

Eula Independent School District

Gifted and Talented Program

A Handbook for Parents, Teachers, and Community Members

2017-2018

Eula ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin

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Eula ISD Definition of Gifted and Talented

Gifted and talented students are those who perform consistently or who show the potential perform in a specific academic field or fields and/or general intellectual ability. They are students who require differentiated educational programs or activities beyond those normally provided by the regular school program. The Eula ISD recognizes that students identified as gifted and talented come from all races, socioeconomic groups, geographic locales and environments.

State Definition of Gifted and Talented

Gifted and Talented student means a child or youth who performs or shows the potential for performing at a remarkable 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. (TEC 29.121)

District Philosophy of Gifted and Talented Education

We believe that gifted and talented students have potential that will go untapped without appropriate academic and social emotional services. Gifted students come from all races, socioeconomic groups, geographic locales and environments. They display unique needs and possess unusual abilities and talents, which merit recognition and nurturing.

We believe that gifted and talented students are passionate about learning, solve problems in unique ways, and require support from trained teachers who are sensitive to their individual needs. We believe that appropriate services for gifted and talented students will enable them to work successfully alone, with other gifted students, and with students not identified as gifted.

In order to nurture the unique social, emotional, and intellectual needs of gifted learners, EISD will offer a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate array of differentiated learning experiences that provide a greater depth and complexity than what is included in the district's core curriculum. This will be accomplished through interactions with trained staff, mentors, students, parents, and community members.

A continuum of learning experiences is provided that leads to the development of advanced level products and/or performances such as those provided through the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP). (19TAC 89.3 (2). And 1.3.1C Provisions for ongoing identification of students (at least once per year) who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably

high levels of accomplishment in each area of giftedness served by the districts are included in board approved policy 919 TAC 89.1(1).

Student Population

Approximately the top 3-5 percent of the student population will be identified as gifted and talented and have an opportunity to be served. Once a student is identified for eligibility, he/she will continue in that segment in subsequent years unless the program is deemed incompatible with the student's needs as outlined in the adopted furlough or exit procedure. Students new to the District will be considered under the transfer policy.

Goals of the Program

The program is to assist gifted and talented students in reaching, through enrichment and/or acceleration, the upper levels of achievement in the major categories of the cognitive domain. Specifically, the aim is to draw students from the cognitive area of knowledge, comprehension, and application into areas of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

All district teachers will receive their gifted and talented certification. Teachers, grades K-12, will use differentiated curriculum focusing on the development of general intellectual ability, creative production and specific subject matter aptitude.

The primary goal of Eula ISD is to develop self-directed learners by providing an instructional program that integrates the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor process.

This may be achieved by:

- Directing independent research, allowing for in-depth learning of self-directed topics with an area of study and integrating multiple disciplines in the area of study.
- Encouraging divergent and productive thinking that challenges exciting ideas and produces "new" ideas resulting in development of products that use new techniques, material, and forms.
- Providing opportunities for creative problem solving, allowing for the development of productive, complex, abstract, and/or higher level thinking skills.
- Facilitating self-acceptance of the gifted student by encouraging the development of self-understanding (i.e. recording and using one's abilities, becoming self-directed, appreciating likenesses and differences between oneself and others).
- Developing higher cognitive processes using content that is related to broad-based issues, themes or problems integrating basic skills and higher level thinking skills into the curriculum.

Program Design

Elementary

The gifted and talented program at the kindergarten through sixth grade levels is designed to provide differentiated instruction for identified gifted and talented students. Differentiated instruction offers a variety of learning options designed to tap into students' interests and abilities by providing additional depth and complexity to the grade level curriculum.

The curriculum for Eula ISD's gifted and talented program in the core content areas of math, language arts, social studies, and science will follow the TEKS. Each teacher plans instruction to provide depth and complexity of content to meet the needs of gifted learners.

At each grade level, students will be taught by a teacher with the required GT training, who will provide differentiated instruction. Students will be provided opportunities to work alone, with other GT students, and with non-identified students.

Gifted kindergarteners will be identified by March 1 each year and will also participate in receiving differentiated instruction in their regular classes.

Middle School

Gifted students in grades 7-8 receive services in a pull out program during the regular school day taught by a teacher with the required GT training. Placement in a particular content area is based on student strength and interest. Students may also receive differentiated instruction in the classroom by a teacher with the required GT training.

Secondary

Gifted students in grades 9-12 receive services in one or two of the four core content areas: Language Arts, Math, Science, or Social Studies. Placement in a particular content area is based on student strength and interest. Students will receive differentiated instruction by a teacher with the required GT training.

The curriculum for Eula ISD's gifted and talented program in the core content areas of Math, Language Arts, Math, Science, or Social Studies will follow the TEKS. Each teacher plans instruction to provide depth and complexity of content to meet the needs of gifted learners.

GT Identification Procedures

Step 1: Nomination

- Students may be nominated/referred for the gifted and talented program at any time by teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons.

- Nominations may be made at any time during the school year: however, any testing and identification will be completed according to a published district assessment and identification schedule.
- A nomination period prior to the district's testing will be advertised at the campus and in the community.
- Parents will receive written notification of nomination and approval for testing will be secured.

Step 2: Screening

- All nominated kindergarten students will be screened in the spring. Parent/guardian permission will be obtained prior to the screening.
- All nominated students grades 1-12 will be screened in the spring. A student will be screened only once during any academic year.

Step 3: Assessment

- Program admission is based on a minimum of three equally weighted criteria that represent both objective and subjective assessment. The criteria may include but not be limited to the following;
 1. Intelligence tests
 2. Parent behavioral checklist
 3. Teacher behavioral checklist
 4. SOI (Structure of Intellect)
 5. Non-verbal mental abilities test
 6. Creativity assessment
 7. Teacher nomination based on classroom observations
 8. Student work products, if available
- Parent/Guardian permission will be requested for any testing which is not given to the entire grade level.
- The district's gifted and talented coordinator will administer any GT testing.

Step 4: Selection

- A selection committee shall evaluate each nominated student according to the established criteria and shall select those students for whom gifted program placement is the most appropriate educational setting. The committee will be comprised of at least three local district educators who have received the required 30 hours of training in gifted education and the annual six hours update training. In the case of a counselor or administrator, six hours of update training. In the case of a counselor or administrator, six hours of training in the nature and needs of gifted students is required.
- Prior to receiving services, a student must have a signed parent/guardian permission form on file.

Step 5: Participation

- Students will be allowed to continue participation in the GT program as long as they are making positive contributions to the program, working with others in a spirit of cooperation, acting in a responsible manner while participating in the program, and obeying the instruction of those in charge.

Transfer Policy

Students identified as gifted by a previous school district shall have their records reviewed by the selection committee to determine if placement in the District's GT program is appropriate.

Students new to the district **who have not been previously identified as GT by another district** must wait until the next regularly scheduled screening period for consideration.

Furlough Policy

- Furloughs are for students who need a short time away from the rigor of GT services.
- A student may be furloughed for a period of time deemed appropriate by the selection committee.
- At the end of the furlough, the student's progress shall be reassessed, and the student may re-enter the gifted program, be exited from the program, or be placed on another furlough.
- The selection committee may place students, who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the gifted and talented program, on furlough. The purpose of such a furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the selection committee.
- The student, his/her parents or legal guardian, teacher, counselor, or administrator may request a furlough from the program.
- In order for a furlough to be granted, an application for furlough shall be obtained from the GT Coordinator and must be submitted to the campus designee.

Exit Policy

- Student performance in the program shall be monitored. A student shall be removed from the program at any time the selection committee determines it is in the student's best interest.
- If a student or parent requests removal from the program, the selection committee shall meet with the parent and student before honoring the request.
- Students who exit and desire to re-enter the program shall be screened using established screening criteria.

Appeals

- Parents or students may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or removal from the gifted program within ten calendar days of notification of selection or removal.
- Appeal shall be made first to the selection committee. The committee shall hold a conference with the parent or student within five days of the request.
- Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with **Eula ISD Board Policy FNG (LOCAL) beginning at Level Two.**

Curriculum and Instruction

The curriculum for Eula ISD's gifted and talented program in the core content areas of Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science will follow the TEKS. Each teacher plans instruction to provide depth and complexity of content to meet the needs of gifted learners.

Professional Development

- Teachers who provide instruction and services that are part of the program for the gifted and talented students have a minimum of thirty clock hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of gifted learners, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students.
- After the initial thirty hours of training, teachers receive a minimum of six hours of professional development annually.
- Counselors and administrators who make gifted and talented program decisions have a minimum of six hours of professional development that includes the nature and needs of gifted students.

Program Evaluation

The Eula ISD Gifted and Talented Program shall be evaluated annually. Administrators, teachers who provide GT services, GT students, and parents of GT students, shall complete evaluation forms.

The analysis of the GT program shall be used for the program improvement and to determine staff development needs. The results of the evaluation will be utilized to develop the district improvement plan and specific goals for improvement of the GT program shall be listed in the district improvement plan. Evaluation information shall be shared with Board members, administrators, teachers, counselors, students in the gifted talented program, and the community.

Community Awareness

Eula ISD shall ensure that information about the district's gifted and talented program is available to parents and community members and that they have an opportunity to develop an understanding and support for the program.