

# **DISTRICT PLAN FOR GATE**

(A Plan for Gifted and Talented Education)



*The Valley View ISD will provide gifted and talented students with a continuum of learning experiences that lead to advanced-level products and/or performances.*

**Valley View Independent School District  
Valley View, Texas  
Approved by the Board of Trustees, July 16, 2012**

## **Philosophy of the Gifted and Talented Program**

The Valley View Independent School District is committed to an educational program that recognizes the unique values, needs, and talents of the individual student. The Gifted and Talented Education program, **GATE**, for academically gifted students is an integral part of this commitment.

The GATE program is designed to challenge the identified student through a qualitatively differentiated curriculum and multidimensional teaching approach.

The ultimate goal of the program is to develop within the student a desire for excellence and a sense of individual responsibility to the school, the community, and a changing society.

## **Definition of Gifted and Talented**

“Gifted and talented student” means a child or youth with outstanding talent who performs or shows the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared with others of the same age, experience, or environment and who:

- 1) exhibits high performance capability in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic area;
- 2) possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or
- 3) excels in specific academic fields.

(Texas State Plan and Guidelines for the Education of the Gifted/Talented Student)

## **Goals of the Gifted and Talented Program**

Valley View ISD has adopted the following goals for GATE, its gifted and talented program:

- to provide accelerated and enriched learning experiences for highly capable students;
- to emphasize high-level conceptual understanding in accelerated and elective courses;
- to engage gifted/talented students in high-level independent study and to help them become autonomous learners;
- to organize opportunities for gifted/talented students to work together and opportunities to work with students of different abilities;
- to provide opportunities to work with and as tutors and mentors; and
- to encourage active and cooperative participation by the gifted students and their parents.

## **Meeting the Needs of Gifted and Talented Students**

When addressing the special needs of the learning disabled by providing the least restrictive environment, we must also look at the needs of our gifted students. Gifted students must be provided with the least restrictive environment to grow, learn, and socialize in the regular classroom. Their lessons will often be different because they learn at different rates. All students will be taught to reach their own personal potential. In the process, we will challenge the minds of all children. Valley View ISD feels that every child is unique; all children have a right to develop their own potential. In our pursuit for equality for all, we must not forget excellence. The programs and practices in gifted education can be used to benefit all students.

# Student Identification

Valley View Independent School District's policies on student identification are approved by the board of trustees and disseminated to parents through our District Handbook. The policies meet the provisions of Texas Administrative Code, title 19, part II, chapter 89.1.

The identification process is conducted by a committee of professional educators at each campus and includes three strategies: nomination, screening and selection.

Nominations are solicited from a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, parents, teachers, students, and other professionals at each campus (**Attachment #1**). Multiple criteria is reviewed on all students nominated for the program with no single criterion being the determining factor in preventing further screening of students in the identification process. Special understanding of a student's background (i.e. culture, socioeconomic status, ethnic group, etc.) is also critical when assessing performance for the **GATE** program. Of special importance for this factor is the choice of appropriate subjective data to be assessed. It is critical that appropriate objective measures be used as well. The primary focus is to provide all students with opportunities to demonstrate their potential commensurate with characteristics of the defined gifted/talented population.

Screening procedures are as follows:

- **Teacher Assessment**  
Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales: This is norm referenced and converts to standard scores and percentile ranks. Based on the federal definition of giftedness, GATES is composed of five scales: intellectual ability, academic skills, creativity, leadership, and artistic talent. GATES is a behavioral checklist used to identify persons who are gifted and talented.
- **Parent Inventory**  
Parents complete a checklist of characteristics that are typical of gifted students. (**Attachment #2**)
- **Intelligence Test**  
A standardized and norm referenced test which provides a basic measurement of intelligence (IQ) is utilized. Intelligence tests may be verbal or nonverbal. Both types may be used when evaluating a student for the program.
- **Achievement Test**  
A standardized and norm referenced test will be utilized to assess the broad achievement of the child under consideration.
- **Classroom Performance**  
The student's grade point average will be considered in the screening process.
- **Student Interview**  
The student will be interviewed and responses scored based upon learning, motivation, and creativity.

Placement decisions are made by the following personnel: administrator(s), counselor, and teachers. All personnel involved in the placement decision must have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students. A “Gifted and Talented Identification Profile” form (**Attachment #3**) must be completed on each nominated student. Testing done by private practitioners will not be accepted for consideration in placement.

Letters regarding students’ admittance or denial into the program will be sent by the GT Director after placement decisions are made. (**Attachments #4A and #4B**)

## **Consideration of Transfer Students**

Any student who has been identified for the gifted/talented program in another district who transfers into the Valley View ISD shall be immediately accepted into the GATE Program if he/she meets the district criteria for identification. If qualifications cannot be determined immediately, the student shall be observed and efforts shall be made to determine the student’s correct placement.

## **Appeals**

Parents of students not selected may register an appeal to the campus principal of the student under the following conditions:

1. student must have been in the selection process
2. a matrix error suspected

An appeal must be made to the campus principal within ten school days after notification of non-acceptance. An appeal hearing will be scheduled within ten school days and will be conducted by the campus principal.

## **Reassessment**

The Valley View ISD has the option of reassessing identified students every three years to determine if continued placement in the program is appropriate. We strive to provide the most appropriate educational placement for our students. To insure a test’s validity and reliability, a student should not be given the same tests within a one year time period.

## **Furlough Policy**

A student may request to have a furlough from the GATE program. Acceptable reasons include, but are not limited to: illness and scheduling conflicts. The furlough would not exceed one year for grades kindergarten-five students and one semester/term in length for students in sixth-twelfth. Students in grades six-twelve are limited to two furloughs. Final permission for a furlough request can only be made with a majority vote of the appropriate campus committee.

## Exit Procedures

### Elementary

Gifted education at this level is integrated into the total school curriculum: therefore, parent request is the only reason for exit at this level.

### Secondary

A student will be dismissed from the GATE program when it is determined that another setting provides the best education for that student. Decisions will be based on the following criteria:

- The student fails to enroll in the required courses/activities.
- The student fails to master the concepts presented in the gifted program.
- The student's emotional or physical condition prevents adequate participation.
- The student's continuous disruptive behavior interferes with the rights of other students.
- Both student and parent(s) request withdrawal from the program.

When dismissal is being considered, the GATE committee members will meet with the student to discuss the situation. The committee will also schedule a conference with the parents. During the parent conference, one of the following may be determined:

- A joint decision may be made for the student to exit the program. If this option is chosen, a formal withdrawal will be completed and filed. **(Attachment #5)**

OR

- A period of probationary placement may be established, with the understanding that the student's progress will be reviewed at the end of the probationary placement. At the time of review, a decision will be made to either continue the student in the program or dismiss the student from the program. If the student is to continue in the program, no further action is necessary. If the student is dismissed from the program, a formal withdrawal will be completed and filed.

A student may not re-enter the gifted program for at least one year from the date of the exit/dismissal.

## Program Organization

In developing a program organization for a comprehensive kindergarten through grade twelve program for gifted and talented students, patterns that accommodate both the cognitive and affective needs were developed. Also, an organizational structure that provides opportunities for gifted students to work as a group, to work with other students of different abilities, and to work independently was developed for each school level.

## **Primary Program: K**

Gifted/talented education in kindergarten will be integrated into the total school curriculum to bring excellence to the entire program. All teachers at this level have been trained in creating a differentiated curriculum which includes considering all students individually.

All students in the primary program will be provided an array of appropriately challenging and enriching learning experiences.

## **Elementary Program**

Identified gifted/talented students in the elementary program, grades one through four, are clustered in groups of three to five in the class of a designated gifted/talented teacher at each grade level on the Elementary campus whenever possible. The remainder of the class is heterogeneously selected. The instruction is generally provided within the classroom and extends from the daily instruction program in that classroom. The gifted/talented teacher in each of those classes receives special training in gifted education in order to meet the needs of identified students.

In addition, a weekly pull-out program will be utilized to provide services. The GATE students will meet once a week with a GT teacher for at least 30 minutes. The Texas Performance Standards project will be used as the curriculum for this pull-out portion of the program. There is a mandatory attendance policy with this pull-out program. If a student is absent from GT class but not school, this is a GT absence. 3 of these absences in a semester will result in automatic exit of the student.

All students grade one through grade four are provided ability based reading through the Reading Renaissance Program.

## **Middle School Program: Grades 5-8**

Students at this level will participate in a weekly pull-out program. The GATE students will meet once a week with a GT teacher for at least 30 minutes. The Texas Performance Standards project will be used as the curriculum for this pull-out portion of the program. There is a mandatory attendance policy with this pull-out program. If a student is absent from GT class but not school, this is a GT absence. 3 of these absences in a semester will result in automatic exit of the student.

All Middle School students are provided ability based reading through the Accelerated Reading Program.

Each campus is encouraged to implement provisions that extend beyond the classroom in offering challenging opportunities for identified GT students as well as others. Such programs include, but not limited to: participation in academic competitions of University Interscholastic League, Texas Math and Science Coaches Association, Spelling Bee, Subject Area Clubs, Battle of the Books, Science Fair, etc.

## **Secondary Program**

Students at the high school level will be expected to take specified courses and electives/extracurriculars. The following chart lists the courses by grade level and the expectations per grade. In addition, g/t students are encouraged to fulfill the requirements of the Recommended or Distinguished Graduation plans.

Year	English	Math	Science	Social Studies	Electives	Extracurricular
Freshman— Must take Honors Biology AND either one of the electives OR Extracurricular activities			Honors Biology		Principles of Human Services/ Principles of Ag	BPA FFA FCCLA UIL 4-H
Sophomore- Must take one of the two core area courses AND either one of the electives OR Extracurricular activities	Pre AP English 2		Pre AP/Honors Chemistry		Child Development/Accounting/Wildlife/Ag Mechanics/Principles of Human Services/Principles of Ag/Web Tech/BIM1/Horticultural Science/Animal Science/Fashion Design/Interior Design	BPA FFA FCCLA UIL 4-H
Junior- Must take one of the two core area courses AND either one of the electives OR Extracurricular activities					Child Development/Accounting 1 or 2/Ag Facilities/Wildlife/BIM2/ Web Tech/Ag Mechanics/Ag Power/Fashion Design/Interior Design/Advanced Welding/Tractor Restoration/Ag Structures	BPA FFA FCCLA UIL 4-H
	Any Dual Credit or AP course					
Senior- Must take one of the core area courses AND either one of the electives OR Extracurricular activities		Pre-Cal/ Calculus	Anatomy & Physiology		Child Development/Accounting 1 or 2/Ag Facilities/Wildlife/BIM2/ Web Tech/Ag Mechanics/Ag Power	BPA FFA FCCLA UIL 4-H
	Any Dual Credit or AP course					

If VVHS does not offer the required course(s), that course requirement will be waived.

## Professional Development

Each GT subject (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies) classroom teacher will be required to receive 30 professional development hours in gifted/talented training. After the 30 hours has been concluded, each classroom teacher will be required to receive an additional 6 professional development hours each year.

Other staff will receive GT updates each school year.

## Family/Community Involvement

A yearly meeting will be conducted to inform parents of the process and services available. In addition, information is available on the school website.

## Evaluation of GATE

Evaluation is based on the growth as determined by testing and/or evaluation of student products.

Input is obtained from students, teachers, administrators, and parents through conferences and/or evaluations (**Attachment #6**).

Each June, the GT Director is to present a report to the school board consisting of the following information:

- The members of the GATE committee.
- A list of teachers qualified to teach gifted/talented education.
- The number of students identified as gifted/talented.
- The number of students served in each grade level in the gifted/talented programs.
- Distribution of students and of gifted/talented students per grade level: male, female, black, white, Hispanic, and other.
- Achievement levels of gifted/talented students and their performance on the most recent state test of academic skills.
- Percentage of gifted/talented students that are underachieving as determined by those not passing the state tests of academic skills.
- Methods used for reporting to parents and the community on the educational program available for the gifted and talented student.
- GATE activities at each campus.
- Method(s) of documenting gifted/talented education including lesson plans, etc.