

NIXON-SMILEY CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

FOR ACADEMICALLY GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS

School Board Approved

10/15/18

WE ARE COMMUNITY



#mustangSTRONG

Nondiscrimination

Nixon-Smiley CISD 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.

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STATE GOAL FOR SERVICES FOR GIFTED 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 are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment and reflect individuality and creativity. 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.

-Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students

STATE DEFINITION OF GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENT

§ 29.121. DEFINITION: In this subchapter, "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.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

NIXON-SMILEY CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S DEFINITION OF GIFTED

Nixon-Smiley CISD defines gifted and talented as any child or youth in grades K-12 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.

NIXON-SMILEY CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S GOAL FOR GIFTED/TALENTED SERVICES

Nixon-Smiley CISD is committed to providing all children with educational opportunities that enable them to reach their full academic potential; this includes comprehensive services to advanced or gifted learners. Objectives and strategies to accomplish this goal are included and updated annually in the District Improvement Plan.

PROGRAM GOALS FOR GIFTED/TALENTED SERVICES K-12

1. IDENTIFICATION - Identify students in grades K-12 who demonstrated an academic need for gifted services using the criteria established by the district, approved by the board, and in compliance with the state mandates.
2. SELF-DIRECTED LEARNERS - Develop the students' capacities to become self-directed and to be confident in their ability to research and process information and to create and communicate their findings as they produce and present advanced-level products or performances as well as products and performances of professional quality at the high school level.
3. COMPLEX THINKING SKILLS - Enhance and refine the abstract and complex thinking and reasoning of these students through more sophisticated creative and critical thinking activities as they reflect and refine their own thinking processes.
4. APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES - Provide students with multiple opportunities to participate in learning experiences using advanced content (within the four core areas) which are defensibly differentiated in depth, complexity and range through modification to content and/or process and/or product. Students will be able to work independently, with groups of other gifted students, and with groups of non-gifted peers.

NIXON-SMILEY CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S GIFTED/TALENTED PROGRAM DESIGN

The gifted/talented program is available to qualifying students in grades K-12. The intent of the program is to assist the student in the development of creative, critical, and divergent thinking skills.

Kindergarten:

Teacher observations and a collection of work from August through December will aid in the nomination of possible candidates for the gifted/talented program. Kindergarten nominations will be solicited through letters sent home with each student during the month of October and nominations accepted through the end of January. Screening of all nominees will take place during January with selections completed and served by March 1. Once qualified, they will participate in one school wide project, which encompasses the 4 core academic areas, art and technology.

1st- 4th Grades:

All students will receive differentiated instruction in the regular mixed-ability classroom, when appropriate. 1st – 4th grades will participate in four school-wide thematic projects during the school year designed to cover the 4 core academic areas, art, and technology. Extension activities may include field trips, guest speakers, theater arts projects, and research or problem solving projects. A focus on the development of creative thinking skills such as fluency, flexibility, and originality as well as the discovery and development of the student's individual capabilities will take place. Critical thinking skills are introduced and encouraged in all activities.

Middle School:

Creative thinking, divergent thinking, and critical thinking skills are encouraged and developed through the core curriculum taught by trained gifted/talented teachers. Students are encouraged to become independent thinkers and autonomous learners. The core curriculum is the basis for instruction. Gifted students are provided experiences that replace, supplement, or extend learning based on students' needs. Enrichment opportunities for these students are intended to provide opportunities for these students to take courses at appropriate levels and in a compacted curriculum. Program options enable gifted/talented students to work together as a group, work with other students and work independently during the school day and throughout the school year.

High School:

The core curriculum is the basis for instruction. Creative, divergent, and critical thinking skills are encouraged and developed through the core curriculum taught by trained gifted/talented teachers. Gifted students are provided experiences that replace, supplement, or extend learning based on students' needs. Enrichment opportunities for these students are intended to provide opportunities for these students to take courses at appropriate levels and in a compacted curriculum. The district also offers dual credit courses. Students are encouraged to become independent thinkers and autonomous learners. A student's individual talents are encouraged through the use of authentic assessments which allow for student choice. Program options enable gifted/talented students to work together as a group, work with other students and work independently during the school day and throughout the school year.

IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES K-12

Nixon-Smiley CISD has board approval on the identification procedures and processes of students K-12 for the services of the Gifted/Talented Program. These procedures meet state requirements (§29.121 & TAC 89.1) and have been designed to ensure the identification of any student who demonstrates educational need for the services of the program under the established guidelines. *Changes in policy that effect the gifted and talented program will be communicated to parents by newsletters and other communications to students and parents.*

Texas Administrative Code §89.1: Student Assessment.

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 the assessment process and, if identified as having significant educational need for advanced academics, services for the gifted/talented program;
- (4) Provide for final qualification of students (through a blind process) 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; and
- (5) Include provisions regarding furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement.

District Identification Timeline:

Referral procedures published in local newspaper and on district website	October
Kindergarten – 12 th grade referrals accepted from parents, teachers, community members	October - January
Kindergarten screenings, assessments conducted after written parental permission obtained	January
Gifted/Talented committee meets on kindergarten screenings	February
Written parental permission for services obtained for identified students in kindergarten	February
Services begin for identified kindergarten students	March 1
1 st -12 th screenings, assessments conducted after written parental permission obtained	March
Gifted/Talented committee meets on grade 1-12 screenings	May
Written parental permission for services obtained for identified students in grades 1-12	May
Services begin for identified students	Following school year

DISSEMINATING INFORMATION and REFERRAL PROCESS

Nominations are accepted from parents, teachers, or another party at any time during the school year. Once a year nominations are actively solicited through letters in English and Spanish that are sent home to every student. A child nominated but not qualifying for services may be nominated again the following year. Referral forms are available in each campus office and/or on the district web site. The screening instruments will match the program's services.

Parents are informed of the identification policies through the district or campus handbook, and/or the district website, and/or by request of the written policy and procedures for the Gifted/Talented program.

Written parent or guardian permission is required to screen/assess a student. If a parent does not want his/her child to be screened, this information will be documented. Nominated students are screened using a variety of qualitative and quantitative instruments. The screening process may include but are not limited to achievement tests, intelligence tests, creative thinking tests, behavioral checklists, student and parent conferences, and student portfolio (work products).

SCREENING/ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Student Identification and Selection Process

Currently Enrolled Students:

- Step One: A student enrolled in the district at least four weeks is nominated by parents, teacher, or other interested party.
- Step Two: Screening of nominated students with a parent inventory, teacher inventory, qualitative and quantitative testing
- Step Three: Campus Screening Committee determines need of services
- Step Four: The student and parents are notified by letter about placement in the program. Written permission must be obtained from the parent prior to participation in the program.

A student profile is used to identify those students who perform, or show the potential for performing, at remarkably high levels of accomplishment relative to their age, peers, experience, or environment. The profile will reflect a **minimum of three (3)** criteria used in the assessment. The criteria used will be a combination of **qualitative and quantitative** instruments and **may include:**

- School Abilities Test such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT), and the Otis-Lennon School Abilities Test (OLSAT) or other school abilities tests as deemed appropriate for the student;
- Achievement Test such as the Screening Assessment for Gifted Elementary and Middle School Students Edition 2 (SAGES2), or other achievement tests as deemed appropriate for the student;
- Divergent thinking assessment such as the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking, or other divergent thinking assessment as deemed appropriate for the student;
- Teacher and/or Parent Rating Scales as deemed appropriate for the student;
- Student product/portfolio
- When additional data is needed to determine the need of the student, instruments such as the K TEA, Achieve 3000, and NWEA Map may be used when appropriate.

QUALIFICATION PROCESS

The student profile identifies the student's strengths and weaknesses. The percentiles and/or scores from the assessment instruments are plotted on the student profile. Each student's profile is individually evaluated by the Gifted/Talented Committee through a blind (no name) process. A student clearly qualifies for Gifted/Talented services if the majority of the evidence on the profile falls within the *High* and/or *Superior* ranges on the profile. The decision is based on the committee's observation of the preponderance of the evidence on the student's profile.

Each campus will have a G/T Selection Committee that will review the campus program and evaluate student performance for qualification, furloughs, and exiting the program. The members of the campus committee will be made up of: the building principal, the G/T Coordinator or Counselor, and at least three teachers who have received the 30 Hour G/T Training. The G/T Selection Committee makes a professional judgment based on the recorded student profile data. As the committee evaluates the data on the students nominated, the committee has three options:

- The preponderance of profile data indicates the student exhibits educational need and would benefit from the services offered in the Gifted/Talented program.
- There is insufficient evidence in the documentation, at this time, indicating the student's educational needs would best be met by the Gifted/Talented program. The preponderance of evidence indicates the student's educational needs would best be served with the services of the regular curriculum.
- Further information is requested for the committee to make a qualification decision.

Once the identification process is complete, parents or guardians are notified of the Gifted/Talented Selection Committee's decision. Parents of all screened students may request a conference to examine their child's assessment results. Request should be made through the student's home campus.

ADDITIONAL POLICES AND PROCEDURES

TRANSFER OF STUDENTS

The principal shall designate the person(s) responsible for checking records of all new students to the district to determine prior placement in all special programs.

Identified gifted and talented students transferring into the district are automatically placed in the Nixon-Smiley CISD program.

APPEALS PROCESS

Appeals must be made in writing and received within 30 days of notification of action by the G/T Selection Committee. Upon receipt of written appeal, the G/T Selection Committee shall review the student's nomination, scores, and performance. The committee may interview the student to determine whether special or unusual circumstances should be considered in the committee's final decision. The district will communicate this decision in writing to the parents. Subsequent appeal should be made in accordance with local school board policy FNG, beginning at Level Two.

FURLOUGH PROCEDURE

A furlough is a temporary "leave of absence" from gifted/talented services designed to meet the individual needs of an identified student. A furlough may be requested by the parent, student or teacher. The request must be presented to the campus principal in writing. Prior to granting a furlough, a conference involving the parent, gifted/talented teacher, classroom teacher, and campus principal must occur. The student may be present at this meeting.

A student may be furloughed for a period of time deemed appropriate by the G/T Selection Committee. At the end of the furlough, the student's progress shall be reassessed, and the student may re-enter gifted/talented services, be exited from the program, or be placed on another furlough. Furloughs are designed to be short-term and temporary and **should not be used for an entire school year.**

EXIT

Student performance in the program shall be monitored. A student shall be removed from the program at any time the Gifted/Talented Selection Committee determines it is in the student's best interest **and** a furlough has been ineffective.

To exit the program, a meeting of the parent, student (grades 6-12), classroom teacher, gifted/talented teacher, principal, and the G/T Selection Committee shall be held to discuss the student's overall performance, as well as individual program goals.

If a parent requests their child be removed from the program, the Gifted/Talented Selection Committee shall grant the request. Once a student is exited from the program he/she must adhere to the identification procedures and exhibit educational need to be re-admitted.

Parents are encouraged to use the review process described above so that the best educational placement is provided for the student.

PROVISION OF STUDENT SERVICES

Nixon-Smiley Consolidated Independent School District offers a variety of learning experiences and opportunities for Gifted/Talented students in grades K-12 which meet the mandates of the Texas Administrative Code. These services include, but are not limited to, integrating depth and complexity into the curriculum, requiring advanced level products and performances, and allowing identified Gifted/Talented students the opportunity to work with other identified students.

Texas Administrative Code §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 as well as differentiated strategies in the regular classroom and the Pre-AP and AP classrooms;
- (3) In-school and, when possible, out-of-school options relevant to the student's area of strength that are available during the entire school year; and
- (4) Opportunities to accelerate in areas of strength.

A continuum of learning experiences will be provided in the Gifted/Talented services which lead to the development of advanced-level products and/or performances. Such services may include use of depth and complexity elements, differentiation of content, process and/or product in the regular or Pre-AP/AP classroom, a pull-out program, independent studies, dual-enrollment classes, and other services as deemed appropriate for the student.

Services are available in all four core academic areas including Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. Identified students will work independently, with other identified students, and with students of other abilities.

Documentation of services will be maintained and parents will be notified of in-school and out-of-school options during the school year that are relevant to the needs of the gifted and talented students.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ONGOING TRAINING IN GIFTED EDUCATION

Nixon-Smiley Consolidated Independent School District is committed to providing its staff with appropriate and meaningful professional development which enables the staff to meet the unique and individual educational needs of all students including services for gifted/talented students. It is important that all staff responsible for formally servicing these students obtain appropriate training for educating the gifted child. The district will require at least the minimum hours of training as mandated by the state:

Texas Administrative Code §89.2. Professional Development

1. Prior to assignment in the program, teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted students have a minimum of 30 hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students;
2. Teachers without training required in paragraph (1) of this section who provide instruction and services that are part of the gifted/talented program must complete the 30-hour training requirement within one semester;
3. Teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the program for gifted students receive a minimum of six hours annually of professional development in gifted education; and
4. Administrators and counselors who have authority for program decisions have a minimum of six hours of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students and program options.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Nixon-Smiley Consolidated ISD will annually evaluate the Gifted/Talented program by surveying all stakeholders including students, parents/guardians, and teachers. The evaluation data will be presented to the school board and will be used as a needs assessment to be addressed in the district/campus improvement plans. The composition of the district committee will be as follows:

Superintendent	Middle School Principal
Curriculum Director	Middle School Instructional Facilitator
Elementary Principal	High School Principal
Elementary Instructional Facilitator	High School Assistant Principal

