

# May ISD Gifted and Talented Program Handbook



## **May ISD Administration**

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## **I. Program Mission Statement:**

It is the intention of the May ISD to provide a program of quality, equity, and accountability for academically talented students in compliance with state and local requirements.

The gifted/talented program for the May ISD is designed to meet the needs of those children who are identified as having superior intellectual abilities or potential for outstanding academic achievement. It is acknowledged at the onset that these children are found in all races, socioeconomic groups, and at all levels of society. It is incumbent upon the school system to meet these students' special needs and prepare these students to deal with the challenges of a rapidly changing society. It shall be the mission of the May ISD to provide opportunity within the educational program for each individual to develop to the fullest of his/her capacity.

We strive to facilitate partnerships with parents and our community in order to provide a comprehensive G/T program that addresses the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of our students.

## **Definition:**

“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:

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.

## **II. State Goal:**

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.

### **III. District Program Goals**

A. Gifted and Talented students will seek original and innovative solutions to problems which constructively reflect HIGHER-ORDER THINKING PROCESSES.

- 1) Develop creative and critical thinking.
- 2) Be able to apply component skills in complex thinking processes such as problem solving, decision making, and critical thinking.
- 3) Participate in inquiry-based, project-based, or problem-based research such as the Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP).
- 4) Practice and apply basic principles of creative problem solving.
- 5) Recognize and use planning as a vital element of the creative process.
- 6) Recognize aspects of creative thinking to include originality, elaboration, and evaluation.

B. Gifted and Talented students will develop an UNDERSTANDING OF SELF AND OTHERS through Social and Emotional Learning.

- 1) Become aware of and cope more successfully with their giftedness in relation to themselves and others.
- 2) Exchange ideas with peers and others as a means of intellectual and self-development.

### **IV. Local Application**

This program will be implemented on all campuses in the district. Students identified as Gifted/Talented will receive differentiated instruction and opportunities to develop advanced products. A variety of instructional models will be implemented to meet the needs of identified students. These models include both the pull-out program and in-class differentiation.

Identified students are served in grades K-6 in a pull-out program and grades 7-12 will participate in advanced studies and receive differentiated instruction.

The district shall provide an array of learning opportunities for gifted/talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 and shall inform parents of the opportunities. Options shall include, but not limited to:

- 1) Instructional and organizational patterns that enable identified students to work together as a group, to work with other students, and to work independently.
- 2) A continuum of learning experiences that leads to the development of advanced-level products and performances.
- 3) In-school, and when possible, out-of-school options relevant to the student's area of strength that are available during the school year.

## **V. Referrals**

Under requirements provided by TEA, students may be referred for the gifted and talented program by teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons. Students at the secondary level may self-refer. A meeting will be held to inform parents of referral, identification, placement, and program procedures at each campus. The referrals or requests will be made on a form provided by the district. Written consent shall be obtained before any special 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 the protections set out in policies at FL.

## **VI. Identification/Assessment**

Student participation will be based upon criteria provided by the state and by local policy. These criteria will include the following:

- 1) Teacher observation
- 2) Parent observation form
- 3) Abilities test
- 4) State Assessment (when available)
- 5) Student Product/Performance (Portfolio)
- 6) Other Optional Criteria

## **VII. Student Selection**

Each campus will establish a placement committee composed of at least two campus educators who have received the 30-hour gifted and talented required training regarding gifted students. A campus administrator will also be a member of the placement committee. The responsibility of this committee is to ensure that placements will be made by state and local guidelines. The committee will meet to

review data regarding each referred student and will make a decision about student placement in the G/T education program.

Prior to referral, school staff, parents, and the community will be made aware of the screening and have available to them the characteristics of gifted/talented students. This may be done through teacher in-service, printed or social media, public meetings, website, and/or notes.

Parents will be notified regarding the committee's placement decision. Notifications to parents will be the responsibility of the individual campus. The district shall obtain written permission of the student and his/her parents before a student is placed in a gifted program.

### **VIII. Curriculum**

An array of learning opportunities in Grades K-12 emphasizes content in the four core academic areas and is commensurate with the abilities of G/T students. Parents are informed of these opportunities. Flexible grouping program options offer G/T students opportunities to work together as a group (3 or more) to work with other students, and to work independently during the school day, as well as the entire school year. A continuum of learning experiences is provided that leads to the development of advanced-level products and/or performances including TPSP, Texas Performance Standards Project, or other forms of inquiry-based, project based, or problem-based projects. Opportunities are provided to accelerate in areas of student strengths. Student progress in the G/T program shall be monitored.

### **IX. Transfer Policy**

It shall be the policy of the May ISD that students transferring into the district, with documentation of being identified Gifted/Talented, shall submit their records to the GT review committee to determine whether placement in the district's program for gifted and talented students is appropriate. The committee shall make its determination within 30 days of the student's enrollment in the District and shall base its decision on the transferred records, observation reports of District teachers who instruct the student, and student and parent conferences. If the transfer student's records are limited or not available, the student will be required to go through the district placement process.

## **X. Student Furlough**

Students who are unable to maintain academic performance within the structure of the gifted and talented program may be placed on furlough by the campus G/T committee. The purpose of such a furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the campus committee. A furlough also may be granted at the request of the student and/or parent.

A student may be furloughed for a period of time deemed appropriate by the campus committee. At the end of the furlough, the student's progress shall be reassessed, and the student may re-enter the gifted program, be removed from the program, or be placed on another furlough.

## **XI. Student Exit**

Student performance in the program shall be monitored. A student shall be removed from the program if the campus committee determines it is in the student's best interest. Program exit is finalized by committee decision following a careful review of progress documentation and consultation with parents and the student regarding the student's educational needs. When a student or parent requests removal from the program, the placement committee shall meet with the parent and student before honoring the request.

## **XII. Appeals**

Parents or students may appeal any final decision of the campus committee regarding placement in or removal from the gifted program. Appeals shall be made first to the campus committee in written form no later than 10 calendar days after notification of pending exit. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with FNG (LOCAL) beginning at Level Two.

## **XIII. Evaluation**

The gifted program shall be evaluated periodically, and evaluation information shall be shared with Board members, administrators, teachers, counselors, students in the

gifted and talented program, and the community. The evaluation procedure designed to be used by the May ISD may include the following:

- 1) Parent Survey
- 2) Student Survey
- 3) School Personnel Survey
- 4) Student performance assessment may include using the Texas Performance Standards

#### **XIV. Professional Development for Teachers/30 Clock Hours**

Prior to assignment in the classroom, teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted students have a minimum of 30 clock hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of G/T students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students or, in extenuating circumstances, a plan on file showing how that teacher will receive the 30 clock hours within one semester through ESC 15.

#### **XV. Community Awareness**

The district 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 of and support for the program. Information will be provided in the parent's native language, to the extent possible.

Information may be shared with parents and community through the following:

- District website
- Local Media/Social Media
- Newsletters

### **May ISD Gifted and Talented Program Design**

#### **May ISD: PK-12th Grade**

Services provided by GT Trained Classroom Teachers:

- Project and performance-based lessons including S.T.E.M./S.T.E.A.M. are based on grade-level TEKS in the four foundation areas (cross-curricular)
- TPSP objectives, lessons, and rubrics are considered in the development of lessons and activities building up to major projects

- Clustered in classrooms with other GT students
- Students receive differentiated instruction