

FAQ

What are some key terms I need to understand about gifted/talented education?

- **Intellectual or General Intellectual Ability**--Possessing superior intelligence with potential or demonstrated accomplishments in several fields of study; ability to perform complex mental tasks
- **Creative**--Possessing outstanding imagination, thinking ability, innovative or creative reasoning ability, ability in problem solving, and/or high attainment in original or creative thinking
- **Artistic**--Possessing outstanding ability in the visual and performing arts (the state identifies this as one area of giftedness although not required; NBISD does not currently identify or provide services in this area)
- **Leadership**--Possessing the natural ability to influence others; possessing skills in interpersonal relationships demonstrated, for example, by outstanding ability in such activities as student government; (the state identifies this as one area district may identify although not required to; NBISD does not currently identify or provide services in this area)
- **Specific Academic Field**--Possessing superior ability or potential in a specific course of study such as science, mathematics, language arts, or social studies
- **Qualitative or Subjective Measures**--Measures used to assess student needs that include observations, anecdotal records, checklists, interviews, student products, performances, etc.
- **Quantitative or Objective Measures**--Standardized tests that are used to assess students
- **Differentiation**--adaptation of classroom learning to suit each student's individual needs, strengths, preferences, and pace by either splitting the class into small groups, giving individual learning activities, or otherwise modifying the material
 - Five Dimensions of Differentiation are proposed by Dr. Joseph Renzulli. These include the following:
 - Content--put more depth into the curriculum through organizing the curriculum concepts and structure of knowledge
 - Process--use many instructional techniques and materials to enhance and motivate learning styles of students
 - Product--improve the cognitive development and the students' ability to express themselves;
 - Classroom--enhance the comfort by changing grouping formats and physical area of environment
 - Teacher--use artistic modification to share personal knowledge of topics related to curriculum as well as personal interests, collections, hobbies, and enthusiasm about issues surrounding content area
- **Homogeneous Grouping**—students are grouped for instruction with other students with similar ability and achievement levels; generally the difference in achievement levels among students is minimal; this is one part of the instructional component of the State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students; in NBISD, our Pull-Out Program at grades 3-5 and our Advisory Classes in grades 6-9 are considered homogeneous groups; in Kinder-2nd grade and 10-12th grade, students are homogeneously grouped through clustering within the core classroom(s)
- **Heterogeneous Grouping**—students are grouped for instruction with students of varying abilities and achievement levels; often referred to as “mixed-ability grouping”; this is one part of the instructional component of the State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students; in NBISD, our students are scheduled into heterogeneous classes from Kinder through 12th grade (including PreAP and AP classes)
- **Clustering**—this is one homogeneous grouping option within a heterogeneous classroom; the general guideline is to cluster schedule 3-7 students with like abilities in one classroom to allow for these students to work together some times and to work with other students or alone at other times
- **Furlough**—a leave of absence from program services that can be due to a variety of circumstances; the leave is temporary and can be extended for up to a year; a request must be submitted to the campus committee in writing; the student is eligible to continue in the G/T program after the furlough period
- **Exit**--a denial of services in all areas and an exiting from the program; this process can be initiated by the student, parent, or teacher; if a student is exited from the program, then he/she must remain out of the program and any services for one year and then be reassessed for identification

<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/nrcgt/newsletter/spring98/sprng985.html>

What is the NBISD definition of a “gifted” student?

- “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.

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IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

In what areas are students identified and served in the NBISD Gifted/Talented Program?

- NBISD's Gifted/Talented program identifies and serves students in the areas of general intellectual ability, creativity and specific academic fields. Students also have access to leadership and artistic endeavors through our general education program, but are not specifically identified as G/T at this time in NBISD.

Who can refer students for the NBISD G/T program?

- Students may be referred by teachers and other district staff, parents, peers or themselves.

Who can be referred and then assessed?

- Only students currently enrolled in NBISD can be referred and assessed. Anyone transferring from another school will be assessed once enrolled per district policy.

What if my child is transferring to NBISD?

- If your child was identified and received services in an accredited Texas public school, private school or a school affiliated with military service, you will need to refer your child upon registration in NBISD (forms available on our website) and provide documents indicating placement and assessment data. Once the documents are received and permission to serve your child is granted, your child will be placed in the program and services begun immediately.
- If your child was identified and received services in an out-of-state school, an unaccredited Texas public or an unaccredited private school or if your child is coming in from a home schooling system, you will need to refer your child upon registration in NBISD (forms available on our website) and provide documents indicating placement and assessment data. Once the documents are received the district screening committee will evaluate the data, make additional information requests as necessary, and make identification and placement decisions within the first 6 weeks of school.
- If your child was never identified in his/her previous school, you will need to refer your child upon registration in NBISD (forms available on our website) and grant permission for us to administer the appropriate assessment tools. You may want to provide any assessment data from your previous school as well as have teachers from the previous school complete the Parent Information Form (part of the nomination form online) so that we have as much anecdotal data as possible to make sound placement decisions. Assessment and placement decisions will be made within the first 6 weeks of school if enrolling in the fall. If enrolling in the spring after the annual assessment window, formal assessment and placement decisions will be made the following fall.

What if a student doesn't speak English?

- The assessments are done in a language that the student understands or the assessment is non-verbal.

How are students identified for NBISD G/T services?

- All elementary students (K-5) are screened for the G/T program at what is called "Level I" through a series of measures both qualitative and quantitative. These measures include parent information forms, teacher observation forms, a creativity measure and both district and/or state benchmarking tools. If students qualify for further assessment based on "Level I" data, then a recommendation for further assessment is made. At this point, nationally-normed assessments for achievement and ability are administered. These include an IQ Equivalency Assessment as well as additional content area achievement tests. The final performance results are reviewed by the district screening committee and recommendations for service eligibility are made.
- Secondary students undergo the referral period. Data is gathered regarding each nominated student from parents, teachers, creativity measures, as well as nationally-normed quantitative measures for achievement and ability. These include an IQ Equivalency Assessment as well as additional content areas achievement tests. The final performance results are reviewed by the district screening committee and recommendations for service eligibility are made.

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Does my referral mean that my child will be identified for the Gifted Program?

- No. To be referred is only one component in the identification process. Your referral is just your way of ensuring that your child's performance is assessed during the screening process.
 - For elementary students, your referral form provides much needed qualitative data in the form of the Parent Information Form. This is one of the pieces of information gathered at Level I of the identification process.
 - For secondary students, your referral (or that of a peer, teacher, or student himself/herself) serves as the catalyst for identifying students. The referral assures that your student will be assessed.

Who decides if my child is identified and recommended for services in G/T?

- A District Selection and Placement Committee reviews the data collected on the students who have been screened. The Selection and Placement Committee makes the final decision based on an analysis of collected information.

If my child is identified for services, will he/she have to go through the identification process every year?

- No. Once a child is identified in the NBISD Gifted/Talented Program, he/she remains in it throughout all grade levels, unless exited according to district procedures.

My child was not identified for "G/T" services but was identified for "Talent Pool" services. What does this mean?

- The "Talent Pool" placement means that your child does not meet the screening measures for NBISD Gifted/Talented services, but does demonstrate performance at a High Average, Superior, or Very Superior level in at least two areas: general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, leadership, or creativity.
- Students in the "Talent Pool" are not coded in PEIMS as G/T, the district does not receive funding for the student as "G/T", and thus district records will not indicate that your child was identified as gifted and talented.
- Students in the "Talent Pool" are allowed access to all components of the G/T program (as provided at each grade level) as an additional opportunity to demonstrate gifted qualities as they learn along with identified gifted students.
- Participation in "Talent Pool" is for one school year. At the next assessment opportunity, students in the talent pool must be reassessed for identification for the program and must meet the same qualifications as other G/T students.

If my child is not identified as gifted, when can he/she be reassessed for identification?

- Students who are not identified during the annual spring identification period are eligible for reassessment the following school year during the annual identification period. It is the responsibility of the parent to nominate the student for testing during the nomination window during the next school year.

If my child is not identified as gifted, what is the reconsideration process?

- District policy provides for a formal reconsideration process. The first level of formal reconsideration must be initiated and communicated by the parent within 10 days of placement notification. The form can be found on the Gifted/Talented website.
- Formal reconsiderations can be submitted if any one of these three conditions applies to your case:
 1. The home language of the student is not English and this factor was not considered in the initial screening process.
 2. The student has a disability which may have impacted testing, as identified through special education ARD or 504 Committees, and this was not considered in the initial screening process.
 3. The student earns within one point of qualifying on the matrix and in other ways exhibits need for gifted services. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide additional data regarding giftedness.

What if my child no longer wishes to receive G/T services?

- NBISD has policies/procedures in place to address this issue. Students who need a temporary denial of services may request a furlough. (Form posted on G/T website.) Students who wish to exit the program permanently may do so by requesting exit procedures and submitting the appropriate document. (Form posted on G/T website.)

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REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

What kinds of training will my G/T child's teachers have/need in order to meet my child's learning needs?

- According to the NBISD Gifted/Talented Program, ALL core content area teachers responsible for delivery of program services must have the minimum requirements of 30 clock hours of G/T professional development. In addition, these same teachers must complete six clock hours of update training annually related to G/T instruction, differentiation, or needs of gifted students.
- In addition, because librarians are responsible for program delivery of advisory, pull out and advanced programs for gifted students in NBISD, they must also have the minimum requirements of 30 clock hours of G/T professional development and the 6 hour annual update.
- Any teacher who has the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) Gifted/Talented Certificate must also have the minimum requirement of 30 clock hours of G/T professional development and the 6 hour annual update. This SBEC certificate is considered "Supplemental" and does not replace the 30 hour training requirement.
- Finally, a teacher of an AP or PreAP course responsible for serving gifted students must have the minimum requirements of 30 clock hours of G/T professional development and the 6 hour annual update. Six of the required hours must be in Nature and Needs of the Gifted and six hours must be in Identification and Assessment of the Gifted. The additional 18 hours may be from instructional and differentiation strategies learned at an approved College Board AP/PreAP Institute.

Do other campus/district personnel need special training to make decisions about my child's identification and placement?

- Yes. Campus principals, assistant principals, counselors or anyone else responsible for placement and scheduling decisions regarding gifted students must have training in Nature and Needs of Gifted Students and Identification and Assessment of Gifted Students/Program Overview. District-level staff responsible for program design and placement decisions must have the same training as campus administration.

How do I know if my child's teacher has the appropriate training?

- You will need to address any concerns/questions regarding this issue with your campus administrator. Training records are maintained by the district regarding initial 30 hour trainings and subsequent 6 hour annual update trainings.

PROGRAM MODEL

If my child is identified and placed, what kinds of learning opportunities are available?

- All NBISD students are expected to master the standards and learning objectives as outlined in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for all grade levels/courses. In addition, students in the G/T program will have opportunities to participate in activities that foster advanced academic, critical thinking and creativity growth and performance. Differentiation within the homogeneous classroom promotes intellectual and academic growth. In addition, students will be afforded opportunities through their participation in pull out, advisory or specific advanced classes to experience advanced research projects, guest speakers, field trips, and/or mentorship opportunities.

When do services begin once my child is identified?

- Kindergarten students who are identified for services will begin receiving services by March 1 of their kindergarten year.
- Grades 1-12
 - Transfer students who are identified for services will begin receiving services immediately upon receiving written permission from the parent for the child to participate in the services.
 - Students identified during our annual identification process will begin services at the beginning of the next school year.

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What kinds of services are available for my child if identified?

- Kinder
- Grades 1-2
 - Whenever possible, students will be clustered with other identified students within heterogeneous classrooms. Differentiation in content, process or products will be provided by the trained classroom teacher.
- Grades 3-5
 - Students will be clustered with other identified students within heterogeneous classrooms. Differentiation in content, process or products will be provided by the trained classroom teacher.
 - In addition, services for G/T students in grades 3-5 include a pull out program in which the identified students are homogeneously grouped. Students are introduced to research methods and are given a topic of interest in which their research product is based. The focus of instruction and performance is based on models such as Texas Performance Standards Project and Envision curriculum units.
- Grades 6-8
 - Students will be clustered with other identified students within heterogeneous classrooms. Differentiation in content, process or products will be provided by the trained classroom teacher.
 - In addition, services for G/T students in grades 6-8 include a homogeneously grouped advisory class. Students are introduced to research methods and are given a topic of interest in which their research product is based. The focus of instruction and performance is based on models such as Texas Performance Standards Project.
 - In addition, the Problem Based Inquiry Method is further emphasized and implemented as an elective class.
- Grades 9-12
 - Students will be clustered with other identified students within heterogeneous classrooms. Differentiation in content, process or products will be provided by the trained classroom teacher.
 - High school Gifted/Talented students may be served through several avenues including the Pre-AP, AP and Dual Credit courses.
 - Students also have an opportunity to complete an Independent Research and Mentoring class. This course encourages students to be more involved in the direction of their learning and to approach their studies as though they were professionals in the field.
 - College credit may be earned in dual credit course completion and/or after successfully passing the appropriate AP exams for an AP course.

Does the district have an adopted G/T curriculum?

- K-2
 - Regular district curriculum with differentiation within the classroom
- 3-5
 - Regular district curriculum with differentiation within the classroom.
 - Pull-out: Focuses on developing research skills including developing questions, research processes, presentation skills; We utilize components of the Envision Curriculum; (in accordance with the Texas State Plan for Gifted and Talented goals)
- 6-8
 - Regular district curriculum with differentiation within the classroom.
 - Homogeneously grouped advisory: Focuses on developing research skills including developing questions, research processes, presentation skills; We design components of the in accordance with the Texas State Plan for Gifted and Talented goals
- 9-12
 - Differentiation within advanced courses; Independent Study course with presentation (in accordance with the Texas State Plan for Gifted and Talented goals)

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES/CONTACT INFORMATION

Who do I contact on my campus if I have other questions regarding the G/T program in NBISD?

- If you have questions/concerns about the identification and assessment process, please start by contacting your child's campus counselor. If you have questions about program services, please contact your campus librarian.

Where else can I have additional questions answered?

- Any of the district level contacts noted on the main Gifted/Talented website.
- The Gifted/Talented specialists at the Region XIII Education Service Center at <http://www4.esc13.net/gt/>
- The TEA Website has an extensive FAQ site with additional terms you may need to know at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6263>
- Any of the professional organizations listed on the resources page of the G/T website