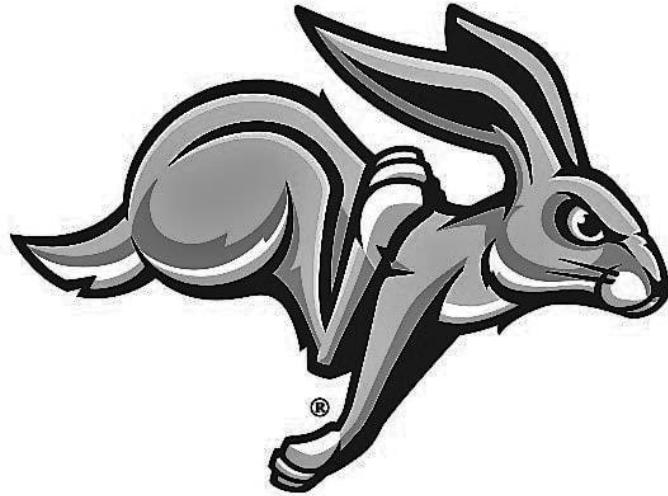


Graford ISD



Gifted and
Talented
Program

State Goal for Services for Gifted Students

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

Definition of Gifted and Talented Students

The District recognizes that “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 exhibits high performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area; possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or excels in a specific academic field.

(Texas Education Code §29.121)

GISD Service Design

Gifted students require educational experiences beyond those normally provided by the regular school program. GISD offers instruction and opportunities for students identified by their general intellectual ability. It also provides an array of learning opportunities for identified Gifted and Talented students in K-12, in which parents are informed of the opportunities. Such options provide instructional and organizational patterns that enable identified students to work together as a group, to work with other students, and to work independently; a continuum of learning experiences that leads to the development of advanced-level products and performances; in-school, and when possible, out-of-school options relevant to the student’s area of strength, and opportunities to accelerate in areas of strength.

GISD addresses general intellectual thinking in the areas of English language arts and reading, math, science, and social studies through differentiated instruction and provides opportunities that extend and enrich beyond the classroom curriculum and instruction.

Grades K-5

Identified students in grades K-5 are served through a pull-out program by a teacher who has received specialized training in gifted education. This teacher provides an array of appropriately challenging learning experiences in English language arts and reading, math, science, and social studies.

Grades 6-12

Identified students in grades 6-12 allows the opportunity for students to take advanced courses that offer differentiated curriculum for the gifted/talented learner and is an instructional program for gifted students through Dual Credit classes in ELAR, math, science, and/or social studies. Teachers in these grades have completed their 30 hours of gifted education training and have received their 6 hours of professional development annually.

Identification Criteria and Procedures

Students shall be identified through the use of multiple criteria as specified by the Graford Independent School District. An on-going and current issue in the field of gifted education concerns the appropriate screening and identification of students for placement in gifted/talented programs. Educators seek to identify the traits and aptitudes of high-ability students in order to provide them with a qualitatively differentiated learning environment in which students receive opportunities to achieve to their highest potential. The District's identification procedures are designed to ensure that all students from all populations in the district have access to referral, assessment, and if identified, services provided by the gifted program

regardless of race, socioeconomic group, geographical locale, and environment.

Program Identification

Identification of students is conducted not to label students as gifted, but rather to locate students who have specific needs which can be more effectively met through differentiated instruction in the Gifted and Talented Program. In accordance with the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students (2019).

Identification of academically gifted students is a comprehensive and ongoing three-step process, which includes:

1. Referral
2. Screening
3. Selection

Referral

Referral is the process of establishing a Talent Pool for screening students. For grades K-12, students may be referred for the gifted/talented program at any time by teachers, parents, or other interested persons. Students may be referred only once during each school year.

Procedures and forms for assessment of gifted/talented students are communicated to families in the language and form that the families understand, or a translator is provided.

Once a student is officially nominated for the Gifted and Talented Program, the Permission to Evaluate form must be completed by the parent/guardian and returned to the Director of Special Populations in order for the student to be screened.

Screening

Screening is the process of collecting research-supported information on each nominated student that will be used to determine placement needs. Screening for nominated students in grades 1-12 shall occur in the fall (beginning in October) and the spring (beginning in February). Screening for nominated students in kindergarten shall occur during mid-year (beginning in December) with services for kindergarten students begin by March 1st.

According to state law and TEA guidelines, both subjective and objective criteria are collected.

The following qualitative (subjective) instruments may be used in the screening process for nominated students:

1. Home Rating Scale
2. School Rating Scale
3. Other documentation may be considered as needed

The following quantitative (objective) instruments may be used in the screening process for nominated students:

1. Achievement Test
2. Creativity Test
3. Intelligence/Abilities Test
4. Other documentation may be considered as needed

All students are assessed in languages they understand or with non-verbal based tests. All populations of the district have access to assessment and, if identified, services offered as part of the program for gifted students. Written parental or custodial consent shall be obtained before any special testing or individual assessment is conducted as part of the screening and identification process. All student information collected during the screening and identification process shall be an educational record.

Selection

The District Selection Committee shall evaluate each nominated student according to established criteria and shall select those students for whom gifted program placement is the most appropriate educational setting. The committee shall be composed of at least three professional educators who have received 30 hours of training in the nature and needs, in identification and assessment, and in curriculum and instruction of gifted students. Members of the committee shall receive a six-hour update annually in gifted education.

To be eligible for the Gifted and Talented Program, a student must qualify in 3 of 5 criteria. The District Selection Committee will review data collected using a Gifted and Talented Selection Matrix worksheet. Scores for each criterion are indicated on the worksheet with students being identified by number, not by name.

The criteria for placement for students in kindergarten through grade twelve are: ■ To have at or above the District Line (excellent) on the Intelligence/Abilities test AND have at least two scores at or above the District Line (excellent) on the other assessments.

Quantitative and Qualitative Instruments District Line

1. Intelligence/Abilities Test - Excellent
2. Achievement Test (ELA/SS) – Excellent and/or (Math/Sci) - Excellent
3. Home Rating Scale (five areas) - Excellent
4. School Rating Scale (five areas) - Excellent

Before making a determination, the committee may request that additional screening instruments be used (i.e. nonverbal assessment). The committee may also request additional data on a student prior to final program placement recommendation. Additional data may include, but is not limited to:

- *Admission, Review, Dismissal (ARD) and/or Individual Educational Plan (IEP) records
- *Advanced Placement test results
- *Local Assessments
- *Oral Language Proficiency Tests
- *State Assessments (i.e. STAAR, TELPAS)

Placement

Parents of students screened and considered by the District Selection Committee are informed in writing of the District Selection Committee's decision. Parents are sent either a letter which notifies them of placement and requests their permission for placement or a letter which notifies them of non-eligibility. Parents may request a conference with the Director of Special Populations to review and clarify specific data collected on their child.

Services for kindergarten students begin by March 1st.

Participation in the Gifted and Talented Program is voluntary and requires a parental or custodial signature on the Parent Permission for Placement form before a student is placed in the program.

Reassessments

The District shall not perform routine reassessments.

Transfer Students

Students who enter school from another district's G/T program shall be eligible for placement into GUSD's Gifted and Talented Program without assessment. Transfer students will be placed on probation for a six-week grading period. At the end of the probationary period, if there is concern about the student's placement in the program, the campus

Gifted and Talented Committee shall meet to consider continued placement.

Students who enroll in school after the identification process has been completed may be considered for participation in the program during the next scheduled screening period.

Furloughs

In extenuating circumstances, it may be determined to be in the best interest of the student to remove him/her from the Gifted and Talented Program for a predetermined length of time, without actually exiting from the program. Reasons such as illness, family or emotional problems, peer conflicts, or other stressful situations, which may be resolved within a reasonable amount of time, may warrant a furlough. Students who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the program may be placed on furlough by a campus committee consisting of the campus principal or designee, teacher(s), parent, and student (if appropriate). The purpose of such a furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the campus committee. A furlough also may be granted at the request of the student and/or parent.

A student may be furloughed for a period of time deemed appropriate by the campus committee. At the end of the furlough, the student's progress shall be reviewed, and the student may re-enter the program, be removed from the program, or be placed on another furlough.

Exit Provisions

Student performance in the Gifted and Talented Program shall be monitored. A student shall be removed from the program at any time the campus committee consisting of the campus principal or designee, teacher(s), parent, and student (if appropriate) determines it is in the student's best interest. If a student or parent requests removal from

the program, the campus committee shall meet with the parent and student before honoring the request. Reasons for exit may include personal or social stresses, which prevent self-satisfying student performance. Poor grades or conduct are not reason enough for exit, but may be indicators of other problems, which may lead to exit from the program.

Students who exit the Gifted and Talented Program and who wish to reenter the program must be referred and screened for program placement. If the original screening data is more than one year old, more recent data will be required. Students who no longer meet the criteria for identification will be denied placement into the program.

Appeals

Parents or students may appeal any final decision of the district or campus committee regarding selection for or removal from the gifted program. Parents or students who wish to appeal decisions of the campus or district committee concerning placement or exit should follow these procedures:

1. Contact the Director of Special Populations to request a conference. The purpose of this conference will be to review the criteria and the process by which the decision was made. This does not imply a reversal of the committee's decision.
2. If the appeal is not satisfied, submit a written appeal to the District Selection Committee. The district committee will review the decision and/or collect additional information for review. This does not imply a reversal of the committee's decision. Parents will be notified of the results of the district committee's determination.
3. If still unsatisfied, an appeal may be made in accordance with FNG (LOCAL) Board Policy beginning at Level Two. This does not imply a reversal of the committee's decision.

Program Evaluation

On an annual basis, the District will evaluate effectiveness of program design and student performance. The results will be used to improve the Gifted and Talented Program and will be reflected in the District Improvement and Campus Improvement Plans. Documentation for the program evaluation will be gathered through a self-evaluation of the State Plan by the district GT team; PEIMS population profile; assessment results; and/or professional development records.

Community Awareness

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

Professional Development

GISD will provide professional development for educators in an ongoing basis, utilizing local, regional, and state resources.

Prior to assignment, teachers who provide instruction and services that are part of the program for gifted students shall have a minimum of thirty (30) clock hours of professional development that includes the nature and needs of gifted students, identification and assessment of gifted students, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students.

To meet this requirement, these teachers must have a minimum of 6 hours in nature and needs of gifted/talented students, a minimum of 6 hours in identification/assessment of gifted/talented students, and a minimum of 18 hours in curriculum and instruction for gifted/talented students. If there are extenuating circumstances, assigned teachers

without the required training shall complete the 30-hour training requirement within one semester.

Teachers who provide instruction and services that are part of a program for gifted students shall receive a minimum of six (6) hours annually of professional development in gifted education (after they have had the initial 30 hours). For extenuating circumstances, assigned teachers without the required six hour update shall complete the training within one semester.

Administrators who have authority for program decisions have a minimum of six (6) hours annually of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students and program options. For extenuating circumstances, assigned administrators without the required training shall complete the six hour training requirement within the first semester.

Professional development records will be kept in a centrally located program file and will consist of copies of certificates and/or other documentation showing that all requirements have been fulfilled. Submission of documentation will be the responsibility of the program teacher(s), administrators and will be maintained for the duration of employment in the district.