students.</p>

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
5.4 A written plan for professional learning in the area of gifted/talented education that is based on identified needs is implemented and updated annually.	
5.5 Opportunities for professional learning in the area of gifted/talented education are provided on a regular basis, and information on them is disseminated to professionals in the district.	5.5.1 Mentors and others who offer specialized instruction for gifted/talented students are provided training or resources to increase their understanding of the nature and needs of these students and the district goals for the students, including the state goal for gifted/talented students.
5.6 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).	5.6.1 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 based on evaluation of G/T services. 5.6.2 All staff receive an orientation to the district's gifted/talented identification processes and gifted/talented services provided by the district or campus, along with training on the nature and needs of the gifted/talented.
5.7 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.	
5.8 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)).	5.8.1 Administrators who have authority for gifted/talented service decisions receive a minimum of six (6) hours annually of professional development in gifted/talented education.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
5.9 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)).	5.9.1 Counselors who work with gifted/talented students receive a minimum of six (6) hours annually of professional development in gifted/talented education.
5.10 Local district boards of trustees are trained to ensure program accountability based on the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students (19 TAC §89.5).	5.10.1 Local district boards of trustees are encouraged to pursue professional development on the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.
5.11 Evaluation of professional learning activities for gifted/talented education is ongoing and related to state teacher gifted/talented education standards, and the results of the evaluation are used in making decisions regarding future staff development plans (19 TAC §89.5 and TAC §233.1).	5.11.1 A long-range plan for professional development that culminates in graduate studies in gifted/talented education, supplemental gifted/talented certification, advanced degrees in gifted/talented education, and/or their teaching discipline is pursued by a majority of the teachers who provide advanced-level and/or gifted/talented services.
5.12 Gifted/talented services staff are involved in planning, reviewing, and/or conducting the district's gifted/talented professional learning.	

## FAMILY/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The district involves family and community members in services designed for gifted/talented students throughout the school year.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
6.1 Written policies are developed on gifted/talented student identification, approved by the local board of trustees and disseminated to parents (19 TAC §89.1).	

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
6.2 Input from family and community representatives on gifted/talented identification and assessment procedures is invited annually.	
6.3 Information is shared or meetings are held annually requesting parent and community recommendations regarding students who may need gifted/talented services.	
6.4 The opportunity to participate in a parent association and/or gifted/talented advocacy groups is provided to parents and community members.	6.4.1 Support and assistance is provided to the district in gifted/talented service planning and improvement by a parent/community advisory committee.
6.5 An array of learning opportunities is provided for gifted/talented students in grades K–12, and parents are informed of all gifted/talented services and opportunities (19 TAC §89.3).	
6.6 Products and achievements of gifted/talented students are shared with the community.	
6.7 Orientation and periodic updates are provided for parents of students who are identified as gifted/talented and provided gifted/talented services.	
6.8 The effectiveness of gifted/talented services is evaluated annually, shared with the board of trustees, and the data is used to modify and update district and campus improvement plans. Parents are included in the evaluation process, and the outcomes and findings of the evaluation are shared with parents (TEC §§11.251–11.253).	
	6.9.1 Community volunteers are organized and provided an orientation about working with gifted/talented students.

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
	6.10.1 Liaisons with business and community organizations are established, and the use of community resources (retired community members, foundations, universities, etc.) is evident in the service options available for gifted/talented students.
	6.11.1 Professional development opportunities are offered by the gifted/talented coordinator in collaboration with the parent advisory committee to staff, parents, and community members.
	6.12.1 Presentations are given to community groups and organizations to solicit their involvement in services for gifted/talented students.
	6.13.1 A data bank of resources is compiled for use by gifted/talented students, their teachers, and their parents.
	6.14.1 Support for mentorship and independent study programs in the district is solicited by the parent/community advisory committee.



## Exhibit E

*Texas Performance Standards  
Project (TPSP)  
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## Texas Performance Standards Project

The Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) is a resource for providing differentiated instruction to G/T students and can be used for providing enhanced academic opportunities for all students. The TPSP provides a coherent package of standards, curriculum, and assessments for use in G/T programs from kindergarten through high school. The goal of the TPSP is to provide resources for G/T teachers and students that allow students to create professional quality work in alignment with the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*.

At each grade level, the TPSP provides guidelines for independent learning experiences and research projects that teachers can adapt and use with their G/T students. The projects, or “tasks”, are based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and focus on the foundation content areas of English language arts and reading, mathematics, science, and social studies with interdisciplinary connections.

The TPSP website provides materials for the following grade-level spans:

- Primary Grades (K-2)
- Intermediate Grades (3-5)
- Middle School Grades (6-8)
- High School/Exit Level (9-12)

For kindergarten through grade 10, the TPSP offers two or more interdisciplinary units (tasks) per grade level. Aligned with the TEKS, each task includes guided instruction and opportunities for independent research in multiple content areas. At exit level, the TPSP supports an extended independent study under the guidance of a mentor who is an expert in the student’s area of study.

The TPSP can be used to design or enhance your G/T programming, and resources can be incorporated into any existing class. At the exit level, course credit may be earned for independent studies conducted in state-approved courses.

### TPSP Tasks

Tasks include a TEKS alignment guide, adaptable activities, and other resources. The structure and content of the tasks provide the following:

- Wide variety of choices for student learning
- Flexibility to pursue topics of student interest
- Real-life research experiences
- Focus on a high-quality product and presentation

The tasks were designed to give G/T teachers the flexibility to integrate the TPSP into existing programs and instruction. The tasks are open ended and can be extended and adapted. The tasks provide teachers with a structured curriculum, but teachers still have the freedom to make appropriate adjustments and enhancements. For example, teachers can extend tasks into community service projects, if appropriate.

In grades K-10, the TPSP tasks consist of two phases.

- Phase I, Learning Experiences, involves teacher-driven instruction. In the lower grades, tasks require more teacher guidance than in the upper grades.
- Phase II, Independent Research, allows students to immerse themselves in a project and develop a high- quality end product that demonstrates their knowledge and skills.

At exit-level, tasks consist of an extended independent research project that is completely student driven and based on a student-chosen topic of interest that may be outside the traditional high school curriculum. The project structure should allow for the long-term development of a question or idea that is significant to professionals in the student's specified field of study. Projects should allow students to demonstrate sophisticated and advanced research methods and the use of technology appropriate to the field of study. Over the course of a year, each student works with a mentor who is a professional in the student's field of student to create a unique, innovative final product or performance that is of professional quality.

# Exhibit F

## *Bright Child/Gifted Child*

<b>BRIGHT CHILD</b>	<b>GIFTED CHILD</b>
Knows the answer	Asks the questions – sometimes deep probing questions of an abstract nature
Is interested	Is highly curious
Is attentive	Is mentally and physically involved
Has good ideas	Has wild, silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well
Answers the questions	Discusses in detail, elaborates
Top Group	Beyond the group
Listens with interest	Shows strong feelings and opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults or older children or seeks out other very bright or gifted peers
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences and opens up new questions
Completes assignments	Initiates projects
Is receptive	Is intense
Copies accurately	Creates a new design
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning – but may hate school
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Technician	Inventor – loves construction toys
Good Memorizer	Good guesser – draws on vast information store
Is alert	Is keenly observant – seems to remember fine details
Is pleased with own learning	Is highly self-critical – can be a perfectionist to the point of tantrums when young
Enjoys straight-forward and/or sequential presentation	Thrives on complexity – needs the whole picture. Requires a gestalt approach.

Exhibit G

*Subject Area Gifted And  
Talented Characteristics*

# Gifted and Talented Characteristics

Although wide variations exist among the areas of giftedness, the following lists are characteristics or traits that a gifted and talented individual may possess within each area. Please keep these characteristics in mind when nominating students for gifted and talented services.

LANGUAGE ARTS	SOCIAL SCIENCE/HUMANITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extensive vocabulary</li> <li>▪ Keen power of observation</li> <li>▪ Good memory</li> <li>▪ Perceives abstract ideas rapidly</li> <li>▪ Ability to portray to others feelings, actions, personalities, situations</li> <li>▪ Possesses creativity and inventiveness</li> <li>▪ Has varied interests</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates an intellectual playfulness with words</li> <li>▪ Writes fluently with insight and strong personal voice</li> <li>▪ Sees relationships among apparently unrelated ideas</li> <li>▪ Reads avidly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Possesses a large store house of information about a variety of topics</li> <li>▪ Quick mastery and recall of factual information</li> <li>▪ Rapid insight into cause-effect relationships</li> <li>▪ Ready grasp of underlying principles—quickly makes valid generalizations</li> <li>▪ Keen and alert observer</li> <li>▪ Becomes absorbed and involved in certain topics or problems</li> <li>▪ Prefers to work independently—requires little attention from teacher</li> <li>▪ Interested in many “adult” problems</li> <li>▪ Likes to organize and bring structure to things, people, and situations</li> <li>▪ Quite concerned with right/wrong, good/bad</li> <li>▪ Great deal of curiosity about many things</li> <li>▪ Generates a large number of ideas or solutions to problems and questions</li> <li>▪ Uninhibited in expressions of opinion</li> <li>▪ Keen sense of humor</li> <li>▪ Willingly tries out different media</li> <li>▪ Elaborates on ideas from other people</li> </ul>
MATHEMATICS	SCIENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Solves problems, yet sometimes not able to explain procedures</li> <li>▪ Performs computations easily and accurately, but resists extensive calculating</li> <li>▪ Hypothesizes frequently</li> <li>▪ Works a long time on challenging problems although there may be no solution</li> <li>▪ Is preoccupied with scales, statistics, records, almanacs, globes, maps</li> <li>▪ Devises own languages, codes, number systems</li> <li>▪ Is sensitive to patterns in shapes</li> <li>▪ Ability to translate unfamiliar abstraction into a familiar form</li> <li>▪ Can translate the familiar into an abstraction</li> <li>▪ Intuitively solve seemingly difficult problems mentally</li> <li>▪ Computes answers in a non-traditional manner</li> <li>▪ Uses unusual techniques in problem solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Questions critically</li> <li>▪ Visualizes mentally</li> <li>▪ Thinks critically—abstraction, conceptualization, and synthesis</li> <li>▪ Attends to details related to the task at hand</li> <li>▪ Is persistent in the pursuit of answers and solutions</li> <li>▪ Sees alternatives and offers several solutions</li> <li>▪ Makes generalizations</li> <li>▪ Ability to use resources with the intent to find answers</li> <li>▪ Ready grasp of underlying principles and quickly makes valid deductions</li> <li>▪ Keen and alert observer</li> <li>▪ Tries to understand complicated material</li> <li>▪ Reasons things out for him/herself</li> <li>▪ Sees logical/common sense answers</li> <li>▪ Is easily bored with mundane or routine</li> <li>▪ Is a self-starter—intrinsically motivated</li> <li>▪ Shows an interest in science</li> </ul>

*Subject Area Characteristics taken from “The Identification of Gifted and Talented Students”*

# Exhibit H

## *G/T Resources*

The Texas Education Code on Gifted Education: TEC Subchapter D. Educational Programs for Gifted and Talented Students:

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.29.htm#29.121>

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.42.htm#42.156>

The Texas Administrative Code on Gifted Education:

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter089/ch089a.html>

The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6420>

The Texas Performance Standards Project:

<http://www.texaspsp.org>

Future Problem Solving Program International:

<http://www.fpspi.org>

Texas Future Problem Solving Program:

<http://www.txfpsp.org>

Gifted/Talented Teacher Toolkit:

[http://www.texaspsp.org/toolkit/GT\\_Teacher\\_Toolkit.html](http://www.texaspsp.org/toolkit/GT_Teacher_Toolkit.html)

Gifted/Talented Teacher Toolkit II:

<http://www.texaspsp.org/toolkit2/Toolkit2.html>

Lighthouse Initiative for Texas Classrooms:

<http://www.tealighthouse.org>

Equity in G/T:

<http://www.gtequity.org>

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC):

<http://www.nagc.org>

Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented (TAGT):

<http://www.txgifted.org>

Hoagies' Gifted Education Page:

<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org>