



Trinity
Independent School District

Gifted and Talented
Handbook

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Trinity Independent School District

District Philosophy of Gifted Education

We believe that every student has the right to optimal development. Each person is unique; therefore, we are committed to an educational program that recognizes the special value and needs of the individual student. Providing programs and materials for gifted students who perform at or show the potential for performing at a remarkable high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment (§29.121) is an integral part of this commitment.

We believe that gifted students need a continuum of learning experiences that leads to the development of advanced level products and/or performances (§89.3 TAC). Modifications in instructional strategies, content, and the development of skills and/or products are part of the services provided. The program helps develop self-actualized learners by encouraging effective communication, guiding learners to be focused and self-directed, nurturing intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, and focusing on independent research study skills, as well as developing critical and creative thinking and problem solving skills.

The purpose of the program is to seek, identify, and provide gifted learners with experiences that develop that potential of each individual. Identified gifted students should be challenged in order to fully develop their abilities.

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 evidence 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 participated in services for gifted students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services (Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students, Revised May 2009, Texas Education Agency).

District Goals for Gifted Students

It is the goal of Trinity ISD to use the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students as the guide for continuous improvement of district G/T services. Improvement and modifications of services include:

- Differentiated instruction and curriculum options in intellectual, creative or artistic areas, leadership, and specific academic fields;
- Opportunities for acceleration in areas of exceptional academic strength; and

- Depth and complexity as an integral part of the state/district curriculum with students creating sophisticated products and/or performance.

Grade Level Descriptions

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students who are identified for the G/T program will be provided services starting on or before March 1st of their kindergarten year.

Elementary (Grades 1-5)

Identified students are grouped together in classes with trained G/T teachers at each grade level. The G/T facilitator provides enrichment services and facilitates higher-level thinking skills. Appropriately challenging learning experiences related to the four (4) core academic areas (language arts, math, social studies, and science) for gifted and talented students are offered at the elementary level through a variety of instructional strategies. Examples include acceleration or compacting of grade level curriculum, in-depth critical investigations, and/or thematic units. Curriculum is differentiated in content depth and complexity, process, and/or product. In addition to differentiated instruction, services are also provided to G/T students through clustering and enrichment services. Emphasis is placed upon activities that develop the student as a lifelong learner.

High School (Grades 9-12)

Distinguished Achievement Plan (For Students Entering Grade 9 Prior to 2014)

Trinity High School offers several options for Gifted/Talented students. Students may elect to complete a Distinguished Achievement Plan for graduation, which includes four advanced measures. Any combination of four of the following measures will apply:

- Test data – appropriate qualifying scores on The College Board Advanced Placement exam, International Baccalaureate exam, or PSAT exam.
- College course credit – Dual high school/college credit courses are offered at Trinity High School. For information on college credit earned from high school courses, students should contact the campus counselor.

Distinguished Level of Achievement (For Students Entering Grade in 2014 or After)

The foundation graduation program also involves the term “distinguished level of achievement,” which reflects the completion of at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the required advanced mathematics credits.

Honors Courses

A variety of Pre-Advanced Placement courses are offered at the secondary level. Pre-Advanced Placement courses offer differentiated content with more depth and complexity and are designed to prepare student for Advanced Placement courses. These are offered at both the Middle School and High School levels. Students may take Pre-Advanced Placement courses without being required to take Advanced Placement courses.

Advanced Placement and Dual Credit Courses

Advanced Placement and Dual Credit Courses, usually taken during the junior and senior year of high school, are college level courses and receive Trinity ISD's Weighted Ranking.

Identification Procedures

The formal identification process for the Gifted and Talented program occurs in the spring semester for students in grade 1-12 and in January for students in kindergarten. Students may be screened for the TISD Gifted and Talented program only once within a 12-month period.

Data collected from multiple sources are included in the assessment process for the gifted/talented services (19 TAC §89.1(2)). Assessments in the areas of intellectual and academic fields with a minimum of three criteria are used. Student must qualify using at least one qualitative AND one quantitative measure from the list below. A combination of the following may be used during the identification process.

Quantitative measures (95% or Above)

Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test (NNAT)
Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
Otis-Lennon School Abilities Test (OLSAT)
Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test
Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT)
Other comparable measures of intellectual ability

Qualitative measures

Traits, Aptitudes, and Behaviors Rating Scale (TABs)
Kingore Observation Inventory (KOI)
Gifted Rating Scales (GRS)
Other qualitative measures

Assessment data are reviewed and analyzed. The final determination of a student's need for gifted/talented services is made by a committee of local District and campus educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted/talented students and who have met and reviewed the individual student data (19 TAC §89.1(4)). As part of an exemplary program outlined by the *Texas State Plan*, the selection committee is formed of a majority of members who have completed thirty (30) hours of training and are current with the six-hour training update as delineated in 19 TAC §89.2(2). Additional data beyond that collected through the District's standard gifted/talented assessment process are considered, as needed, by the District selection committee in making identification decisions in order to make the most appropriate placement.

Parents/guardians will be notified of the committee's decision. Parents/guardians of all qualifying students must give written consent for their child to participate in the G/T program. Parents of non-qualifying students may request a conference to review the testing results. If the parents or guardians question the decision of the District G/T committee, they may initiate the appeal process. All appeals will go the Superintendent.

In the case of transfer students, the G/T Committee will review identification data and will accept assessment results for the purpose of identification using results from other current tests that are comparable to those used for identification in Trinity ISD. Additional assessment may be required.

Students in the TISD Gifted and Talented program are identified as general education students.

Gifted and Talented Program Policies

Appeal Process

A parent/guardian or student may appeal the final placement decision made by the District's G/T committee. The appeal must be made in writing within 30 days of the notification of placement or non-placement in the G/T program. The appeal should be directed to the Superintendent. The District's G/T committee will re-evaluate all testing information/processes, examine additional information provided by the parent/guardian and/or student, make a decision concerning the student's qualification for gifted services, and inform the parent/guardian of this decision in writing. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with Board Policy FNG (LOCAL). Appeal forms can be found on the District's website.

Transfer Students

Parents are responsible for providing the campus with documentation of prior G/T program placement, including all assessment information used for placement in the previous district. Based on a review of such documentation, transfer students who have been identified for a G/T program in another district will be considered for entry into the TISD G/T program.

The G/T Committee will review identification data from the former school district and will consider assessment results from other current tests that are comparable to those used for identification in Trinity ISD. Additional assessment may be required. See Board Policy EHBB (LEGAL/LOCAL).

Furlough

Furloughs from G/T service are intended to help students who need a temporary break from the G/T program, not to remove non-performing students. The G/T Committee may grant a furlough when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the student.

A furlough may not exceed one academic year. At the end of the furlough period, the student may reenter the gifted program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program. See Board Policy EHBB (LOCAL).

Professional Development

All teachers of gifted and talented students have completed an initial thirty hours of prescribed professional development including nature and needs of the gifted student, assessment training, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students which includes differentiation and creativity strategies (19 TAC §89.2 (1)). Teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the gifted and talented program also receive six hours of yearly update training (19 TAC §89.2 (3) and TAC §233.1).

Administrators and counselors are required to have at least six hours of administrative training in nature and needs; identification and assessment, curriculum and instruction: and program options for gifted and talented students (19 TAC §89.2 (4)).

All TISD classroom teachers are provided opportunities to participate in trainings in a variety of settings such as district workshops, online programs, state level conferences, or workshops offered by the Education Service Centers, the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented, and/or the College Board. Teachers are responsible for implementing their training in the classroom to meet gifted students needs.

Family and Community Involvement

The District recognizes the vital importance of parent/guardian support and community involvement to the success and growth of the Gifted and Talented Program. In accordance with the recommendation in the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*, the District will provide an orientation meeting for all parent/guardians of identified gifted students. The orientation meeting will be held in the fall. Parents and guardians also provide valuable feedback on program effectiveness through discussions and/or campus and District surveys.

Community volunteers are encouraged to share their expertise by presenting lectures/demonstrations on various topics related to the themes studied in each grade or as mentors to students who are involved in independent study in an area of special interest.

Curriculum and Instruction

Identified G/T students are assured an array of learning opportunities that are commensurate with their abilities and that emphasize content in the four (4) foundation curricular areas. Services are available during the school day, as well as the entire school year (19 TAC §89.3(3)). The curriculum and instructional needs of gifted students are met by modifying the depth, complexity, and pacing of the academic content, learning processes, and evaluation products relevant to the general school program. This modification is accomplished through a differentiated, academically enriched learning environment, as well as through instructional methods and materials that encourage independent scholarship. The following are principles of differentiation that came from the National Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and Talented and continue to be the basis for differentiated experiences.

1. Present content that is related to broad base issues, problems, or themes.
2. Integrate multiple disciplines into an area of study.
3. Present comprehensive, reinforcing, mutually related experiences within an area of study.
4. Allow for the in-depth learning of a self-selected topic.
5. Develop independent or self-directed study skills.
6. Develop research skills and methods.
7. Focus on open-ended tasks.
8. Develop productive, complex, abstract, and/or higher level thinking skills.
9. Integrate basic and higher level thinking skills within the curriculum.
10. Encourage the development of self-understanding, i.e., recognize and using one's abilities, becoming self-directed, appreciating likenesses and differences between oneself and others.
11. Encourage the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce new ones.
12. Encourage the development of products that use new techniques, materials, and forms.
13. Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion referenced and/or standardized instruments.

The principles of differentiation fall into three categories: content, process, and product. The content items are the first four principles and deal with what students are taught. The process items are the next five and include how students obtain skills and develop thinking. The final four principles are product items. Products are the ways in which students demonstrate learning and how we communicate what we have learned.

Additional Resources

American Association for Gifted Children at Duke University

<http://www.aagc.org>

The American Association of Gifted Children at Duke University (AAGC) is the nation's oldest advocacy organization for gifted children. Their mission is "to foster a better understanding of the needs and capabilities of gifted children, to encourage research in the field of education and nurturing of gifted children, and to accomplish and encourage other initiatives relating to the development of gifted children.

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

<http://www.nagc.org>

NAGC supports and develops policies and practices that encourage and respond to the diverse expressions of gifts and talents in children and youth from all cultures, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic groups.

National Society for the Gifted and Talented (NSGT)

<http://www.nsG/T.org>

NSGT's mission is to advance the development of gifted, talented and high potential youth, in the United States and abroad, through opportunities, advocacy, and exemplary programs and practices.

Texas Association of Gifted and Talented (TAGT)

<http://www.txgifted.org>

TAG/T offers a parent affiliate membership that provides various resources to support parents.

Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP)

<http://www.teaspsp.org/>

The TPSP provides a coherent package of standards, curriculum, and assessments for use in G/T programs from kindergarten through high school.

Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/ Talented Students

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/>

The State Plan provides requirements for and guidance to districts as they meet the unique needs of the Gifted/Talented population in Texas.

Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG)

<http://www.SENGIgifted.org>

SENG's mission is about empowering families and communities in reaching goals. SENI focuses on the social and emotional needs of gifted individuals.



Trinity Independent School District
Referral for Gifted/Talented Services

Differences Between Gifted Students and High Achieving Students

A High Achiever...	A Gifted Learner...	A Creative Learner...
Remembers the answers.	Poses unforeseen questions.	Sees exceptions.
Is interested.	Is curious.	Wonders.
Is attentive.	Is selectively mentally engaged.	Daydreams; may seem off task.
Generates advanced ideas.	Generates complex, abstract ideas.	Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed.
Works hard to achieve.	Knows without working hard.	Plays with ideas and concepts.
Answer the questions in detail.	Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives.	Injects new possibilities.
Performs at the top of the group.	Is beyond the group.	Is in own group.
Responds with interest and opinions.	Exhibits feelings and opinions from multiple perspectives.	Shares bizarre, sometimes conflicting opinions.
Learns with ease.	Already knows.	Questions: What if...
Needs 6 to 8 repetitions to master.	Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master.	Questions the need for mastery.
Comprehends at a high level.	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas.	Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas.
Enjoys the company of age peers.	Prefers the company of intellectual peers.	Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone.
Understands complex, abstract humor.	Creates complex, abstract humor.	Relishes wild, off-the-wall humor.
Grasps the meaning.	Infers and connects concepts.	Makes mental leaps: Aha!
Completes assignments on time.	Initiates projects and extensions of assignments.	Initiates more projects that will ever be completed.
Is receptive.	Is intense.	Is independent and unconventional.
Is accurate and complete.	Is original and continually developing.	Is original and continually developing.
Enjoys school often.	Enjoys self-directed learning.	Enjoys creating.
Absorbs information.	Manipulates information.	Improvises.
Is a technician with expertise in a field.	Is an expert who abstracts beyond the field.	Is an inventor and idea generator.
Memorizes well.	Guesses and infers well.	Creates and brainstorms well.
Is highly alert and observant.	Anticipates and relates observations.	Is intuitive.
Is pleased with own learning.	Is self-critical.	Is never finished with possibilities.
Gets A's.	May not be motivated by grades.	May not be motivated by grades.
Is able.	Is intellectual.	Is idiosyncratic.

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Trinity Independent School District

Referral for Gifted/Talented Services

TISD Gifted/Talented Parent Information Form – Grades 1 through 2

Return all pages to the school office no later than the close of the school day on _____ . No exceptions!

Student: _____ Grade: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Parents have unique opportunities to see their children at play, at work, and in family settings. Please share your observations with us.

Please place a check next to the characteristics that best describes your child. If you check **3 OR MORE AREAS** describing a gifted ability in any category, **YOU MUST DESCRIBE** a personal experience that supports the characteristics checked. If additional space is needed, please feel free to use a blank sheet of paper.

ADVANCED LANGUAGE

- Uses words that seem advanced for the age-level expectations
- Rewords own language for younger or less mature children
- Explains how unrelated things are similar
- Uses words for time concepts (clock and calendar) accurately
- Uses similes, metaphors, or analogies: “A _____ is really like a _____ because _____”
- Asks questions about words (in print or oral language)

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

ANALYTICAL THINKING

- Demonstrates complex or abstract thinking
- Analyzes household or school tasks
- Notices a surprising depth of details about surroundings
- Takes apart and reassembles things or ideas with skill
- Expresses relationships between past and present experiences
- Makes up songs, stories, or riddles about experiences
- Organizes collections of things uniquely; likes to plan or arrange things

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

MEANING MOTIVATION

- Is philosophical
- Asks surprisingly intellectual questions
- Is curious; experiments
- Demonstrates an unexpected depth of knowledge in one or more areas
- Exhibits intense task commitment and energy when pursuing interests
- Remembers!
- Is independent

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____



Trinity Independent School District
Referral for Gifted/Talented Services

TISD Gifted/Talented Parent Information Form – Grades 1 through 2

PERSPECTIVE

- Explains another’s point of view
- Shows dimension, angle, or perspective in art, writing, math solutions, or problem solving
- Creates complex shapes, patterns, or graphics
- Applies left and right without prompting
- Adds interesting details to enhance products

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

SENSE OF HUMOR

- Says or does something indicating an expected, sophisticated humor
- Catches an adult’s subtle humor
- Understands and uses puns and riddles
- “Plays” with language
- Develop humorous ideas to an extreme

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

SENSITIVITY

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cares deeply; intense concern for human issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Displays a strong sense of fairness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tries to take action to help someone in need | <input type="checkbox"/> Expresses high expectations of self and others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expresses feelings through words or art | <input type="checkbox"/> Seems to overreact at times |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Explains others’ feelings | |

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

ACCELERATED LEARNING

- Learns new things quickly with minimum practice
- Uses multiple characteristics when discussing items
- Reads passages at an advanced, fluent reading level for the age-level expectations
- Explains the meaning of what has been read
- Demonstrates an unexpected mastery of math or science concepts
- Uses a dictionary, encyclopedia, map, atlas, or computer to gain advanced information
- Creates products which seem advanced for the age-level expectations

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

Other information I would like you to know about my child: _____



Trinity Independent School District

Referral for Gifted/Talented Services

TISD Gifted/Talented Parent Information Form – Grades 3 through 11

Return all pages to the school office no later than the close of the school day on _____ . No exceptions!

Student: _____ Grade: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Parents have unique opportunities to see their children at play, at work, and in family settings. Please share your observations with us.

Please place a check next to the characteristics that best describes your child. If you check **3 OR MORE AREAS** describing a gifted ability in any category, **YOU MUST DESCRIBE** a personal experience that supports the characteristics checked. If additional space is needed, please feel free to use a blank sheet of paper.

ADVANCED LANGUAGE

- Uses a large vocabulary and more precise language than expected for the age-level
- Is unusually descriptive in conversations or writings
- Expresses similes, metaphors or analogies; “A ___ is really like a ___ because ___”
- Modifies language for less experience listeners
- Ably explains complex concepts to others
- Uses verbal skills to handle conflicts or influence others

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

ANALYTICAL THINKING

- Able to abstract and generalize information
- Notices a surprising depth of details about surroundings
- Thinks logically; presents arguments logically
- Thinks critically; may lead to skepticism
- Recognizes relationships or patterns between ideas or experiences
- Enjoys analyzing and solving difficult problems
- Enjoys planning and organizing

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

MEANING MOTIVATION

- Is philosophical Eager to do things differently; independent
- Has a questioning attitude; asks intellectual questions about complex topics
- Generates multiple new ideas and solutions to problems; ingenious
- Demonstrates in-depth information in areas beyond age-expectations
- Remembers! (may retell an experience, story, or video almost verbatim)
- Displays high levels of task commitment and energy when pursuing interests

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____



Trinity Independent School District
Referral for Gifted/Talented Services – Grades 3-11

PERSPECTIVE

- Explains another’s point of view
- Approaches problems from an unusual perspective in oral discussions, art, writing, math solutions, or problem solving
- Expresses past, present, and future aspects of an issue
- Develops advanced or unique graphic products and patterns
- Appreciates the beauty and value of things

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

SENSE OF HUMOR

- Says or does something indicating a sense of humor beyond the age-level expectations
- Uses humor to gain approval of others, catches an adult’s subtle humor
- Uses figurative language and puns for humorous effect
- Uses humor that may be absurd or far-out

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

SENSITIVITY

- Exhibits intense concern for human issues
- Intuitive and insightful of others’ needs and feeling
- Expresses feelings through words or art
- Bases friendships on similarity of interest rather than age
- Displays a strong sense of justice; demands fairness and consistency
- Demonstrates high expectations of self and others
- Prefers to be a loner part of the time
- Overreacts at times
- Cares deeply but may mask sensitivity

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

ACCELERATED LEARNING

- Demonstrates knowledge beyond the age-level expectations
- Comprehends and uses symbols with an unexpected ability
- Reads fluently, more like an adult; comprehends with advanced understanding
- Understands and uses advanced ideas, concepts, or implications
- Learns easily and with a minimum of practice
- Creates products that are advanced for the age-level expectations
- Accesses data with ease using an unexpected variety of tools

Examples from above of things my child said/did: _____

Other information I would like you to know about my child: _____



Program Contacts

For more information on the Gifted and Talented program in Trinity ISD, please contact:

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