

## ADVANCED ACADEMIC SERVICES

The Department of Advanced Academic Services is responsible for the Gifted and Talented Program in the school district. The department also coordinates services for the Advanced Placement (AP), Pre-Advanced Placement (Pre-AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, and works closely with the district's three academic magnet schools.

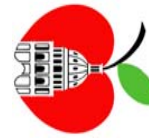
Additional information about the department can be found on the following webpage [www.austinisd.org/academics/curriculum/gt/](http://www.austinisd.org/academics/curriculum/gt/)

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### Gifted and Talented Program

The Department of Advanced Academic Services, in accordance with the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*, provides a Gifted and Talented Program to students in grades K-12 in the areas of general intellectual ability and specific academic aptitude in one or more of the four core areas: science, social studies, mathematics, and language arts. AISD is committed to meeting the needs of all the children in its schools, including those of high academic and intellectual ability whose needs may not be met by the regular curriculum.

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Austin Independent School District  
Department of Advanced Academic Services  
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Austin, TX 78703

# Advanced Academic Services

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## Gifted and Talented Program

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

[www.austinisd.org/academics/curriculum/gt/](http://www.austinisd.org/academics/curriculum/gt/)  
(512) 414-9986

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## PROGRAM DESIGN

The Texas State Plan requires that gifted students have opportunities to work independently, with peers, and with students of similar ability. Research confirms that the more time-identified students spend together in an enriched and/or accelerated environment, the higher their achievement level.

The AISD gifted program design is based on the cluster-grouping model, where groups of three or more gifted students are assigned to classroom teachers (elementary) and advanced coursework teachers (secondary) who have completed the state required gifted education training. The clustering provides opportunities for gifted students to work with other gifted students as well as independently and in flexible groups. Campuses may choose to enhance the model with additional learning opportunities for identified gifted students.

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## CURRICULUM

Differentiated instruction is required for K-12 students identified as gifted and talented in the state of Texas. GT students are taught and assigned work that matches their instructional level in the subject area(s) for which they have been identified for services.

Secondary level students are provided GT services within advanced level courses. The AISD K-12 GT Curriculum Scope and Sequence provides teachers with a framework for designing differentiated lessons for gifted students. The four strands of focus in the framework are Communication, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Research. Skills that build from grade level to grade level are outlined in the framework for each strand, and support and exceed mastery of state standards.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The department provides numerous professional development opportunities for teachers, counselors, and administrators. Foundation level opportunities are designed to meet requirements outlined in *The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*. Additional training is offered to extend and enrich gifted education knowledge and skills. Training topics include meeting social and emotional needs of gifted students, strategies for use with high-level learners, development of creative thinking, and improving identification of underrepresented populations.

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## IDENTIFICATION

GT Identification is ongoing, using a process of nomination, screening, and placement in accordance with the Texas State Plan. K-12 students are eligible for nomination and screening each school year.

AISD identifies GT students using a multi-criteria approach to selection. GT identification is based upon data collected from several sources, including tests, observation checklists, and student portfolio work samples. Alternative testing is used for students who are English Language Learners.

Each AISD campus has a GT selection and placement committee that analyzes all of the collected data and recommends placement or non-placement for each student nominated and screened for the gifted program.

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## GT ADVOCATES

The GT advocate is the person primarily responsible for overseeing GT services on each campus. The advocate supports the identification and delivery of services to gifted students. They provide a support link for teachers of GT students in the areas of

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curriculum, instruction, and professional development. Advocates also provide information and support to parents. Each GT advocate receives a program guide to assist them in following policies and procedures set by both the state of Texas and AISD.

For a complete list of campus advocates visit our website.

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## TRANSFER STUDENTS

Identified GT students that transfer from one AISD campus to another maintain gifted education services in the area(s) for which they are identified for GT services from their previous school.

For students transferring to AISD from another school district, placement in the GT program is not automatic. GT screening information from the previous GT program is sent to and reviewed by the Department of Advanced Academic Services. Based on the review, a recommendation is made to the selection and placement committee of the campus at which the new student has enrolled for a placement decision.

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## PARENT ADVOCACY

The department also provides parent education opportunities each school year for parents of gifted students. Topic forums, mini-conferences, newsletters, and website postings are among the formats used to communicate with and support parents in advocating for their gifted children. Campuses may also provide opportunities for parents of GT students to network by hosting parent meetings and events. Advocacy support is also available through local, state, and national gifted organizations.