



Gifted and Talented Education

Definition of a Gifted and Talented Student

The Texas State Plan and Guidelines for the Education of Gifted and Talented students defines gifted and talented students as 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 capability in intellectual, creative, or artistic areas;
- Possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or
- Excels in a specific academic field.

Philosophy and Program

To provide appropriate educational opportunities for artistically talented students, Texas School of the Arts seeks to identify all students who possess exceptional abilities and potential for accomplishment to meet their educational and artistic needs. To qualify for admission into Texas School of the Arts, students must meet minimum criteria in all four areas of the fine arts. Thus, selection reflects above average to highly gifted abilities in the arts. Additional assessments help to identify cognitive ability and academic achievement levels. The results from these assessments are used to determine specific academic aptitude and general intellectual ability. Although kinds of ability/talent are determined at different times and stages during the school year, an ongoing, systematic review of all students is made to determine students needing enriched programming and/or advanced placement to receive maximum educational advantage.

TeSA believes that students who show attributes of giftedness deserve a differentiated learning environment. All students in the Gifted and Talented Education Program (GATE) will have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) in order to address the unique individual learning needs of each gifted and talented student in the classroom. Students will be given opportunities throughout the year to work within the classroom both independently, as well as in small groups with other GATE students. GATE students will meet once each six weeks as a group to discuss progress and complete a “quick think” activity. Each GATE student will also complete projects for which the culmination of their learning will be displayed at school fairs. As opportunities arise throughout the year, students may attend field trips with other GATE students, listen to presentations from special guest speakers, and/or complete group labs and activities.

TeSA offers this program for students who are identified through the TeSA identification process. The identification of GATE students is accomplished through the following process consisting of nominations, assessment, and selection.

Nominations, Assessment, and Selection

Students may be nominated by a teacher or parent during the posted time frame in the spring of each year. All Kindergarten students who perform at a noticeably higher level of accomplishment relative to age peers are assessed for the GATE program in the spring. Students are assessed in the area of overall intellectual ability.

Parents whose children are enrolled at TeSA may nominate their child for testing. To nominate a child, the parent must complete a parent survey and permission to test form. These forms are available through the school's website beginning on Monday during the 2nd week of April, and must be returned to the office no later than Friday of the 3rd week in April each year. The forms are also available in the front office during the same time period. Failure to turn in these forms by the deadline will prevent a child from being tested.

Staff Members at TeSA may nominate a student during the 1st week of April each year. If your child has been nominated by a staff member, it is not necessary to turn in a parent nomination form. Any student who enrolls at TeSA during the middle of the school year can be nominated by a parent within two weeks of enrollment. New students to TeSA will be tested within the first six weeks of enrollment during our fall test administration.

Final determination of a student's need for gifted and talented services is completed by the GATE committee, which consist of the GATE coordinator and at least two teachers trained in the nature and needs of gifted and talented students, and approved by the principal.

The GATE committee reviews all information gathered on each nominated student to determine if criteria is met for entry into the program.

The following is a list of steps for entry into the GATE program:

Step 1: Nominations

Teacher nomination, parent nomination, or cognitive ability test scores from the Fall test administration may be used as a nominator.

Step 2: Information Gathering

After the selection committee has the completed forms by the posted deadlines, data from the following measures will be compiled.

1. Cognitive ability test scores from the fall test administration
2. Qualitative inventory or checklist completed by teacher(s)
3. State Achievement scores (3-6) TPRI (K-2)
4. Review of Products/Portfolios, if requested by the selection committee

Step 3: Testing

This step consists of cognitive ability testing administered for the sole purpose of entrance to the GATE program.

Step 4: Selection

The GATE Committee will review the data on each student who has been nominated for the GATE program. Parents and staff will be informed of the selection committee's decision and given an opportunity to discuss assessment data, if requested.

Appeals

Parents can submit any appeals of GATE decisions to the following, *in order*, within 30 days of notification of assessment results.

1. GATE committee
2. Principal
3. Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer
4. President | CEO
5. School Board

Transfers, Furloughs, Reassessment, & Exiting

When a student in the GATE program *transfers* to another district, either in or out of Texas, that district is provided with the student's assessment data once request records have been received.

Students may have a *furlough* (a leave of absence from gifted and talented program services) for specified reasons, with approval from the GATE committee, without being exited from the program.

Students may not be *assessed* for entry into the GATE program more than one time per school year. A student who is admitted to the GATE program through our nomination and selection process will remain in the GATE program for the duration of their enrollment at TeSA, without the need for re-nomination or re-assessment each year.

A GATE student who does not complete one of the two required GATE projects during the year will be placed on *probation* for the following semester. A student on probation will be monitored closely for adequate progress in response to services. If progress is satisfactory, the probation will be removed the following semester. If progress continues to be unsatisfactory, the student may be removed from the program by decision of the GATE committee. Parents will be informed of probation status and any decisions made as a result of probation.

Students may be *exited* from gifted and talented services at any time based on multiple criteria, including student performance in response to services, lack of progress after being placed on probation, or at the request of a parent. The exiting of a student is finalized by a GATE committee decision after consultation with parents and student regarding the student's educational needs.