

**Yoakum Independent School District**

**GIFTED/TALENTED  
PROGRAM  
HANDBOOK**

## **PREFACE**

This handbook presents the official policies, processes, and procedures for organizing, operating, and evaluating the Yoakum Independent School District's program for gifted and talented students. This program is to be known as the Yoakum Gifted/Talented Program.

This handbook is intended to be used as a working guide for the Yoakum Gifted/Talented Program. Any element is subject to change upon changes in State/Federal guidelines, or recommendations by the G/T Advisory Committee with approval of the superintendent and school board.

The 1990-1991 school year marks the beginning of new criteria for entry into the G/T Program for students in grades K-3.

The criteria stated before 1990-91 will remain unchanged for those students already in the operational ALAMO Program. This is for students in grades 4-12 before 1990-91.

The G/T Program's overarching theme is "Service". As teachers of G/T students, it is our desire to teach the student to prepare himself/herself to be of service to others in whatever endeavor he/she chooses.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Yoakum Independent School District acknowledges that academically talented students require stimulation that is unique from that received by their age peers. It is also the district's contention that these students not be isolated from their peers. The program is designed to provide appropriate learning experiences for these students while requiring them to function with their age peers during a majority of the school day.

Academically talented students are potentially able adults and possess the ability to be leaders in our society. If not challenged; however, their ability can become stagnant and their creative thinking regimented. The enrichment program for the gifted/talented students will exercise and develop this natural resource.

In keeping with this commitment, it is the district's responsibility and endeavor to offer an appropriate differentiated curriculum which will challenge students in the gifted/talented program. In order to meet the needs of these students, the Yoakum ISD has developed such a program.

# YOAKUM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **GIFTED/ TALENTED PROGRAM**

### DEFINITION OF GIFTED/TALENTED CHILDREN

#### **STATE**

“Gifted/talented students are those who excel consistently or who show the potential to excel in any one or combination of the following areas: general intellectual ability, specific subject matter aptitude, creative and productive thinking ability, leadership ability, ability in the visual and performing arts, and psychomotor ability. These students require educational experiences beyond those normally provided by the regular school program.”

#### **LOCAL**

“Academically gifted children are defined as children who excel markedly, or have the potential to excel markedly, in ability to think, reason, judge, invent, and/or create. These students need special facilities and/or educational services in order to assist them in achieving more clearly their potential for themselves, and for the increased contributions they may make to the community, state, and nation. The Yoakum ISD recognizes that students identified as gifted/talented come from all races, socio-economic groups, geographical locals, and environments.”

# YOAKUM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## GIFTED/TALENTED PROGRAM

### THE NEEDS OF GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS

The gifted and talented have the same basic needs as other students: love, understanding, encouragement to grow, companionship, guidance, respect, support, acceptance, security.

However, they also have special needs, which correspond to their special natures as noted below:

- I. A flexible program, which involves the higher cognitive concepts and processes as defined by Bloom:
  - A. Knowledge
  - B. Comprehension
  - C. Application
  - D. Analysis
  - E. Synthesis
  - F. Evaluation
- II. Freedom from the restrictions of structure requirements and limited time frames
- III. Time and freedom to experiment, explore subjects of interest
- IV. Open access to needed learning resources whatever and wherever they may be. (Grade level is irrelevant for the gifted and talented who can cope with material from two to four or more levels higher than grade placement)
- V. Confrontation with problems and issues of society for which there is not signal predetermined solution

- VI. Opportunity to brainstorm, thus producing creative ideas
- VII. Encouragement to ask questions, make discoveries, pursue own interest in depth
- VIII. Opportunities to work with other gifted and talented students at least part of the time
- IX. Wide variety of in-depth cultural experiences beyond the usual field trips to zoos, museums, industries
- X. Opportunities to help others (as volunteer readers to the blind, companions to the elderly, volunteer tutors to students in lower grades), and service projects
- XI. Friendly recognition and acceptance of their giftedness
- XII. Introduction to their own abilities; (many gifted and talented people never knew they were unusual in any way until someone helped them discover their abilities)
- XIII. Active concern for the gifted and talented among administrators, counselors, and teachers
- XIV. Varying learning styles of different gifted and talented students
  - A. Linguistic
  - B. Logical-mathematical
  - C. Spatial, visual, auditory
  - D. Musical
  - E. Kinesthetic-tactile
  - F. Interpersonal
  - G. Intrapersonal

- XV. Consequences of failure to meet the needs of gifted and talented students
- A. Poor study habits (because of lack of competition)
  - B. Behavior problems
  - C. Apathy and withdrawal or self imposed isolation
  - D. Emotional / psychological problems caused by neglect or ridicule of abilities (loneliness, feelings of inferiority, rejection, withdrawal)
  - E. Underachievement
  - F. Nervous breakdowns / suicide, preoccupation with death, depression
  - G. Increased drop-out rate
  - H. Involvement with drugs, alcohol and promiscuous sex, eating disorders
  - I. Involvement in criminal activities (often behind the scenes as the mastermind), unusual fascination with violence
  - J. Dependence on welfare in retaliation against a society that does not seem to value high potential and / or creativity

# YOAKUM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **GIFTED / TALENTED PROGRAM**

### PROGRAM GOALS

Program goals are consistent for the unique needs of the gifted and talented student. Yoakum I.S.D. has adopted these goals:

- Gifted / Talented students will study and prepare themselves to be of service to themselves, their families, the community, and the world.
- Gifted / Talented students will be provided extended and enriched curriculum in a General Intellectual Abilities (GIA) program and a Specific Subject Matter Aptitude program.
- Gifted / Talented students will develop higher cognitive abilities, such as problem-solving, creative thinking, conceptualization, logical thinking, inquiry, critical thinking, and decision-making skills through the use of content that focuses on these abilities.
- Gifted / Talented students will be given the opportunity through use of discussions and materials to learn how to live, work, and relate to their peers and adults outside school as well as in the school environment.
- Gifted / Talented students will be encouraged to develop personal goals and fulfillment through activities designed to develop a good self-concept. The focus of this goal is to provide the students opportunities to discover themselves, their capabilities, and their characteristics. This self discovery can in turn, provide a solid foundation of self-esteem so that the student will be capable of dealing with frustration as well as success. Emphasis will be placed on encouraging leadership abilities.

# YOAKUM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **GIFTED / TALENTED PROGRAM**

### ENTRY, EXIT, AND TRANSFER POLICIES

#### I. ENTRY POLICY

##### A. Nomination

Nominations are made by any of the following persons who are familiar with student's abilities, potential performance, and past records:

- Teachers who have had the students in class
- Parents who nominate their own or another child
- Counselors who know the student
- Administrators who know the student
- Professionals who have relevant data to contribute on a particular student
- Other- any community member

Ideally, all kindergarten students are nominees for the gifted program. The G/T coordinator, kindergarten grade level contact teacher, and principal will assess the students' progress and products, and make recommendations based on an understanding of what might be the expected student performance at a given age and stage of development. Yoakum ISD will provide services by March 1<sup>st</sup> of kindergarten for those students who clearly qualify for program placement.

## B. TALENT POOL

All kindergarten students will be assessed in the fall using the NNAT (Nagliari Nonverbal Ability Test). The kindergarten students who scored in the top 15% will be assessed using the KOI (Kingore Observation Inventory) and the Slocumb-Payne Teacher Perception Inventory. The kindergarten students scoring in the top 10% will qualify for the K-Pups Program. The K-Pups Program is a talent pool and is a separate program from the gifted and talented program. By meeting the criteria for placement in the K-Pups Program Kindergarten children have shown the *potential* to be later identified as gifted and talented. Selection for the Kindergarten K-Pups Program does not guarantee the child will be placed in the Yoakum ISD Gifted and Talented Program.

Nominations will be accepted at any time during the school year for the K-1-2 Pups Talent Pool Program. If a student has been tested for the talent pool program, one school year must elapse before the student may be re-nominated.

At the first grade level the following instruments will be administered: NNAT (Nagliari Nonverbal Ability Test), Slocumb-Payne Teacher Perception Inventory, and the KOI (Kingore Observation Inventory)

Each instrument will be assigned a holistic score as follows:

### a. NNAT

- 95<sup>th</sup> percentile and above 4
- 93<sup>rd</sup> percentile and above 3
- 80<sup>th</sup> percentile and above 2
- Below the 92<sup>nd</sup> percentile 1

### b. Slocumb-Payne Teacher Perception Inventory

- Each student will be assigned a rank based on Grand Total. Ties will not be broken. For example, if there

are two students tied for second place, there will be no third place. Both students will be ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>.

1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	4
5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	3
9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	2
All remaining	1

c. Kingore Observation Inventory

- Each student will be assigned a rank based on Total Tallies. Ties will not be broken. For example, if there are two students tied for second place, there will be no third place. Both students will be ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>.

1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	4
5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	3
9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	2
All remaining	1

d. A final score will be calculated by weighting the holistic scores as follows:

- NNAT 60%
- Slocumb-Payne 20%
- KOI 20%

e. All students who are at the 93<sup>rd</sup> percentile or higher on the NNAT and have a final score of 28 or higher will be selected for the talent pool.

These students have shown the **potential** to be later identified as gifted and talented. These students will receive services in a pull out program where they will be observed and monitored for **potential** gifted and talented identification in the future.

Students in grades 2 through 5 may be nominated at any time for the Yoakum ISD Gifted and Talented Program. Students in second grade will be assessed at the end of the second grade and will be assessed using the Yoakum ISD Gifted and Talented Criteria and should they qualify for the program, will be serviced in a pull out program.

The identification process is ongoing and additional students are added later in kindergarten or any grade level where the student's potential indicates that the program for the gifted the appropriate move.

A kindergarten repeater is a student who is going through Kindergarten for a second time. His/her entrance into the talent pool will be judged on an individual basis, according to the District criteria for entrance into the talent pool.

### C. Screening for the Gifted and Talented Program

Screening is conducted by the Campus Screening, Selection, and Exit Committee composed of a campus principal, counselor, and G/T coordinator. The G/T grade level contact teacher, if deemed necessary, will also help conduct the screening.

Identification is based upon data from a minimum of five sources that include both subjective and objective measures. These may include, but are not limited to, the following criteria:

- a. Standardized achievement tests
- b. Mental abilities test
- c. Parent questionnaire
- d. Teacher evaluation
- e. Creativity test
- f. Pupil product
- g. Student interview
- h. Other pertinent evidence

Written permission of parents will be secured for special testing if needed for screening or selection. At the Intermediate level and above, students must be passing all portions of the TAKS to be considered for screening for the Yoakum ISD G/T Program.

Identification will involve data from the core areas of Language Arts and Mathematics. Students may be identified as gifted in one or in both areas. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) will be sources used to identify students.

Nominations will be accepted at any time.

#### D. Selection

Following completion of the nomination and screening procedures, selection of students will be made by the Campus Screening, Selection, and Exit Committee. This committee will organize the data and use a standard scores approach. Scores on the ITBS and CogAT must fall into the High or Superior Range and the Average of the scores must fall into the Superior Range. One score from either the creativity test, parent questionnaire or teacher evaluation must also fall into the Superior Range to qualify for the program. State guidelines require 3%-5% of the students of each grade level be selected for the G/T Program. If there are fewer than ten students to be considered, the Campus Screening, Selection and Exit Committee will review the scores electronically. If there are more than ten students to consider, the Campus Screening, Selection, and Exit Committee will review the scores in person.

Participation in any program or service offered for gifted/talented students is voluntary on the part of the students and requires written permission from parents or legal guardians.

#### E. Appeals

When questions arise as to the Screening, Selection, and Exit Committee's decision and / or if more information is requested by the parents, the following procedure is recommended:

- STEP 1 Arrange a conference with the school principal
- STEP 2 Contact the superintendent of the school district
- STEP 3 Appeal to the school board

## II. EXIT POLICY

Requiring a student to exit from the G/T program is a serious consideration. Care and sensitivity needs to be the two overarching attitudes that guide educators and parents when considering the exiting of a student from the G/T program.

To exit a student because his / her grades drop, or because the student is the recipient of disciplinary action, is not appropriate.

The Campus Screening, Selection, and Exit Committee will make final decisions regarding exiting of students from the program for educational, psychological and personal reasons after consultation with both students and parents. Such decisions are based on any or all of the following data:

- teacher recommendations based on observation of student behavior, performance, and products
- counselor recommendations based on interviews/observations
- parental requests for withdrawal from the program or services
- student requests for withdrawal from the program or services with parental permission

The parent(s) will be given the opportunity to meet with the selection committee or a representative of the committee before the student is exited.

Prior to formal exit from the program, these steps will be followed:

- Review of student progress in classroom and pullout programs**
- Documentation of progress**
- Conference(s) with student, parent, professional**
- Completion of Request for Exit Form**
- Meeting of SSE Committee**
- Notification of parent(s) & student by Notification of Exit Form**

A student who is exited from the program may be re-nominated the following school year.

### III. TRANSFER POLICY

A student who has been verified by phone and / or mail an identified G/T student in another school district in the state of Texas will qualify for entrance into the Yoakum G/T program provided that the screening criteria used to screen the student is similar to criteria adapted by Yoakum ISD.

If the Yoakum SSE Committee and / or a parent thinks that the student may have difficulty experiencing success in the district's program, a request may be made that the student not be included in the program or that the student is screened using the criteria adopted by the Yoakum ISD.

If the parents do not think that their child will have difficulty making the transition into the Yoakum ISD G/T Program, the student will participate in the program on a probationary status of six weeks. If a problem occurs within this six weeks period, the campus SSE committee will hold a conference to discuss the student's progress. If no transitional problems occur within the six weeks period, the student shall be designated as a gifted student in the Yoakum ISD.

A student leaving the Yoakum ISD G/T Program will be given a full report to be taken to their new school.

# YOAKUM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **GIFTED / TALENTED PROGRAM**

### RE-NOMINATION

Nominations will be accepted at any time during the school year for the Yoakum I.S.D. G/T Program.

If a student has been nominated for G/T heretofore, one school year must elapse before the student may be renominated.

A student being tested for the second time will most probably be given a different set of tests from the set given to him / her the first time he / she were tested.

# YOAKUM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **GIFTED / TALENTED PROGRAM**

### EVALUATION

#### PROGRAM EVALUATION

The evaluation of the gifted / talented program is both ongoing and comprehensive. The evaluation process provides a continuous flow of information on selected facets of the program and measures their effectiveness in relation to student growth. Some methods used to evaluate the gifted / talented program may include questionnaires, interviews, self-evaluation, and observation.

#### STUDENT EVALUATION

Questionnaires, self-appraisals, teacher observations, attitude checklists, and student products are some of the means by which students are evaluated in the gifted / talented program.

# YOAKUM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **GIFTED / TALENTED PROGRAM**

### PROTOTYPE

The prototype determines the setting and organization in which learning will take place and is itself determined by the nature and needs of students selected for the program and by the resources and limitations of each campus.

Research has shown that gifted and talented students need to be part of a learning environment that allows for independent study, group work with peers of like ability, and group work with peers who represent heterogeneous populations. Therefore, the prototype selected for the Yoakum I.S.D. Gifted / Talented Program is one of a special design in which students are grouped together for a designed period of time each week.

### GRADES K-5

The Yoakum G/T Program in grades K-5 is conducted by the G/T Resource teacher in a pull-out situation and classroom instruction is in all subject areas. These grades will be involved in a General Intellectual Abilities (GIA) Program. The GIA program allows for the G/T students to be served in many areas of subject matter. Students will be involved in utilizing depth and complexity with all lessons. Project based learning that is student oriented will be the drive in lesson structure. These grades will receive at least 150 minutes per week from pull-out and from within the regular classroom activities. Grades K-2 are involved in extended activities such as Writing to Read Program, field trips, plays, guest speakers, library and technological research, project based lessons utilizing technology, and various hands-on projects deemed necessary by the teacher in conjunction

with the G/T Resource teacher. Grades 3-5 have activities extended by use of the Content Mastery Superlab, play productions, producing newspapers, writing school related articles for the local newspapers, writing books, library and technological research, invention conventions, field trips, cooperative learning, whole language, project based lessons utilizing technology, and various hands-on projects deemed necessary by the teacher in conjunction with the G/T Resource teacher. Sometimes these activities are conducted by the classroom teacher and sometimes by the G/T Resource teacher.

### **GRADE 6**

Grade 6 is homogeneously grouped one period a day for G/T instruction in Language Arts and Mathematics. This group receives at least 225 minutes of instruction per week.

### **GRADE 7-8**

Grades 7-8 are homogeneously grouped in a Specific Subject Matter Abilities (SSMA) for two periods a day for 225 minutes per week per subject. The subjects for these students are Language Arts and Math. Eighth graders will be able to take Algebra I as it continues to be offered at the ninth grade level.

### **GRADES 9-12**

The subjects of Specific Subject Matter Abilities (SSMA) offered in grades 9-12 are Language Arts, Math, and Science. Identified G/T students in honors classes will be provided a differentiated curriculum and will do extended and enriched activities and products. These classes meet for at least 250 minutes per subject per week.

In all grades K-12, an interdisciplinary approach is utilized in the G/T program and students are encouraged to use critical and creative thinking skills, independent and group problem solving techniques, research and technology techniques in production of differentiated student procedures.

# YOAKUM INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

## **GIFTED / TALENTED PROGRAM**

### THE ARTISTIC, MUSICAL, AND ATHLETIC CHILD

Many children are given special talents other than academic abilities. It is our desire to locate these students and assist them, their parents, and their classroom teachers in furthering their special gift. Every effort will be made to help these students reach their full potential; however, we have no official pull out program for them at this point.

# **APPENDICES**

## **LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISADVANTAGED / CULTURALLY DIFFERENT GIFTED**

### LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS / NOTICEABLE TRAITS OF GIFTED CHILDREN FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

1. Weakness in knowledge and vocabulary – from lack of exposure to reading materials and information
2. Strengths in observational skills and in memory or recall – intellectual abilities that are independent of specific knowledge
3. Weakness in task completion and internal motivation often are found
4. Dependent on external motivators and tend to attribute their success to factors such as luck rather than to ability

### CREATIVE AND LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS:

Life experience of children from low income families may be more supportive of creativity (Torrance 1968, 1971, 1977) than those children from advantaged homes.

1. Must improve with common materials to develop toys and must be Creative just to get by
2. Show creative strengths in curiosity: generating new, unique, and clever ideas or solutions to problems; taking risks; and showing a sense of humor
3. Strengths usually concentrated in areas other than verbal, showing up in their drawings and actions
4. Often perceived as leaders among their low socioeconomic status peers
5. Show responsibility and adaptability and are well coordinated
6. Often do not show this self confidence with children from more advantaged backgrounds or with adults

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GIFTED SPANISH SPEAKING PUPIL:

(Bernal 1978)

1. Rapidly acquires English language skills once exposed to the language and given the opportunity to use it expressively
2. Exhibits leadership ability, be it open or unobtrusive, with heavy emphasis on interpersonal skills
3. Has older playmates and easily engages adults in lively conversations
4. Enjoys intelligent or effective risk taking behavior, often accompanied by a sense of drama
5. Is able to keep busy and entertained, especially by imaginative games and ingenious applications, such as getting the most out of a few simple toys and objects

6. Accepts responsibilities at home normally reserved for older children, such as supervision of younger siblings or helping others with homework
7. Is “streetwise” and is recognized by others as a youngster who has the ability to “make it” in the Anglo dominated society.

#### SIGNS OF CREATIVITY AMONG THE CULTURALLY DIFFERENT

E. Paul Torrance

- Ability to express feelings
- Ability to improve with commonplace materials
- Articulatness in role playing, creative dramatics
- Enjoyment and ability in visual arts
- Enjoyment and ability in creative movement and dramatics
- Enjoyment and ability in music
- Expressiveness in speech
- Fluency and flexibility in nonverbal media
- Enjoyment and skills in group activities, problem solving
- Responsiveness to the concrete
- Responsiveness to the kinesthetic
- Expressiveness of gesture and body language
- Humor
- Richness of imagery in informal language
- Originality of ideas in problem solving
- Problem – centeredness
- Emotional responsiveness
- Quickness of warm up to

Gifted and Talented Program  
P.O. Box 737  
Yoakum, Texas 77995

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Your child, \_\_\_\_\_, was tested recently because he/she was nominated for the Yoakum ISD Gifted/Talented Program.

Your child has qualified for participation in the program. If you choose to permit your child to enter the program, please indicate by signing the form below and return it to me or to your child's classroom teacher by \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

G/T Teacher/Coordinator  
293-3001 M,W,F  
293-2011 T,Th

-----  
My child, \_\_\_\_\_, has my permission to participate in the Yoakum ISD Gifted and Talented Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

I have viewed the Yoakum Independent School District's Gifted and Talented Handbook available online at <http://www.yoakumisd.net> , or a copy has been given to me by the school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Yoakum Independent School District

K-1- 2 Pups Program  
Permission to Participate

As the parent or guardian of \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my permission

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not give my permission

for him/her to participate in the district's K-1- 2 Pups Program.

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

I have viewed the Yoakum Independent School District's Gifted and Talented Handbook available online at <http://www.yoakumisd.net> or a paper copy has been given to me by the school.

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

# THOUGHTS

*For every gifted child who is not allowed to reach his or her potential, there is a lost opportunity.*

*That child might have eventually composed a concerto, found the cure for a terminal disease, or developed a formula for world peace.*

*Wasting the potential of a gifted mind is reckless for a society in desperate need of creativity and inventiveness.*