

Alamo Heights Independent School District
Secondary Gifted and Talented
Placement Handbook

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Secondary Gifted and Talented (GT)

The Alamo Heights Independent School District is committed to recognizing unique talents, gifts, and abilities of its diverse student population and to providing an environment that maximizes intellectual development.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Students who participate in services designed for gifted/talented 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 (from the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*).

SERVICE DELIVERY

In grades 6-12, Gifted and Talented services are offered through Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP) courses designed to prepare students to excel in high school Pre-AP and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. When scheduling permits, separate GT sections of Pre-AP courses will be offered. When scheduling does not permit separate GT sections, GT student needs will be met through differentiated instruction within the heterogeneously grouped classroom.

GT AND NON-GT SECTIONS

GT sections of PreAP/AP course are expected to be different in the way content is covered, in the processes that are used, and in the products that are created. GT will be taught using techniques that are considered best practices for GT students. Although the curriculum and general grading standards will be very similar to non-GT courses, the instruction and work will be differentiated to meet the learning needs of GT students. Different, however, should not simply mean “more work” or “outrageously challenging,” but it refers to *different* types of assignments, products, processes, pacing, etc. Non-GT sections of PreAP/AP maintain a high level of intellectual challenge and academic rigor.

PreAP/AP GUIDELINES

GT students enrolled in PreAP/AP courses are expected to follow guidelines for those courses set forth in the parent/student contracts and other district guidelines.

Secondary GT Placement Procedures and Policies

IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT

- The Board-approved criteria for placement into various classes 6-12 include the objective criteria and subjective criteria.
 - The objective criteria include ability and achievement tests
 - Ability tests include the Cognitive Abilities Test, or CogAT, the Otis-Lennon School Abilities Test (OLSAT), etc.
 - Achievement tests include the Iowa Test, the Stanford achievement tests, the Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED), etc.
 - The subjective criteria include semester grades and teacher behavioral checklists.
- Qualification is based on a combination of these scores, as seen at the bottom of the Student Summary Profile.
- For the entire matrix with each content area test for grades 6-8 or 9-12, please consult the sample Student Summary Profile

TIMELINE FOR IDENTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT

Junior school: 6th, 7th, and 8th graders who seek placement up the following year are tested during the preceding school year. Specific dates are available in the school guidance office. A Parent Permission to Test form must be turned in by the established deadline to sign up for testing. More information about these forms may be sought in the guidance office.

High school: 9th- 11th graders who seek GT placement are tested during the spring semester (typically in February & March; June & August). Specific dates are available in the high school guidance office. Students may begin signing up for testing in February, after counselors have handed out course selection sheets for the following year. A Parent Permission to Test form must be turned in by the established deadline to sign up for testing. More information about these forms may be sought in the Assistant Principal's office.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Transfer students must meet the Alamo Heights criteria to be admitted to the GT program. Students will be screened for possible placement within two weeks of enrollment in the district. Transfer students will be assigned to the appropriate non-GT classes until the assessment is accomplished. Transfer students who enroll early enough will be screened in August, prior to the start of school.

Below are tables with the cut-scores for qualifying.

	G/T	Non G/T
Ability Tests	150-132	<132
Achievement Tests	99-96%ile	<96
HS Behavioral Checklist	5	<5
JS Behavioral Checklist	20-17	<17
Grades	100-95	<95

Student Summary Profile
Alamo Heights Independent School District
Gifted/Talented Program

English, Math, Social Studies, Science

Grade Level: 6th, 7th, and 8th

Student _____

Teacher _____

Student ID# _____

Current Grade _____ Date _____

CRITERIA			GT	Non-GT Placement
O B J E C T I V E	ABILITY TESTS		SAS	SEM
			150-132	<132
	CogAT/OLSAT Verbal (Eng & Soc St)			
	CogAT/OLSAT Non-Verbal (Math & Sci)			
	CogAT Nonverbal (Eng, Soc St, Math, & Sci)			
	ACHIEVEMENT TESTS		99-96%ile	<96 %ile
Iowa/Stanford Reading Total NPR (Eng & Soc St)				
Iowa/Stanford Math Total NPR (Math & Sci)				
S U B J E C T I V E	STUDENT EVALUATION		20-17	<17
	Rating Scale	English		
		Social Studies		
		Math		
		Science		
	GRADES		100-95	<95
	Semester Average	English		
		Social Studies		
Math				
Science				

English: 3 of 5 indicators with 2 in the objective area

Social Studies: 3 of 5 indicators with at least 1 in the objective area

Math: 3 of 5 indicators with 2 in the objective area

Science: 3 of 5 indicators with 2 in the objective area

Student Summary Profile

Alamo Heights Independent School District Gifted/Talented Program

English (E), Math (M), Social Studies (SS), Science (Sc)

Grade Level: 9-12

Student _____

Birth Date _____ Age: Y ____ M ____

Student ID# _____

Current Grade ____ Testing Date ____/____/____

CRITERIA

G/T

Non-GT placement

OBJECTIVE	ABILITY TEST(S)		150-132	<132
	B	CogAT Verbal Battery	<i>E—M—SS—Sc</i>	
J	CogAT Quantitative Thinking	<i>M—Sc</i>		
E	CogAT Nonverbal Battery	<i>E—M—SS—Sc</i>		
C	ACHIEVEMENT TEST(S)		99-96%ile	<96%ile
	TI	Iowa Assessments Vocabulary	<i>English</i>	
V	Iowa Assessments Written Expression	<i>English</i>		
E	Iowa Assessments Mathematics	<i>Mathematics</i>		
	Iowa Assessments Social Studies	<i>Social Studies</i>		
	Iowa Assessments Science	<i>Science</i>		
SUBJECTIVE	BEHAVIORAL CHECKLIST		5	<5
	Rating Scale	English		
Math				
Social Studies				
Science				
C	GRADES		100-95	<95
	Semester Average	English		
Math				
Social Studies				
Science				

English: 4 of 6 indicators with at least 2 in the objective area, at least 1 an ability score

Social Studies: 3 of 5 indicators with at least 1 in the objective area

Math: 3 of 5 indicators with at least 2 in the objective area

Science: 4 of 6 indicators with at least 2 in the objective area

SELECTION

- A selection committee composed of at least three professional educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students shall be established at the elementary level, middle school level, and high school level.
- The committee shall ensure the fair assessment of students with special needs, such as the culturally different, the economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities.
- This 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.

APPEALS

- Parents, students, teachers, or counselors may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or removal from the gifted program. Appeal shall be made first to the selection committee. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with local board policy. (Refer to FNG Local.)
- A written appeal must be submitted **no later than 15 calendar days** after the selection committee has announced its decision. The appeal must contain justification for the appeal and **provide new evidence** to be considered.
- The Placement Review Request form (EHBB REGULATION X) should be turned in with the letter of appeal.
- Students in grades six through twelve shall submit the appeal to the student's counselor (JS) or Assistant Principal (HS).

PROBATIONARY PLACEMENT

- The selection committee, upon initial placement, or the appeals committee, if it decides to grant an appeal of placement, may place a student on probationary status.
- If a student is placed into a GT class on a probationary status, the student is required to maintain an 80 or above at the end of the first grading cycle. If that grade is not met, then the student will be removed from the class and placed into the next lower level available. If the grade is met at the end of the first grade cycle, then the student comes off of probationary status and must meet the regular maintenance requirement for full placement.

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENT (EHBB REGULATION)

- Student performance in the gifted and talented program shall be monitored. In order to remain in the program/course, students must maintain an acceptable standard.
- At the secondary level, “acceptable standard” shall be defined as a semester average of 70 or above. Teachers are required to send progress reports to parents should a student’s average fall below 70 any time after the third week of a grading period.
- At the end of the semester, teachers shall provide counselors with the names of students who have not earned a semester average of 70 and a recommendation regarding continuation. If a student does not meet an acceptable standard, one of the following options will be exercised:
 1. Continue in the course(s) on probationary status for a specified period of time as recommended by the teacher.
 2. Request a furlough.
 3. Exit the program/course(s).
- Students who did not make the grade requirement at the end of the year and are placed on a furlough must meet performance requirements the following year. During the following school year, the student must be placed in the grade level class. If the student maintains an overall average of a 90, then the student may come off the furlough and be placed back into the GT placement in the fall semester of the following year. If the student does not maintain an overall average of a 90, then the student exits the program. When a student exits the program, the only way to get back in is to requalify.
- Students who did not make the grade requirement at the end of the fall semester and are placed on a furlough must meet performance requirements the following spring semester. During the spring semester, if the student maintains an overall average of a 90 in the grade level class, then her/she may come off the furlough and be placed back into the GT placement in the fall semester the following year. If the student does not maintain an overall average of a 90, then the student exits the program. When a student exits the program, the only way to get back in is to requalify.

FURLOUGHS (EHBB REGULATION)

- The purpose of a furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the selection committee.
- A furlough may be requested by a student, parent, teacher, and/or counselor.
- The Placement Review Request form, also called a “furlough form” by school officials, is used to apply for a furlough (SEE APPENDIX FOR SAMPLE).
- 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 removed from the program, or be placed on another furlough.

- The parent and/or student, upon consultation with the teacher and counselor, shall initiate a request for a furlough from the gifted program. The request must occur within the first grading period of the semester or at the end of a semester.
- **For the student's sake, we recommend that a furlough request be processed during the 1st 10 days of a semester. After the 1st 10 days of a semester, furloughs should be requested after the 3rd day after the end of the first grading cycle or by the 3rd day after the end of a semester.**
- The request must be submitted in writing to the student's counselor (grades six through twelve). This person shall convene the selection committee to rule on the furlough request.
- When a furlough is granted during the first semester of a full-year course, the student will not be readmitted during the second semester of that full-year course because of the sequential nature of a full-year course.
- If a furlough is taken during the second semester of a full-year course, the student may be considered for admission into the next sequential course.
- Reassignment to the gifted course is contingent upon a review of the student-initiated written request by the selection committee or its representative and upon the student earning the minimum grade required for admittance to the course.
- Note: Students who are not able to be in a GT section of a PreAP/AP course because of a scheduling conflict are not considered on furlough.

EXIT PROVISIONS

A student shall be removed from the gifted and talented 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 District shall honor that request after a conference with the selection committee or its representative. If the student, with parental consent, withdraws from the program, he/she may not reapply for admission during that school year. Should the student desire readmission thereafter, the student must re-qualify on the basis of selection criteria in effect at the time re-admittance is requested.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

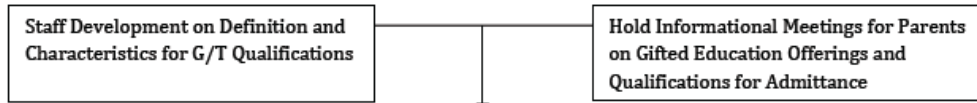
The District shall ensure that information about the District's Gifted and Talented program is available to parents and community members and that they have an opportunity to develop an understanding of and support for the program.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

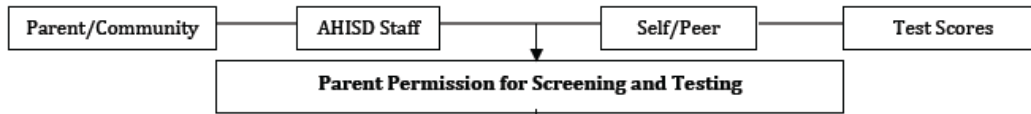
The GT program shall be evaluated annually, and evaluation information shall be shared with Board members, administrators, teachers, counselors, parents, and the community. The evaluation process shall ensure that those involved in the planning and implementation of the gifted program are also involved in its evaluation.

PROCEDURAL FLOW CHART

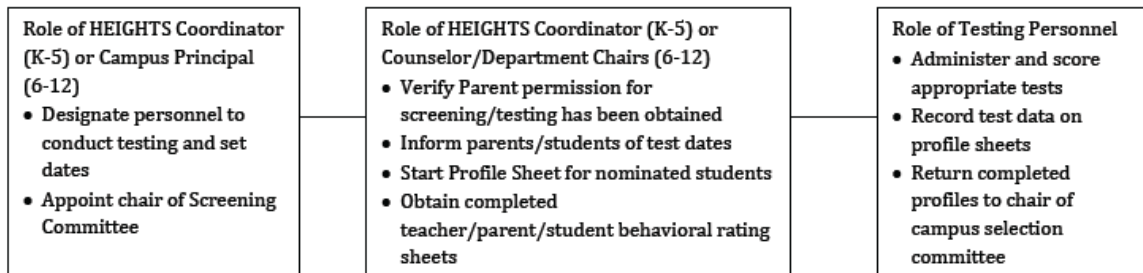
PHASE ONE—INFORMATION MEETINGS



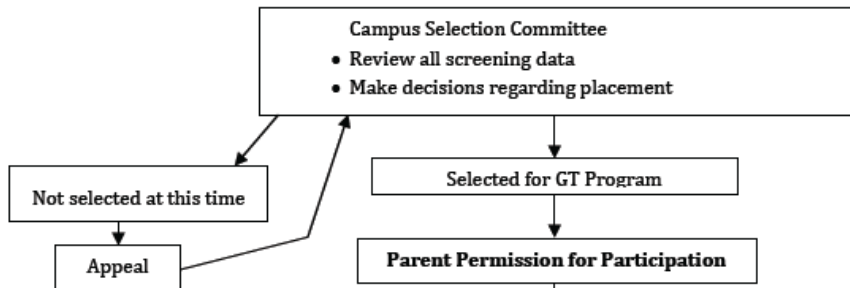
PHASE TWO—NOMINATIONS



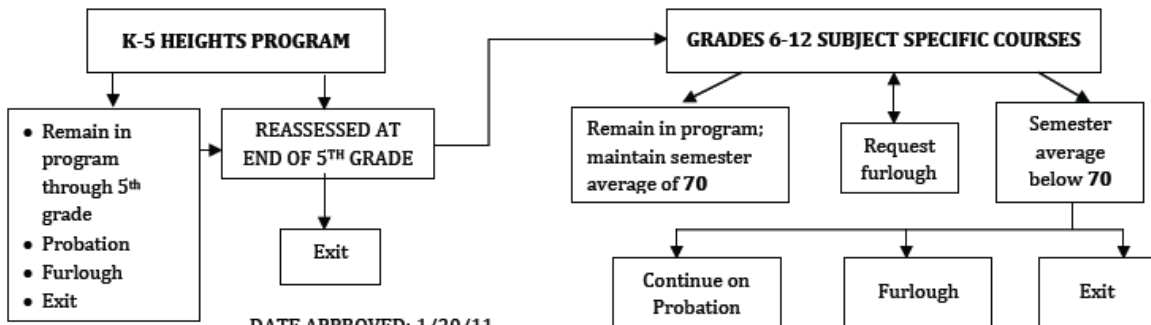
PHASE THREE—SCREENING



PHASE FOUR—SELECTION



PHASE FIVE--PARTICIPATION



DATE APPROVED: 1/20/11

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

EHBB
(REGULATION)

MAINTENANCE
REQUIREMENT –
GRADES 6-12

At the secondary level, “acceptable standard” shall be defined as a semester average of 70 or above. Teachers are required to send progress reports to parents should a student’s average fall below 70 anytime after the third week of a grading period.

At the end of the semester, teachers shall provide counselors with the names of students who have not earned a semester average of 70 and a recommendation regarding continuation. If a student does not meet an acceptable standard, one of the following options will be exercised:

1. Continue in the course(s) on probationary status for a specified period of time as recommended by the teacher.
2. Request a furlough.
3. Exit the program/course(s).

FURLOUGHS
GRADES 6-12

After school begins, a student enrolled in a GT course must stay in the course for the first ten days of class. In extenuating circumstances, determined by the principal- in consultation with the teacher, counselor, and parent- a student may be waived from the requirement to remain in the course the first ten days.

FURLOUGHS
GRADES 9-12

A student, parent, teacher, and/or counselor may initiate a request for a furlough from the gifted program/course(s). The request must occur by the third day after the first cycle grade is distributed or by the third day after the end of the semester.

FURLOUGHS
GRADES K-8

A student, parent, teacher, and/or counselor may initiate a request for a furlough from the gifted course(s). The request may occur whenever the need arises during the school year. The request must be submitted in writing to the HEIGHTS Program Coordinator (kindergarten through fifth grades) or to the student’s counselor (grades six through twelve). This person shall convene the selection committee to rule on the furlough request. The selection committee shall decide the length of the furlough. The sequential nature of the course(s) will determine whether a furlough is granted for one semester or a full year. In most instances, when a furlough is granted for the spring semester, the student may reenter the program the following fall. If the furlough is requested for the fall semester, reentry into the course for the spring semester will depend upon the sequential nature of that course. Reassignment to the gifted program/course is contingent upon a review of the student-initiated written request to the selection

DATE PRESENTED: 1/20/11

1 of 2

committee or its representative and upon the student meeting the 90 semester average set by the selection committee.

Performance goals may include the grade earned in a course, conduct/effort requirements, tests scores, or other criteria set forth by the selection committee.

ALAMO HEIGHTS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
GIFTED/TALENTED PROGRAM

PLACEMENT REVIEW REQUEST

<input type="checkbox"/> Howard
<input type="checkbox"/> Cambridge
<input type="checkbox"/> Woodridge
<input type="checkbox"/> AHJS
<input type="checkbox"/> AHHS

Student Name _____ ID # _____

Parent Name _____ Address _____

I. Student Request

Appeal the decision of the Selection Committee for placement in _____ (Attach letter stating reason for appeal and providing new evidence to be considered.)

Continue in _____ on Probation
Course

Furlough for _____ to _____
Time Course/Level

Exit Program/Course to _____
Course/Level

II. State Reason for Request and provide details of the extenuating circumstances which you feel justifies reconsideration of the placement. Attach additional pages as needed.

Student Date

Parent/Guardian Date

III. Committee Recommendation

Appeal Granted

Appeal Denied

Continue in _____ on Probation
Course/Level

Furlough for _____ to _____
Time Level

Exit Program/Course to _____

IV. Comments

Screening Committee Representative

Date

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

EHBB
(LOCAL)

NOMINATION/ REFERRAL	Students may be nominated/referred for the gifted and talented program at any time by teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons.
SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION PROCESS	The District shall provide assessment opportunities to complete the screening and identification process for nominated/referred students at least once per school year.
PARENTAL CONSENT	The District shall obtain written parental consent 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.
IDENTIFICATION CRITERIA	The Board-approved program for the gifted and talented shall establish criteria to identify gifted and talented students. The criteria shall be specific to the state definition of gifted and talented and shall ensure the fair assessment of students with special needs, such as the culturally different, the economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities.
ASSESSMENTS	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 are not limited to, the following: achievement tests, intelligence tests, creativity tests, behavioral checklists completed by teachers and parents, student/parent conferences, and available student work products.
SELECTION	A selection committee shall evaluate each nominated/referred student according to the established criteria and shall identify those students for whom placement in the gifted and talented program 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, as required by law, and shall be established at each campus.
NOTIFICATION	The District shall provide written notification to parents of students who qualify for services through the District's gifted and talented program. Participation in any program or services provided for gifted students shall be voluntary, and the District shall obtain written permission from the parents before placing a student in a gifted program.
REASSESSMENT	The District shall reassess students to determine appropriate program placement when a student moves from grade 5 to grade 6.
TRANSFER STUDENTS INTERDISTRICT	Transfer students shall meet the District's criteria to be admitted to the gifted program. A student previously identified by the sending district shall be screened for possible placement within two weeks of enrollment in the District. All transfer students shall be assigned to regular classes until the assessment is accomplished.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

EHBB
(LOCAL)

INTRADISTRICT A student who transfers from one campus in the District to the same grade level at another District campus shall continue to receive services in the District's gifted and talented program.

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENT Student performance in gifted and talented program courses shall be monitored. In order to remain in the program, students shall maintain an acceptable standard.

FURLOUGHS The District may place on a furlough any student who is unable to maintain satisfactory performance or whose educational needs are not being met within the structure of the gifted and talented program. A furlough may be initiated by the District, the parent, or the student.

In accordance with administrative regulations, a furlough shall be granted for specified reasons and for a specified period of time. At the end of a furlough, the student may reenter the gifted program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.

EXIT PROVISIONS The District shall monitor student performance in the program. If at any time the selection committee determines it is in the best interest of the student and his or her educational needs, the committee may exit a student from the program. If a student or parent requests removal from the program, the selection committee shall meet with the parent and student before honoring the request. If the student, with parental consent, withdraws from the gifted and talented program/course, he or she shall not reapply for admission during that school year. Should the student desire readmission thereafter, the student must requalify on the basis of selection criteria in effect at the time readmittance is requested.

APPEALS A parent or student may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted program. Appeals shall be made first to the selection committee. A written appeal shall be submitted no later than 15 days after the selection committee has announced its decision. The appeal shall contain justification for the appeal and provide new evidence to be considered. For students in kindergarten through grade 5, the appeal shall be submitted to the HEIGHTS program coordinator. A student in grades 6 through 12 shall submit the appeal to the student's counselor.

Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with FNG(LOCAL) beginning at Level Two.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

EHBB
(LOCAL)

PROGRAM
EVALUATION

The District shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of the District's gifted program, and the results of the evaluation shall be used to modify and update the District and campus improvement plans. The District shall include parents in the evaluation process and shall share the information with Board members, administrators, teachers, counselors, students in the gifted and talented program, and the community.

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.