



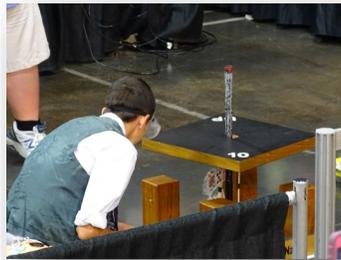
**Advanced Academic Services
for the
Gifted & Talented**

STATE GOAL FOR SERVICES FOR GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS

The state's goal for G/T students is to ensure that students who participate in G/T services demonstrate self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication skills. G/T students develop innovative products and sophisticated performances that reflect individuality and creativity and are targeted to an audience outside the classroom.

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. (Texas Education Code [§29.121](#))



REVISED July 26, 2021

**ABILENE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
241 PINE STREET
ABILENE, TEXAS 79601
325-677-1444**



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**Advanced Academic Services
for the
Gifted & Talented**

Program Arrangement

Grades K—5

Campus-based, differentiated instructional program included within general education classes at all AISD elementary campuses; campus-based supplemental enrichment activities; pull-out instruction from district GT teachers

Grades 6—12

Early College Advanced Placement Incentive Program, Pre-Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement Classes



History of the Abilene Independent School District Gifted and Talented Program

1980—1981

A pilot program was implemented at Dyess Elementary for 80 fifth and sixth graders from six elementary campuses. The students were bused for instruction one day per week, Monday through Thursday. The instructor was Kathy Aldridge, assisted by a teacher's aide.

1981—1982

The program was moved to Crockett Elementary. Fifth and sixth grade students from all elementary campuses were bused one day per week, Monday through Thursday. A second teacher, Nancy Eppler, was added to the program staff. A seventh grade program was piloted at Madison Junior High utilizing two language arts teachers in a team-teaching approach.

1982—1983

A third teacher was added to the program at Crockett Elementary to begin serving fourth grade students. The seventh grade pilot program was successful and expanded to include all junior high campuses through a language arts team-taught class. Madison Junior High piloted an eighth grade program through math and science classes.

1983—1986

Two additional teachers were added to the elementary program to begin serving third graders from all district campuses. This brought the total number of teachers teaching in the elementary Alternative Learning Program for Gifted Students (ALPS) to five. The junior highs, when possible, added a team-taught math/science class for eighth graders to go along with the seventh grade language arts class.

1985—1987

Middle schools replaced junior highs and the ALPS program was moved to the last period of the day as part of the advisory program for sixth graders. The seventh and eighth grade program remained in specified subject matter classes where teachers were willing and available to teach the classes. The elementary program moved to Locust Elementary and the total number of elementary teachers was reduced to four.

1987—1989

The middle school program was changed to a pull-out program with four teachers and one aide instructing students one day per week, Monday through Thursday, at Franklin Middle School. The elementary program did not change in structure.

1989—1990

A fifth day of instruction (Friday) was added to the schedule. This allowed the total number of ALPS teachers to be reduced to a total of six—three at elementary and three at middle school.



History of the Abilene Independent School District Gifted and Talented Programs

1990—1991

Primary Enrichment for Advanced Kids (PEAK) was established on each elementary campus for grades kindergarten through second to meet new state requirements for Gifted and Talented instruction to students in kindergarten through twelfth grades. Initially, one teacher was trained for each grade level (kindergarten through second) from each campus. Laureate English classes were established at both high schools for Gifted and Talented students. No changes were made in the ALPS program.

1991—1992

Alternative testing (Raven Test of Progressive Matrices) was implemented to identify more minority and economically disadvantaged students. The program continued as structured the previous year.

1992—1994

The elementary ALPS program moved from Locust Elementary to Bowie Elementary. Locust was changed to an early childhood education center. One additional teacher was added to the staff at each level, elementary and middle school, to handle an overall increase in the number of students served. The increase began the previous year with the identification of more minority and economically disadvantaged students.

1994—1997

Middle school ALPS program was moved from Franklin Middle School to Mann Middle School.

1997—1998

New state guidelines were adopted that required identified Gifted and Talented students to be offered "learning opportunities that are commensurate with the abilities of Gifted and Talented students, and that emphasize content in the four (4) CORE ACADEMIC AREAS." Because of these guidelines, the high school program was expanded from (Laureate) English to include Honors, Pre-Advanced Placement, and Advanced Placement classes in all of the core academic areas.

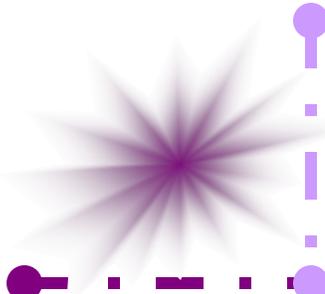
1998—2003

The program continued as structured the previous year. During the summer of 2002, the curriculum was aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) with a greater emphasis placed upon mathematics and science.

2003—2006

The seventh and eighth grade ALPS program was dissolved and restructured into the same format that serves grades nine through twelve. The needs of identified gifted students in seventh through twelfth grades were met through differentiated instruction within the SOAR, Pre-AP, and AP classes.





History of the Abilene Independent School District Gifted and Talented Programs

2007—2008

The elementary ALPS program was expanded to include second grade, and a second grade ALPS teacher was added. Second grade ALPS students receive instruction one day per week on the identified ALPS campus.

The sixth grade ALPS program was dissolved and restructured into the same format that served grades seven through twelve. The needs of identified gifted sixth through twelfth grade students were met through differentiated instruction within the Early College Advanced Placement Incentive Program with Pre-AP and AP Classes.

The PEAK program for kindergarten and first grade continued as structured from previous year.

2009—2011

The program continued as structured the previous year. In the Spring of 2011, a GT Restructuring Committee was formed and included teachers, parents of current gifted students, administrators, along with the Advanced Academics Consultant from Region 14 ESC and a university professor who is a leading authority on gifted education. The mission was to research best practices in gifted education and make recommendations for the elementary GT program as it transitions from a pull-out to a campus-based program.

2011—2015

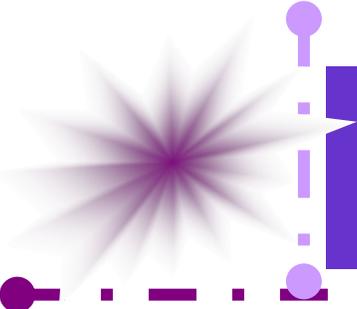
The ALPS program was dissolved in 2011 and was restructured into a campus-based format. Identified GT students were cluster-grouped into grade-level classes where the Texas Performance Standards Project and differentiated instruction forms the foundation of the program. Additional enrichment opportunities were made available on each campus which can include Destination Imagination, Elementary UIL, Junior Historians of Texas, etc. Secondary programs continued as structured the previous year.

2015—2020

GT services continue as differentiated instruction within the general education classes by GT teachers. The lead GT teachers were replaced by campus GT coordinators who also serve as the campus Instructional Coordinator. GT students are placed into classrooms where teachers have the GT requirements, but it is no longer required to have the GT students clustered into one classroom. GT students can help and benefit themselves by being exposed to more diverse learners; and diverse learners can benefit by working more closely with GT students. This will encourage campuses to get more teachers to obtain their GT hours which will benefit all students. An increased emphasis has been placed upon evaluating and communicating the Advanced Academics program.

2020—Present

In addition to classroom differentiation and acceleration activities, three district GT teachers were added to the elementary level to provide weekly pull-out classes and activities based on the Texas Performance Standards Project. Academic UIL participation is encouraged, and all students participate in a GT Showcase in the spring semester. All classroom teachers who serve GT students at all grade levels were required to obtain the initial 30-hour "Nature and Needs of Gifted / Talented Students" if they had not already completed it, followed by 6 hours of continuing training each year related to GT instruction.



Nomination / Identification

The Abilene Independent School District offers instructional programs in Kindergarten through grade twelve for students who are identified as gifted and talented in the area of general intellectual ability.

Nominations

In Kindergarten and first grade, all students are considered nominees for the Advanced Academics (GT) program. For Kindergarten students, screening will begin in the fall semester, and 1st grade students screening will take place during the spring semester to be completed prior to the end of the year. Identified first grade students will begin services beginning with the fall semester of their second grade year.

Students in grades two through eleven who are not currently in the program may be nominated by a parent/guardian, teacher, counselor or administrator. Individuals who wish to nominate students for the Advanced Academics (GT) program may obtain nomination/checklist forms from the school Instructional Coordinator/Specialist.

Students new to the district in grades one through twelve may be nominated by a parent for the gifted and talented program. Parents who wish to nominate students may obtain nomination/checklist forms from the school counselor or Instructional Coordinator/Specialist.

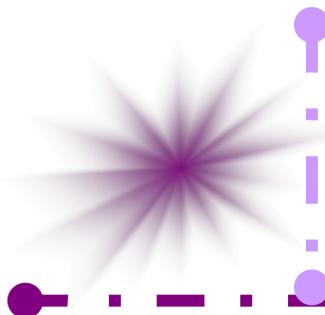
Transfer students from outside the district who have been identified as gifted and talented in another school district's academic-based program and have such recommendation stated on their transfer records may be admitted to the gifted program for a six week trial period.

Students will be tested for the G/T program one time during the school year. A new student who is tested in the fall of the new school year will not be eligible to be tested again until the spring of the following school year.

Identification

Both quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) measures are used to assess potential gifted and talented students and may include but are not limited to the following: standardized achievement test, standardized school abilities test, state assessments, parent checklists, teacher observations and grade averages.

Identification decisions are made by the district selection committee which includes G/T teachers, at least one school counselor and the Executive Director of Federal Programs, all of whom have had a minimum of training in the Nature and Needs of Gifted Learners. For additional information, please contact your school counselor.



Elementary Advanced Academics Overview

Instructional Program

The Elementary GT Advanced Academics Program serves identified Gifted and Talented students in Kindergarten through fifth grade on each elementary campus. To coordinate the program, each elementary campus has a lead GT coordinator who is also the campus Instructional Coordinator. GT students are grouped within the regular classroom and program instruction is conducted by designated GT teachers for each grade level on every elementary campus. All GT students are also served by a district GT teacher who provides weekly pull-out cluster classes. Additionally, each campus is encouraged to offer enrichment programs outside of the classroom to further showcase the talents of GT students.

Teacher Requirements

Teachers who provide instruction and services in the four core subject areas as part of the Elementary Advanced Academics program are required by state law to receive a minimum of 30 hours of staff development in gifted education to include "nature and needs of gifted/talented students, identification and assessment of gifted/talented students' needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted/talented students." Additionally, teachers who provide instruction to GT students must receive an annual GT update to include a minimum of 6 hours. Professional development is obtained through graduate-level coursework at the university level or through other professional development opportunities offered through educational service centers. Teachers are encouraged to pursue advanced degrees and/or obtain the state's GT Supplemental Certification.

Curriculum

The Elementary Advanced Academics curriculum is based on differentiated instruction of the district's scope and sequence in the four core subject areas of reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Additionally, emphasis is placed upon the Texas Performance Standards Project.

The Texas Performance Standards Project is a statewide system designed to provide a structure to capture the high levels of achievement of GT students through tasks aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The goal is for students to create projects that address real world problems and reflect professional-level quality.

Additional enrichment programs are available to further address and showcase the talents and interests of GT students. Destination Imagination (DI), Elementary University Interscholastic League (UIL), and Junior Historians of Texas are examples of programs from which campuses may choose.

GT instructional activities address and help develop critical and creative thinking skills, creative problem-solving skills, decision-making skills, and research skills while integrating the content areas of reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The affective domain skills of self-awareness, group dynamics, and task commitment are also addressed.



Middle School Advanced Academics Overview

Early College

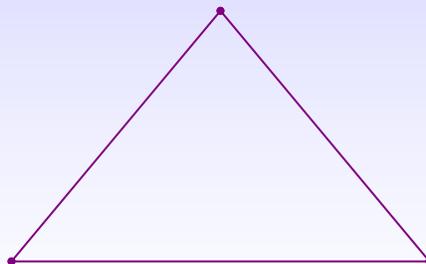
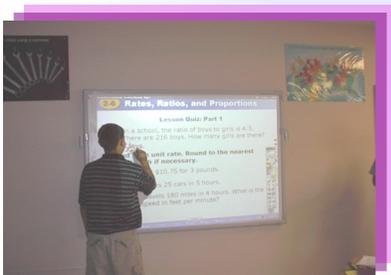
Pre-Advanced Placement Incentive Program (Grades 6-8)

Gifted and Talented students in middle school begin preparing for high school Advanced Placement courses by participating in the Early College Pre-Advanced Placement Incentive Program. Pre-AP courses in English, math, science, social studies, and art are offered in grades 6-8. These courses provide both academic challenge and differentiated learning experiences for identified Gifted and Talented students.

The following Pre-AP classes are available at all four AISD middle schools to prepare students for additional Pre-AP and Advanced Placement courses in High School:

Teachers who provide instruction and services in the four core subject areas as part of the Pre-AP program are required to have obtained a minimum of 30 hours of staff development in gifted education as well as a 6 hour annual update in advanced curriculum and instructional strategies.

Middle School				
ENGLISH	Social Studies	Science	Math	Art
6 th grade Pre-AP 7 th Grade Pre-AP 8 th Grade Pre-AP	8 th Grade Pre-AP U.S. History	6 th Grade Pre-AP Science 7 th Grade Pre-AP Science 8 th Grade Pre-AP Science	6 th Grade Pre-AP Math 7 th Grade Pre-AP Math 8 th Grade Pre-AP Algebra 1	8 th Grade Pre-AP Art



High School Advanced Academics Overview

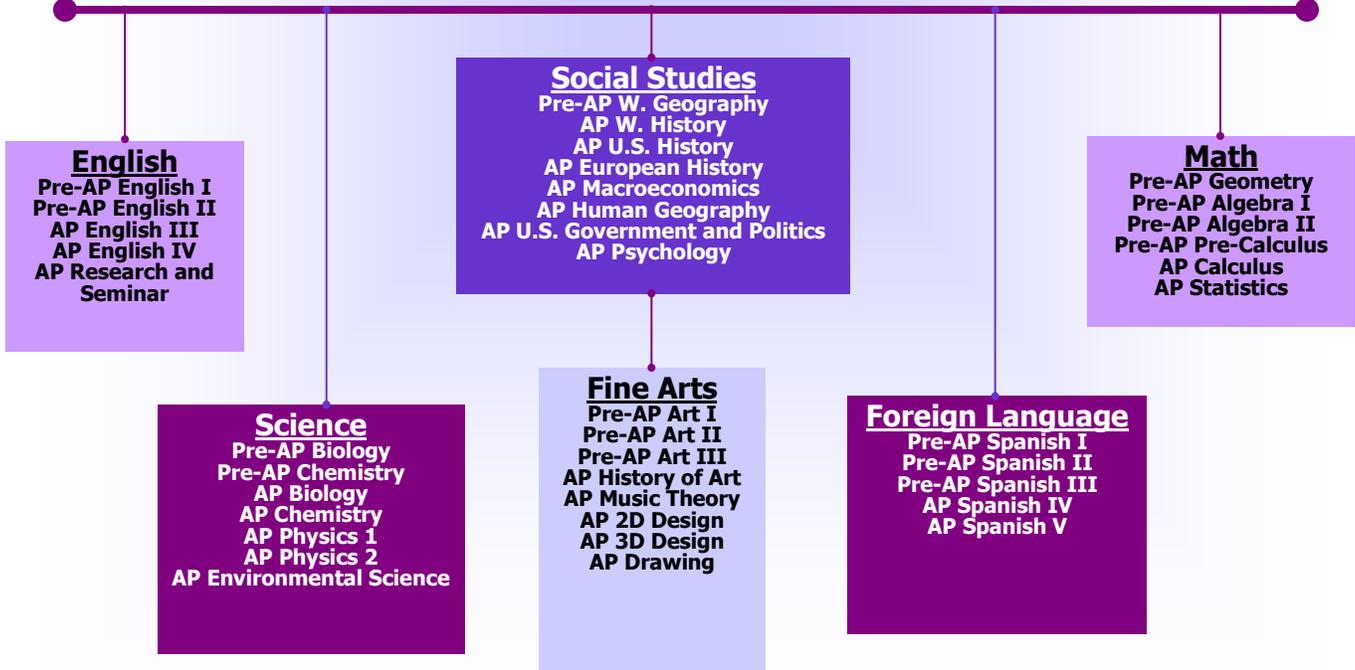
Early College

Advanced Placement Incentive Program (Grades 9-12)

Gifted and Talented students in grades 9-12 continue to participate in the Early College Advanced Placement Incentive Program. Pre-Advanced Placement courses and Advanced Placement courses are available in English, math, science, social studies, art, music theory, and foreign languages. These courses provide both challenging academic and differentiated learning experiences for identified Gifted and Talented students.

Teachers who provide instruction and services in the Pre-AP and AP programs are required to have obtained a minimum of 30 hours of staff development in gifted education as well as maintain 6 hour annual updates in advanced curriculum and instructional strategies.

AISD Advanced Academic Program



A district shall establish a process for identifying and serving gifted and talented students and shall establish a program for those students in each grade level. Under this provision, a district may establish a shared services arrangement with other districts.

A district shall adopt a policy regarding the use of funds to support the district's program for gifted and talented students.

Education Code 29.122

Definition

"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.

Education Code 29.121

Identification

Students shall be identified as gifted/talented in accordance with a written policy that includes:

1. 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 Education Code 29.121.
2. Assessment measures collected from multiple sources according to each area defined in the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.
3. Data and procedures designed to ensure that students from all populations in a district have access to assessment and, if identified, to services provided for the gifted/talented program.
4. Provisions for final selection of students 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.
5. Provisions regarding furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement.

19 TAC 89.1

**Learning
Opportunities**

A district shall provide an array of learning opportunities for gifted/talented students in kindergarten through grade 12 and shall inform parents of the opportunities. Options shall 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.
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.
4. Opportunities to accelerate in areas of strength.

19 TAC 89.3

**Certification and
Reporting**

A district shall annually certify to the commissioner of education that the district has established a program for gifted and talented students as required by Education Code Chapter 29, Subchapter D and that the program is consistent with the state plan.

If the commissioner determines that a district has failed to comply for a school year, the commissioner shall reduce the total amount of funding as described by Education Code 29.124(b). The commissioner may restore to a district all or part of the funding withheld if during the school year the district complies with the program requirements.

At the same time that a district makes the certification described above, the district shall report to the commissioner regarding the use of funds on the district's program for gifted and talented students as provided by State Board of Education rule.

Nothing in these provisions may be construed as limiting the number of students that a school district may identify as gifted and talented or serve under the district's program for gifted and talented students.

Education Code 29.124

Note: See DMA(LEGAL) for training requirements for teachers of gifted and talented education.

Referral	Students may be referred for the gifted and talented program at any time by teachers, counselors, parents, or other interested persons.
Screening and Identification Process	<p>The District shall provide assessment opportunities to complete the screening and identification process for referred students at least once per school year.</p> <p>The District shall schedule a gifted and talented program awareness session for parents that provides an overview of the assessment procedures and services for the program prior to beginning the screening and identification process.</p>
Parental Consent	The District shall obtain written parental consent before any special testing or individual assessment is conducted as part of the screening and identification process. All student information collected during the screening and identification process shall be an educational record, subject to the protections set out in policies at FL.
Identification Criteria	The Board-approved program for the gifted and talented shall establish criteria to identify gifted and talented students. The criteria shall be specific to the state definition of gifted and talented and shall ensure the fair assessment of students with special needs, such as the culturally different, the economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities.
Assessments	Data collected through both objective and subjective assessments shall be measured against the criteria approved by the Board to determine individual eligibility for the program. Assessment tools may include, but are not limited to, the following: achievement tests, intelligence tests, creativity tests, behavioral checklists completed by teachers and parents, student/parent conferences, and available student work products.
Selection	A selection committee shall evaluate each referred student according to the established criteria and shall identify those students for whom placement in the gifted and talented program is the most appropriate educational setting. The committee shall be composed of at least three professional educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students, as required by law.
Notification	The District shall provide written notification to parents of students who qualify for services through the District's gifted and talented program. Participation in any program or services provided for gifted students shall be voluntary, and the District shall obtain written permission from the parents before placing a student in a gifted and talented program.

Reassessment	If the District reassesses students in the gifted and talented program, the reassessment shall be based on a student's performance in response to services and shall occur no more than once in elementary grades, once in middle school grades, and once in high school grades.
Transfer Students Interdistrict	When a student identified as gifted by a previous school district enrolls in the District, the selection committee shall review the student's records and conduct assessment procedures when necessary to determine if placement in the District's program for gifted and talented students is appropriate. [See FDD(LEGAL) for information regarding transfer students and the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children]
Intradistrict	A student who transfers from one campus in the District to the same grade level at another District campus shall continue to receive services in the District's gifted and talented program.
Furloughs	The District may place on a furlough any student who is unable to maintain satisfactory performance or whose educational needs are not being met within the structure of the gifted and talented program. A furlough may be initiated by the District, the parent, or the student. In accordance with the Board-approved program, a furlough shall be granted for specified reasons and for a specified period of time. At the end of a furlough, the student may reenter the gifted and talented program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.
Exit Provisions	The District shall monitor student performance in response to gifted and talented program services. If at any time the selection committee or a parent determines it is in the best interest of the student to exit the program, the committee shall meet with the parent and student before finalizing an exit decision.
Appeals	A parent, student, or educator may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or exit from the gifted and talented program. Appeals shall be made first to the selection committee. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with FNG(LOCAL) beginning at Level Two.
Program Evaluation	The District shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of the District's gifted and talented program, and the results of the evaluation shall be used to modify and update the District and campus improvement plans. The District shall include parents in the evaluation process and shall share the information with Board members,

administrators, teachers, counselors, students in the gifted and talented program, and the community.

The District's gifted and talented program shall address effective use of funds for programs and services consistent with the standards in the state plan for gifted and talented students.

The District shall annually report to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) regarding funding used to implement the District's gifted and talented program. The District shall annually certify to TEA:

1. The establishment of a gifted and talented program by the District; and
2. That the District's program is consistent with the state plan for gifted and talented students.

**Community
Awareness**

The District shall ensure that information about the District's gifted and talented program is available to parents and community members and that they have an opportunity to develop an understanding of and support for the program.

Abilene ISD
221901

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
REQUIRED STAFF DEVELOPMENT

DMA
(LEGAL)

Gifted and Talented
Education

A district shall ensure that:

1. Before assignment to the program for gifted students, teachers who provide instruction and services that are part of the program have a minimum of 30 hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, assessment of student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students.
2. Teachers without the required training who provide instruction and services that are part of the gifted/talented program complete the 30-hour training requirement within one semester.
3. Teachers who provide instruction and services that are part of a program for gifted students receive a minimum of six hours annually of professional development in gifted education.
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.

19 TAC 89.2

