

Hughes Springs Independent School District Gifted and Talented Education Program



Policies and Procedures

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Definitions of Gifted and Talented

Federal

The United States Commissioner of Education defines gifted and talented in accordance with Public Law 91-230, Section 806, as:

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

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

1. General intellectual ability
2. Specific academic aptitude
3. Creative or productive thinking
4. Leadership ability
5. Visual and performing arts
6. Psychomotor ability

State

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.

Philosophy

The Program for Gifted and Talented students of Hughes Springs Independent School District is committed to the intellectual and creative development of students to their fullest potential. It is recognized that gifted students need a learning environment which will provide them continuous opportunities to discover, to develop, and to expand their perceptual, cognitive, and creative skills in a variety of areas at all academic levels. To achieve this, the curriculum is designed with an emphasis on awakening and fostering creativity, and providing divergent thinking opportunities through creative problem solving, demonstration of leadership skills, increased awareness of current happenings, and development of creative thinking skills.

Goal

Students who participate in the GT program at HSISD will develop and demonstrate advanced skills in the following areas:

- Self-directed learning
- Critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving
- Research skills in one or more disciplines
- Communication and leadership

Students who participate in the GT program at HSISD will demonstrate their advanced skills through the development of innovative products, performances, and demonstrations that reflect creativity, individuality, and professional-level quality.

Participation in the Gifted and Talented Program

Students may qualify to participate in the GT program based on evidence of their remarkably high level of performance or evidence of their potential for remarkably high level of performance.

The policies and procedures articulated in this document describe the process established by HSISD for determining how and when a student qualifies for participation in the GT program.

There are three phases of services in which students may qualify:

1. HSISD Elementary GT program (K -5th grade)
2. HSISD Jr. High GT program (6th-8th grade)
3. HSISD High School GT Program (9th-12th grade)

Identification Procedures

The identification process for the Program for Gifted of the Hughes Springs ISD consists of four stages:

1. referral of potential candidates
2. collection of data
3. selection
4. dissemination

Referral of Potential Candidates

Referrals of potential candidates (K-12th grade) for the Program for Gifted may be made by members of the faculty, administration, students, parents, and members of the community.

After the deadline for accepting referrals has passed, teachers and principals are given the names of the referred students, and parents are asked to fill out a Permission for Testing form and return it to the Department of Gifted Education. The completed form must be on file before identification can proceed for the student.

A student can be tested once per school calendar year.

Collection of Data

Before the collection of data process begins, each student is assigned a personal code number which is used for identification throughout the selection process. Criteria for placement should be based upon observed performance on schoolwork, standardized examinations, or other measures of achievement that indicate that the student is performing at or has the potential to perform at a remarkably high level of accomplishment.

Available data collected for each referred student consists of the following, but not limited to:

1. Teacher Rating Scale
2. Parent Evaluation Scale

Additional Data:

1. Intellectual Ability Tests
2. Reading Tests
3. Creativity Tests

Selection

No identifying student information is used until after the selection committee has made its decision. Only then are the names entered on each individual Identification Profile Sheet. This assures impartiality by all parties involved in the selection process.

Raw scores are then plotted according to a rubric, ranging from Below Basic to Advanced.

After completion of an Identification Profile sheet for each student referred for evaluation, a Gifted and Talented Screening Committee (GTC) is assembled to make final selections. This five-person committee consists of one or more of the following who have received required training:

- School Administrator
- Counselor
- Classroom Teacher
- GT Coordinator

Dissemination

Following the decision of the Screening Committee, results are disseminated to the following:

- Parents of ALL evaluated children, regardless of the outcome of the identification process.
- Administrators and teachers.

All parents are invited to make an appointment for a conference with the GT Coordinator or a designee to further discuss the results of the screenings.

Gifted and Talented Students Transferring to Hughes Springs ISD

Students who have been actively participating in the GT program in another school district will be provisionally placed into the GT program immediately upon registration based upon the following criteria:

- The student provides written documentation from the previous school district to verify that he/she participated in the GT program prior to moving to Hughes Springs.
- The student (or parent/guardian) completes the GT Transfer Student Information form.

Transfer placement is considered provisional for one full semester. If a student transfers during a semester, he/she is placed in GT. During provisional placement, the student is coded as active for GT student records. The provisional placement becomes an official placement to participate in the GT program if the student maintains satisfactory performance in all classes during the provisional semester.

Gifted and Talented Students Transferring from Hughes Springs ISD

Students who have been actively participating in the GT program at HSISD will receive paperwork indicating their placement into the GT program as well as the justification for their placement.

Furlough from the Gifted and Talented Program

Students who have qualified to participate in the GT program are allowed a temporary furlough. The furlough must be based upon extenuating circumstances that have or will inhibit the student from performing at a remarkably high level during a specified period of time.

To apply for a furlough, the student must complete the GT Furlough Application. The application will require the student or parent/guardian to explain the circumstance that will temporarily inhibit performance. The furlough form is available from the district GT Coordinator, or the HSISD website. The completed application must be returned to the district GT Coordinator and the furlough must be approved by the GTC.

The furlough request will be approved as long as the GTC deems the request to be based on a temporary circumstance and expects the student to perform at a remarkably high level when the circumstance has passed.

At all levels, an approved furlough will last until the end of the school year unless the student requests a return to the program sooner than the end of the school year. At the end of the furlough period, the student must complete the Return to Active Status Application. The return form is available from the district GT Coordinator or the district website. If the student elects not to return to active status at the end of the furlough period, the student will be exited from the GT program and must go through the identification process again to participate in the future.

Exit from the Gifted and Talented Program

A student who qualifies to participate in the GT program may be exited from participation under the following circumstances:

- The GTC determines that it is in the best interest of the child
- Parent/Guardian request
- Teacher request
- Poor academic performance
- Failure to participate in GT activities

The GTC must approve an exit from the program unless the exit is at the parent/ guardian request. Parents/Guardians may obtain an exit form from the district GT teacher or the district website. An exit form from GT enrollment must be signed by the district GT Coordinator and entered into the student's file.

The exit procedure is based on an underlying principle. A student should be placed in an educational environment or schedule that is rigorous as well as appropriate. If a student is failing to achieve standards in the most rigorous setting, we have an obligation to move that student to a more appropriate setting or schedule.

Clarification of Poor Academic Performance

The following examples are deemed to characterize poor academic performance that may warrant the GTC to exit a student from participation in the GT program.

Elementary Level

- Failure to meet standard on one or more state assessments (i.e. STAAR)
- Below expectation performance in core academic courses
- Below expectation performance on campus or district assessments
- Low level of student participation

Secondary Level

- Failure to meet standard on one or more state assessments (i.e. STAAR)
- Grade averages below 70 in core academic courses
- Low level of student participation

Appealing a Placement Decision

A student who does not qualify to participate in the GT program at either the elementary or secondary level may appeal the decision of the GTC. The appeal process is designed to ensure that appropriate decisions are made in the best interest of students and that they follow district and state guidelines. The GT appeal form is available from the district GT Coordinator or the district website. To make an appeal, complete all sections of the GT appeal form and return it to the district GT Coordinator.

Appeals must be made within 10 school days of the GTC decision. Students will not be coded as GT during the appeals process. Additional testing may be required based on an appeal, but additional testing is not guaranteed. The district GT Coordinator determines when additional testing is necessary.

The GTC will make all decisions based on data collected. In an effort to remove bias from the decision-making process, all identifying information will be removed from the student's appeal and work submitted except for the student identification number and grade level. Members of the GTC will conduct an evaluation of any additional testing or data collected.

- Appeals are sent to GTC for re-evaluation. The GTC will consider the appeal and make one of three possible decisions:
- Change the original decision and approve the student for participation in the GT program.
- Confirm the original decision and not approve the student for participation without gathering further assessment data.
- Confirm the original decision and not approve the student for participation in light of additionally gathered assessment data.

Hughes Springs ISD Gifted and Talented Education Program

Transfer Student Application

HSISD Gifted and Talented program is designed to provide appropriate educational experiences for those students who perform at a remarkably high level of accomplishment or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to students of similar age, experience, or environment.

Students may qualify to participate in the gifted and talented program based on evidence of their remarkably high level of performance or evidence of their potential for remarkably high levels of performance. There are three phases of participation in which students may qualify:

1. HSISD Elementary GT program (kindergarten -5th grade)
2. HSISD Jr. High GT program (6th-8th grade)
3. HSISD High School GT Program (9th-12th grade)

A participating student who meets specified standards as part of the elementary gifted and talented program will qualify without further assessment to participate in the secondary program.

Transfer Policy Acknowledgement

Students who have been actively participating in the gifted and talented program in another school district will be placed into the gifted and talented program in HSISD upon registration based on evidence from the previous school district that the student had been formally identified and participating in a gifted and talented program.

I understand the nature of the transfer placement and wish to have my child participate in the gifted and talented program in Hughes Springs ISD.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Parent Name: _____

Student Name: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ Teacher: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Mobile/Work Phone: _____

Student's Date of Birth: _____ Current Age in Years: _____

Previous School District _____

HSISD Gifted and Talented Education

Referral Form

The Hughes Springs ISD Gifted and Talented Program is designed to provide appropriate educational experiences for those students who perform at a remarkably high level of accomplishment or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to students of similar age, experience or environment.

Students may qualify to participate in the gifted and talented program based on evidence of their remarkably high level of performance or evidence of their potential for remarkably high level of performance.

Referring as: (Please check one):

Teacher _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Other _____

School: _____

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

Please take a few minutes to review these characteristics of gifted students attached. Please think carefully about your referral.

* This form must be completed and returned to the district GT Coordinator to initiate the identification process.

Characteristics of Gifted Children

Observing gifted characteristics is often difficult when we are dealing with obviously bright children. The chart below is helpful in seeing the subtle differences between the bright child and the gifted learner.

Bright Child

Knows the answers
Is interested
Is attentive
Answers the questions
Top group
Listens with interest
Learns with ease
6-8 repetitions for mastery
Understands ideas
Enjoys peers
Grasps the meaning
Completes assignments
Is receptive
Copies accurately
Enjoys school
Absorbs information
Technician
Good memorizer
Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation
Is alert
Is pleased with own learning

Gifted Learner

Asks the questions
Is highly curious
Is mentally and physically involved
Discusses in detail, elaborates
Beyond the group
Shows strong feelings and opinions
Already knows
1-2 repetitions for mastery
Constructs abstractions
Prefers adults
Draws inferences
Initiates projects
Is intense
Creates a new design
Enjoys learning
Manipulates information
Inventor
Good guesser
Thrives on complexity
Is keenly observant
Is highly self-critical

Hughes Springs ISD Gifted and Talented Education Program

Appeal of Placement Decision

Please complete and return this form to the district GT Coordinator.

Name of Student: _____ Date of Appeal: _____

Name of Individual Making the Appeal: _____

Phone Number: _____

By making this appeal, you are stating that you disagree with the gifted and talented committee’s decision. Please state below your rationale for the appeal, including any specific evidence that supports your claim that the participation decision for your student should be reconsidered. You may attach additional pages.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Hughes Springs ISD Gifted and Talented Education Program

Gifted and Talented Furlough Application

Please complete and return this form to the district GT Coordinator.

Name of Student: _____ Date of Request: _____

Campus: _____ Current Grade Level: _____

Please explain the rationale for this request for furlough, including a description of the circumstance that will temporarily inhibit performance:

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

GTC Review

Date of Review: _____

_____ Overturn the original decision and recommend participation in GT program.

_____ Confirm the original decision without further testing.

_____ Confirm the original decision after further data collection.

Hughes Springs ISD Gifted and Talented Education Program Gifted and Talented

Return to Active Status after Furlough

Please complete and return this form to the district GT Coordinator.

Name of Student: _____ Date of Request: _____

Campus: _____ Current Grade Level: _____

Return to GT program participation on the following date: _____

Please explain the rationale for return to active status, including a description of the circumstance that will allow the student to be successful in the program:

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Hughes Springs ISD Gifted and Talented Education Program

Gifted and Talented Program Exit

A student who qualifies to participate in the GT program may be exited from participation under the following circumstances:

- Best Interest of the Child (determined by the GTC)
- Parent/Guardian Request
- Teacher Request
- Poor Academic Performance
- Failure to Participate in GT Activities

The GT Coordinator must approve an exit student from the program unless the exit is at the parent/guardian request. Parents/Guardians may obtain an exit form from the district GT teacher or district website. An exit form from GT enrollment must be signed by the district GT Coordinator and entered into the student's file.

Elementary Level:

- Failure to meet standard on one or more state assessments (i.e. STAAR)
- Below expectation performance in core academic courses based on performance-based report cards
- Below grade-level performance on district grade-level assessments
- Low level of student participation

Secondary Level:

- Failure to meet standard on one or more state assessments (i.e. STAAR)
- Grade averages below 70 in AP and Pre-AP classes

Reason for exit:

- Student elects to attend the alternative educational setting without a GT program.
- Poor academic performance (explain below)
- Parent Request
- Other (explain below)

Evidence of Poor Academic Performance/other circumstances (attach documentation as necessary):

Date of Exit: _____

Director's Signature: _____