

Gifted/Talented Board Policy & District Plan



**Olton ISD
PO BOX 388
Olton, TX 79064
806.285.2641**

OLTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
POLICY AND PROCEDURES
FOR ACADEMICALLY GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

School Board Approved July 28, 2025

SUPERINTENDENT: Michael Michaleson

PRINCIPALS: Colby Huseman, Olton High School
Amanda Richardson, Olton Jr. High
Stacie Ramage, H.P. Webb Elementary

DISTRICT G/T COORDINATOR: Terri Sandoval, Director of Federal and Special Programs

Nondiscrimination Statement

Olton ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, economic status, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
State Goal for Gifted Students	3
State Definition of Gifted/Talented	3
District Gifted/Talented Philosophy and Program Goals	4
Program Design	5
Identification Procedures and Processes	6-7
Additional Policies	
• Transfer Procedure	8
• Furlough Procedure	8-9
• Exit Process	9-10
• Appeal Process	10
Professional Learning	11
Family and Community Involvement	11
Program Evaluation	12
School Board Policy	13-18

STATE GOAL FOR SERVICES FOR GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS

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. High school graduates who have participated in services for gifted/talented students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services.

Texas Education Agency's Definition of Gifted/Talented

A gifted/talented student is 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 an intellectual, creative, or artistic area;**
- **possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or**
- **excels in a specific academic field. (Texas Education Code §29.121)**

The Texas Education Code 29.123 specifies that students who are gifted have outstanding mental abilities and above-average achievement or potential in:

- **General intellectual ability**
- **Specific subject matter aptitude**
- **Creativity/productive thinking abilities**
- **Leadership ability**

Olton ISD Philosophy on Gifted/Talented Education

Olton ISD recognizes the gifted/talented student as a student whose abilities, talents and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require a variety of special provisions to meet their educational needs. As students, they are found in all races, socioeconomic groups, geographic locales and environments; as adults, they are leaders in government, medicine, invention, creative arts, communicative arts, philosophy, industry, science, and many other fields. Olton ISD seeks to offer educational opportunities appropriate to each student's ability, including providing for the unique needs of the gifted/talented.

Gifted/talented students require educational experiences beyond those normally provided by the regular school program. The ultimate goal of the program is to provide experiences whereby the students will be challenged academically, socially, and emotionally to achieve their greatest potential to manage change and to have a sense of responsibility for self, school, community, and society.

District Goals for Gifted and Talented Students

Olton ISD Gifted/Talented Students will:

- Study issues, themes, and problems of a discipline of study to create in-depth understanding
- Become creative problem-solvers and use complex thinking skills effectively
- Generate a variety of original products of professional quality through skills and information gained from in-depth study
- Develop a healthy self-concept and sense of pride in accomplishment as it relates to self and others
- Develop leadership skills that will enable these students to become leaders beyond their school days and into the work world

Program Design

The Gifted/Talented program at the elementary and jr. high level are pullout programs.	
Kindergarten 1st-5th Grade	<p>Identified students in these grades are served through a pullout program. These students participate in an advanced thematic curriculum designed to allow for in-depth exploration of complex topics and issues that require high-level thinking. In addition to the foundational skills formally introduced, a strong emphasis is placed on further development of self-acceptance, group investigations, research skills, technology applications, leadership development and communication skills.</p> <p>Identified students in Kindergarten, 1st Grade, and 2nd Grade attend weekly pullout classes for 1.5 hours a week. Identified students in 3rd grade, 4th Grade, and 5th Grade attend the pullout class for 2.5 hours per week.</p>
The Gifted/Talented program at the secondary level is embedded within the core content areas.	
6th-8th Grade	<p>identified students in these grades are served through a pullout program. These students participate in an advanced thematic curriculum designed to allow for in-depth exploration of complex topics and issues that require high-level thinking. In addition to the foundational skills formally introduced, a strong emphasis is placed on further development of self-acceptance, group investigations, research skills, technology applications, leadership development and communication skills.</p> <p>Identified students in 6th -8th grade attend weekly pullout classes for 2.5 hours per week.</p>
9th-12th Grade	<p>Identified students in these grades are served through a pullout program. These students participate in an advanced thematic curriculum designed to allow for in-depth exploration of complex topics and issues that require high-level thinking. In addition to the foundational skills formally introduced, a strong emphasis is placed on further development of self-acceptance, group investigations, research skills, technology applications, leadership development and communication skills.</p> <p>With the opportunity to enroll in dual credit classes.</p> <p>Identified students in 9th -12th grade attend weekly pullout classes for 50 minutes per week.</p>

Student Identification

Referral of Students

During the academic school year, all students in grades K-12 will have the opportunity to be referred and tested. (Students in grade 12 can be tested and identified but will not be served since they will graduate before services would begin.) Teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members may refer students for the gifted/talented program in Olton ISD. Students will be considered referred for the program when a referral packet has been completed and parental permission for testing has been received. The referral process is held annually. All students referred and for whom parent permission to test has been granted will be assessed for placement. There is no limit to the number of years a child can be referred. (For example, a child who does not qualify may be referred again the following year for testing. At that time, the student will be newly assessed for consideration.)

Referral Window

The referral window for different grade levels is posted on the district website. At least one additional method of communication (call-out, letter home, email, etc.) about referral windows will be made.

Student Profile Summary

A student profile summary will be prepared for each student referred. This profile summary will be utilized in considering students for final identification and placement in the program. Included in this profile will be a compilation of results obtained from appropriate quantitative and qualitative assessment measures.

Evaluation Procedures

There is no single method or instrument that adequately identifies giftedness in an area of human endeavor because giftedness is a multifaceted trait. Therefore, each student referred will be screened with multiple criteria. Evaluation for EB students will be conducted in the student's primary language or using non-verbal instruments whenever possible. All students must have a parent permission to test form signed by their parent(s) before assessment can be completed.

The screening tools listed below have been chosen as ways to portray as accurately as possible a picture of each nominee's "gifts" in leadership, creativity, specific academic ability, and general intellectual ability.

- The Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) - measures cognitive ability

- K-BIT 2 - a brief measure of verbal and nonverbal intelligence used with individuals ages 4 through 90 years
- Slocumb Payne Teacher Perception Inventory -A teacher survey rates leadership, creativity, academic ability, and task commitment
- A parent survey includes rating the child's unique characteristics, creativity, task commitment, and skills.
- Quantitative Abilities - K-2 students M-class scores, 5-12 Students STAAR scores
- Creativity based on information sent in from classroom teachers (Drawing, journaling etc.) and Writing Samples gathered.

Students continuously enrolled may be referred and screened only once each calendar year.

District Placement Committee

Olton ISD will have a District Placement Committee, which consists of an administrator, counselor, and District G/T Coordinator at a minimum. (Only staff who have met the requirements of the State Plan may serve on this committee.) The District Placement Committee will make placement decisions once testing procedures have been completed. The committee makes the final placement into the Gifted/Talented program and has the authority to overrule any testing results. Letters to parents regarding their child's placement will be sent home following committee decisions.

Placement of Students:

Students who have been identified as gifted and talented by Olton ISD and who have parent permission to be served will be placed in the district's program and will remain in the program through graduation or as long as they are enrolled in the district. Students in kindergarten will be placed and begin receiving services by March 1st of the same year in which they were assessed. Students in 1st-11th grade will be placed and begin receiving services at the beginning of the school year following assessment.

If an identified student withdraws from Olton ISD, his/her student profile sheet with testing results will be passed on to the district receiving the student.

Student Records

The permanent records of identified G/T students participating in the program shall include the student gifted and talented summary profile. Assessment data of students who were referred and tested for the G/T program and who did not meet eligibility requirements will be kept for one year at the campus and then sent to the District G/T Coordinator.

All records related to G/T identification will be kept on file by the district for five years after services have ceased.

Additional Policies: Transfers, Furlough, Exit, and Appeals Procedures

Placement of Transfer Students

A student who has been identified as gifted and talented by a previous school district and who enrolls in Olton ISD, will be considered for placement into the G/T program. The District Placement Committee shall review the student's profile sheet and testing records from the previous district, and if they are similar to the identification measures used by Olton ISD, the student may be placed in the program without additional testing. If the student's profile sheet and testing records are not similar to the identification measures used by Olton ISD, the student may be reassessed following parent consent. Testing of transfer students previously identified as gifted/talented does not have to be completed within normal testing windows and can occur at any point in the school year. Within 30 calendar days of enrollment, the District Placement Committee shall determine if the transfer student meets the criteria for gifted and talented services within Olton ISD.

Middle School and high school transfer students may not be enrolled in any course designated for only gifted/talented students until the assessment process has been completed and/or eligibility has been determined by the District Placement Committee. These students may be enrolled in advanced courses that are open to all students regardless of gifted/talented identification.

Placement of Intra-District Transfer

Identified gifted/talented students who move within the district should immediately be placed in the gifted/talented program at the receiving school. The Campus G/T teacher at the sending school should include any G/T documentation with the student's cumulative folder when it is sent to the receiving school.

Withdrawal from Olton ISD

G/T students withdrawing from Olton ISD will have a letter forwarded, upon request, to the receiving school district verifying identification and participation in the G/T program, including a copy of the student profile.

Furlough Procedure

A furlough from the Olton ISD Gifted/Talented Services is a departure from the program providing services for a prescribed length of time, not to exceed six months. Furloughs from the G/T program may be initiated by parents or school personnel and may also be granted for extenuating circumstances other than academic performance. If a parent,

teacher, or the campus principal has evidence an identified gifted/talented student is not benefiting from the placement in the campus G/T program, a conference will be scheduled to assess whether or not a furlough is warranted. This conference will include the student (if age appropriate), a campus G/T teacher, a campus principal, and the parent/guardian. No student will be furloughed without parent permission to do so. If furloughed, the student remains coded as GT in the PEIMS database.

When considering a furlough, the District Placement Committee will consider the following questions:

- What is the most appropriate educational placement for the student at this time?
- Is the gifted/talented program detrimental to this student?
 - Is the student experiencing undue stress due to the program participation?
 - Is competition in the program too demanding for the student at this time?
- Is the subject matter and difficulty of material appropriate for the student's abilities and educational development?
- Are teachers and parents clinging to the following misconceptions or unrealistic expectations about the gifted such as...
 - Gifted students should be making straight A's.
 - Gifted students should be model students and never present discipline problems.
 - Gifted students should be able to keep up with all their work and never get behind.
 - Gifted students should excel in all subject areas.

A student may be furloughed from the G/T program for a maximum of six months. At that time, a decision must be made by the parent and the District Placement Committee for the student to either re-enter the G/T program, to begin another furlough, or to exit from the program. No more than two consecutive furloughs will be permitted.

Exit Procedure

Once a student is placed in the gifted/talented program he/she will most likely continue in the program. If, however, it becomes evident that an error has been made in the placement of a student it may be in the best interest of the student to exit him/her from the program. Evidence may include data that shows the student's mastery of core content is hampered by his/her participation in the G/T program, or anecdotal evidence that the student consistently refuses to engage in the G/T instructional opportunities. All methods of intervention should be utilized before the District Placement Committee

determines and proceeds with formal exit. Parents are notified and involved in intervention strategies. The final exit decision should be based on educational, psychological and personal reasons with no single criterion as the determining factor for exiting the student. If formal exit is deemed appropriate, parent permission is required, and a copy of the decision is placed in the student's file. When a student exits the program, his PEIMS coding for G/T is removed. Additionally, once a child has been exited from the program, he or she may not re-enter without going through the entire referral and assessment process again.

Placement Appeal Procedures

Appeal of the G/T District Placement Committee's decision begins at the building level. To appeal the District Placement Committee decision about your child's eligibility for the Olton ISD Gifted/Talented Program:

1. The parent submits a written appeal (form on following page) to the campus G/T teacher or District G/T Coordinator within one week after receiving placement information.
2. The campus principal and District G/T Coordinator will be informed of the appeal.
3. The campus G/T teacher presents the written appeal to the District Placement Committee.
4. The District Placement Committee responds in writing to the parent within two weeks after receiving the written appeal.
5. In accordance with board policy, any subsequent appeals shall be made to additional staff in the following order: the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Superintendent, and Superintendent.

Professional Learning

The District G/T Coordinator will track and keep records of district staff members' professional learning requirements and completion.

Each teacher designated as a Campus Gifted/Talented teacher will complete a minimum of 30 hours of professional learning that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, identification and assessment of gifted/talented students, and curriculum and instruction for gifted/talented students is required for teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the district's defined gifted/talented services. Teachers are required to have completed the thirty (30) hours of professional learning prior to their assignment to the district's gifted/talented services (19 TAC §89.2(1)).

Administrators and counselors who have authority for program decisions will have the required hours of professional learning in gifted education in the areas designated under the State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.

Members of the District G/T Placement Committee will have the required hours of professional learning in gifted education in the areas designated under the State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.

Members of the School Board of Trustees will be trained on the State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students.

Family/Community Involvement

Meetings

To encourage parental and community involvement in Olton ISD's Gifted/Talented program, the district and/or campuses will hold meetings during the year for parents/community.

- **G/T Program Information Meeting**
 - Designed for parents with children already being served in the program to highlight service design and curriculum used within the program
 - Offers an "open house" approach for parents to become more knowledgeable about program specifics
 - Informs parents of opportunities that exist for students and parents beyond in-school services
- **G/T Referral Process Meeting**
 - Provides information about the referral process for both parents and/or teachers

- Provides referral windows for current year
- **G/T Advisory Committee**
 - Composed of members (including parents, G/T teachers, and community members) in accordance with the State Plan
 - Held at least twice per year
 - Provides the opportunity for suggestions to be made for improvements/changes to the program

Student-Parent-School Communications:

Good communication is one of the keys for success in any organization, and the teachers in Olton ISD Gifted/Talented program are interested in keeping the lines of communication open between themselves, the students, and the parents at all times. Below is a list of some of the ways in which communication can be achieved.

- **Letters**
 - Permission to test for G/T services
 - Notification of Placement/Non-placement (Q or DNQ)
 - Parent permission for service in the G/T Program
 - Parent and Student Surveys
- **Newsletters**
 - Newsletters and/or flyers to parents advertising opportunities
- **Conferences**
 - Offered parent and G/T teacher at parent request

Program Evaluations

The District Coordinator will facilitate an annual evaluation of the district's G/T program according to the requirements of the State Plan. This annual evaluation will be compiled and provided annually to the School Board of Trustees. If the district is found to be out of compliance with the state requirements, a written plan for compliance will be developed and submitted to the School Board of Trustees.

APPROVED 07/28/2025

Olton ISD's School Board of Trustees adopts as its board policy for the district's G/T program all related requirements of the Texas Education Code (TEC), Texas Administrative Code (TAC), and State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE

CHAPTER 29. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Subchapter D. Educational Programs for Gifted and Talented Students

§29.121. Definition.

In this subchapter, "gifted and talented students" 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.

§29.122. Establishment.

- (a) Using criteria established by the State Board of Education, each school district shall adopt a process for identifying and serving gifted and talented students in the district and shall establish a program for those students in each grade level. A district may establish a shared services arrangement program with one or more other districts.
- (b) Each school district shall adopt a policy regarding the use of funds to support the district's program for gifted and talented students.

§29.123. State Plan; Assistance.

The State Board of Education shall develop and periodically update a state plan for the education of gifted and talented students to guide school districts in establishing and improving programs for identified students. The regional education service centers may assist districts in implementing the state plan. In addition to obtaining assistance from a regional education service center, a district may obtain other assistance in implementing the plan. The plan shall be used for accountability purposes to measure the performance of districts in providing services to students identified as gifted and talented.

Texas Education Code as amended by the 86th Legislature of the State of Texas.
Effective September 1, 2019.

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE

CHAPTER 39. PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM ACCOUNTABILITY

Subchapter H. Additional Awards

§39.236. Gifted and Talented Standards.

The commissioner shall adopt standards to evaluate school district programs for gifted and talented students to determine whether a district operates a program for gifted and talented students in accordance with:

- (1) the Texas Performance Standards Project; or
- (2) another program approved by the commissioner that meets the requirements of the state plan for the education of gifted and talented students under TEC §29.123.

Source: Amended by: Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 895 (H.B. 3), Sec. 59, eff. June 19, 2009.

TEXAS EDUCATION CODE

CHAPTER 48. FOUNDATION SCHOOL PROGRAM

Subchapter C. Student-Based Allotments

§48.109. Gifted And Talented Student Allotment.

- (a) For each identified student a school district serves in a program for gifted and talented students that the district certifies to the commissioner as complying with Subchapter D, Chapter 29, a district is entitled to an annual allotment equal to the basic allotment multiplied by 0.07 for each school year or a greater amount provided by appropriation.
- (b) Funds allocated under this section, other than the amount that represents the program's share of general administrative costs, must be used in providing programs for gifted and talented students under Subchapter D, Chapter 29, including programs sanctioned by International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement, or in developing programs for gifted and talented students. Each district must account for the expenditure of state funds as provided by rule of the State Board of Education. If by the end of the 12th month after receiving an allotment for developing a program a district has failed to implement a program, the district must refund the amount of the allotment to the agency within 30 days.
- (c) Not more than five percent of a district's students in average daily attendance are eligible for funding under this section.
- (d) If the amount of state funds for which school districts are eligible under this section exceeds the amount of state funds appropriated in any year for the programs, the commissioner shall reduce each district's tier one allotments in the same manner described for a reduction in allotments under TEC §48.266.
- (e) If the total amount of funds allotted under this section before a date set by rule of the State Board of Education is less than the total amount appropriated for a school year, the commissioner shall transfer the remainder to any program for which an allotment under TEC §48.104 may be used.
- (f) After each district has received allotted funds for this program, the State Board of Education may use up to \$500,000 of the funds allocated under this section for programs such as MATHCOUNTS, Future Problem Solving, Odyssey of the Mind, and Academic Decathlon, as long as these funds are used to train personnel and provide program services. To be eligible for funding under this subsection, a program must be determined by the State Board of Education to provide services that are effective and consistent with the state plan for gifted and talented education.

Source: Added by Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 806 (H.B. 1525), Sec. 27, eff. September 1, 2021.

TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Title 19, Part II

Chapter 89. Adaptations for Special Populations

Subchapter A. Gifted/Talented Education

§89.1. Student Identification.

School districts shall develop written policies on student identification that are approved by the local board of trustees and disseminated to parents. The policies must:

- (1) include provisions for ongoing screening and selection of students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment in the areas defined in the Texas Education Code, §29.121;
- (2) include assessment measures collected from multiple sources according to each area defined in The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students;
- (3) include data and procedures designed to ensure that students from all populations in the district have access to assessment and, if identified, services for the gifted/ talented program;
- (4) provide for final selection of students to be made by a committee of at least three local district educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students;
- (5) include provisions regarding furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement; and
- (6) not limit the number of students the district may identify as gifted/talented or served under the district's program for gifted/talented students.

Source: The provisions of this §89.1 adopted to be effective September 1, 1996, 21 TexReg 5690; amended to be effective September 1, 2024, 49 TexReg 6454.

§89.2. Professional Learning.

School districts shall ensure that:

- (1) prior to assignment in the program or within one semester of assignment, teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted/talented students have a minimum of 30 hours of professional learning that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted/talented students;

(2) teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted/talented students receive a minimum of six hours annually of professional learning in gifted/talented education; and

(3) administrators and counselors who have authority for program decisions have a minimum of six hours of professional learning that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students and program options with an update after legislative sessions.

Source: The provisions of this §89.2 adopted to be effective September 1, 1996, 21 TexReg 5690; amended to be effective February 13, 2000, 25 TexReg 776; amended to be effective September 1, 2024, 49 TexReg 6454.

§89.3. Student Services.

School districts shall provide an array of learning opportunities for gifted/talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 and shall inform parents of the opportunities. Options must include:

(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(s) of strength that are available during the entire school year; and

(4) opportunities to accelerate in areas of strength.

Source: The provisions of this §89.3 adopted to be effective September 1, 1996, 21 TexReg 5690.

§89.4. Fiscal Responsibility.

School districts shall adopt a policy regarding the use of funds to support the district's program for gifted and talented students, as required by Texas Education Code, §29.022(b). The policy must:

(1) ensure that 100% of state funds allocated for gifted/talented education are spent on providing gifted/talented services or enhancing the district's gifted and talented program; and

(2) establish a method to account for the expenditure of the gifted and talented allotment in alignment with the Texas Education Agency's financial compliance guidance.

Source: The provisions of this §89.4 adopted to be effective September 1, 2024, 49 TexReg 6454.

§89.5. Program Accountability.

A school district shall ensure that:

- (1) student assessment and services for gifted/talented students comply with accountability standards defined in the Texas State Plan for the Education of the Gifted/Talented (State Plan);
- (2) it annually certifies to the commissioner of education that the district's program for gifted/talented students is consistent with the State Plan and that the district's use of funds complies with §89.4 of this title (relating to Fiscal Responsibility); and
- (3) the board of trustees annually measures the performance of the district in providing gifted/talented services in alignment with the State Plan.

Source: The provisions of this §89.5 adopted to be effective September 1, 1996, 21 TexReg 5690; amended to be effective September 1, 2024, 49 TexReg 6454.