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"Creating Generations of Excellence"*



## **DISTRICT PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The mission of Ezzell Independent School District is to provide a unique educational experience where all students excel academically, physically, and socially in a safe learning environment that encourages respect and responsibility and prepares students to be confident, life-long learners and productive citizens. To fulfill this mission, instruction must be of the highest quality, equity must be maintained for all students, and educators shall be accountable for results.

Based on this mission for all students, programs for the gifted/talented students should be geared toward the potential of such students. The gifted/talented program should encourage these students toward maximizing their reasoning and performance abilities while incorporating both creative thinking and problem solving. The program should provide a variety of experiences for students that enable them to understand learning and knowledge within and among themselves.

These beliefs should shape the development of an exemplary program for students whose needs are different from those of other students.

### **DEFINITION**

Ezzell Independent School District defines giftedness in the same manner as the State of Texas. A gifted and 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, and environment and who exhibit high performance capability in leadership in grades K-2 or excels in a specific academic field in grades 3-8. All

students in Ezzell Independent School District will have equal access to be identified under this definition.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

### **Program Description**

The overall program is divided into three distinct levels:

Tier I	Talent Pool	Grades K-2
Tier II	Elementary G/T	Grades 3-4
Tier III	Secondary G/T	Grades 5-8

### **Nominations**

Nominations for G/T will be taken from teachers, parents, community members, and the students themselves. Students may also be automatically referred for the program by superior performance on standardized measures. Nomination for the program will be opened yearly. A nominated student will then proceed through the entire screening process at the appropriate time. Openings will be advertised in the fall of each school year. Teacher and parent nomination forms will also be used to solicit information and nominations for students. Information regarding the opening of nominations for the gifted/talented program will be made available to teachers, parents, students, and community members. Copies of these documents are included in the appendices of this plan.

### **Screening**

All nominated students will be screened using multiples measures both qualitative and quantitative to determine their aptitude, performance, and productive thinking abilities. Measures will vary depending on the grade of the nominated student. Students with a superior performance will be tested at the secondary level. Ezzell ISD also reserves the right to request additional information where accumulated data is inconclusive. Students previously tested, may not be retested for 2 school years due to the need for the student to develop significant growth in areas tested.

### **Selection**

A campus committee will be used to make all placement, furlough, exit, transfer, and appeals decisions. The committee will consist of a minimum of three campus educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students.

### **Time Line**

Kindergarten:

August-November:	Observation/nomination
November-December:	Screening Process
January:	Placement made and Notification made Services begin in Feb. for kindergarten students

Grades 1-8:

September-May	Determine transfer students
September-October	Open nomination period
Nov-Dec & Mar-May	Nominations accepted & Screening process
Jan. & August	Notification and appeals Process
Spring & Fall	Services begin

\*\*Nominations can be submitted at any time during the year, however, screening for the gifted/talented program will occur as per the time line indicated above.

**Appeals**

Students or parents who wish to appeal the committee's decision should write a letter requesting review of the process. The student will be asked to present additional data not previously evaluated by the committee for review during an interview. The campus committee will examine the new data along with data previously evaluated by the committee for review during an interview. The campus committee will examine the new data along with data previously collected. The student will be notified of the committee's decision and may appeal to the superintendent if desired.

**Transfer**

Students who transfer into Ezzell Independent School District who have formerly been identified as gifted/talented will be placed in G/T based on conditional acceptance until supporting documentation showing previous G/T placement has been received. Comparable tests administered in other districts may be accepted in place of Ezzell Independent School District measures. However, Ezzell ISD reserves the right to administer all its own tests. Assessment will be completed within six weeks of enrollment. Final enrollment occurs when the campus committee reviews all data related to the enrollment. When a gifted/talented student withdraws and transfers to

another district, EISD will include information on the student's assessment data.

### **Exit Procedures**

Parents may withdraw students from the program at any time by contacting the school principal and submitting written notification. If a child consistently has difficulty in the program, the teacher, student, parent, or school administrator may request that a conference be held to discuss the problems in an effort to provide intervention strategies. If difficulty continues, parents will be notified of exiting. Students who are exited will be eligible to be nominated each subsequent year for identification for G/T.

### **Furlough**

Students who wish to be withdrawn for a 6 weeks period or length determined by the committee, may request "furlough status" for the current school year. They or their parents should present to the placement committee their reason for wishing to be furloughed and their educational plans for the intervening period. The placement committee shall document the furlough and include documentation in the student's cumulative folder. Students who do not reenter the program at the end of the furlough period may reenter at a later date through the standard identification process.

### **Reassessment**

Reassessment of gifted/talented students is based on performance in the program for gifted/talented students and if reassessment occurs at all, it is no more than once in elementary grades (K-4) and once in middle school grades.(5-8)

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Ezzell Independent School District will service the G/T student within the classroom. Each teacher who is responsible for a g/t student will be in compliance during that year. In compliance means, has had 30 hours of specific training in Gifted and Talented and will continue to get a 6 hour update each year. The teacher will document in his/her lesson plans the gifted/talented lesson that was done in his/her classroom. Students will be identified in specific subjects(s) placement in grades 3 through 8. In grades kindergarten through 2, students will be identified with "leadership criteria".

### **K-2 Leadership Description**

The Ezzell Independent School District G/T program for kindergarten- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will be served through a talent pool. Students who indicate a propensity for learning at a faster rate, understanding more abstract and complex content, and thinking creatively and critically will be identified for a talent pool. In kindergarten, students are observed, nominated, and screened during the fall semester with talent pool selection completed no later than the end of February. Inclusion into the gifted program will begin by March of the spring semester. The screening process for (k-2) will include at least 4 venues:

1. TPRI
2. ITBS (norm-referenced Achievement test)
3. Teacher Checklist
4. Parent Checklists
5. Creativity test

### **3-4 Elementary and 5-8 Secondary G/T Description**

The Ezzell Independent School District will serve students in grades 3-8. Students may be nominated by parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, or other professionals who are familiar with their abilities, potential performance, and past records. The G/T program is planned for the student who excels in a specific academic field. Final identification of students eligible to participate will be made by the Campus Screening, Selection, and Exit Committee, composed of the campus administrator, 3 professional educators. All members will be familiar with state guidelines, local policies, and have a minimum of six hours of training in nature and needs of gifted students. The committee will base identification upon data secured from a minimum of three sources that include both subjective and objective measures.

Students in grades 3-8 will be serviced in the classroom with a professional teacher who has been trained in the recommended 30 hours of G/T and is in compliance having had a 6 hour update completed each school year between June 1<sup>st</sup>- May 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Ezzell Independent School District will develop appropriate and challenging learning experiences in grades kindergarten through eighth in language arts, math, science, and social studies based on TEKS standards. The focus will be on creative and critical thinking, productive thinking, problem solving

and Bloom's Taxonomy will be an integral part of the thematic units developed for the program. Opportunities will be provided to accelerate in areas of student strengths. Since G/T curriculum is inherently individual and unique, Ezzell ISD will work closely with the Education Service Center, Region 3 specialists and other advocates to develop, refine, and evaluate its curriculum for G/T students. Working through the Site-Based Decision-Making Committee, further assignments and tasks will be assessed and implemented for curriculum development for G/T.

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

All teachers serving G/T students will have state-mandated 30 hours of staff development in Gifted and Talented. These initial hours will be accepted from the Region 3 ESC. Teachers will be expected to acquire one day (six hours) of advanced (Level 2) training annually during the school year or summer. The district will pay substitute reimbursement and registration fees to encourage and enable teachers to stay current on effective practices in the education of G/T students. This staff development day may be used in coordination with the curriculum development days described above. Administrators need six hours of training in the Nature and Needs of Gifted and Talented Students and program options.

## **EVALUATION**

Evaluation of the Gifted/Talented Program will be completed annually. This process will include student evaluation and program evaluation. Evaluation activities will include student and parent questionnaires, teacher observations, attitude checklists, standardized test result, community review of surveys, program activities with dates of accomplishments, and measurement of changes in perception of the program by staff, students, parents, and community. Evaluation results will be compiled and disseminated as appropriate. Recommendations for improving the program will be based on evaluation results and will be included in district and campus improvement plans. An advisory group of community members, parents of gifted/talented students, school staff, and gifted/talented education staff meet regularly to review and recommend program policies and procedures to the district.