



## Gifted and Talented Services 2023-2024 Handbook

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# FBISD GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

## Philosophy

The Board believes every student shall be inspired and equipped to reach his or her full potential in a nurturing and innovative learning environment that meets his or her unique educational, social, and emotional needs.

## Core Beliefs

Fort Bend ISD Gifted and Talented services support the following beliefs:

- Gifted and Talented children and youth exist within all ethnic and socioeconomic groups.
- Gifted and Talented students' needs are best met through the collaboration of students, educators, parents, and community members.
- Gifted and Talented students require differentiated curriculum in an appropriate program to meet their unique needs and to reach their potential.
- Schools promote intellectual growth by providing challenging and demanding learning experiences for Gifted and Talented students that lead to the development of advanced-level products.

## Texas Definition of Gifted and Talented

According to Texas Education Code §29.121, 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.

## Policy

Fort Bend ISD Board Policies define Gifted and Talented services. These include the following:

- AE-Local – District core beliefs and commitments
- EHBB – Legal, Local– District processes for the Gifted and Talented Program

## State Goal for Services for Gifted Students

Students who participate in services designed for Gifted and Talented students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that reflect individuality and creativity, and are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience or environment. High school graduates who have participated in services for Gifted and Talented students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services (Texas Education Agency, 2009, p. v).

## Common Characteristics of Gifted Students

While it is unusual for a child to manifest all the following characteristics, gifted students may exhibit many of these, even at an early age (Blum, 1985; Webb, Gore, Amend, & DeVries, 2007):

- Possesses a large storehouse of information about a variety of topics
- Prefers complex and challenging tasks
- Sees connections between apparently unconnected ideas and activities
- Prefers to work independently
- Prefers older companions
- Is a perfectionist
- Has a sophisticated sense of humor
- Loves puzzles, mazes and numbers
- Can elaborate on ideas
- Enjoys solving problems, especially with numbers and puzzles
- Is persistent
- Reads with comprehension at an early age
- Shows quick mastery and recall of factual information
- Has insight into cause-effect relationships
- Has a ready grasp of underlying principles
- Is a keen and alert observer
- Exhibits advanced vocabulary for age or grade level
- Displays curiosity about many topics
- Has a passionate interest area
- Is intense; gets totally absorbed in activities and thoughts
- Displays asynchronous development...physical skills may lag behind cognitive abilities, etc.
- Unusual alertness, even in infancy
- Rapid learner; puts thoughts together quickly
- Excellent memory
- Unusually large vocabulary and complex sentence structure for age
- Often self-taught reading and writing skills as preschooler
- Deep, intense feelings and reactions, highly sensitive
- Thinking is abstract, complex, logical, and insightful
- Idealism and sense of justice at early age
- Concern with social and political issues and injustices
- Longer attention span and intense concentration
- Wide range of interests (or extreme focus in one area)
- Puts idea or things together that are not typical
- Desire to organize people/things through games or complex schemas
- Vivid imaginations (and imaginary playmates when in preschool)

### Twice Exceptional Students

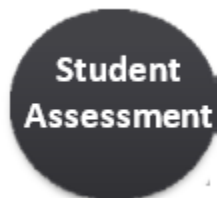
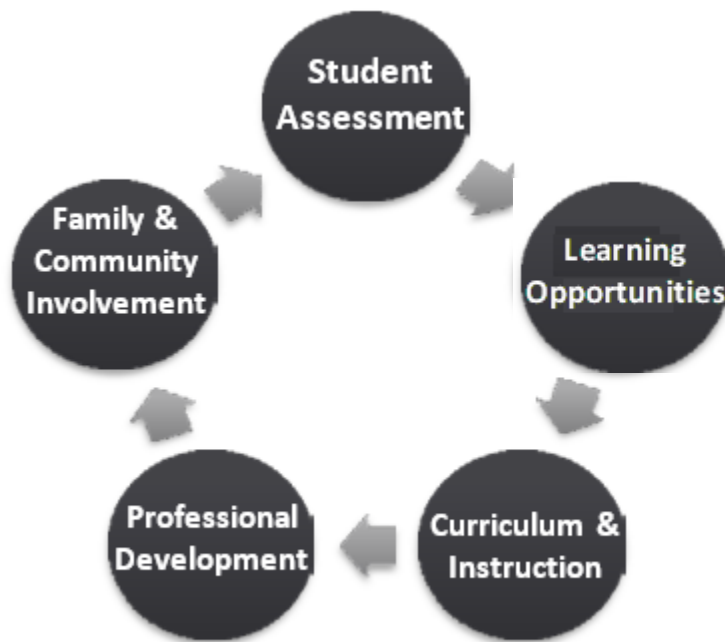
The term “twice-exceptional” is used to signify the presence of gifted potential and a disability. Collaboration between classroom teachers, special educators, gifted educators and parents needs to implement strategies to meet the diverse needs of twice-exceptional students. The following characteristics may be among those observed in twice-exceptional students, particularly those with learning disabilities (Higgins, Baldwin & Pereles, 2000; Nielsen, Higgins, Wilkinson, & Webb, 1994; Weinfeld, Barnes-Robinson, Jeweler, & Shevitz, 2006):

#### Characteristics of Twice Exceptional Gifted Students

- Struggle with basic skills due to cognitive processing difficulties; need to learn compensatory strategies in order to master basic skills
- Show high verbal ability but extreme difficulty in written language area; may use language in inappropriate ways and at inappropriate times
- Demonstrate strong observation skills but have difficulty with memory skills
- Excel in solving “real-world” problems; have outstanding critical thinking and decision-making skills; often independently develop compensatory skills
- Show attention deficit problems but may concentrate for long periods in areas of interest
- Have strong questioning attitudes; may appear disrespectful when questioning information, facts, etc. presented by teacher
- Display unusual imagination; frequently generate original and at times rather “bizarre” ideas; extremely divergent in thought; may appear to daydream when generating ideas
- May be unwilling to take risks regarding academics; take risks in non-school areas without consideration of consequences
- Can use humor to divert attention from school failure; may use humor to make fun of peers or to avoid trouble
- Appears immature since they may use anger, crying, withdrawal, etc. to express feelings and to deal with difficulties
- Require frequent teacher support and feedback in deficit areas; highly independent in other areas; can appear stubborn and inflexible
- May not be accepted by other children and may feel isolated. May be perceived as loners since they do not fit typical model for either a gifted or a learning-disabled student
- Poor memory for isolated facts, but excellent comprehension
- Preference for complex and challenging materials; easily distracted
- Lacking self-regulation and goal-setting strategies
- Boredom with rote or memorization tasks, but often disorganized
- Skill in manipulating people and situations, but poor interpersonal skills
- Poor performance on simple facts such as addition and subtraction, but capable of complex, conceptual manipulations such as algebraic concepts

## Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted Students

Pursuant to Section 29.123 of the Texas Education Code (TEC), the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted Students forms the basis of Gifted and Talented services and accountability. Districts are accountable for services as described in the “in compliance” column of the Texas State Plan where performance measures are included for five aspects of GT services: student assessment, service design, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and family and community involvement. The state plan also offers standards for “recommended” and “exemplary” performance as viable targets for districts seeking excellence in gifted services.



### STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

*Assessment instruments and gifted/talented identification procedures provide students an opportunity to demonstrate their diverse talents and abilities (Texas Plan, TEA, 2009).*

Fort Bend ISD has board-approved identification procedures and processes for students K-11. These procedures meet state requirements in Texas Education Code §29.121 and Texas Administrative Code §89.1. These procedures are designed to ensure the identification of any students who perform, or show potential for performing, at remarkably high levels within our District. A comprehensive identification process consisting of three phases: referral, assessment, and identification determines if a student needs Gifted and Talented services in FBISD. This process is managed through an online system created in 2017 that eliminated nearly 20,000 sheets of paper from the process and increased consistency and equity in processing across the District. The online system allows students to be referred at the click of a button! Click this [link](#) during the open referral window to access the online referral form.

### Referrals

Each year, the initial referral window opens on the first day of school and remains open until September 30. Parents, teachers, administrators, and counselors may refer students who are not receiving Gifted and Talented services for evaluation if they believe the student exhibits characteristics indicating giftedness. Students may also refer themselves.

A second referral window will be available for one month in the spring semester for any student who enrolls in the District after the closing of the fall nomination window and those currently identified for services. The actual dates for this window shall be announced through various District communications.

#### Referral Reminders

- Students may be referred for GT Evaluation if they are in grades K – 11 and are enrolled in an FBISD campus.
- Communication of the Gifted and Talented referral window occurs via campus and District websites, campus newsletters, and messages sent by the District and campuses.
- Consent to be evaluated for Gifted and Talented services must be provided by the parent when anyone other than a parent makes the referral.
- Fees for the re-evaluation of students already identified for services are the responsibility of the student and his or her family. Fees must be received no later than 5 days prior to the Spring Testing Window.

### Assessment/Testing

Following the referral process, student data will be collected and evaluated through the District identification procedure. In grades K-11, qualitative and quantitative data are collected from three (3) or more sources and used to determine if the data indicates a need for Gifted and Talented services in FBISD.

#### Quantitative Data

- Cognitive Ability Test consists of three parts:
  - Verbal
  - Quantitative
  - Non-verbal - reasoning and problem solving using spatial symbols

#### Qualitative Data

- Teacher inventories serve as an instrument for identifying observed behaviors in a school setting associated with Gifted and Talented children.
- Parent inventories serve as an instrument for identifying observed behaviors at home and in the community associated with Gifted and Talented children.



The fall testing window is a two-week window, which typically occurs in October or November. The spring testing window is a one-week window, which typically occurs in February. Students test during school hours, according to their specific campus-testing calendar. Campuses will notify parents of their *tentative* testing dates.

**Allowable Accommodations**

The following accommodations are allowed on the Cognitive Abilities test for students who have any of these supports documented in their IEP.

Accommodation	Reason	Levels 5/6, 7	Levels 9 and up
Repeated Directions		★	★
Test Administered by ELL teacher	ELL	★	★
Separate Location	IEP/504	★	★
Large-Print Edition* <i>Prior notification needed for ordering</i>	Visual Impairment, 504/IEP	★	★
Assistance with Answer Document	Physical Impairment, 504/IEP	★	★
Small Group/Individual	ELL, IEP/504	★	★
Directions Administered in a Language Other Than English	ELL	★	★
Word to Word Dictionary	ELL		★
Extended Time on Verbal Battery	ELL		★
Verbal Battery Read Aloud	ELL, IEP/504		★
Verbal Battery Omitted	ELL		★

### Identification

In FBISD, Gifted and Talented identification procedures provide students an opportunity to demonstrate their diverse talents and abilities. The process includes:

1. Student data is plotted on the Fort Bend ISD Gifted and Talented Identification Profile.
2. Students may be identified to receive services in the core academic areas in the following combinations:
  - Math and Science
  - Language Arts and Social Studies
  - All four core areas
3. Parents will be able to see the results of the District GT identification process in the [GT app](#) once the identification process is complete.

### Additional Procedures

#### Appeals

A parent may appeal an identification decision by submitting an appeal through the [GT Referral App](#) within ten (10) school days from the date of the identification notification.

#### Reasons a Parent Might Submit an Appeal

- 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

Once the appeal window closes,

- The District Appeals Committee holds appeals meetings to review student data against any new evidence submitted.
- The District Appeals Committee responds with their appeal decision within ten (10) school days of the appeals meeting.

### Gifted and Talented Services Timeline

Students in grades 1 – 11 who are identified to receive Gifted and Talented services in FBISD will begin services the following school year. Kindergarten students will begin receiving services by March 1 of the current school year. Services are provided in the four core areas according to each student's identification.

### Gifted Learning Plan

The Fort Bend ISD Gifted and Talented Learning Plan (GTLP) is a written record of the Gifted and Talented programming utilized with each Gifted and Talented child. It is considered in educational planning and decision-making for each Gifted and Talented student. GTLPs are dynamic, working documents that are developed and reviewed through collaborative efforts of the teacher(s), parents, and student. GTLPs are signed annually by parents, the child's teacher(s), the student (as appropriate), and other personnel involved in their development.

The Gifted and Talented Learning Plans (GTLP) will contain:

- Evidence for identification (data used during the identification process)
- Areas of identified giftedness (indicate the area(s) of Gifted and Talented services provided)
- Goals (Academic and Social & Emotional)
- Progress reporting (revisiting progress made toward annual goals)
- Programming Options (specific strategies, programs, activities, etc.)

The designated GT Learning Plan Monitoring teacher will implement individual Gifted and Talented Learning Plans (GTLP) for Gifted and Talented students, grades 1-12. In meeting the provisions for GTLPs, each GT Learning Plan Monitoring teacher will maintain each Gifted and Talented student's GTLP in Skyward. Teachers will conduct progress checks, help students to establish action steps/weekly goals, identify resources and/or additional support needed to reach goal.

### Gifted and Talented Identification Transfer

Districts across the nation have varying procedures and processes for determining the need for Gifted and Talented services based on the service model provided to students in their district.

As students enroll in Fort Bend ISD from other public-school districts, the data from the previous school district must be evaluated to determine the need for GT services in Fort Bend ISD. Parents must indicate previous GT identification on the enrollment form.

The data collected will be evaluated for multiple data points:

- Type of Assessment used (cognitive abilities testing or achievement testing)
- Screening Process (qualitative and quantitative data available)
- Screening Criteria (scores fall within Gifted and Talented range)

The campus will obtain the student records from the previous public school district and submit a request for data evaluation to the Gifted and Talented Department. Upon evaluation, the District selection committee will decide on the need for Gifted and Talented services in Fort Bend ISD.

## Furlough and Exit Provisions

### Furlough

A furlough allows a student to take a “leave of absence” from the Gifted and Talented program for specified reasons, and for a designated period without being exited from the program.

- The parent/guardian of the student may request a furlough.
- A furlough may be recommended by the GT Counselor or GT Administrator due to the student’s unsatisfactory performance within the structure of the Gifted and Talented program.
- The GT counselor *must* have a conference with the student and/or parents to document the need for the furlough. Written communication *must* be provided to parents.
- A Gifted and Talented Furlough form must be completed and must specify the length of time requested. District policy prohibits furloughs longer than one consecutive year.
- While on furlough, the student’s progress shall be monitored on a regular basis by a Gifted and Talented teacher using a variety of methods.
- At the end of the furlough period, the student’s progress shall be reassessed and the student may reenter the Gifted and Talented program, be exited from the program, or be placed on another furlough if the length of the first furlough was less than one year.

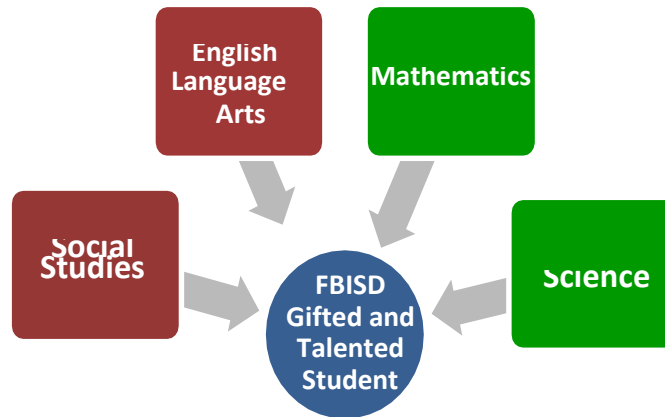
### Exit Provisions

Students who have participated in the District’s Gifted and Talented program shall continue in the program unless their performance is not commensurate with expected abilities of Gifted and Talented students. A student may be removed from the program at any time the GT Counselor has had a conference with the student and/or the parent and has documented the use of established exiting procedures.



## Learning Opportunities

*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. (Texas Plan, TEA, 2009).*



### Elementary Service Design

#### Cluster Grouping

Grouping Gifted and Talented students together provides opportunities for the students to work with cognitive peers. Students identified for GT services in grades K – 5 are cluster grouped with Gifted and Talented trained teachers. Cluster grouping places a select number of Gifted and Talented students together for instruction in the appropriate content area(s) for which they have been identified.

- The Gifted and Talented trained teacher adapts the curriculum and environment for their Gifted and Talented learners with strategies such as:
  - Curricular compacting
  - Lesson Differentiation to increase depth and complexity; and
  - Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP) or Innovation Hour programming.

### Secondary Service Design

#### Advanced Placement

##### *Advanced Placement and Advanced Academic Placement Courses (AP and AAC)*

Placing Gifted and Talented students in AAC and AP classes puts them in rigorous, college level courses designed to promote acceleration.

- The AP Program is a nationally recognized set of rigorous classes, where students study advanced and in-depth material at an accelerated pace.
- Identified Gifted and Talented students in grades 6 - 12 are required to enroll in the AAC or AP course(s) offered in the academic fields for which they are identified.
- Core AAC/AP teachers who teach Gifted and Talented students are trained and provide differentiated instruction for Gifted and Talented students according to their needs.
- Students may pay for AP exams for the opportunity to earn college credit for a variety of courses.

## **Acceleration**

### **Credit by Exam**

Credit by Exam (CBE) may be given when there has been no prior instruction for the tested content.

- To earn credit for an elementary grade level, students must score 80% on each subject area exam for the grade level.
- To earn credit for a middle school course, students must score 80% on the exam to receive course credit.
- To earn credit for a high school course, students may test with the following exams:
  - CBE; Passing score of 80% or higher (Not available for world languages)
  - AP Exam; Passing score 3 or higher
  - CLEP Exam; Passing score 60 or higher
  - District developed World Language exams. Passing score 80% or higher
  - Credit for all courses earned with Credit By Exam, including AP and CLEP exams, will receive regular/non-weighted course credit

### **Curricular Compacting**

After showing a level of proficiency in the standard curriculum, a student may be allowed to exchange instructional time for other learning experiences. These learning experiences should provide greater depth and complexity to challenge and engage the student.

### **Accelerated Courses**

In middle school, students can take high school courses in mathematics and world languages. Students in high school can take Advanced Placement courses or Dual Credit courses. These courses provide the opportunity to earn college credits, which may be applied to a degree plan once enrolled in college.

## **Additional Opportunities for Identified Students**

### **Middle School Gifted and Talented Academy**

- The Middle School Gifted and Talented Academy is housed at Quail Valley Middle School. The academy serves Gifted and Talented students in grades 6-8.
- Instruction is designed to enhance self-awareness, self-efficacy, problem solving and the learning of critical and creative thinking skills that empower students.
- Fifth grade students who are identified to receive Gifted and Talented services in FBISD and who reside in the District during the application window (January) may apply for admission.
- Students are admitted using a lottery system until all seats are filled.
- Students who do not receive an invitation to attend the Gifted and Talented Academy will receive Gifted and Talented services at their zoned campuses.

### High School Gifted and Talented Mentorship

- The Gifted and Talented Mentorship program is an innovative course, which serves a small number of students who have developed an authentic research question.
- Enrolled Gifted and Talented students may apply during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year for consideration for the senior cohort of students.
- Students explore complex thought, expand critical thinking, consider novel problem-solving strategies, engage in original research, and project development while working alongside a professional mentor.
- Classes and mentoring occur outside of the school day and students must have transportation to the designated classroom site and their accepted mentorship site.

### Enrichment

In addition to the differentiated instruction provided during the school day, campuses provide a variety of enrichment programs to students outside the school day. Options may include but are not limited to those listed below. This is a list of opportunities throughout the District. Please contact your child's campus directly for other campus-based opportunities.

Examples of Campus Enrichment Opportunities			
Academic Decathlon	9 – 12	National History Day	6 – 12
Academic Octathlon	9 – 10	National Elementary Honor Society	4 – 6
Academic Pentathlon	7 – 8	National Honor Society	10 – 12
American Mathematics Competition 8, 10, 12	6 – 12	National Junior Honor Society	6 – 9
Bilingual Spelling Bee	3 – 5	National Speech/Debate Contest	9 – 12
Coding Clubs	3 – 12	Robotics	6 – 8
Destination ImagiNation	K – 12	Science Bowl	6 – 12
Engineering First and Best	9 - 12	Science & Engineering Fairs	6 – 12
Future Problem Solvers	4 – 12	Science Olympiad	K – 12
GT Project Showcase	K – 5	Spelling Bee	2 – 8
Math League	3 – 12	TMSCA (Texas Math and Science Coaches Association) contest	6 – 12
Mathcounts	6 – 8	UIL Academics	9 – 12
Mini-Mathletes	4 – 5	24 Competition	4 – 8

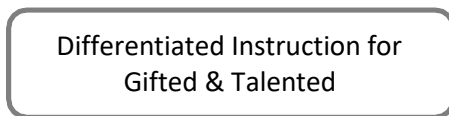


## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

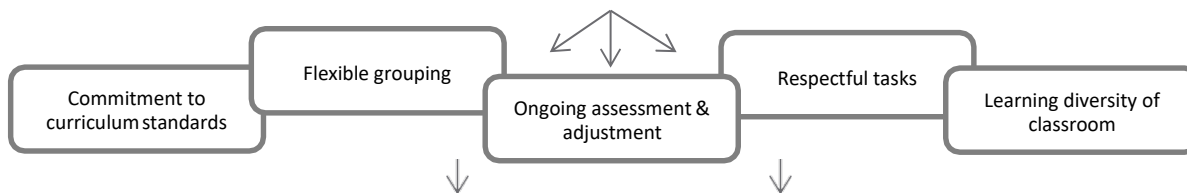
*Districts meet the needs of gifted/talented students by modifying the depth, complexity, and pacing of the curriculum and instruction ordinarily provided by the district. (Texas Plan, TEA, 2009).*

“Identified gifted/talented students are assured an array of learning opportunities that are commensurate with their abilities” (Texas Plan, TEA, 2009, 2.1C). This begins with high quality, focused instruction provided to *all* students. The following flow chart depicts the means of differentiation as published by the U.S. Department of Education (Tomlinson & Allen, 2010, p. 3):

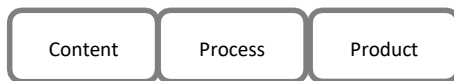
### Differentiation



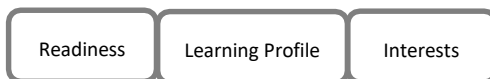
Is a teacher’s response to learner’s needs by using general principles of differentiation such as:



Teachers can differentiate depth and complexity within:



According to a student’s:



In addition to differentiation, teachers of the Gifted and Talented are expected to elevate instruction and assessment to include student responses that require learners to analyze, evaluate, and create original thought.

### Sophisticated Learning Products

The Texas Performance Standard Project (TPSP) is designed to provide learning experiences and research opportunities for GT students and has been implemented at the elementary level in FBISD.

- Projects are based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and focus on the core areas with interdisciplinary connections.
- Students can present their projects at the end of the year at a campus Gifted and Talented Showcase and possibly at the District Gifted and Talented Showcase.
- At the secondary level, Science Fair and History Fair provide students similar opportunities to conduct research, develop sophisticated learning products and present to authentic audiences.





## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*All personnel involved in the planning, creation, and delivery of services to gifted/talented students possess the knowledge required to develop and provide appropriate options and differentiated curricula (Texas Plan, TEA, 2009).*

The Texas State Plan (2009) states: “A minimum of thirty clock hours of professional development... 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 complete the thirty (30) hours of professional development prior to their assignment to the district’s gifted/talented services or within their first semester (19 TAC 89.2(1)).”

### Gifted Education Standards

The state of Texas also possesses a set of specific standards for teachers of the Gifted and Talented. These seven standards are as follows:

- Standard I. The teacher of Gifted and Talented students understands and applies knowledge of the historical, legal, and conceptual foundations of gifted education.
- Standard II. The teacher of Gifted and Talented students has comprehensive knowledge of the cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics and needs of these students.
- Standard III. The teacher of Gifted and Talented students understands and applies knowledge of assessment issues relevant to Gifted and Talented students, including identification, diagnosis and evaluation.
- Standard IV. The teacher of Gifted and Talented students understands and applies knowledge of systematic program and curriculum design.
- Standard V. The teacher of Gifted and Talented students creates a learning environment that reflects research-supported instructional practices.
- Standard VI. The teacher of Gifted and Talented students collaborates and communicates with students and parents/guardians; colleagues and administrators; professionals in business, industry, and universities; and the public to support the education of Gifted and Talented students.
- Standard VII. The teacher of Gifted and Talented students fulfills professional roles and responsibilities and understands legal and ethical issues relevant to the education of these students. (Gifted and Talented Standards)

### Training Requirements

FBISD teachers are provided with opportunities to receive training from local, state, and nationally recognized leaders in gifted education through the District’s participation in the Houston Area Cooperative for the Gifted and Talented and associations with Region IV and the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented.

**Minimum Training Requirements**

<b>Initial or Foundation Teacher Training</b>	<b>30 hours</b>
Prior to teaching Gifted and Talented students, teachers must complete a 30-hour Gifted and Talented Foundation Training program.	
<b>Core Knowledge Area/Teacher Competency</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Hours</b>
Creativity & Instructional Strategies for Gifted Learners	6
Differentiated Curriculum for Gifted Learners	6
Identification & Assessment for Gifted Learners	6
Nature & Needs of Gifted Learners	6
Depth and Complexity	6
<b>Annual Update</b>	<b>6 hours</b>
Each additional year, teachers must receive 6 hours of Gifted and Talented training in any of the core knowledge areas.	

<b>Administrator and Counselor Training</b>	<b>6 hours</b>
Administrators and counselors who have authority for service decisions complete a minimum of 6 hours of professional development in the following areas.	
<b>Core Knowledge Area/Competency</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Hours</b>
Nature & Needs of Gifted Learners	3
Service Options for Gifted Learners	3

*Teachers, counselors and administrators are encouraged to participate in professional learning beyond the minimum required. The state offers a TeXes Gifted and Talented Supplement exam that teachers and administrators may choose to take, which is in addition to training requirements. Securing a Gifted and Talented Supplement through TEA certification exam does not waive training requirements.*

**AAC/AP Teachers**

- The thirty (30) hour foundation training may be obtained through one of the combinations shown below:
  - Nature and Needs of Gifted Students (6 Hours)
  - Identification and Assessment of Gifted Students (6 Hours)
  - Depth and Complexity (6 Hours)
  - College Board Approved Content Specific Courses (12 Hours of the 30-hour training programs below will be credited)
    - Laying the Foundation; or
    - AP Summer Institute



## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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

“The district involves family and community members in services designed for gifted/talented students throughout the school year” (Texas Plan, TEA, 2009). This is directly related to FBISD District goal 3, priority 2, which states: “Fort Bend ISD will demonstrate the development of systems that will be used to build, maintain and sustain a positive culture and climate and effective relationships among all stakeholders.

### GT Parent Advisory

The Fort Bend ISD GT Parent Advisory Committee (GTPAC) is an extension of the Gifted and Talented Department. The GTPAC provides insight, support, and encouragement to the Gifted and Talented Department and the Fort Bend ISD Gifted and Talented community to facilitate the continuous improvement and success of the Gifted and Talented program.

Members of the GTPAC are parents or guardians of children identified for Gifted and Talented services in Fort Bend ISD. Members may serve up to three years per campus as determined by the principal.

### The Fort Bend Association of Parents for Academic Excellence (PACE)

**PACE** is a private parent support and advocacy group that focuses on advocating for the educational needs of Gifted and Talented students. As stated on their website, [www.pacefortbend.org](http://www.pacefortbend.org), PACE provides an organized “voice” for parents, teachers, administrators, school board members and others concerned with the educational, psychological, and social needs of Gifted and Talented learners.

# Glossary

## Frequently Used Terms in Gifted Education (National Association of Gifted Children, 2013)

Ability Grouping	Class or group assignment based on observed behavior or performance. Ability grouping is not the same as tracking.
Accelerated Learning	A strategy of progressing through education at rates faster or ages younger than the norm.
Accountability	Holding students, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel responsible for instructional outcomes.
Advanced Level Products	Learning artifacts that showcase high level, rigorous instruction and learning often associated with student research and/or performance.
Advanced Placement	A program developed by the College Board where high schools offer courses that meet criteria established by institutions of higher education. In many instances, college credit may be earned with the successful completion of an AP exam in specific content areas. (Note Individuals interested in policies related to earning college credit should contact the college or university of their choice for specifics.)
Affective Curriculum	Curriculum that focuses on personal/social awareness, and includes the study of values, attitudes, and self.
Aptitude	An inclination to excel in the performance of a certain skill.
Asynchrony	A term used to describe disparate rates of intellectual, emotional, and physical rates of growth or development often displayed by gifted children.
At-Risk	A term used to describe students whose economic, physical, emotional, or academic needs go unmet or serve as barriers to talent recognition or development, thus putting them in danger of underachieving or dropping out.
Authentic Assessment	Evaluating student learning through the use of student portfolios, performance, or observations in place or in conjunction with more traditional measures of performance such as tests and written assignments. The process allows students to be evaluated using assessments that more closely resemble real world tasks, such as a scientific experiment to demonstrate understanding of the laws of motion.
Bloom's Taxonomy	Developed in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom, the taxonomy is often used to develop curriculum for gifted children. There are six levels within the taxonomy that move from basic to high levels of thinking. These include knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
Brainstorming	Brainstorming is an activity used to generate many creative ideas that have no right or wrong answers and are accepted without criticism. Effective brainstorming is characterized by fluency and flexibility of thought.
Cluster Grouping	A grouping assignment for gifted students in the regular heterogeneous classroom. Typically, five or six gifted students with similar needs, abilities, or interests are clustered in the same classroom, which allows the teacher to more efficiently differentiate assignments for a group of advanced learners rather than just one or two students.

Cognitive Ability	Brain-based skills we need to carry out any task from the simplest to the most complex. They have more to do with the mechanisms of how we learn, remember, problem-solve, and pay attention, rather than with any actual knowledge.
Concurrent or Dual Enrollment	Most often refers to high school students taking college courses, often for college credit. Dual enrollment is viewed as providing high school students benefits such as greater access to a wider range of rigorous academic and technical courses, savings in time and money on a college degree, promoting efficiency of learning, and enhancing admission to and retention in college. Dual credit results in college and high school credit. Concurrent enrollment results in college credit only. The terms may also be used to refer to middle grade students taking high school courses and earning credit towards graduation.
Cooperative Learning	An instructional method that allows students to work in small groups within the classroom, often with a division of assignment of several specific tasks or roles. This group strategy allows students to practice working in a group and taking leadership roles. However, when gifted students participate in cooperative learning groups intentionally clustered by mixed ability students, special care must be taken to differentiate tasks appropriately.
Creativity	The process of developing new, uncommon, or unique ideas. The federal definition of giftedness identifies creativity as a specific component of giftedness.
Criterion-Referenced Testing	An assessment that compares a student’s test performance to their mastery of a body of knowledge or specific skill rather than relating their scores to the performance of other students.
Curriculum Compacting	After showing a level of proficiency in the basic curriculum, a student can then be allowed to exchange instructional time for other learning experiences.
Differentiation	Modifying curriculum and instruction according to content, pacing, and/or product to meet unique student needs in the classroom.
Enrichment	Activities that add or go beyond the existing curriculum. Activities may occur in the classroom or in a separate setting.
Flexible Grouping	An instructional strategy where students are grouped together to receive appropriately challenging instruction. True flexible grouping permits students to move in and out of various grouping patterns, depending on the course content. Grouping can be determined by ability, size, and/or interest.
Gifted and Talented Students	The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act defines gifted and talented students as “Students, children, or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.” [Title IX, Part A, Definition 22. (2002)] Many states and districts follow the federal definition.
Heterogeneous Grouping	Grouping students by mixed ability or readiness levels in a heterogeneous classroom is one in which a teacher is expected to meet a broad range of student needs or readiness levels

Homogeneous	Grouping students by need, ability, or interest. Although variations between grouping students exist in a homogeneous classroom, the intent of this grouping pattern is to restrict the range of student readiness or needs that a teacher must address.
Independent Study	A self-directed learning strategy where the teacher acts as guide or facilitator and the student plays a more active role in designing and managing his or her own learning.
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	An IEP is a document that delineates special education services for special needs students. The IEP includes any modifications that are required in the regular classroom and any additional special programs or services. A Federal law and the majority of states do not require IEPs for gifted learners.
Intelligence	The ability to learn, reason and problem solve. Debate revolves around the nature of intelligence as to whether it is an innate quality or something that is developed as a result of interacting with the environment. Many researchers believe that it is a combination of the two.
Intelligence Quotient (IQ)	A numerical representation of intelligence. IQ is derived from dividing mental age (result from an intelligence test) by the chronological age times 100. Traditionally, an average IQ is considered to be 100.
Learning Styles	Preferred way(s) in which individuals interact or process new information across the three domains of learning identified in the taxonomy of education objectives: cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills) and affective (attitude). An individual's preferred learning style is how he/she learns best.
Mentor	A community member who shares his or her expertise with a student of similar career or field of study aspirations.
Norm-Referenced Testing	An assessment that compare an individual's results with a large group of individuals who have taken the same assessment (who are referred to as the norming group). Examples include the SAT and CogAT.
Portfolio Assessment	An alternative or supplement to traditional measures of giftedness, portfolios offer a collection of student work over time that can help to determine achievement and progress. Many of the elements found in portfolios cannot be captured by a standardized test.
Rubric	A rubric is a chart composed of criteria for evaluation and levels of fulfillment of those criteria. A rubric allows for standardized evaluation according to specified criteria, making grading simpler and more transparent.
Social-Emotional Needs	Gifted and talented students may have affective needs that include heightened or unusual sensitivity to self-awareness, emotions, and expectations of themselves or others, and a sense of justice, moral judgment, or altruism. Counselors working in this area may address issues such as perfectionism, depression, underachievement, or career planning.
Talent Development	Programs, curricula, and services for gifted and talented students that can best meet their needs, promote their achievements in life, and contribute to the enhancement of our society when schools identify students' specific talent strengths and focus educational services on these talents.

Telescoping	To cover the same amount of materials or activities in less time, thereby allowing more time for enrichment activities and projects that better suit the interests, needs, and readiness levels of gifted students.
Tiered Assignments	A differentiated instructional strategy in which all students work toward the same goal, but activities are geared toward each student's level of understanding.
Twice Exceptional	A term used to describe a student that is both gifted and disabled. These students may also be referred to as having dual exceptionalities or as being GT/LD.
Underachieving or Underachievement	A term used to describe the discrepancy between a student's performance and their potential, or ability to perform at a much higher level.

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