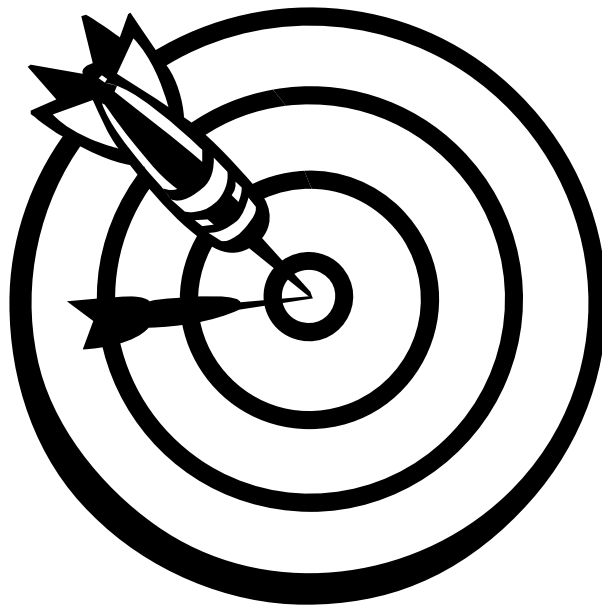


**A.I.M.**

*Activating Inquisitive Minds*

**Gifted and Talented  
Program Plan**



**Terrell Independent  
School District**

# **Texas State Goal for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students**

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

# **Terrell Independent School District**

## **A.I.M. Activating Inquisitive Minds**

### **Gifted and Talented Program Handbook**

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Terrell Independent School District's Gifted and Talented Program is to provide effective educational opportunities that meet the unique social, emotional, and intellectual needs of the gifted student.

#### **Beliefs**

- All students are special, but some students possess distinct intellectual gifts/talents which need to be nurtured.
- Contributions of gifted/talented students are vital to our future.
- Gifted students should be provided a differentiated curriculum which best meets their unique needs.
- Gifted students should be provided the opportunities to meet their unique potentials

#### **Goals**

- Students will be provided an environment in which to work that fosters opportunities to yield advanced products.
- Students will utilize higher level thinking skills to demonstrate advanced content

- Students will develop a self-concept that meets their emotional and intellectual needs.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to conceptualize the level of their abilities enabling them to become independent and self-directed learners.

# **Terrell Independent School District**

## **Gifted and Talented Objectives**

1. Students will be provided an environment in which to work that fosters opportunities to yield advanced products through independent study and research.
2. Students will utilize higher level thinking skills to demonstrate advanced content within the four core curricular areas (Math, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts).
3. Students will develop a self-concept that meets their emotional and intellectual needs.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to conceptualize the level of their abilities enabling them to become independent and self-directed learners.
5. Students will continually demonstrate communication skills in the fields of oral, written, and visual areas.

# **Selection Process**

## **Identification Criteria**

Criteria to identify gifted and talented students are board approved and specific to the state definition of gifted and talented. The criteria shall ensure the fair assessment of students with special needs, such as culturally different, the economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities.

## **Parental Consent**

Written parental consent shall be obtained before any testing or individual assessment is conducted as part of the screening and identification process. All student information collected during the screening and identification process shall be an educational record, subject to protection.

## **Nominations and Assessments**

Student nominations may be made by teachers, parents, administrators, and community members. The nomination process is ongoing throughout the year with screening at least once a year in the grades 1-6. Screening for students at the secondary level (7-12) is provided once a semester. Students in Kindergarten are assessed to begin class by the first of March. Additional students may be nominated and screened in the late spring for possible placement in the program at the beginning of the fall semester.

Data collected through both objective and subjective assessments shall be measured against the criteria approved by the Board to determine individual eligibility for the program. Assessment tools may include, but not be limited to the following: achievement tests, intelligence/abilities test, creative test, behavioral checklists completed by teachers, student interviews, student grades, and parent observations.

## **Selection**

A selection committee shall evaluate each nominated student according to the established criteria and shall select those students for whom the program placement is the most appropriate educational setting. The committee shall be composed of at least three professional educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students.

## **Notification**

Parents and students shall be notified in writing upon selection of the student for the gifted program. Participation in any program or services provided for gifted students is voluntary. The District shall obtain written permission of the parents before a student is placed in a gifted program.

# **Gifted and Talented Student Policies**

## **Transfer Students**

When a student identified as gifted by a previous school district transfers into the District, the student's records shall be reviewed by the selection committee to determine if placement in the District's program for gifted and talented students is appropriate.

## **Furloughs**

Students who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the gifted and talented program may be placed on a furlough at the end of the current school year by the student's gifted and talented teacher through recommendation to the selection committee.

A furlough also may be granted at the request of the student and parent by written request. The selection committee will consider the furlough and make recommendations.

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 assessed, and the student may re-enter the gifted program or be removed from the program. A student shall be retested before a second furlough is granted. If a student requests a second furlough, he/she must be re-evaluated to be considered for re-instatement in the program.

## **Exit Provisions**

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.

## **Appeals**

Parents or students may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or removal from the gifted program. Appeal shall be first made to the selection committee. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with School Board Policy beginning at Level Two.

**Terrell Independent School District  
Gifted/Talented Program  
AIM – Activating Inquisitive Minds**

**Furlough Form**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for Request:**

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Length of Furlough (*to be determined by the Selection Committee*):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Selection Committee:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**                      **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**                      **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**                      **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**                      **Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Program Coordinator**              **Date**

Terrell ISD Board Policy EHBB (Local)

Students who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the gifted and talented program may be placed on furlough at the end of the current school year by the student's gifted and talented teacher through recommendation to the Selection Committee.

A furlough also may be granted at the request of the student and parent by written request by the student and parent to the campus principal who shall forward the request to the Selection Committee for consideration of a furlough beginning with the next school year.

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 assessed, and the student may re-enter the gifted program or be removed from the program. A student shall be re-tested for the program before a second furlough is granted.

**Terrell Independent School District**  
**Gifted/Talented Program**  
*AIM - Activating Inquisitive Minds*

**Exiting Form**

\_\_\_\_\_ is exiting from the Gifted/Talented Program.

**Effective Date:**

**School:**

**Reason:**

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**Comments:**

If the student is not exiting because of a scheduling conflict, retesting would be necessary if the student wishes to be in the program at a later date.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Counselor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coordinator's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature

# **Program Prototypes**

## **A.I.M. Activating Inquisitive Minds**

### **Elementary**

The AIM program at the lower elementary level is designed as a pull-out program for students in Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Students are pulled out of their regular classroom one half day each week to receive instruction in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, and creative thinking. Interdisciplinary units are created to include all four core academic areas.

### **Intermediate**

Identified students in fifth and sixth grade receive services each day through their reading class. Interdisciplinary units include lessons and activities in the four core academic areas. Students receive instruction in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, and creative thinking.

### **Middle School**

AIM Students at the middle school may choose to participate in the core academic areas of their strength. G/T classes with trained teachers are provided in reading, English, math, science, and social studies.

### **High School**

Identified students at the high school level participate in pre-advanced and advancement placement classes in the core academic areas. Teachers have received training through Advanced Placement Institute, as well as in the nature and needs of gifted students.

Students are encouraged to participate in dual/concurrent enrollment, correspondence courses, or accelerated summer programs.

# Program Design

- An array of learning opportunities that emphasizes content in the core academic areas will be available during the school day as well as the entire school year.
- Program options enable students to work together as a group, work with other students, and work independently.
- When possible out-of-school options relevant to the student's area of strength will be provided.
- Credit by Exam and Early High School Graduation are options.
- Information concerning special opportunities is available and disseminated to students and parents.
- Students may participate in concurrent enrollment, correspondence courses, and/or accelerated summer programs.
- Annual evaluation activities are conducted for the purpose of continued program improvement and development and reviewed by the school board.
- An advisory group which includes community members, parents of g/t students, school staff, and gifted/talented education staff meet to review program evaluations and recommend program policies and procedures to the district.
- It is preferable that a person who has an endorsement or advanced degree in gifted/talented education is assigned to coordinate the district K-12 g/t program.

## Professional Development

- Prior to assignment in the program, teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted/talented students must have a minimum of thirty (30) clock hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of gifted students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students.
- In order to be in compliance with TEA law, educators *without* the required training who provide instruction and services that are part of the gifted/talented program must complete the required thirty (30) hours of training within one semester.
- Pre-AP and AP teachers who have completed the week-long AP Institute must complete 12 hours of gifted/talented training which includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students and curriculum and instructional strategies.
- Teachers who provide instruction and services for gifted/talented students must receive a minimum of six (6) hours of annual professional development in gifted education.

- Administrators and counselors who have authority for program decisions are required to have a minimum of six (6) hours of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students and program options for gifted/talented students.
- Information about professional development in gifted education is disseminated to professionals in the district.
- District support in the form of tuition stipends per three-hour college course will be granted following the conditions described in the Personnel Handbook.

# Program Evaluation

Formative and summative evaluation of the program for gifted/talented students will be conducted to gather information on which to base decisions concerning its effectiveness and/or problems, and its impact on the development of gifted and talented students. Program improvement is the goal of such evaluations.

The Advisory committee will review the evaluation results and make suggestions for program improvement.

The Selection Committee will analyze the collected data to modify and update campus improvement plans.

Parents, Students, Teachers, and Administrators will complete evaluations, surveys, or questionnaires each year. The results will be used to make suggestions and recommendations for program improvement.

Develop Evaluation Plan  
Student Assessment and Identification  
Program Effectiveness  
Program Design  
Staff Development  
Family/Community Involvement

- Evaluations will be formative (directed toward improving program services) as well as summative (judging overall worth of the program or success in achieving outcomes).
- Information collected should address pertinent questions raised by all constituency groups and should be responsive to the needs of all stakeholders.
- The evaluation design should report the strengths and weaknesses found in the program, as well as critical issues that might influence program services.
- Evaluation results will be presented in a clear format for the audience who will use it for decision making.

- An advisory group of community members, parents of gifted/talented students, school staff, and gifted education staff will meet regularly to review and recommend program policies and procedures.
- Gifted/talented teachers will meet to discuss plans for improvement.
- Evaluation results will be shared with the Central Office Administration and School Board