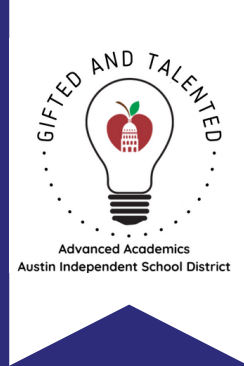


WELCOME

to Gifted and Talented

A Family Guide



What is GT?

Gifted and talented (GT) refers to a child who performs or shows the potential of performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment.

Gifted and talented children may also exhibit an unusual capacity for leadership or high-performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area.

GT Identification Process

All campuses in Austin ISD offer Gifted and Talented screening in grades K-12 based on annual referrals received by the Campus GT Advocate. During the designated annual referral window, parents/caregivers, community members, and/or teachers/staff can submit a referral for consideration for GT services.

GT screening components include GT assessments and teacher and parent observation forms. Schools may also collect student work samples, conduct student interviews, and include MAP scores. The Campus GT Committee will complete a holistic review of each student and the Campus GT Advocate will communicate the decision in writing.

SERVICE MODEL

In Austin ISD, GT services are provided at every campus for GT-identified students.

Elementary

Elementary GT students are placed within a GT cluster classroom with a teacher who has completed GT training. GT students participate in personalized learning opportunities, including extension and enrichment activities. GT students have opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups, as well as independently.

Secondary

Secondary GT services include instruction by teachers who have completed GT training and the following options:

- Advanced Courses, Advanced Placement (open enrollment)
- Magnet Program/School (requires admission)
- International Baccalaureate (requires admission)
- Dual Credit (requires passing TSI score)
- UT OnRamps Courses (open enrollment)
- Advanced-level CTE courses



GT Showcase

Every year, students are encouraged to submit a project to include in our virtual GT Showcase. Projects may be entered in the categories of Humanities, STEM, or Creativity, and are connected to a theme chosen by Austin ISD. GT Showcase is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the amazing work done by GT students throughout the year.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When do GT services start?

GT services for previously identified GT students will begin in August. GT services for newly identified GT students will begin in January.

In which content areas are GT services provided?

Services are provided for STEM (math and science) and Humanities (language arts and social studies).

Does my child need to be retested every year?

Your child does not need to be retested yearly. Once identified, the GT identification remains with your child as long as they are enrolled in AISD.

How will GT services change my student's school experience?

GT students will have opportunities to explore subjects with increased depth and complexity, while continuing to master grade-level skills. GT students will also be given opportunities to work together in pairs and/or small groups, as well as independently. Teachers with GT training will provide advanced-level opportunities to challenge students rather than increase workload.

How are teachers trained to provide GT services?

The [Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students](#) requires that any teacher who works with GT students receive 30 hours of foundations training through specific gifted education courses that address all aspects of gifted learners. Teachers also complete a yearly GT training update.

How is my child impacted if they are identified for any other special services (Special Education, 504, etc.)?

GT identification has no impact on special services your child may already be receiving. GT students will continue to receive all modifications/accommodations.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can my child be enrolled in the Dual Language program and also receive GT services?

Yes. Students identified as GT can continue to participate in the Dual Language program. Campuses will provide opportunities for GT students to work together throughout the school year.

What is Talent Explore (TE)?

Talent Explore (TE) is a program unique to AISD for students showing high-ability/high-potential in one or more subject areas. A student can be identified as GT in one subject area and identified as Talent Explore (TE) in another. Students in Talent Explore are given opportunities to continue to grow their academic and creative abilities. Talent Explore students may benefit from repeating the GT assessment process the following school year, as they continue to make academic progress. Students are identified as Talent Explore by participating in the GT screening process.

If my student was not identified as GT, or was identified as TE, can they be reevaluated?

Yes. Students can be reevaluated the next school year for GT services.

My student was previously identified as GT in another school district. Does this transfer to Austin ISD?

Parents and caregivers may complete the [Out-of-District Transfer Review Form](#). Your campus will request student records to document previous GT identification. These records will be reviewed and the GT identification decision will be sent to the parent/caregiver and campus GT Advocate.

How can I support my GT child at school?

Know who is designated as the [GT Advocate](#) on your campus. They can help you navigate GT services and address questions that may arise.

Attend Parent/Teacher Conferences. Ask about your child's strengths and growth areas. Learn about the GT opportunities in your child's class.

Spend time talking with your child. Ask about their interests and skills. Listen to the highlights and also the challenges they experience in school and advocate for them when needed.

FAMILY STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT SUCCESS

Build Critical Thinking Skills

Give your child plenty of time to think, try a new task, and/or give a response. Encourage them to think deeply, analyze problems, and ask questions. Compare and contrast things around you such as books, TV shows, historical events, or everyday objects. Discuss real-life situations and ask your child to consider possible outcomes and the pros and cons of different choices.

Don't intervene immediately when your child has a question or encounters a problem. Challenges are essential for growth!

Play games and do puzzles

Games and puzzles develop mathematical thinking skills naturally without turning math into a chore!

Game and puzzles promote problem solving, critical thinking, estimation, and arithmetic skills. They grow strategy, spatial reasoning, and pattern recognition skills. Many games also promote creativity and vocabulary building.

Try card games, chess, Scrabble, Pictionary, Jenga, Monopoly, checkers, Clue, Uno and more!

Cultivate Creativity

Encourage imagination! This might include making up new characters, new stories and new worlds. Suggest creative writing or journaling as a way to document and expand upon ideas. Support bringing imagination to life through drawings, paintings, or even building physical models.

Notice and encourage your child when they may use objects in unexpected ways- a hairbrush as a microphone, toilet paper rolls as binoculars, or a cardboard box as a spaceship. Combine items to create something new.

Protect free time. Allow your child to feel "bored" as many minds require unstructured time to generate new ideas! Allow freedom to make choices and decisions and encourage your child to follow their passions and interests.

Encourage Discussion

Ask open-ended questions to encourage thinking in new and different ways, such as:

What do you think about...?

What do you think is happening here?

Can you predict what will happen next?

What other ideas could you try?

Are there other possible solutions?

Additional GT Resources

[Austin ISD Gifted and Talented](#)

[Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented \(TAGT\)](#)

[National Association for Gifted Students \(NAGC\)](#)

[Texas Education Agency \(TEA\)](#)

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