



## **GIFTED and TALENTED PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

Ingram ISD is committed to recognizing the unique abilities, talents, and gifts of its students. The Gifted/Talented Program is just one way that the district supports and encourages students to maximize their intellectual abilities and talents.

### **DEFINITION OF A GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENT**

“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.”

### **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.”

### **IISD GIFTED/TALENTED PROGRAM MISSION**

The Ingram Independent School District’s Gifted/Talented Program is committed to the mission of providing engaging, rigorous and appropriately challenging academic and social-emotional learning experiences to meet the unique needs of students.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Gifted and Talented (G/T) program serves students in grades K-12 who have been identified as gifted in one or more of the four core academic subjects. Instruction is provided by teachers who have the state-mandated 30 hours of Nature & Needs training and yearly 6-hour G/T update training. G/T students are cluster-grouped when possible and are taught the state curriculum (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) modified by pace, depth, and/or level of complexity based on student need. G/T students are expected to produce advanced level products at every grade level that reflect “individuality and creativity” as they demonstrate skills in critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, self-assessment, research, communication, and collaboration.

## **SERVICE DESIGN**

### **KINDERGARTEN**

Beginning in March, identified students will receive instruction from their G/T certified classroom teacher three to four times a week to work on interdisciplinary units of study, which focuses on critical and creative thinking skills. Kindergarten students also attend the STEM/Thinkery Lab a minimum of 90 minutes each week for additional extensions in areas of interest, and for lessons that address the social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

### **ELEMENTARY**

G/T students are clustered together in a class for core subjects with teachers who have completed the state-mandate G/T training. The students are taught the state curriculum of the TEKS, with appropriate differentiation in pace, depth, and/or complexity of the lesson according to the needs of the students. The G/T identified students are also served for a minimum of 90 minutes a week in the Thinkery Lab, a “pull out” G/T program. The STEM/Thinkery Lab is used to address the social and emotional needs of the gifted child as well as provide opportunities for self-directed learning, critical and creative thinking, collaboration, and independent research study in areas of interest. All G/T students in 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade complete an independent study project within the Texas Performance Standards. GT students present their independent projects in a student showcase at their campus in the spring.

\*\* Information regarding the Texas Performance Standards Project can be found at <https://www.texaspsp.org/>.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

G/T students will be enrolled in BEYOND classes in the core content courses in which they qualify for the Gifted and Talented Program. The students are taught the state curriculum (TEKS) with appropriately challenging and rigorous learning experiences differentiated in pace, depth, and/or complexity according to the needs of the students. All G/T students receive instruction from teachers who have completed the state-mandated G/T training. G/T students will complete a year-long independent study project within the Texas Performance Standards. The social and emotional needs of G/T students are addressed through regular group meetings facilitated by the campus counselor. Seventh grade BEYOND students are screened for placement in eighth grade Algebra I for high school credit.

\*\* Information regarding the Texas Performance Standards Project can be found at <https://www.texaspsp.org/>.

## **HIGH SCHOOL**

Students identified as G/T in Grades 9-12 are served through Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), Advanced Placement (AP), Dual Credit, and On-Ramps courses. G/T students receive instruction from teachers who have completed the state-mandated G/T training. When scheduling allows, students are cluster grouped in Pre-AP and AP courses to allow students to work collaboratively with peers of similar intellect and abilities. Though the courses are open enrollment courses, course expectations, products, depth, complexity, and pacing will be differentiated based on student need.

## **REFERRAL AND IDENTIFICATION**

Students can be referred for G/T testing by self, peer, parent, counselor, teacher, administrator, or anyone with knowledge of the students. “Parent Permission to Test” will be obtained prior to initiating the assessment process. G/T testing occurs once a year during testing windows aligned to grade levels. Information regarding the testing process and schedule can be found on our district website.

A variety of objective and subjective data is considered when determining eligibility for the G/T Program.

Assessments used to determine eligibility include:

- CogAT (An ability test)
- IOWA (An achievement test)

Subjective data used to determine eligibility include, but not limited to:

- Teaching Rating Scale
- Scale for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) Home Rating Scale
- Grades
- Work portfolios

## **ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

The Selection Committee makes final eligibility determinations. The committee consists of a minimum of three professional educators who are knowledgeable of the students and have received state-mandated G/T training on the nature and needs of gifted students. The Selection Committee may include:

- Campus Administrator
- Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
- Counselor
- Teacher(s)

## **NOTIFICATION**

Once the Selection Committee makes eligibility decisions, parents will be notified in writing of the committee's decision. Written parental consent must be obtained prior to any student being enrolled in the G/T program.

- Kindergarten eligibility decisions are made in February.
- All other grade level eligibility decisions are made in late April / Early May.

## **APPEAL PROCESS**

Parents or students may appeal the Selection Committee's decision regarding selection for and exit from the G/T Program within 15 days of the decision. The Level I appeal process can be initiated by contacting the campus principal, and the Selection Committee will meet to review the appeal and render a decision. Level II appeal process can be initiated by contacting the Assistant Superintendent.

## **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Ingram ISD will honor the G/T Placement decisions of the student's previously attended district if parents provide the campus counselor with the paperwork reflecting assessments, scores, and any additional information used to determine the G/T eligibility.

## **FURLOUGH**

The purpose of the furlough is to provide a student with a leave of absence from the G/T Program for a time up to one school year. Students who do not maintain satisfactory performance or whose educational needs are not being met within the program may be furloughed. The furlough can be requested by district personnel, the parent, or student. The Selection Committee will evaluate the request and determine the amount of time the furlough will last for the student. At the end of the furlough, the student may re-enter the G/T Program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.

## **EXIT PROVISIONS**

Student performance in the G/T Program is monitored. A student can be removed from the G/T Program at any time that the Selection Committee determines it is in the best interest of the student. If a student or parent requests removal from the program, the selection committee shall meet with the parent and student before honoring the request.

## **APPEALS**

A parent or student may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted program. Appeals should be made to the Selection Committee.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

The District will annually evaluate the effectiveness of the District's gifted program and the results of the evaluation will be used to modify and improve the program.

## **COMMUNITY AWARENESS**

Ingram ISD will ensure that information about the Gifted/Talented Program is available to parents and community members through the district website, campus websites, G/T Parent Information Nights, and parent representation on District and Campus Level Decision Making Committees. Parents are strongly encouraged to be actively involved.

**For more information about the District's Gifted and Talented Program, contact the Ingram ISD office at 367-5517.**







