LA VERNIA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

GIFTED & TALENTED EDUCATION SERVICES

Updated 2018 - 2019

O.M.E.G.A.
Opening Minds to Empowering Goals & Achievements

Updated February 2019
# La Vernia ISD

**Gifted & Talented Referral and Identification Timelines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Events</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Services to previously identified G/T students 1st – 12th begin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Referral procedures are published on school district website and social media. Referral procedures are communicated to teachers by the campus principals and also published in campus communication with parents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November – December. Due 2nd Monday in December</td>
<td>Referrals accepted from parents, teachers, counselors, campus administrators, peers or self.</td>
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</table>
| January – February     | • Kindergarten screenings conducted  
                          • K – 12 assessments conducted after written parent/guardian permission is obtained. Dates determined by individual campuses |
| February               | • Campus Gifted & Talented committee meets on Kindergarten screenings and assessments.  
                          • Letters of identification decision for Kindergarten students sent to parents  
                          • “Permission to Participate” forms are due. |
| February/March         | • Services begin for identified Kindergarten students (March 1)  
                          • Campus Gifted & Talented Committees meet for determination of grades 1 – 11 screening and assessments. |
| April                  | • Letters of G/T Qualification decisions for 1st – 12th grades are sent to parents  
                          • “Permission to Participate” forms for all services are due. |
| August                 | Services begin for identified students 1st – 11th.                       |

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STATE DEFINITION OF GIFTED

A 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 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

DISTRICT DEFINITION OF GIFTED

LVISD’s definition of giftedness is based on the state definition. Gifted students are those who excel or have the potential to excel in one or more of the areas of creativity, general intellectual ability, or leadership. These students may need services or enriched activities not ordinarily provided in the regular school program. The district recognizes that students identified as gifted may come from diverse populations.

GIFTED & TALENTED SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of La Vernia ISD Gifted & Talented Services is to provide an array of educational experiences to foster critical and creative thinking, collaboration, and problem solving while meeting the social, emotional and academic needs of gifted students by matching a student’s abilities, interests and motivations with enriched educational opportunities. The G/T program in La Vernia ISD provides services in general intellectual ability in the four (4) foundation curricular areas. Efforts are made to encourage the development of specific-academic ability, creativity and leadership gifts while enriching academic achievement. The G/T program will vary the content taught, the instructional strategies used to teach it, the environment in which it is taught, and the student’s role in learning.

Therefore, the overarching goal of the gifted program is to enable gifted children to become independent, lifelong learners who are challenged to discover their gifts and talents and who are prepared to assume roles as leaders and active participants in a world of rapid change and complexity.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GIFTED

There are a wide variety of gifted and talented characteristics. The following are a few examples:

- Advanced vocabulary for age or grade level
- Quick mastery and recall of information
- May be easily bored with routine tasks
- Often tries to discover the how and why of things
- Looks for similarities in events, people and things
- Enjoys reading and/or retelling of stories
- Is a good problem solver
- May strive toward perfection
- Is a self-directed learner
- Shows strong leadership qualities

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IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Students shall be identified as gifted/talented in accordance with a local policy that includes a definition of giftedness that is consistent with the state definition.

The LVISD G/T program is centered around general intellectual ability. Every effort is made to encourage the development of specific-academic ability, creativity and leadership gifts while enhancing and enriching academic achievement.

The identification process shall be accomplished in three stages:

- Referral of student for G/T services for further assessment using appropriate instruments and measures. All kindergarten students will be screened for determination of further assessment.
- Assessment of students using appropriate instruments and measures.
- Selection of students for whom G/T services is an appropriate educational placement by the campus selection committee.

G/T REFERRAL FOR SERVICES PROCEDURES

Any student enrolled in La Vernia ISD may be referred for Gifted & Talented. The referral process may be initiated through any of the following ways:

- Teachers
- Counselors
- Librarians
- Administrators
- Peers
- Self
- Community Member
- Parents, Relatives, or Legal Guardians

The principal, counselor, or G/T facilitator shall communicate referral and screening/assessment procedures and timelines to faculty members. This communication may be completed through the distribution of appropriate materials, as agenda items for discussion at faculty meetings or through other means deemed appropriate on individual campuses. After referrals have been submitted to the campus counselor, written parent or guardian permission is required for further assessment.

Referral and assessment procedures will consider all students who might benefit from G/T services regardless of sex, race, creed, handicapping condition, ethnic origin or religious preference. State guidelines for identification require that students be selected for the program based on criteria that include both qualitative and quantitative measures.

All Kindergarten students will be automatically screened to determine if further gifted/talented services assessment is warranted.

- Kindergarten students will be screened early January and students who qualify will be assessed during the months of January and February.
- Teachers and parents may refer kindergarten students for assessment. The deadline for referral to participate in the kindergarten testing cycle is the last day of the semester when we release for Christmas Break.

Assessment procedures are designed to assure that all students, including those with special needs, those from different cultures, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are provided with

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equal access to the G/T program. Instruments will be chosen with the goal of allowing students to display optimal performance. Students will be assessed in languages they understand or with nonverbal assessments. Other instruments may be added as the need arises with the approval of the selection committee. Three or more measures are used to determine the recommendation for gifted/talented services.

Assessment tools may include, but not be limited to the following:

- Achievement tests
- Ability tests
- Non-verbal reasoning tests
- Behavioral checklists completed by teachers and parents
- Parent conferences/interviews
- Student conferences/interviews
- Creativity measures
- Student products/portfolios

**IDENTIFICATION PROCESS**

Final determination of the need for G/T services is made by the selection committee at the campus level. The selection committee may include administrators, counselors, G/T facilitators, and/or regular classroom teachers. The campus committee consists of at least three professionals who have completed the required, initial basic 30-hour G/T training and yearly, approved 6-hr G/T update or administrator training. These members must be knowledgeable of the needs and potential of gifted and talented students and familiar with the state guidelines for G/T programs.

La Vernia I.S.D. uses a holistic method of assessing students for placement in the G/T program. The selection committee does not focus on any single measure such as IQ score, achievement test scores, parent inventory/interview, teacher inventory, or other criteria. The appropriate educational placement of the individual student is the overriding goal in the decision-making process. Students are not denied placement because of poor classroom behavior or poor grades, as these do not always indicate accurate reflections of intellectual ability; likewise, good behavior and good grades do not necessarily indicate the need for gifted services as well.

Identification for the program is determined by a balanced examination and review of information gathered during the assessment process. Students whose data reflects that gifted/talented services would be an effective way to meet their identified educational needs are recommended by the campus selection committee for gifted/talented services.

Depending on individual needs, a student may simultaneously receive services in more than one special program. For example, a student may be served in both the special education and G/T programs. Students not placed in the G/T program may be re-evaluated the following year. A student’s file may be updated each year; however, some indicators may only be administered every two years. This allows for further observation and increased student maturity and insight.

The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be notified of the selection committee’s decision in writing. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must provide La Vernia I.S.D. permission in writing for the student to receive G/T services.

In addition to the placement of students to receive G/T services, the selection committee is charged with the review and monitoring of the progress of gifted and talented students. These actions allow the committee to review and recommend action in regards to possible errors in identification, transfer of students identified as G/T from other districts, and furlough or exiting of students from the program.

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Once a student is identified, GT services will continue until graduation or the student furloughs or exits from the program. Students may be considered for the LVISD Gifted & Talented program only once within a 12-month period.

GIFTED & TALENTED POLICIES

APPEALS

Parents, legal guardians or students may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding selection for or removal from Gifted & Talented services. Appeals shall be made first to the selection committee. If the decision is made to appeal the campus G/T Committee’s decision, please follow these steps:

1. Contact the G/T Counselor on your child’s campus to discuss the assessments that were administered and reviewed by the committee.
2. The formal appeal must be made in writing or emailed to the G/T counselor
   • The written statement requesting an appeal must be received within 30 days of the date appearing on the Letter of Non-Qualification.
   • All documentation in support of the appeal must be received within 30 days of the date appearing on the Letter of Non-Qualification
   • Supporting documentation should be – but is not limited to – standardized test scores provided by an outside source or a portfolio of your student’s work, along with an explanation of how that work reflects gifted/talented traits.
   • Please include your daytime phone number, your email or mailing address, campus and child’s grade level with your appeal.
3. After reviewing the evidence in support of an appeal, the G/T selection committee will determine whether additional assessment is warranted or whether the initial decision will stand

Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with FNG(LOCAL) beginning on Level Two. At no time will any single individual make a decision to override the committee decision regarding placement for G/T services.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students transferring from a G/T program in another district or another state must provide documentation of G/T qualification and participation. Parents are responsible for providing the G/T Counselor with documentation of prior G/T program placement.

When a student identified as gifted by a previous school district enrolls in LVISD, the student shall be placed in the district’s program for gifted and talented students for the remainder of the current school year. The student’s records from the prior district will be reviewed by the campus selection committee within six weeks of enrollment to determine if the prior district’s standards of assessment and identification criteria is comparable to LVISD’s standards of assessment and identification criteria or if further assessment is needed during the next annual screening period. The committee will also determine if continued placement in the G/T program is appropriate based on performance in response to gifted/talented services.
FURLOUGH PROCEDURE

A furlough is a period of time in which a student may take a leave of absence from G/T program services. A student may be considered for furlough if it is in his/her best interest and/or if program services do not seem to be the most appropriate educational placement for the student at the time. A student may be granted a furlough from the G/T program due to a variety of circumstances. A furlough may be initiated by the district, the parent, or the student. At the end of a furlough, the student may re-enter the gifted program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.

Furloughs from G/T services are intended to help students who need a temporary break from the G/T program, not to remove non-performing students. The G/T committee may grant a furlough when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the student. If a student is granted a furlough, the date of re-entry must be stated. The furlough may not exceed one school year.

A furlough should NOT be used as a disciplinary tool and should be granted without adding undue pressure on the student.

EXIT PROCEDURES/ REFUSAL OF SERVICE

An exit is complete removal from program services in the district. A student may be considered for exit if it is in his/her best interest and/or if program services do not seem to be the most appropriate educational placement for the student at that time.

Student performance in the G/T program will be monitored each semester. An identified G/T student, parent/guardian, or an educator may request an exit. If an educator initiates the petition, that educator shall provide documentation from multiple sources to support his/her request for exit from services. If a student or parent requests removal from the program, the selection committee shall request a meeting with the parent and student before exiting the student from the program. Reason’s for exit may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increased demand on time caused by scheduling and/or outside interests
- The student has demonstrated over a substantial length of time (at least one semester) that they are not benefiting from the program
- Emotional issues stemming from self, school, or home
- Inability to participate because of scheduling conflicts

EXIT should NOT be used as a disciplinary tool and should be granted without adding undue pressure on the student.

CAMPUS TRANSITION

Fifth grade G/T identified students will be reassessed as they transition to 6th grade by reviewing current student performance data and performance in services to determine appropriate program placement based on area of giftedness. The G/T committee will determine if further data and/or assessment is needed to determine areas of giftedness to make appropriate program placement decisions moving forward with the transition from 5th to 6th grade.
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

A minimum of thirty (30) clock hours of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students, identification and assessment of gifted/talented students' needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted/talented students is required for teachers who provide instruction and services that are a part of the district’s defined gifted/talented services.

These teachers must also receive a minimum of six (6) hours update annually of professional learning in gifted/talented education.

Administrators and counselors are also required to have at least six (6) clock hours of administrative training in nature and needs; identification and assessment; curriculum and instruction; and program options for gifted and talented students.

PROGRAM DESIGN

The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students School requires that a “flexible system of viable service options provides a research-based learning continuum that is developed and consistently implemented throughout the district to meet the needs and reinforce the strengths and interests of gifted/talented students.” School districts must provide an array of learning opportunities that are proportionate with the abilities of gifted/talented students and that put emphasis on content in the four foundational curricular areas.

La Vernia Primary
At La Vernia Primary School, identified gifted students are served in the regular, general education classroom and clustered together in one or two classes. When clustered in two classes, the students are grouped with teachers on the same POD (same planning and daily schedule). Students are served daily during a thirty-minute time in the morning and in the afternoon called WIN (What I Need). This serves as a time for students to receive enrichment during a reading and math block. Students in the dual language program receive instruction during this time in English according to the guidelines in the dual language manual.

La Vernia Intermediate
La Vernia Intermediate School G/T identified students are served in the regular, heterogeneously grouped core curriculum class for most of the school day. G/T students are grouped together for additional instructional periods as appropriate during a daily intervention/enrichment period. Gifted and Talented services provide opportunities for the G/T students to work together as an entire group, to work with other students in a cooperative learning setting, and to work individually. Both cognitive and affective needs of these students are accommodated through the program.

La Vernia Junior High School
G/T identified students are provided services through Pre-AP classes in their area(s) of giftedness. The current curriculum in the Pre-AP classes is by nature accelerated and enriched to include self-directed learning, critical thinking, problem solving, researched and communication skills. G/T students are clustered in Pre-AP classes with a G/T certified teacher who understands the nature and needs of this special population. These teachers provide differentiation in the classroom, so students can reach their fullest academic potential
La Vernia High School
G/T identified students at La Vernia High School are provided services through Pre-Advanced Placement, Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, Dual Enrollment, Independent Study, online classes for college credit, and other advanced courses that are appropriate for and consistent with the areas of giftedness served.

The curriculum for the advanced courses mentioned above is differentiated from that of the regular curriculum to best meet the needs of the identified gifted students. It is accelerated in both pace of the instruction and depth of the specific content learned. These learning alternatives are designed to promote both cognitive and affective growth.

For further information, contact the campus G/T counselor or Jackie Simmonds, Coordinator of College, Career & Military Readiness (including Advanced Academics) jackie.simmonds@lvisd.org 830-779-6600