



**Gifted/Talented Program Services Guide
A Handbook for Parents, Community Members,
and Campus Personnel**

Revised July 2021

Pearland ISD
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Definition of Gifted and Talented Students

“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 (TEC Subchapter D §29.121).

Beliefs

Gifted students have special learning needs. They are passionate about learning, solve problems in unique ways, and require support from trained teachers/mentors who are sensitive to their individual needs.

Program services for G/T students will enable them to work successfully alone, with other gifted students, and with students not identified as Gifted.

Philosophy

Gifted students come from all races, socio-economic strata, geographic locales and environments. They display unique needs and possess unusual abilities and talents which merit recognition and nurturing.

Mission Statement

In order to meet the specific needs of Gifted learners, Pearland ISD offers a comprehensive array of differentiated learning opportunities to integrate depth and complexity, to encourage creative problem-solving, to develop necessary research and communication skills, and provide the social and emotional supports necessary to better prepare the Gifted students of today for the world of tomorrow.

Vision Statement

The Advanced Academics programs of Pearland ISD provide opportunities for students to develop as world class learners who meet or exceed international standards of academic performance.

Program Objective

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

Program Commitments

Pearland ISD will:

- Comply with G/T accountability standards
- Monitor the effectiveness of student assessment
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the G/T program service design
- Meet the needs of G/T students by developing, implementing, and monitoring curriculum for G/T students
- Ensure that all personnel involved in the planning, creation, delivery, and administration of services to gifted/talented students receive the required professional learning needed to develop, implement, and/or monitor G/T program services
- Provide opportunities for G/T student, family, and community involvement in the design and evaluation of G/T services

Program Design

Gifted and Talented services in Pearland ISD are designed for students who are identified as G/T according to Pearland ISD's identification procedures. Program service design will include one or more of the following options:

- Push-in: A G/T trained teacher provides occasional services to a student while the student is in the regular classroom.
- Full-time Gifted Only: The student receives the majority of their core subject instruction from a specific G/T trained teacher or teachers and is with peers who are identified as G/T.
- Full-time Inclusion: The student receives the majority of their core subject instruction from a specific G/T trained teacher or teachers but the classes may include peers who are not identified as G/T.

Elementary (K-4)

The G/T program in kindergarten through fourth grade is designed to provide differentiated instruction for identified G/T students. Differentiated instruction offers a variety of learning options designed to tap into students' interests and abilities by providing academic enrichments and extensions to the grade level curriculum.

At each grade level, identified students will be clustered within a class taught by a teacher who has completed the G/T foundational training as required by the state of Texas. If team teaching, both teachers will complete the training. If there are more than 22 G/T students identified at one grade level, the students will be clustered in two classes with teachers who have completed the state-mandated training to teach gifted and talented students.

All kindergarten students are automatically considered for G/T and other advanced level services. Kindergarten gifted student services begin the first school day in March of every year. Gifted kindergarten services will follow a model determined by the campus.

Intermediate (5-8)

In grades 5-8, teachers who have completed the G/T foundational training as required by the state of Texas provide services to identified students through PAP classes in the four core areas (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies). In 5th and 6th grades, students identified as G/T may be placed on a G/T team in all PAP classes or may receive G/T instruction in one or more identified content areas. G/T students are clustered together to the extent possible with a minimum of a 40% or higher representation of G/T students in a core foundation class. Pearland Advanced Program (PAP) courses have previously been named Pre-Advanced Placement, Pre-AP, or Advanced.

Students in grades 7-8 who are identified as G/T may be placed on a G/T team in all PAP classes or may receive G/T instruction in one or more identified content areas. G/T students are clustered together to the extent possible with an expectation of a 40% or higher representation of G/T students in a core foundation class. Some classes are expected to meet the specific needs for gifted students. Please refer to the junior high course selection handbook for specific recommended course listings.

Students may receive G/T services at their attendance-zoned campus in cluster group classes or at the G/T Academy. For details about the G/T Academy and the application process and deadlines, please see the campus website or contact the campus:

Leon Sablatura Middle School (grades 5-6)
2201 N. Galveston Ave. Pearland, TX 77581
Phone: 281-412-1500
Website: <https://www.pearlandisd.org/domain/420>
GT Academy Specialist: Stacy Mueller, muellers@pearlandisd.org

Pearland Junior High West (grades 7-8)
2337 N. Galveston Ave. Pearland, TX 77581
Phone: 281-412-1222
Website: <https://www.pearlandisd.org/domain/472>
GT Academy Specialist: Jennifer Bill, billj@pearlandisd.org

Additional program services, which may vary based on campus interest, may include: Spelling Bee, Quiz Bowl, Future Problem Solvers, Robotics, and Texas Math and Science Coaches Association (TMSCA). Please check with your child's campus about which programs are offered at that campus.

Secondary (9-12)

In grades 9-12 teachers who have completed the G/T foundational training required by the state of Texas provide services to identified students through acceleration, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and PAP courses. Pearland Advanced Program courses have previously been named Pre-Advanced Placement, Pre-AP, or Advanced. The AP Program allows students to take college-level classes as part of their high school curriculum. These courses offer challenging learning experiences and maintain national standards set by the College Board. Students who meet specific criteria set by each college or university on an AP Exam receive credit for specific

college courses. Students may also apply for above-level or concurrent enrollment in AP courses. Pearland ISD offers AP courses in all core areas as well as several elective areas. PAP courses may include courses designed for preparation for Advanced Placement, courses that are open to all students seeking challenging coursework, courses in which Gifted students are clustered, or courses created especially for Gifted and/or accelerated students. Additional opportunities for Gifted students include credit by exam and early graduation. For a full listing of courses offered, please refer to the *Pearland ISD High School Course Selection Handbook*.

To the greatest extent possible, Gifted students will be clustered in the following high school courses: AP Human Geography, PAP English 1, PAP Chemistry, PAP English 2, PAP/AP Comparative Government and Politics, AP Seminar, AP Research, PAP Logic/Combinatorics, and PAP Linear Algebra/Multivariable Calculus. Gifted students are expected to enroll in the aforementioned courses and other PAP/AP courses in areas of strength and interest. Dual Credit courses are not considered G/T program options. Students must enroll in a G/T program option to retain a G/T student designation. The Capstone courses, AP Seminar and AP Research, are the premier courses for G/T students and lay the foundation for success in challenging post-high school programs.

Additional program services, which may vary based on campus interest, may include: Academic Decathlon, Academic Octathlon, Model United Nations, Future Problem Solvers, University Interscholastic League for academics, and Robotics. Please check with your child's campus about which programs are offered at that campus.

Dual Language

Gifted students who are also in dual language will be clustered within a class taught by a teacher who has completed the G/T foundational training as required by the state of Texas. If team teaching, both teachers must complete the TEA required G/T professional learning.

Referring Students for G/T Services

Communicate the Process to Parents and Community

- Prior to the referral period, Pearland ISD will communicate to families an overview of the assessment procedures and services for gifted/talented students.
- Input from family and community representatives on gifted/talented identification and assessment will be encouraged.

How to Refer Students for G/T

- Referral forms for initial G/T assessment are available through the district electronic family information portal (Skyward) beginning September 1 and must be completed by September 30 for students to be assessed for G/T services that school year. To be assessed for G/T services, students must be enrolled and attending school in Pearland ISD.
- Students who enroll in Pearland ISD after the September 30 referral deadline should contact Advanced Academics as soon as possible.
- Parents needing assistance in completing the referral form may contact the Advanced Academics office for assistance within the established timeline.
- Members of Pearland ISD professional staff, including principals, teachers, counselors, special program teachers, or others who have knowledge of the student may refer students.
- Parents/Guardians, other family members, and/or community members may refer students.
- Students may refer themselves.

Identification

- Based on a review of information gathered during the assessment process, those students whose data reflect that the district's G/T service options would best meet their identified educational needs will be recommended by the identification committee for gifted/talented services.
- Final determination of students' need for gifted/talented services will be made by a committee of at least three local district or 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)).
- Once identified, students will be provided services as well as opportunities to produce advanced-level products.

Assessment

- Students must be enrolled and attending school in Pearland ISD to be eligible for G/T assessment or services. Please check the [Advanced Academics website](#) for the district assessment timeline.
- Pearland ISD will provide assessment opportunities for gifted/talented identification once per school year. This assessment process allows for student exceptionalities and language differences to the extent possible. Access to assessment and, if needed, gifted/talented services is available to all populations of the district.
- At the kindergarten level, at least three criteria are used to assess students who show potential of accomplishment relative to age peers. In grades 1 - 12, qualitative and quantitative data are collected through three (3) or more measures and are used to determine whether a student needs Gifted/Talented services.
- Assessment instruments may include, but are not limited to:
 - Ability assessments, including verbal and/or nonverbal
 - Achievement assessments
 - District screener
 - Observation inventory
 - Planned experiences
 - Student portfolio
 - Student interview
 - Review of data from previous years
 - Review of student school performance data
- Parent/guardian permission must be secured for any testing not given to the entire grade level.
- Students who miss G/T assessments due to excused absences may attend a make-up assessment. The make-up assessment will be scheduled by the current grade level Advanced Academics Specialist.

Assessment from Outside Sources

- The Identification Committee will consider the recommendations and results from outside evaluations.
- Costs associated with private assessments will not be reimbursed.

Reassessment

- Student participation is ongoing, and re-evaluation is based on student performance in the program.
- Refer to policy EHBB (LOCAL).

G/T Student Transfers

Transfers within Pearland ISD

- If a Pearland ISD identified G/T student transfers within Pearland ISD, the student continues services at the new campus. Parents should notify Advanced Academics and the campus when the student enrolls.

Students Previously Identified G/T by Another School District

- Transfer students identified G/T by another school district will be properly assessed and appropriately placed **following notification of enrollment** in the district.
- Students new to Pearland ISD who were identified as G/T by another school district will be placed with a teacher who has completed the state-mandated training to teach gifted and talented students.
- Within six weeks of receiving G/T data, the Identification Committee will evaluate the data provided by the previous school district and any new information to determine if the student is eligible for G/T services in Pearland ISD.
- Students who were identified in their previous school district who have a parent actively serving in the US military will receive G/T services when documentation of G/T identification is received by Advanced Academics.
- When a student identified as gifted transfers to another district, Pearland ISD will provide the receiving district the student's assessment data.
- Students who wish to attend the G/T Academy (GTA) at Sablatura Middle School or Pearland Junior High West (PJHW) must be identified as G/T in Pearland ISD and submit a GTA application. **GTA applications must be submitted prior to the deadline published on the Sablatura and PJHW campus websites.** For details about the G/T Academy and their application process and deadlines, please see the campus website or contact the campus.

Private and Home-schooled Students

- Students **must be enrolled** in Pearland ISD to be eligible for G/T data review by Advanced Academics.
- Within six weeks of receiving G/T data, the Identification Committee will evaluate the data provided by the previous school and any new information to determine if the student is eligible for G/T services in Pearland ISD.
- If the student is not identified as eligible for G/T services based on the data received, they may contact Advanced Academics about referring for G/T assessment and services. Please check the PISD website at [Advanced Academics website](#) for the district assessment timeline.
- If identified as G/T, students will then receive G/T services at their attendance-zoned campus. Students who wish to attend the G/T Academy (GTA) at Sablatura Middle School or Pearland Junior High West (PJHW) must be identified as G/T in Pearland ISD and submit a GTA application. **GTA applications must be submitted prior to the deadline published on the Sablatura and PJHW campus websites.** For details about the G/T Academy and their application process and deadlines, please see the campus website or contact the campus.
- Pearland ISD does not offer an assessment program at public expense for non-enrolled students.

Furloughs and Exit Procedures

Furloughs

Furloughs are for students who need a specified time away from the academic rigor of the G/T Program. Reasons for furloughs could include, but are not limited to, death in the family and/or a student's physical or mental health. A furlough cannot be used to change the class schedule or because of poor academic performance.

- The parent/guardian or student (with parent/guardian signature) completes the Furlough Request Form and submits it to the Advanced Academics department.
- A G/T Student Support Committee led by a member of the Advanced Academics team, a campus administrator, and a parent/guardian (and student, when appropriate) review the request and student data to grant or deny the furlough.
- After the time specified in the furlough, a G/T Student Support Committee will determine if the student will resume services in the gifted program, exit the program, or be placed on another furlough.
- Copies of the completed furlough form will be provided to the parent/guardian and placed in the student's permanent folder.

Intervention & Exit Procedures

A request for G/T Intervention should be made at the first indication that a G/T student is not achieving academically at the expected level of performance. Interventions are required prior to a committee decision regarding exit from G/T services.

A request for G/T Intervention, initiated by a student, parent, teacher, counselor, or administrator, must be submitted to Advanced Academics identifying areas of concern for the student. Advanced Academics will then convene a G/T Student Support Committee meeting including (but not limited to) a campus administrator, a member of the Advanced Academics team, and a parent/guardian, with the student to identify intervention strategies and timeline (6-9 weeks) for implementation and monitoring.

The student continues participation in G/T services during the implementation and monitoring period, and at the end of this period, the G/T Student Support Committee will review the student's performance record and recommend either exit or continued intervention and monitoring. Exiting of students from G/T services must be based on multiple criteria, including, but not limited to, student performance in response to services and interventions, educational needs, social/emotional needs, and any limiting factors at home or at school that are interfering with learning.

Exiting of a student is finalized by a committee decision after completion of the intervention and consultation with parent and student regarding the student's educational needs.

Students cannot be exited from gifted/talented services during the last nine weeks of the school year.

G/T Appeal Process

If a student does not qualify for the Pearland ISD G/T Program, parents/guardians have due process rights to request an appeal. The request for appeal must follow the guidelines outlined below.

Level 1 Appeal

A parent/guardian may appeal the decision of the Identification Committee regarding identification for the G/T program. To file a Level 1 appeal, please complete the **Pearland ISD Gifted and Talented Program Appeal Form: Level One** which can be found at the [Advanced Academics website](#) under the “Appeals” tab on the left. The appeal form must be submitted to the current grade level Advanced Academics Specialist within 10 business days of the date on the denial of placement letter.

The Level 1 Appeal Committee will include the initial identification committee and may also include campus administrators and/or campus counselors. During the appeal process, all assessment data, including new information from the parent/guardian as to why the original decision should be overturned, will be considered. Within five business days after the Level 1 Appeal Committee decision, the decision will be communicated to the parent/guardian.

Level 2 Appeal

If the parent/guardian wishes to appeal the Level 1 Appeal Committee’s decision, written request for a Level 2 Appeal must be submitted to the Director of Advanced Academics. To file a Level 2 Appeal, please complete the **Pearland ISD Gifted and Talented Program Appeal Form: Level Two**, which can be found at the [Advanced Academics website](#) under the “Appeals” tab on the left. The appeal form must be submitted to the Director of Advanced Academics within 10 business days of the date on the denial of placement letter from the Level 1 Appeal Committee.

A parent/guardian conference will be scheduled with the Director of Advanced Academics. At this conference all assessment data, including new information from the parent or guardian as to why the Level 1 Appeal decision should be overturned, will be considered. The Level 2 conference must occur within 15 business days of the request. Within five business days after the District Level 2 conference, a letter with the decision will be mailed to the parent/guardian.

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the Level 2 Appeal decision, they may contact the Assistant Superintendent for Special Programs to follow the District Policy for Appeals.

Parent Resources Link

For additional parent resources, please see the [Advanced Academics website](#).