

## **XIX. ADVANCED ACADEMICS**

### **Gifted and Talented Program**

#### **Authority**

[Texas Education Code \(TEC\), §29: Educational Programs; TAC Chapter 89: Adaptations for Special Populations, Subchapter A; Gifted/Talented \(G/T\) Education; Houston Independent School District \(HISD\) Board Policy.](#)

Texas State Law for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students mandates that all school districts provide program services for their gifted and talented students with the following state goal.

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 students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services.

#### **Definition Under [TEC §29.121](#)**

Gifted and talented students are those identified by professionally qualified persons, who perform at, or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment. These are students who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society. Students capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas:

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

### **Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students**

According to §29.123 of the Texas Education Code, the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* forms the basis of program accountability for state mandated services for gifted/talented students. The state plan is comprised of the following components:

- Service Design;
- Student Assessment;
- Curriculum and Instruction;
- Professional Development;
- Family/Community Involvement.

## **Standards for Vanguard Programs**

The Advanced Academics Department in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) has the primary responsibility of overseeing, supporting, and monitoring (in collaboration with other departments, District leadership and school-based staff) the programs for gifted and talented (G/T) student's district-wide. These Elementary Guidelines include administrative procedures that support and extend the Vanguard Program Standards. It is important to note that in HISD, the term "Vanguard" is used synonymously with "gifted and talented (G/T)". Generally, G/T is used when referring to a student who is identified as gifted and talented through pre-established identification procedures and criteria; the term "Vanguard" refers to the program to which G/T students are assigned.

The HISD Vanguard *Standards* have been established in accordance with the components of the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students* and the state goal for gifted students and are designed to ensure equity in access for all students and to maintain consistency and integrity in program implementation. It is expected that all HISD schools adhere to these standards.

Standards:

- #1 Service Design
- #2 Assessments
- #3 Identification of G/T Students
- #4 Admissions
- #5 Instructional Delivery Models
- #6 Curriculum and Instruction
- #7 Monitoring Program Implementation-Quality-Rigor
- #8 Student Success (Expectations)
- #9 Professional Development for Administrators
- #10 Professional Development for G/T Teachers
- #11 Data Quality and Compliance
- #12 Parent/Community Communication and Involvement
- #13 Evaluation
- #14 District Commitment and Support

### **STANDARD 1: SERVICE DESIGN**

According to the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*, the *Service Design* is a flexible system of viable program options that provide a learning continuum developed throughout the district and reinforces the strengths, needs, and interests of G/T students.

The Vanguard Program K-12, is a state-mandated, district-wide program providing G/T services to identified G/T students. Each HISD campus shall offer the Vanguard Program through one of the following program designs:

### **Vanguard Neighborhood—for zoned and non-zoned (transfer) students**

The Vanguard Neighborhood program is a **Vanguard** program which operates in all schools, except those that are pre-designated as Vanguard Magnet schools. It is designed to provide G/T services on a campus, for all G/T students who are zoned to that campus and for any non-zoned G/T student on a valid transfer (other than Vanguard Magnet transfers). There are no enrollment quotas or qualification distinctions (tiers) in the admission process. All G/T students on the campus are served in G/T classes with appropriately trained/qualified teachers. Vanguard Neighborhood schools often operate other magnet programs with such specialties as Fine Arts, Math and Science, etc, but not with Vanguard (G/T) specialty.

### **Vanguard Magnet —for zoned and non-zoned (Magnet transfer) students**

The Vanguard Magnet program is a **Vanguard** program which operates in pre-selected Magnet schools in accordance with the district Vanguard standards as well as the district Magnet standards, which are centered on the principle of parent choice. With few exceptions, schools with Vanguard Magnet programs also offer classes/services for other non-G/T students such as regular/LEP/Sp. Ed. etc. However, the G/T services at these campuses are one and the same for all G/T eligible students, regardless of whether they are zoned or non-zoned/transfer students. The entire **Vanguard** program at Vanguard Magnet schools shall be designated as Vanguard Magnet, eliminating the duality of G/T programs which may have existed on some campuses. Eliminating the duality of programs will require mixing zoned and non-zoned G/T identified students when assigning them to classes. All Vanguard Magnet schools (with the exception of schools that operate under the “Separate and Unique School – SUS” Magnet program) shall operate a “School Wide Program” (SWP) type of Magnet program. The Magnet specialty in Vanguard Magnet schools is the Vanguard focus. As a SWP, all zoned students shall apply for the Vanguard Magnet program and proceed with the necessary assessment if needed. All zoned students will be served in Vanguard Magnet program and will not be part of the transfer enrollment goal for that campus. Should the zoned qualified student move out of the current school zone, they are required to attend their new HISD zoned school, where they will receive G/T services. Non-zoned students must also apply and proceed with the necessary assessment if needed. Those who qualify as G/T may be admitted so long as there is space available. Only non-zoned/transfer students will participate in the Vanguard Magnet admissions lotteries when there are more qualified applicants than spaces.

Enrollment goals for Vanguard Magnet schools shall be in accordance with the Magnet program standards as they relate to School-Wide Programs (SWP).

**Vanguard Magnet programs are Board approved programs only. The following schools are the only elementary schools that are Board approved for Vanguard Magnet programs:**

Askew Elementary  
Carrillo Elementary  
De Zavala Elementary  
Herod Elementary  
Oak Forest Elementary  
Pleasantville Elementary  
River Oaks Elementary  
T. H. Rogers Elementary  
Roosevelt Elementary  
Travis Elementary  
Windsor Village Elementary

## **STANDARD 2: STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

Students shall be assessed for identification as gifted and talented according to [TEC §29.122](#); [TAC §89.1](#); [HISD Board Policy](#) and the *Student Assessment Component* of the [Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students](#).

Each campus principal must provide their parents and community members, through multiple sources, information regarding the Vanguard Program application process and deadlines, the district's assessment requirements and timelines, and the identification process that applies to all applicants.

- Students in grades K-12 shall be assessed and, if identified as G/T, provided services (TEC 29.122 and [19 TAC §89.1\(3\)](#));
- Students not yet identified as G/T are considered for nomination and are eligible for screening once every twelve (12) months for services that are a part of the program for the gifted students (19 TAC §89.1);
- Data and procedures assure that all populations of the district have access to assessment and, if identified as G/T, are offered services as part of the program for gifted students (19 TAC §89.1(3));
- Applicants are assessed using multiple criteria as specified on the *Gifted and Talented Identification Matrix*; (19 TAC §89.1(3));
  - ▶ Instruments and procedures used to assess students for program services measure diverse abilities and intelligences;

- Students applying for kindergarten in the Vanguard G/T programs are assessed at designated locations;
- All assessments are administered during pre-established testing schedules/timelines by specially trained HISD staff at the student's school or at a location designated by either the Vanguard Coordinator or the Advanced Academics Department;
- All assessments administered during the second semester and beyond are considered for G/T identification for the next school year except for spring services for kindergarten students;
- All students applying for kindergarten are tested with the Wechsler Nonverbal Scale of Ability and the Woodcock-Johnson III Test of Achievement;
- Assessments from outside sources for entering kindergarten G/T identification are not permitted;
- All kindergarten and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are universally tested with the Naglieri (NNAT 2) and with the Stanford/Aprenda 3;
- The scores from Stanford 10/Aprenda 3 and the NNAT 2 are used to complete the G/T identification matrix for all students applying for G/T programs;
- The NNAT 2 is the only abilities test used for the G/T identification matrix;
- Students applying for G/T program grades one through twelve who are currently not enrolled in HISD and took The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) within the last calendar year may substitute those scores for the Stanford 10 on the G/T identification matrix;
- The ITBS is the only nationally normed achievement test that is accepted in place of the Stanford 10 on the G/T identification matrix;
- All 5<sup>th</sup> grade students must re-qualify to be identified G/T as 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Students enrolled in a K-8 Vanguard Magnet Program must meet the re-qualification standard from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade in order to remain at the current school on a Magnet transfer. Students enrolled in a K-8 Vanguard Magnet program who do not meet their requalification standard from 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade will have their matrix data automatically reviewed as soon as new data is available during the 5<sup>th</sup> grade year. If the student remains qualified with new data, the student will remain at his/her current campus. If after all appeals have been exhausted the student still fails to re-qualify, the magnet transfer will not be renewed for the next year.

Students currently enrolled in HISD are given the opportunity to be assessed for G/T eligibility

- a. Upon initial application to the Vanguard Magnet program for entry at any grade;
- b. During Nov.-Jan. of their kindergarten year (as part of district's universal assessment effort);
- c. Prior to entry into the 6<sup>th</sup> grade (as part of the district's universal assessment effort);
- d. During district-wide testing windows for new (first year) immigrant LEP students who have no prior test scores available. This testing is done in their home language.

Students not currently enrolled in HISD, but who reside in HISD, shall be given the opportunity to be assessed for G/T identification upon applying for the Vanguard program for entry at any grade.

- a. Staff trained in testing procedures at the Vanguard school to which the student applied shall conduct assessments by appointment on pre-established dates/times/locations following receipt of the Vanguard application and prior to consideration of acceptance/denial.
- b. Students who are identified as G/T as entering kindergarten students or are identified at any point during elementary school shall carry their eligibility through the elementary grades as long as they continue to successfully participate in the G/T program, regardless of which school they attend;

All students not currently enrolled in HISD, and who reside outside HISD, shall follow the established Magnet and/or Vanguard Magnet application process and assessment timelines. Applications for all students not currently enrolled in HISD and who reside outside HISD will not be processed until after the end of the school year.

### **STANDARD 3: IDENTIFICATION OF G/T STUDENTS**

Written policies on student identification for Vanguard programs are approved by the district Board of Education and disseminated to all parents (19 TAC §89.1);

The G/T identification of a student can be initiated in 4 ways:

- 1) Parent nomination that leads to a Vanguard application;
- 2) Teacher nomination that leads to parent completion of a Vanguard application;
- 3) Student self-nomination that leads to parent completion of a Vanguard application;
- 4) District-generated rosters of G/T eligible students to be reviewed by the campus Vanguard Neighborhood Admissions Committee. (Kindergarten and 5<sup>th</sup> grade);
- 5) All Vanguard Magnet Admissions Committees must be conducted centrally by the Advanced Academics Department.

The identification process involves a review of the student's data (i.e. assessments, recommendations, grades, and added obstacle points when applicable) by the Vanguard Admissions Committee, determination of eligibility based on the G/T identification matrix, parent notification of qualification or non-qualification, placement in G/T classes, and documentation of eligibility on the district's Student Information System (SIS) system.

- To be coded "G/T" on the District PEIMS report the students must qualify on the G/T identification matrix, according to one of the following criteria:
  1. Students entering kindergarten must have a total identification matrix score of 68 points or above which includes the following:
    - a. Ability score (Weschler Nonverbal Scale of Ability);
    - b. Achievement scores (Woodcock-Johnson III Test of Achievement);

- c. One Parent Recommendation per year for entering kindergarten students;
  - d. Obstacles (HISD LEP and/or Special Education documentation required).
2. Students enrolled in grades K-12 must have a total identification matrix score of 62 points or above which includes the following:
  - a. Ability score (current year's NNAT-2 score);
  - b. Achievement scores (Stanford 10/Aprena 3);
  - c. Report Card (students enrolled in K-12);
  - d. The first Teacher Recommendation received for the school year for students enrolled in K-12;
  - e. All current HISD Kindergarten and Fifth grade students will have their Teacher Recommendation form completed online by their classroom teacher;
  - f. Obstacles (HISD documentation required).
3. Students enrolled in grades K-12 must have an identification matrix score of 56-61 points, which must include the following:
  - a. Achievement score (Stanford/Aprena) that totals 16 points or above,
  - b. Abilities score that totals 10 points or above.
- The G/T identification matrix is reviewed annually and will be published in November for the following school year. At this time, it will be posted on the Advanced Academics website.
- Final identification of students for services designed for gifted students is made by a Vanguard Admissions Committee of at least three (3) local district or campus educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students.
- The completed G/T identification matrix is presented at the Vanguard Admissions Committee Meeting;
  - ▶ Vanguard Neighborhood Admissions Committee meetings are held at the campus;
  - ▶ Vanguard Magnet Admissions Committee meetings are centralized and held at the Advanced Academics Department, according to Board policy;
- Parents will be notified and sent a copy of the G/T identification matrix when receiving one of the following letters:
  - ▶ Qualified for Vanguard programs according to district criteria, **or**
  - ▶ Not Qualified for Vanguard programs and will not be placed in the program.
- The Advanced Academics Department, the Vanguard Coordinator, and G/T trained-campus staff will collaboratively review all Vanguard Magnet applications, rosters, and neighborhood applications, prior to the district date for notification of Magnet acceptance/denial.

- Schools with Vanguard Magnet programs, the school-based Vanguard Admissions Committee and staff from the Advanced Academics Department will collaboratively review all Vanguard Magnet applications prior to the district date for notification of Magnet acceptance/denial.

### **Vanguard Coordinator**

Each campus shall designate a Vanguard Coordinator who has completed a minimum of 6 hours of G/T training in the nature and needs of G/T students. The state approved 30 hours of G/T training is preferred. The Vanguard Coordinator's responsibilities must include, but are not limited to the following:

- Ensure that a copy of the Gifted and Talented Identification Matrix is placed in the cumulative student folder upon G/T identification. Originals of all G/T records must be kept at the identifying campus until the cessation of services + 5 years;
- Maintain a folder for every G/T teacher indicating appropriate G/T professional development certificates and a folder for each campus administrator indicating required G/T professional development;
- Provide a copy of the G/T identification matrix and a completed G/T Status Report when a student transfers to another school. Identification is transferable from one HISD school to another for students identified as G/T on the Gifted and Talented Identification Matrix, K-12;
- Process student's application that has been signed by the parent to ensure all required documentation has been submitted;
- Contact parents if testing is needed;
- Complete G/T identification matrix and submit it to the Vanguard Admissions Committee;
- Mail G/T notification letter to the parents/guardians regarding qualification status and a copy of the G/T identification matrix by the notification date determined annually;
- Provide information to parents and the community about the G/T programs offered in their school along with application as well as testing information and timelines.

### **Matrix Review Procedures for G/T Identification**

A Matrix Review process is in place, in accordance with state rule (19 TAC §89.1 (5)). Parents and teachers may request a review of all student's non-qualifying identification by bringing forth new data (test scores or grades) to the Vanguard Review Committee. New data for review consists of only new Stanford/Aprena scores and/or new grades (semester average of current or most recent grade level). New test data is not applicable to entering kindergarten identification.



The Vanguard Review Committee will review the new data to determine if the student qualifies for G/T identification (19 TAC §89.1 (5)). All Vanguard Magnet Matrix reviews are done at the first choice campus.

- **HISD Appeals Procedures**

- **Vanguard Magnet**

- Parent makes an appointment to meet with the principal or designee and the Vanguard Magnet Coordinator;
- The principal or designee and the Vanguard Magnet Coordinator meet with the parent at the campus;
- If the decision is not resolved at the initial campus meeting, the principal will send a completed *Magnet Conflict Resolution Form* and documentation to the Office of School Choice for review. The Office of School Choice will contact and meet with the parent.
- If the parent is not satisfied with the Office of School Choice decision, the parent may request formal Level 1 appeals. (FNG(LEGAL) and FNG(LOCAL))

- **Level 1**

- Parent requests a Level 1 appeals meeting, which will be held at the campus with the principal or designee within **fifteen (15) days**;
- If the parent is not satisfied with the Level 1 appeals decision, the parent may request a Level 2 meeting.

- **Level 2**

- Parent requests a Level 2 appeals meeting which will be held with the superintendent of schools designee;
- After the Level 2 appeals meeting, the decision will be rendered in writing within **ten (10) working days**.

- **Level 3**

- If the parent is not satisfied with the Level 2 appeals decision, the parent may file a written request to the School Board.

- **Vanguard Neighborhood**

- Parent makes an appointment to meet with the principal or designee and the Vanguard Neighborhood Coordinator;
- The principal or designee and the Vanguard Neighborhood Coordinator meet with the parent at the campus;
- If the decision is not resolved at the initial campus meeting, the principal will send a completed *Neighborhood Conflict Resolution Form* and documentation to the Advanced Academics Department for review. The Advanced Academics Department will contact and meet with the parent.
- If the parent is not satisfied with the Advanced Academics Department's decision, the parent may request formal Level 1 appeals.

- **Level 1**
- Parent requests a Level 1 appeals meeting, which will be held at the campus with the principal or designee within twenty (20) days;
- If the parent is not satisfied with the Level 1 appeals decision, the parent may request a Level 2 meeting.
- **Level 2**
- Parent requests a Level 2 appeals meeting which will be held with the superintendent of schools' designee;
- After the Level 2 appeals meeting, the decision will be rendered in writing within five (5) working days.
- **Level 3**
- If the parent is not satisfied with the Level 2 appeals decision, the parent may file a written request to the School Board.

- **STANDARD 4: ADMISSIONS OF G/T STUDENTS**

- Students are admitted into the Vanguard program only after they have qualified using the district's G/T identification matrix. G/T students of active military families relocating who were identified G/T at their previous school are automatically qualified for the Vanguard program in HISD. Gifted and talented documentation is required. All students who enroll in a Vanguard program are required to complete an entrance agreement which stipulates the expected commitment for the student, parent, and teacher.
- If a G/T student leaves the district and returns to HISD within 6 months then the student retains their G/T Status.
- Children must be five years old on or before September 1 of the designated school year to qualify for kindergarten. No child becoming five years old after September 1 will be admitted to kindergarten during the year. This applies also to those who are attended school elsewhere either private or public schools.
- Students who become six years old on or before September 1 should be enrolled in first grade.

Students who will be five years of age as of September 1, who have satisfactorily completed one year in a kindergarten instruction program, and who apply for assignment to first grade may be admitted in accordance with the following requirements...(for more information see elementary guidelines section V pages 1-4 and 6)

- Vanguard Neighborhood—for zoned and non-zoned (transfer) students;
  - ▶ All G/T identified students on the campus are served in G/T classes with appropriately trained/qualified teachers. There are no enrollment goals.
- Vanguard Magnet—for zoned and non-zoned (transfer) students;
  - ▶ For Zoned Students: Zoned students shall apply to that specific Vanguard Magnet program (and are not part of the transfer quota for the campus) and if qualified, served through the Vanguard Magnet program without going through Vanguard Magnet admissions lotteries.
  - ▶ For Non-Zoned/Magnet Transfer Students: When there are more qualified non-zoned/Magnet transfer applicants than Magnet transfer spaces, an admissions lottery is conducted centrally through the Advanced Academics Department in accordance with established Advanced Academics guidelines
  - ▶ All Vanguard Magnet Transfer student admissions must be conducted centrally at the Advanced Academics Department;
  - ▶ Completed application with three location choices is submitted only to the student's first choice campus;
  - ▶ If there are more G/T qualified students requesting transfers than spaces available, a lottery will be held to determine student placement;
  - ▶ Students not receiving their first choice location through the lottery process will have a copy of their application and G/T identification matrix forwarded to their second and/or third choice location, where space is available;
  - ▶ Parents will be notified by mail, by a date determined annually, if their child has or has not qualified for the Vanguard Magnet program and their assigned location;
  - ▶ Parents must notify the Vanguard Magnet program, by a date determined annually, of their intent to accept or decline the invitation for their child to attend the program;
  - ▶ Parents will complete registration materials, including the Vanguard entrance agreement and transportation requests, which are provided by the school;
  - ▶ Parents will follow enrollment procedures as indicated by the school;
  - ▶ Accepted applicants, who still have not responded following a call from the Vanguard Coordinator, will be removed from the acceptance lists, thus freeing those spaces for other qualified students;
  - ▶ Vanguard Magnet programs with vacancies can continue to accept students requesting that program location until a cut-off date, determined annually by the Student Transfer Department;
  - ▶ Vanguard Magnet lottery students can accept a change in program location if a space becomes available at their first choice school until the transfer deadline date;

- ▶ After the transfer deadline date, all Vanguard Magnet students will be locked into their final Magnet transfer for **ONE** school year. Students who fail to achieve academic success can be exited out of a Vanguard Magnet program but should remain at the campus to complete the year-long transfer obligation. See “growth plan procedures” in this section;
- ▶ Parents that choose to decline the Vanguard Magnet program at the kindergarten level and enroll their child in a neighborhood school will have the opportunity for their child to be provided G/T services at their neighborhood school. Parents must provide the neighborhood school with a copy of their child’s G/T identification matrix;

### **Vanguard Magnet Sibling Considerations**

In order to accommodate parents who want their children to attend the same school during the same school year, siblings will receive consideration in the following manner:

- Siblings must qualify on their own merit;
- Qualified siblings will have consideration at entry grade levels only. The entry grade levels are the following:
  - All Vanguard Magnet kindergartens;
  - First grade at River Oaks Elementary.
- Qualified siblings will take up no more than 25% of the transfer spaces in the Vanguard Magnet entry grades. If there are more than 25% qualified siblings, a lottery will be held to determine which siblings will be accepted. If the remaining qualified siblings are not drawn in the regular lottery, there will be a waitlist sibling lottery for positions at the top of the waitlist, followed by a waitlist lottery for remaining qualified students;
- Waitlisted siblings not currently attending the Vanguard Magnet Program – Two or more siblings applying to the same school are placed on the waitlist for their respective grade levels. If one child accepts a space off the waitlist, then the other children are considered siblings and will follow sibling policy at entry grade levels;
- Qualifying twins- If one twin is accepted into a Vanguard Magnet program during the lottery, the other twin becomes a sibling and follows the established sibling guidelines for admission;
- Sibling preference will not be given if both children will not be in the same school during the year for which the application is made;
- Siblings, who present new data and qualify through the appeals process, will be placed on the waitlist below other qualified siblings (if applicable), but above other non-sibling applicants.

## **Furlough Procedures for G/T Programs**

Furloughs are considered on a case by case basis for students currently enrolled in a Vanguard program. The purpose of a furlough is for the student to retain their G/T identification. The furlough does not guarantee the student will receive the same program placement. Grounds for a furlough may include, but are not limited to the following: medical problems, custody issues, divorce, parent sabbatical leave, and foreign exchange programs. The district's *Furlough Request for Vanguard Programs* form must be submitted with a specific timeline to the Vanguard Coordinator. The school will then submit the furlough request form to the Advanced Academics Manager. The Advanced Academics Manager may grant or deny the furlough. Furloughs may not be granted to entering kindergarten Vanguard students. The student will retain his/her G/T identification during the length of the furlough, but will NOT be coded G/T on the PEIMS report. If the furlough is granted, the maximum time allowed is one year after the furlough is granted. If the student does not enroll in an HISD Vanguard program at the end of the furlough timeline, he/she will lose his/her G/T identification and will need to re-apply at a later date.

After the furlough is over, students must follow these program guidelines:

### **Vanguard Neighborhood**

1. Student will be placed in his/her zoned Vanguard Neighborhood program;
2. There is no enrollment goal for the Vanguard Neighborhood program; therefore, all G/T identified students must be served.

### **Vanguard Magnet**

1. Student may re-enroll in his/her previous Vanguard Magnet program if space is available;
2. If space is unavailable in that program, the student will be placed in the lottery with other qualified applicants and/or student may apply to other Vanguard Magnet programs;
3. If the student has not returned from the furlough at the time of lotteries for the next school year, the student's space will be filled through the lottery process;
4. Student may also request a different program location where space is available;
5. Student may also return to his/her Vanguard Neighborhood program.

## **Transfer Procedures**

- Transfers will follow the Board of Education policy on transfer with the following provisions. Identification is transferable from one HISD school to another HISD school. G/T identification matrix must be provided by the sending school along with a completed *G/T Student Status Report*.
- **In addition to the transfer procedures:**
- **Vanguard Magnet Program Transfer Procedures**
- All completed applications postmarked by the deadline date ,determined annually, will be processed during Phase I;

- If a qualified student is requesting a transfer to a school that has a lottery, their name will be placed in the Phase I lottery;
- If the student is requesting a transfer to a Magnet school and the student's name is not chosen, the student will retain their position at their original Vanguard Magnet program until they accept a transfer to another school;
- Final acceptance will be approved by the Student Transfer Department;
- Each student receiving an acceptance letter from a Vanguard Magnet program is responsible for informing the program by the designated date of his or her intent to enroll;
- The Vanguard Magnet Coordinator will contact accepted applicants who have not responded;
- Accepted applicants who still have not responded by the deadline will be removed from the acceptance list to free those spaces for other qualified students;
- Out-of-District transfer students are not considered until all of HISD's students have been considered. Deadline to be determined annually.
- **Growth Plan Procedures for G/T Programs**
- For students who are not demonstrating success as evidenced by semester grades that fall below a 75 average in at least one foundation class in the Vanguard Neighborhood or Vanguard Magnet program, the following steps will be taken in order to ensure placement in an educational environment that enables the students to be successful:
- Conduct a mandated parent/student growth plan committee meeting regarding the student's performance in the Vanguard Neighborhood or Vanguard Magnet program. The committee will consist of the parent, student, teacher(s) and designated campus Vanguard Coordinator;
- Complete a district approved Vanguard program growth plan during the mandated parent/student committee meeting to support the student in meeting program expectations;
- Vanguard growth plan specifics include:
  - Student's responsibilities for improvement
  - School personnel's responsibilities for helping student to improve
  - Parent's responsibilities for helping the student to improve
  - Designated time for re-evaluation, which should not be less than one grading period;
- At the designated time for re-evaluation of the student's progress, a committee meeting shall be held with parent(s), student, teacher and campus Vanguard Coordinator in attendance to determine one of the following recommendations for the student:
  - Objectives and goals for the growth plan have been met; therefore, continuation in Vanguard Neighborhood or Vanguard Magnet program is recommended
  - Extension or modifications are made to current growth plan, including a designated time for re-evaluation

- Attempts to achieve goals of the growth plan have not been successful, and a recommendation is made to remove the student from the Vanguard Neighborhood or Vanguard Magnet program and return student to the general educational program at the current campus for the remainder of the current school year;
- Students who attend summer school and successfully meet promotion standards will remain in the Vanguard program.
- Students who do not meet promotion standards or who are retained will be exited from the Vanguard Program.
- A Voluntary Exit Form may be submitted by the parent to exit the student from the Vanguard Program.

## **STANDARD 5: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY MODELS**

Research indicates that gifted and talented students' academic and social emotional needs are best met in classrooms with other students with similar abilities and with fluid, flexible groupings that change as needed based upon students' interest and abilities. G/T instruction shall be delivered in one of the following instructional delivery models:

1. G/T Homogeneous Classroom – G/T students (zoned and non-zoned/transfers) are grouped together in four foundation classes and receive specialized G/T instruction in the four (4) foundation content areas (Language Arts/Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies) from a teacher who is appropriately G/T trained. These classes are comprised only of G/T students;
2. G/T Clusters (minimum of 3 students) in the general education classroom – G/T students (zoned and non-zoned/transfers) are grouped or clustered with non-G/T students and receive differentiated G/T instruction in the four foundation areas (Language Arts/Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies) in a general education classroom setting from a teacher who is appropriately G/T trained. The non-G/T students should be those who are able to handle the rigor of the G/T instruction. This model is appropriate when there are insufficient G/T students to form homogeneous classes;
3. Combination G/T Homogeneous & G/T Clusters – This delivery model is most appropriate in schools with varying numbers of G/T students at each grade level.

Each model enables G/T students to work together as a group (minimum of 3), work with other students, and work independently during the school day as well as the entire school year. Flexible grouping patterns and independent investigations are employed in the four (4) foundation academic areas.

Prior to selecting a delivery model for each school/grade, the school shall conduct a comprehensive analysis of G/T student numbers per grade level, students' instructional and language needs, staff credentials and training, and prior G/T experience of G/T students and staff, as they relate to the schools' academic goals/objectives.

Additionally, the school must be able to demonstrate they have obtained parent/community support for the selected delivery model(s) and describe how the instructional delivery will be monitored to ensure that the appropriate differentiation of instruction will occur. Following this review, the campus principal, serving as the administrator with program responsibility, in collaboration with the Site-Based Decision Making Committee (SDMC), shall determine which instructional delivery model is best suited for their G/T students and submit the selection to the School Improvement Officer (SIO) for approval.



## **STANDARD 6: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

The Texas State Plan states that curriculum and instruction meet the needs of gifted students by modifying the depth, complexity, and pacing in the four foundation classes.

All Vanguard programs (Neighborhood or Magnet) shall implement the district's revised G/T Curriculum Framework, *Scholars & Knowledge* in grades K-12. This continuum of learning establishes program services that are comprehensive, structured, sequenced and appropriately challenging. Revised *Scholars & Knowledge* overlays HISD's core CLEAR curriculum with differentiation through acceleration, adding depth and complexity, higher level thinking skills, and developing independent research skills focusing on advanced level products.

- In grades K-5, G/T students shall receive instruction daily by a G/T trained teacher implementing revised *Scholars & Knowledge* in the four foundation areas (Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies), emphasizing advanced level products.
- Certain campuses have incorporated the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IBPYP) for grades K-5. Campuses may receive G/T instruction via IBPYP, a curriculum framework.

## **STANDARD 7: MONITORING PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION-QUALITY-RIGOR**

HISD is committed to ensuring that all Vanguard programs operate in accordance with state law and district procedures and guidelines established by the Advanced Academics Department. Campus-based and District office staff will provide continual monitoring of areas that affect instruction and student achievement. Campus-based monitoring strategies shall include, but not be limited to:

- Campus Vanguard Coordinator - Each campus principal shall designate a campus Vanguard Coordinator to assist in implementing the G/T requirements, monitoring classroom instruction, and serving as an information liaison for the District office, and parents;
- Instructional Delivery Model - Each campus principal shall annually submit to their SIO and the Advanced Academics Department for approval of his/her campus G/T instructional model(s) with documentation of the comprehensive analysis and approval by the campus Site-Based Decision Making Committee (SDMC);
- Academic Rigor – Each campus principal, in collaboration with his/her leadership team, shall establish a process for systematically monitoring teachers' implementation of the revised *Scholars & Knowledge* framework. The process shall include random walk-through evaluations of G/T classroom instruction during the 1<sup>st</sup> grading cycle utilizing the HISD Advanced Academics Department revised *Scholars & Knowledge* G/T teacher / classroom protocol, grades K-5, with follow-up observations and/or reviews for improvement as needed, as well as frequent reviews of students' advanced level products;

- G/T Common Grade Planning – Each campus principal shall provide G/T teachers with opportunities for common-grade planning at least once every grading cycle to ensure alignment of course requirements and review of students' advanced level products;
- G/T Vertical Team Planning – Each campus principal shall ensure that G/T teachers have opportunities for cross-grade planning at least once every grading cycle to ensure vertical alignment across the grade levels.

## **STANDARD 8: STUDENT SUCCESS (EXPECTATIONS)**

Students who are identified as G/T and who participate in Vanguard programs, either Neighborhood or Magnet, will be expected to meet all district and state academic achievement standards as well as the following achievement standards. **Individual school programs will be evaluated annually on these measures of achievement for G/T students in grades 1-5.**

- G/T students shall be expected to score at least one grade level above current grade level on the district required Stanford/Aprena as appropriate. LEP/Sp. Ed./504 students will be expected to show annual growth on these or related assessments when tested in the same language;

**Students who do not meet the academic standards listed above or who do not meet promotion standards shall be placed on a *Vanguard Growth Plan* for a minimum of one grading period.**

## **STANDARD 9: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ADMINISTRATORS**

The *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students Professional Development Component* states that all personnel involved in the planning, development, and delivery of services to gifted students have knowledge to enable them to offer appropriate options and curricula for gifted/talented students.

All HISD administrators responsible for Vanguard programs and/or G/T students are required to complete a total of 9 hours of G/T professional development as mandated by state law and district Advanced Academics Guidelines. All G/T professional development is offered through the HISD Professional Development (PD) Services and must be authorized through the Advanced Academics Department. The following training sessions comply with the state and district requirements:

- State Requirement: Minimum 6 hours in "Nature and Needs of G/T Students with Program Options". Administrators should request registration on e-TRAIN;
- HISD Requirement: Minimum 3 hours in "Monitoring Academic Rigor and Advanced Level Products in the G/T Classroom". This training will provide a variety of tools for administrators to use in monitoring G/T classrooms and to provide support for teachers in the implementation of revised *Scholars &*

*Knowledge.* Administrators should request registration on e-TRAIN for *Monitoring Academic Rigor G/T*.

Evidence of completion of the aforementioned training shall be kept at the campus level for audit purposes.

## **STANDARD 10: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR G/T TEACHERS**

The *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students Professional Development Component* states that all personnel involved in the planning, development, and delivery of services to gifted students have knowledge to enable them to offer appropriate options and curricula for G/T students.

All HISD elementary teachers responsible for Vanguard programs and/or G/T students are required to complete the initial 30 hours of G/T professional development within their first semester after assignment as mandated by state law and the HISD Advanced Academics Guidelines. This initial professional development includes 6 hours “Nature and Needs of G/T Students”, 6 hours of “Assessment and Identification of G/T Students”, and 18 hours of “Curriculum and Instruction for G/T Students”.

The G/T supplemental certification alone does not qualify a teacher to teach gifted and talented students in Texas. It must be accompanied by the 30 hours initial training that is required by the Texas Administrative Code (TAC §89.2).

An additional HISD requirement is that all G/T teachers, K-12, receive training in the district’s G/T Curriculum Framework, revised *Scholars & Knowledge* which includes best practices for G/T instruction and strategies for advanced level products. *Scholars & Knowledge* has been embedded in HISD PD training since the fall of 2005. Teachers receiving initial 30 hours training prior to fall 2005 must complete 6 hours of the revised *Scholars & Knowledge*.

After the initial 30 hours of training, 6 hours of additional G/T professional development is required each school year. All G/T 6 hour updates must be completed by the last day of the employee’s contract.

Professional development is offered throughout the school year to accommodate new hires. Teachers should request registration on e-TRAIN for training conducted through the HISD Professional Development Services. These trainings are authorized through the Advanced Academics Department. Training may also be acquired through outside sources such as Region IV and the Harris County Department of Education. Evidence of completion of the aforementioned training shall be kept at the campus level for audit purposes.

## **STANDARD 11: DATA QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE**

Each HISD school will comply with all state and district guidelines, according to the Data Quality Manual, regarding the management and operation of Vanguard programs, related documentation, and related budgets.

Campus-based personnel, as designated by the principal, are responsible for the accuracy of data related to G/T student eligibility and services on SIS in accordance with procedures established by the Federal and State Compliance Department and the Advanced Academics Department.

## **STANDARD 12: PARENT/COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

The *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students Family- Community Involvement Component* states that the district regularly encourages community and family participation in services designed for G/T students.

In accordance with the HISD Advanced Academic Guidelines, principals must inform parents of G/T services and choices through multiple sources, which should include but not be limited to, campus newsletters/brochures and parent informational meetings. Schools shall also provide information regarding the Vanguard application process and deadlines, the district's assessment requirements and timelines, and the identification process that applies to all applicants. Program design/delivery decisions must be made annually in collaboration with the Site-Based Decision Making Committee (SDMC) and with the support of the community at large. Parent Surveys form part of the district's annual evaluation of the Vanguard programs and may require campus-based distribution to selected parents.

G/T students should be encouraged to participate in a variety of extra-curricular program opportunities supported by the district or offered through their school, such as Odyssey of the Mind, Academic Decathlon, Future Problem Solving and Creative Problem Solving Programs. Principals shall inform students and their parents of these opportunities and encourage/facilitate participation as appropriate.

## **STANDARD 13: PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Vanguard programs will be evaluated annually to measure compliance with state/district guidelines, student outcomes, adherence to standards, and overall program delivery. The Vanguard program evaluation shall include district-wide and campus-by-campus reports. The Vanguard Program Evaluation shall be submitted to the school board and reviewed with HISD administration, regional, and campus-based staff. Results of the evaluations will be used to make recommendations for improvement.

## **STANDARD 14: DISTRICT COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT**

Each Vanguard program will receive support from the district in the following areas:

- HISD bus transportation for qualified Vanguard Magnet students within the transportation guidelines;
- Budgetary support through the district's GF1 funds (fund 108) which equals to a 12% add-on rate (to the ADA rate) for each student appropriately coded as G/T on PEIMS;
- District Office support and services provided by the Advanced Academics Department shall include district applications, forms/letters, professional development, instructional monitoring tools, program guidelines, service networking, classroom monitoring, data quality, and parent information/training.

