

**CADDO MILLS
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*Gifted & Talented
Handbook*



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PHILOSOPHY

Caddo Mills Independent School District recognizes the individual differences in abilities, needs, and interests of the school population it serves. A sound instructional program for Caddo Mills ISD students includes provision for gifted and talented students. These students can benefit from instruction that develops and challenges their unique capabilities in an atmosphere that fosters creativity and productivity. Recognizing that gifted students possess distinct characteristics and needs, CMISD commits itself to provide a quality, optimal educational experience for each gifted and talented student.

DEFINITION

§ 29.121. DEFINITION: In this subchapter, the state of Texas defines “gifted and talented student” by the following: "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:

- Exhibits high-performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area;
- Possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or
- Excels in a specific academic field.

GOALS

The goal for Caddo Mills ISD is that 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/talented students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services.

OBJECTIVES

- To encourage each student to formulate and solve realistic problems commensurate with his/her abilities and to ensure an environment that promotes the implementation of those solutions.
- To encourage students to analyze and solve problems dealing with local, state, national, and world issues; to assist the students in seeing themselves as vital to the implementation of those solutions.
- To present content that is related to broad-based issues, themes, or problems.
- To encourage the development of the decision-making process.
- To develop creative thinking by utilizing techniques which encourage divergent thinking and develop fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration.
- To provide an environment in which each student becomes a producer of knowledge.
- To help each student develop and maximize such research skills as collecting, classifying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating data.
- To cultivate each student’s listening, written, and oral communication skills.
- To encourage the development of products that use emerging technologies, techniques, materials, and forms.
- To integrate basic skills and higher-level thinking skills into the curriculum.

SCREENING AND IDENTIFICATION

Referrals can originate from teachers, parents, or other interested parties. Students are referred by contacting the campus counselor. All referral forms should be submitted during the time period of referral acceptance. The time period for program acceptance is January - March. Late nominations will be held until the following year. Students may only be referred and tested for gifted and talented services once per school year.

All kindergarten students are automatically screened for advanced level services. (WHAT DOES CMISD USE TO SCREEN)

The second phase of the screening/identification process is screening. Multiple screening assessments in the area of intellectual and specific academic fields are used to identify GT students. A minimum of three criteria that include both qualitative and quantitative measures is used for assessment. Data and procedures assure that all populations of the district have access to assessment. The screening procedures are outlined by grade level as follows:

SCREENING

KINDERGARTEN

STAGE ONE

Teachers will complete a criterion form for each student. There are 4 criteria that are considered for stage one of the GT screening process: TPRI assessment, DRA reading level, midyear math assessment and teacher recommendations. Each student must meet all 4 requirements to be considered for stage two of the GT screening process.

Letters are sent home to the parents of the students who meet the qualifications for stage two testing requesting permission to test and notifying them of the testing date.

STAGE TWO

If a student progresses to stage two, the campus counselor or the campus coordinator will administer an assessment that tests a student's general ability and is recommended for screening of both Spanish and English-speaking students and disadvantaged students. Students achieving 117 on this test will advance to the next level of screening.

STAGE THREE

A second assessment used to identify gifted students by testing their ability to think abstractly and use reasoning skills will be given to each student in a small group setting.

Classroom teachers and parents are given a questionnaire to complete for each student that qualifies for stage three testing. This will be used by the committee for informational purposes.

The student's assessment scores and the teacher and parent questionnaires are used to identify students. The GT Selection Committee, which includes teachers, administrators and counselors or the campus coordinator, will review each student's information to determine placement in the program. Students with an overall average on both assessments of a minimum Z score of 1.1 or a minimum score of 117 are considered for the program.

SCREENING GRADES 1-4

STAGE ONE

A teacher or parent nominates a student for GT screening through the counselor or the campus coordinator.

STAGE TWO

The campus counselor or the campus coordinator will administer an assessment that tests a student's general ability and is recommended for screening of both Spanish and English-speaking students and disadvantaged students. Students achieving 117 on this test will advance to the next level of screening.

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A second assessment used to identify gifted students by testing their ability to think abstractly and use reasoning skill will be given to each student in a small group setting.

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COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS FOLLOWING SCREENING/IDENTIFICATION

After the screening/identification process is complete, each parent receives a letter by mail informing them if their child qualifies/not qualifies for the program. Each letter gives information for the parent to call and make an appointment for clarification or further discussion concerning the test results. The letter also includes information concerning the appeals process.

APPEALS PROCEDURES FOR GT PROGRAM

It is the purpose of the CMISD Central Review Committee to hear appeals of the decisions made by the GT Selection Committee concerning the results of the identification and screening procedures. The person initiating the appeal process may do so according to the following guidelines:

- Within five working days after the parents received the letter informing them that their child did not qualify for the gifted program, an appointment should be made with the campus GT coordinator to review the recent testing results. If an appeal is still desired, they proceed to the next step.
- Within five working days after the parent has met with the campus GT coordinator to review the scores, an appeal may be made by submitting a written request for appeal to the district GT coordinator. The letter of appeal must include a statement of the problem and an explanation and information pertinent to the appeal. The district central review committee will convene to consider the parent's appeal. The committee is made up of a central office administrator, one principal, one classroom teacher, and the GT coordinator. The parent may choose to appear personally before the committee, or the appeal may be submitted only in writing.
- The Central Review Committee will convene within ten days after the GT coordinator has received the written request for appeal.
- Within five school days after the appeal meeting, the Central Review Committee will respond in writing concerning the decision reached by the committee.

After the above process has been exhausted, further questions regarding identification should be directed to the superintendent of schools.

Information regarding the identification of students is confidential and should be regarded as such throughout the appeals process. No parent has the right to information about any other student(s) other than his/her own.

PROGRAM DESIGN

ELEMENTARY K – 4

The Gifted & Talented Program is a “pullout” program for kindergarten through fourth grades in the area of general intellectual ability. Identified GT students are pulled out of regular classes for a specified time per week. This gives an opportunity to group GT students with students who have similar characteristics and needs. Parents will sign a permission form for their child to participate in the program each year. Participation in the GT program is voluntary. However, a student can be placed on probation with danger of being exited if the student cannot maintain the general education requirements. Parents will be required to sign a form supporting this policy.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL 5 – 6

G/T students will participate in a monthly ½ day pull-out program that addresses the social, emotional, cognitive, and academic needs of gifted students. In addition, they will have an opportunity to meet with the campus GT teacher one time per week during RTI. Parents will be required to sign a form supporting this policy.

MIDDLE SCHOOL 7 – 8

G/T students will participate in a weekly pull-out program 2 times per week during advisory that addresses the social, emotional, cognitive, and academic needs of gifted students. Parents will be required to sign a form supporting this policy.

Gifted and talented students have the option of enrolling in one or more Honors or Advanced Placement courses in their area(s) of academic giftedness and interests. These advanced courses allow students to be engaged with a curriculum that reflects acceleration and enrichment in a specific discipline and prepare students to work at an advanced level in their high school years.

HIGH SCHOOL

Gifted and talented high school students have the option of enrolling in one or more Honors or Advanced Placement courses in their area(s) of academic giftedness and interests. These advanced courses allow students to be engaged with a curriculum that reflects acceleration and enrichment in a specific discipline and prepare students to work at the collegiate level in their high school years.

Another option for high school students is to attend college while in high school to earn dual or concurrent credit. Dual enrollment is earning high school credit by attending a college course; concurrent enrollment is being enrolled in a college to earn college credit while attending high school.

Identified students are served in the area of general intellectual ability through specified advanced Pre-AP, AP, and honors courses in several content areas. Students are not reassessed and may take any of these advanced classes. The advanced courses are taught by teachers with GT and advanced training and/or have a master's degree in the field of instruction.

In all of these settings, students are encouraged to solve problems and make decisions. They are guided to develop their

ability to think creatively with techniques presented in relation to broad themes, problems and issues. Students are encouraged to conduct research and make inferences based on data. Instruction is provided in an atmosphere that fosters creativity and productivity, thus developing and challenging each student's unique abilities.

TESTING SCHEDULE AND PLACEMENT

Students are tested for the gifted and talented program according to the following schedule

- Currently enrolled students at the elementary level are tested for the gifted/talented program beginning in April.
- Nominated kindergarten students are tested in January and begin in March. Late nominations will be held until the following school year.
- Students who do not qualify for the gifted/talented program may be nominated the following school year and will be tested in April.

REASSESSMENT

When a student identified as gifted by a previous school district enrolls in the District, the selection committee shall review the student's records and conduct assessment procedures when necessary to determine if placement in the District's program for gifted and talented students is appropriate.

CONDITIONAL PLACEMENT

PROBATION

A student who is unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the gifted and talented program may be placed on probation by the selection committee. The purpose of probation is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the committee. Probationary status allows the students to continue in the gifted program.

A student may be placed on probation for a period of time deemed appropriate by the GT Selection Committee, not to exceed nine weeks. Reasons for the probation along with student performance goals and length of the probation are recorded on the Probation Form, Part I. A copy of the form is placed in the student's file. Parents, principal, and GT teacher must receive a copy.

After a period of working with the student and parents in an attempt to rectify any difficulties a student is experiencing, all persons involved will re-evaluate the situation prior to the selection committee's decision.

The student may

- Remain in the program,
- Be placed on furlough or
- Be exited from the program.

The decision of the selection committee shall be recorded on the Probation Form, Part II. A copy of the form is placed in the student's file. Parents, principal, GT teacher must receive a copy.

FURLOUGH

A student who is unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the gifted program due to special circumstances beyond his/her control may be placed on furlough by the selection committee. An example of a special circumstance is an extended illness. The purpose of the furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the committee. A student placed on furlough does not participate in gifted and talented classes. A student may request a furlough for a period of time deemed appropriate by the selection committee, not to exceed one year. The selection committee has the right to limit the number of furloughs to one per elementary grades and one per secondary grades. (One day or more of furlough will be counted as one year of furlough.)

At the end of the furlough, the student's progress shall be reassessed, and the student may

- Re-enter the program,
- Be removed from the program or
- Be placed on another furlough. Before a student placed on furlough may re-enter the program, a conference must be held with all persons involved.

Reasons for leaving the program are recorded on the Furlough Form. Copies of the form are placed in the student's file. The parents, principal, and GT teacher must receive a copy.

EXIT

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. If a student or parent request removal from the program, the selection committee shall meet with the parent and student before honoring the request. A conference shall be held with the parent and/or student to review the committee's decision. A copy of the Exit Form is placed in the student's file. Parents, principal and GT teacher must receive a copy.

APPEALS

Parents or students may appeal any final decision of the GT Selection Committee regarding selection for or removal from the gifted program. Appeal shall be made first to the GT Selection Committee.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Gifted and Talented Program of Caddo Mills ISD shall be evaluated annually through both formal and informal measures. Evaluation shall include programmatic needs, staff development needs, and family and community involvement. Results of the evaluation shall be used by campus and district committees while developing goals and objectives for the following year.