



## Program Handbook 2006-2007

Denton Independent School District  
1307 North Locust  
Denton, Texas 76201  
Gifted and Talented Program  
(940) 369-0145  
[www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org)  
(click on Academics, then Gifted and Talented)

DISD Board Approved  
July 22, 2006

The Denton Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies.

Title IX & Section 504 Coordinator:

Dr. Roger Rutherford, Assistant Superintendent  
1307 N. Locust Street  
Denton, TX 76201  
940-369-0132

Title II & Title IX Coordinator:

Mr. Dennis Stephens, Executive Director of Human Resources  
1307 N. Locust Street  
Denton, TX 76201  
940-369-0040

## **DENTON ISD MISSION STATEMENT**

. . . in pursuit of excellence . . . The mission of the Denton Public Schools, in partnership with the home and community, is to provide the best educational opportunities in a challenging yet supportive environment where individuals and cultural diversity are respected so that our students become knowledgeable and responsible citizens who are capable of life-long learning and who have developed the necessary skills to contribute productively to a complex and ever-changing world.

### **Philosophy**

The Denton Independent School District is dedicated to developing the unique personal, social, and intellectual abilities of its gifted and talented students. A commitment has been made to provide appropriate and stimulating materials, activities, and instruction for these students of varying abilities, interests, needs, and environmental backgrounds so they may experience success in the development of their potential.

### **Position Statement**

In all realms of humanity, excellence is recognized, applauded, and rewarded. Professions, industries, and arts have acknowledged eminence in their respective fields through multiple and varied channels. Education makes a significant contribution by recognizing the potential for excellence among students, by nurturing its expansion and growth, and by removing impediments to the development of all students to the maximum potential.

Educators in the Denton School District are aware that there are students in the district that have the potential for excellence and that more could be done to foster its development. The Texas State Legislature, the Texas State Board of Education, and the Texas Education Agency have emphasized the need for providing appropriate instructional programs for these students.

### **Goals and Objectives**

There are certain lifelong learning skills that should be a part of every gifted student's school program. Gifted students should develop advanced research and study skills. They should be able to think critically and creatively about problems that are presented to them. They should possess the poise and understanding of group dynamics that will make them effective leaders in the future, and they should recognize the similarities and differences between themselves and others.

This does not mean that research and personal study skills, critical and creative thinking ability, and leadership skills are the exclusive domain of gifted students. Gifted students, however, tend to master the essential knowledge and skills more quickly than most students. Because of this, they should be permitted to extend their education as far and as completely as possible in areas of importance to their development.

Denton ISD has adopted the following goals for its EXPO Program: The EXPO Program will provide space, time, encouragement, and opportunities for gifted students to explore areas of their own interest and ability. Specifically, these students will:

1. utilize higher, more complex-level thinking skills to develop intellectual curiosity in critical, creative, and productive thinking.
2. develop the research skills and personal study skills necessary for self-directed learning. They will conduct independent studies and research projects that extend the regular curriculum and result in the synthesis of elaborate products.
3. understand and apply the problem-solving process in a cooperative group setting through analysis and evaluation of real life situations.
4. use listening, speaking, and written communication skills in order to integrate and extend skills in their regular classrooms.
5. gain an understanding and respect of individual abilities, recognizing the likenesses and differences between themselves and others, while developing their own unique abilities.

### **Definition of Gifted and Talented Students**

"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. (Education Code 29.121) Gifted students require educational experiences beyond those normally provided by the regular school program. Students shall be identified through the use of multiple criteria as specified by the Denton Independent School District. The district recognizes that students identified as gifted and talented can come from all races, socioeconomic groups, geographical locales, and environments.

### **EXPO Program Design**

The EXPO Program at Denton Independent School District offers instruction and opportunities for students identified by their general intellectual ability. EXPO students at every level have the opportunity to work together as a group, with other students, and to work independently. Services are available during the school day and throughout the school year. Out of school options are also available to EXPO students. Some of these extracurricular activities are: Duke Talent Search, University Interscholastic League Academic Contests, Junior National Honor Society, National Honor Society, Destination Imagination, and various specialized organizations.

All EXPO Specialists are trained to provide instruction that will lead to completion of projects that require complex thinking, problem solving, and advanced learning. The use of a variety of organizational patterns will effectively lead to maximizing the potential of gifted and talented students.

### **Elementary Grades**

Identified students in grades kindergarten – five will be served through a pull-out class by a trained gifted specialist at their campus. Kindergarten EXPO students will be served for a minimum of 45 minutes per week and EXPO students in grades one – five will be served for a minimum of 2 ½ hours per week. The Denton ISD Gifted and Talented Curriculum Scope and Sequence will be followed as will the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Students may receive gifted services in either a grade

specific class or in a multi-age class, whichever will allow for the most appropriate instruction and schedule.

When assigning students to homeroom classes, it is recommended that gifted students be clustered in groups of 3 – 5 to allow for these students to serve as a resource to each other. Students who have been placed in the EXPO program are expected to attend EXPO classes. Attendance in EXPO is not optional. If attendance becomes a concern, the student, EXPO teacher, classroom teacher, and parent should investigate the possibility of a furlough. If a classroom assignment is missed in the regular class while the student is attending EXPO, that student should not be expected to make it up or do it as homework. For more specific guidelines, please see the Elementary Classroom Teacher's Guide to EXPO. The student's grades should be averaged without penalty for missing assignments while in EXPO. EXPO students will receive an EXPO progress report every 6 weeks. The EXPO Specialist will be available to assist any classroom teacher with enrichment activities.

### **Sixth – Eighth Grades**

Identified sixth, seventh, and eighth grade EXPO students will meet in a daily EXPO class. The Denton ISD Gifted and Talented Curriculum Scope and Sequence will be followed as will the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. Additionally, the EXPO Specialists will focus on creative and critical thinking skills as well as research assignments leading to advanced products. Enhanced classes in the four core academic areas are also available to these students. The EXPO Specialist will be available to assist any classroom teacher with enrichment activities.

### **Ninth – Twelfth Grades**

The high school EXPO students will have the opportunity to enroll in Pre-AP or Advanced Placement courses taught by qualified teachers. These teachers will complete the state required training and/or The College Board Advanced Placement training as well as training in the nature and needs and identification and assessment of gifted students. In order to remain active in EXPO, High School students should enroll in at least one Pre-Advanced Placement or Advanced Placement course each year. The high school guidance office is available to assist gifted students with preparation for the Distinguished Achievement Program, Dual Credit enrollment, college and scholarship applications, and any special situation that may arise.

### **EXPO Committees**

A Campus Screening Committee, comprised of a campus administrator, counselor, classroom teacher, and EXPO specialist, will meet to look at the results of testing each six weeks. They will make recommendation, including advocacy concerns, to the District EXPO Selection Committee. All members will have training in the Nature and Needs of Gifted Children.

There will be a District EXPO Selection Committee to review all referrals and transfers tested for placement into the program. The committee will convene each six weeks after receiving recommendations from the Campus EXPO Screening Committee. All members will have training in the Nature and Needs of Gifted Children.

The EXPO Advisory Committee will meet as needed to provide support and assistance to the EXPO Program regarding program planning and improvement. Membership shall include, but not be limited to, the EXPO Coordinator, EXPO Specialists, parents of EXPO students, administrators, classroom teachers, counselors, and community members.

## **Referrals**

Identification of students is conducted, not to label students as gifted, but rather to locate students who have specific needs which can be more effectively met through differentiated instruction in the EXPO program. Students may test only once in a twelve-month period.

The identification and selection of students for participation in the program is determined by a three-step process: (1) nomination, (2) assessment, and (3) selection. The final placement decision is made by the District GT Selection Committee.

At the elementary level, nominations are an on-going process. The campus EXPO Specialist will accept nominations at anytime. In grades one through five, testing will be done throughout the year as time permits. Students identified as gifted from a school in which they are transferring will test during the first six-week period. Students in grades one through five will test during the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> six-week periods. EXPO specialists will test 12 students per six-weeks. If there are more than 12 nominations, they will be tested the following six-weeks on a first come, first served basis. Nominated kindergarten students will test during the 4<sup>th</sup> six-week period.

Testing will be available twice each year for middle and high school students, once in the fall and once in the spring. Testing for secondary students will be offered on designated Saturdays. Please refer to the webpage for exact dates and deadlines.

Nominations may come from faculty/staff, parents, community members, or at the secondary level, by self-nomination. Please refer to the EXPO website for referring and testing windows. Go to [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org), click on Academics, and then scroll down to Gifted and Talented.

Persons nominating students must complete a general Nomination Form and submit it to the school office. This will begin the process of data collection from various sources regarding the child's ability and potential. After the nomination is received at the campus, a packet of information will be sent to the parent. Concerns or inquiries regarding EXPO should be addressed to the campus EXPO Specialists in grades kindergarten - eight and with the designated GT Contact Person on the high school campuses.

All kindergarten students are considered for assessment by the EXPO program and will be involved in assessment activities conducted by the EXPO Specialist, assisted by the regular classroom teacher. At the end of the general assessment period a pool of kindergarten students will be selected for further assessment based on teacher observation or nomination.

## **Screening**

The following qualitative and quantitative instruments may be used in the screening process for nominated students in kindergarten:

- Teacher Checklist
- Parent Checklist
- Portfolio
- Abilities Test

The following qualitative instruments may be used in the screening process for nominated students in grades one through twelve:

- Teacher Checklist
- Parent Checklist (used as an elementary assessment)
- Divergent Feeling Student Survey (used as a secondary assessment)

The following quantitative instruments may be used in the screening process for nominated students in grades one through twelve:

- Achievement Test
- Creativity Test
- Abilities Test

All students are assessed in languages they understand or with non-verbal based tests. All populations of the district have access to assessment, and if identified, services offered as part of the program for gifted students.

### **Selection**

After the above instruments have been administered and scored, each student’s scores will be recorded on an EXPO Program Student Identification Profile.

The criteria for placement for students in kindergarten are an ability score and at least two other scores at or above the District Line:

|                                | District Line |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. SIGS Parent Checklist       | 96%           |
| 2. SIGS Teacher Checklist      | 96%           |
| 3. Portfolio                   | 9             |
| 4. Intelligence/Abilities Test | 130           |

The criteria for placement for students in grades one through twelve are at least two scores at or above the District Line on the qualitative assessments (#3-5 below) and at least one score at or above the District Line on the quantitative assessments(#1-2 below).

|                                       | District Line |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. SIGS Parent Checklist (grades 1-5) | 96%           |
| CAP Divergent Feeling (grades 6-12)   | 96%           |
| 2. SIGS Teacher Checklist             | 96%           |
| 3. Creativity Test                    | 130           |
| 4. Intelligence/Abilities Test        | 130           |
| 5. Achievement Test                   | 96%           |

The EXPO Placement Committee will have the option of reviewing any student’s profile for special consideration for program placement. Parents will then be informed.

### **Furloughs**

A parent or student may request a furlough from the EXPO program for up to one school year when extenuating circumstances occur (i.e. DAEP, personal problems, illness, etc.). Parental permission is required for the furlough to be in effect. The furlough will usually last for the remainder of the school year. The student will be automatically re-enrolled in the program when the time of the furlough has elapsed. A student may have only one furlough throughout their school career, unless the campus screening committee determines that it would be in the best educational interest of the student to grant a subsequent furlough due to extreme circumstances.

### **Probation/Exiting**

Exiting from the EXPO Program will only occur when continued placement would not be the most appropriate educational placement for a student. If the EXPO Specialist believes that program participation is not meeting a student's needs, the student may be placed on EXPO Probation for a set period of time. If at the end of that probationary period the student is still not making the appropriate gains, a meeting will be held to discuss exiting that student. A parent or a student may also request exiting from the program. Educational, psychological, and personal reasons will be considered. An exited student may not reapply for admission until one full year has expired. At that time, the student will be required to go through the referral process and requalify for the program.

### **Transfer Students**

Students transferring to the Denton Independent School District from a gifted and talented program at their previous school will be assessed to determine if placement into the EXPO Program would be beneficial. A Denton EXPO Specialist will assess all transfer students within six weeks of enrollment. Information required from previous schools includes qualitative data showing placement into their gifted program and the years served in the program. Transfer students must meet the criteria set by the Denton Independent School District's Gifted and Talented Program. The teacher checklist will not be used, as the student will be new into the classroom. For elementary transfer students, the qualitative data requirement will still include the parent checklist and this lone instrument will then be taken into consideration by the selection committee. Secondary students will still be given the Divergent Feeling Survey and a parent checklist will be added for a second qualitative assessment. Students in kindergarten will be assessed using the three remaining instruments. If the district criteria are not met, the student will not be placed into the EXPO Class/Program.

### **Program Evaluation**

Annual program evaluation activities are conducted for the purpose of continued program improvement. This might include but is not limited to EXPO staff input, student surveys, parent surveys, principal surveys and Gifted and Talented Advisory Committee input.

### **Curriculum**

A scope and sequence is developed that illustrates the target concepts and skills which are taught through activities designed for gifted students in grades K-12. A differentiated curriculum that emphasizes all four core areas is available in grades K-12 and a continuum of learning experiences is provided that leads to the development of advanced-level products and/or performances. The EXPO curriculum focuses on critical and creative thinking skills, higher order thinking skills, in-depth research leading to advanced products and/or performances, and affective skills for the special needs of the gifted



children. Curriculum is modified based on annual evaluations.

## **Professional Development**

Teachers who provide instruction and services that are part of the program for gifted students will have  
a

**minimum** of thirty (30) clock hours of staff development that includes nature and needs of gifted students, assessing student needs, and curriculum and instruction for gifted students. These teachers will receive a minimum annual update of six hours of gifted professional development.

Administrators and counselors who have authority for program decisions will have a minimum of six (6) hours of professional development in the nature and needs of gifted/talented students and program options.

## **Appeal Procedure**

The following steps are to be followed in filing an appeal regarding a decision of the District EXPO Selection Committee:

- Parent may request a conference with student’s building principal within ten business days of receiving selection decision. A conference, where the EXPO specialist and principal go over the student profile and answer any questions, must be scheduled within ten business days of the parent request.

### **Level 1**

- If the parent is not satisfied, the parent will complete the District EXPO Appeal form and return it to the Denton ISD EXPO Coordinator within 10 business days.
- The appeal is presented to the District EXPO Selection Committee by the EXPO Coordinator at the next committee meeting. The committee will meet once each six weeks. Written records of the results of the meeting will be placed in the student’s EXPO folder and will be mailed to the parent immediately following the meeting.

### **Level 2**

- If the parent desires to continue the appeal, an Appeal Review Committee (ARC) form must be completed and submitted to the EXPO Coordinator who will then give it to the Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Staff Development, or designee. According to the Texas Administrative Code, §89.1(4), the District EXPO Selection Committee provides for the final selection of students. The Appeal Review Committee will only look at procedural issues to assure that all procedures were followed correctly.
- The Executive Director, or designee, will arrange for an Appeal Review Committee which may consist of a curriculum director, a principal, an EXPO specialist, and a classroom teacher. All of the above must have training in the nature and needs of gifted children. Any of the above may remove themselves from the committee if it is deemed as a conflict of interest in any way.
- The Appeal Review Committee must meet within 10 business days of receiving the ARC appeal. Procedural issues will be considered and results will be placed in the student’s EXPO folder and will be promptly mailed to the parent.

### **Grievance**

- If the parent is still not satisfied, the parent may initiate a grievance through the office of the Superintendent.

**I. Critical Thinking**

**A. Bloom's Taxonomy** (analysis, synthesis, evaluation)

I I A A A A A A A A A A A

**B. Spatial Thinking**

- 1. Translation-slide, Rotation-turn, Reflection-flip (Tangrams, Pentominoes, Tessellations)
- 2. Design, Symmetry, Patterns (Pattern Blocks)
- 3. Shapes, Area, Perimeter (Pentominoes)
- 4. Size, Shape, Thickness, Color (Attribute Blocks)
- 5. Rotate, Design, Pattern (Tessellations)
- 6. Sequence (Multi-link cubes)

I I A A A A  
 I I A A A A  
 I I A A A A  
 I I A A A A  
 I I A A A A  
 I A A A A A

**C. Logical Thinking**

- 1. Analogies
- 2. Questioning Strategies
- 3. Venn Diagrams
- 4. Deductive Reasoning
  - a. Three component matrix
  - b. Proofs with symbols
- 5. Inductive Reasoning - Inferences (Stories w/Holes)

I I A A A A A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A M M M  
 I I A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A

**D. Interdisciplinary Units**

- 1. Mathematics
- 2. Science
- 3. Social Studies
- 4. Language Arts
  - a. Writing/Communication
    - i. Elaboration
    - ii. Complete Sentences
    - iii. Correct Grammar
    - iv. Advanced Vocabulary
    - v. Clear Communication

I A A A A A A A  
 I A A A A A A A  
 I A A A A A A A  
 I A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A  
 I I A A A A A A A A A A A

**II. Creative Thinking**

**A. Elements of Creativity (FFOE)**

- 1. Fluency
- 2. Flexibility
- 3. Originality
- 4. Elaboration

I I I A A A A A A M M M M  
 I I I A A A A A A M M M M  
 I I I A A A A A A M M M M  
 I I I A A A A A A M M M M

**B. SCAMPER Model**

I A A A M M M

**C. CPS Model**

I I A A A M M M

**D. Forced Relationships**

I A A A A M M M

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 E H M S

### III. Research Skills

#### A. Methods of Research

|                         |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Encyclopedia         |  | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |
| 2. Thesaurus/Dictionary |  | I | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |
| 3. Print Resources      |  | I | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |
| 4. Electronic Media     |  | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |
| 5. Interview            |  |   |   | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |
| 6. Survey               |  |   |   | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |

#### B. Research Procedures/Products

|                                  |  |  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| 1. EXPO Research Format          |  |  |  | I | A | A | A | A | A |   |   |  |  |
| 2. Written Product - EXPO Format |  |  |  | I | A | A | A | A | A |   |   |  |  |
| 3. Power Point Presentation      |  |  |  | I | I | A | A | M | M |   |   |  |  |
| 4. Advanced Product/Performance  |  |  |  | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |  |  |

#### C. In-Depth Investigations

|                      |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Group Study       |  | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |
| 2. Independent Study |  | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |

### IV. Technology Integration

|  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | A |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

### V. Affective Skills

#### A. Understanding Yourself

|  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | M | M | M | M |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

#### B. Interpersonal Relationships

|  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | M | M | M | M |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

#### C. Time Management/Organization

|  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | M | M | M | M |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

#### D. Dealing With the Unknown

|  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | M | M | M | M |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

#### E. Leadership Skills

|  |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | I | I | A | A | A | A | A | A | M | M | M | M |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

I = Introduce  
 A = Apply  
 M = Maintain

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED

From *Raising Champions*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented

This list of general characteristics will help you understand and evaluate your child's gifts and talents. Probably no child has high levels of performance in all of the categories. The more gifted and talented a child is, the more of these traits will show.

- Very verbal, asks many questions, uses advanced vocabulary, wants to know why, how, and what about many things (or everything). They surprise you, your friends, or family with the questions asked or the words used.
- Imaginative, playful, have an imaginary playmate, daydreams, becomes absorbed in thoughts.
- Good memory, learns rapidly, accurately remembers things for a long time.
- Has interests in a wide range of topics, wants to know everything about a chosen interest.
- Acutely aware of right and wrong, sensitive to others feelings, strong sense of fairness.
- Critical of others, but has difficulty accepting criticism; demands unrealistic perfection from self, especially in certain areas.
- Displays boundless energy, requires less sleep, is always in motion.

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### **Suggestions for Home** (if age appropriate)

Jigsaw Puzzles

Brain Teaser Puzzles and Books

Reference Material/Books

Video Games (great for quick thinking/problem solving/strategic planning, and hand-eye coordination, but **monitored and limited**)

Problem Solving Puzzles

Conversation (high level)

Cause/Effect Toys or Games

### **Suggestions for Parents**

Listen to Your Child

Encourage Your Child

Advocate for Your Child

Provide Enrichment Opportunities/Experiences

### **Useful Resources for Parents**

#### **Books/Magazines**

Games Magazine -- 1-800-425-4600

[www.mindwareonline.com](http://www.mindwareonline.com)

Survival Guides -- 1-800-735-7323

[www.piecesoflearning.com](http://www.piecesoflearning.com)

Raising Champions - TAGT -- 1-512-499-8248

[www.awpeller.com](http://www.awpeller.com)

Gifted Child Today and Creative Kids Magazine - [www.prufrock.com](http://www.prufrock.com)

#### **Gifted Organizations**

TAGT 1-512-499-8248 [www.txgifted.org](http://www.txgifted.org)

NAGC [www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)

Denton ISD Gifted and Talented Program – (940) 369-0145 – [mchancellor@dentonisd.org](mailto:mchancellor@dentonisd.org)

or go to: [www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org) , click on Academics, and then scroll down to Gifted and Talented. There are many additional gifted educational links on the GT Links page.