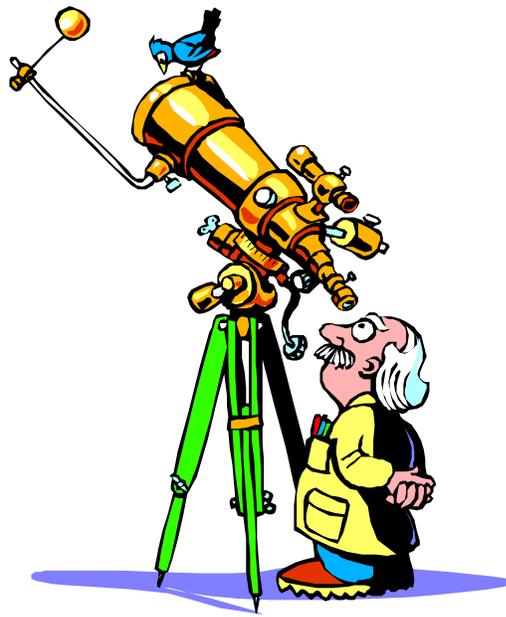


China Spring
Independent School District

Gifted and Talented Program
Plan



“We make success happen.”

Approved by the
China Spring Independent School District Board of Trustees
July 2010

China Spring ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs, activities, or hiring practices.

District Mission Statement

The mission of the China Spring Independent School District is to provide education to each of the students in the district. The district recognizes the need for a well-rounded, disciplined, educational environment including academic, extracurricular, and social experiences in order that students may become effective, participating members of society.

The district is committed to the belief that all children can learn and must be provided the opportunity to master the basic skills, develop thinking and problem solving skills, and realize individual potential. As education is a lifelong process, the district seeks to orient its educational opportunities toward preparing students to meet the complex situations they will face as adults, both as individuals and as citizens in a democracy.

Definition of Giftedness (TEC.29.121)

“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.

China Spring I.S.D. recognizes the special needs of youngsters who fit this description and is committed to offering differentiated curriculum that targets the academic and affective needs of these students.

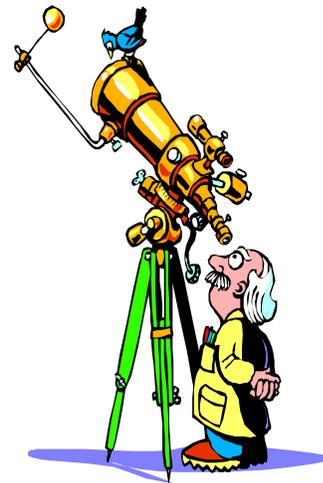
Program Goals

China Spring I.S.D. recognizes the fact that goals which are specific, yet flexible, are an essential part of an effective program designed to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. District program goals will include the following:

- Provide a talent pool program for Kindergarten- 2nd grade that allows the students to be provided with open-ended learning experiences that elicit behaviours indicative of giftedness. These learning experiences will focus on creativity and intellectual strengths.
- Identify students in grades K-12 who excel consistently or have the potential to excel in one or more of the four (4) core content areas.
- Provide differentiated programs for identified students, beyond regular curriculum requirements and offerings.
- Identify professional needs and plan opportunities for staff development to train professional and paraprofessional personnel to work effectively with students in the program.
- Ensure that all special populations are considered for the program and offered differentiated curriculum when appropriate.
- Consider various options for effectively serving identified students.
- Inform and seek the involvement of parents and community members in the program for gifted students.
- Evaluate program effectiveness on a regular basis, providing a continuum of information targeting evaluation of key features of the program and measuring its effectiveness in relation to student growth and achievement.

Student Assessment

- Nomination Procedures
- Data Collection
- Screening and Selection
- Parent Notification
- Reassessment Policy
- Furloughs
- Exiting Policy
- Appeals Procedures
- Transfer Student Policy



Student Assessment

Nomination Procedures

Students may be nominated for the gifted and talented program by any person familiar with the student's abilities, potential, or performance. Those nominating students for the program may include

- parents;
- members of the school faculty/staff;
- community members; and/or
- other interested parties.

Nomination forms will be available in the offices at each campus. Forms should be completed and returned to the office. The due date, during the 3rd and 6th six weeks periods, will be noted on the nomination form. When at all possible, information regarding nomination may be provided in languages that the families of nominated students are able to understand or an interpreter will be provided.

Data Collection

The campus GT coordinator, the building principal, or another designee, will be responsible for collecting nomination forms and gathering data. Written parental/guardian consent will be obtained before any formal testing or individual assessment that is conducted as part of the program screening.

Assessment for the Gifted and Talented Program will include measures collected from multiple sources for each area of giftedness served by China Spring I.S.D. Data and procedures used to identify students for the gifted and talented program will include both qualitative and quantitative measures and will assure that all populations have access to assessment and, if identified, services offered as part of the program for gifted and talented students.

Screening and Selection for the Primary Talent Pool Program

The talent pool process allows the campus GT committee to select students using an informal process to place some students in a talent pool to receive advanced curriculum services that allow continuous growth with or without being identified GT quite yet. Not all students participating in the primary talent pool program are identified GT at this time.

A minimum of three forms of documentation of student strength are used in the selection process. Documentation may include:

- Student work examples (in-school products only)
- Behavioral checklists
- Anecdotal records (Teacher-notes)
- Parent questionnaires
- Teacher recommendations
- Diagnostic data (NNAT)

The GT committee will review all documentation to determine the primary talent pool selection.

Screening and Selection for the Gifted and Talented Program

Students not yet identified as gifted will be considered for nomination and screening at least once a year for services that are a part of the gifted and talented program. The nomination process will begin during the 3rd and 6th six-week periods and students will be screened to join the program at the beginning of the next semester.

Data used in the screening process may include, but will not be limited to, the following criteria:

1. Behavioural Characteristics Scale (i.e. Renzulli/Hartman Scale for Rating Behavioural Characteristics of Superior Students, G.A.T.E.S.)
 2. **Achievement Measures**
 3. Student Products/portfolios
 4. Gifted and Talented Screening Instruments (i.e. S.A.G.E.S.-2, NNAT, KOI)
 5. **I.Q. Measures (needs to be above 124)**
 6. Parent Inventory
 7. Student Interviews
- A GT Committee comprised of at least three (3) professional educators who have received training in the “nature and needs” of gifted students will be established at each campus. This team will meet to carefully review the data collected on each nominated student, according to the criteria established by China Spring I.S.D. and approved by the Board of Trustees, and will select those students for whom gifted program placement is determined to be the most appropriate educational setting.
 - The GT Committee will select the criteria to be considered at their campus and, when the assessment process is complete, will plot the results of the chosen criteria on the Identification Profile. For a student to qualify for the program, a majority of the scores should fall to the right of the district line. **At least one of the criteria needs to be an achievement or IQ score.** The committee will make the decision regarding placement.
 - Screening may include an effort to pinpoint areas of giftedness.
 - Students, whose primary language is one other than English, will be assessed in the language they understand or with non-verbal based tests.
 - The GT Committee may consider optional criteria if additional information is needed.
 - Participation in any program/services provided for identified students will be strictly voluntary.

Parent Notification

Parents/guardians will be notified in writing as to the decision of the GT Committee. The district will obtain written permission from parents/guardians before the identified student is served through educational experiences that are a part of the gifted and talented program.

If the GT Committee decides a student does not meet the criteria for the GT program, the parents will be notified. Students may be nominated again after a year has passed.

Reassessment Policies

- A reassessment may be conducted when students move from one campus to another or to an educational setting in which the gifted and talented program prototype is different (i.e. to determine classes or subject areas in which the student may best be served with differentiated curriculum).
- If it is determined that it is in the best interest of an identified student to be reassessed, the district will inform parent(s) and the student of the team's decision and a reassessment will be conducted.
- If reassessment does occur, it will be no more than once at the elementary level, once at the intermediate school level, once at the middle school level, and once at the high school level.

Furloughs

If at any time it is determined by the GT Committee that it is in the best interest of the student to be temporarily removed from the gifted program, furlough options will be considered. The purpose of such a furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the team. School personnel, parents, or an identified student may request a furlough. A student may be furloughed for a period of time deemed appropriate by the GT Committee. At the end of the furlough period, the student's needs progress shall be reassessed and a determination will be made as to the educational setting that will be most appropriate for the student at that particular time. The team may decide that the student may re-enter the program, be exited from the program, or be placed on another furlough.

Exiting of Students from Program Services

- Student performance in the program will be monitored on a regular basis.
- A student may be exited from the program at any time the GT Committee determines it is in the best interest of the student. Parents of the student and the student him/herself may be given the opportunity to meet with the GT Committee to discuss the decision.
- In such cases that an identified student (or the parent of an identified student) decides that it would be best for the student to exit the program, the student or parent may submit a written request for the desired exit to the GT Committee. The district will approve such a request, but may ask the student and /or parent(s) to discuss the issue with the team if the team members review the identification data and student performance information and determine that it is in the best interest of the student to remain in the program.

Appeals Procedures

- Parents/guardians, students, teachers, and/or other interested parties may appeal any decision made by the GT Committee regarding placement in, or removal from, the gifted and talented program.
- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the campus administrator who will present the appeal to the GT Committee. The team will review the appeal, meet with parties filing the appeal to discuss concerns, review data (including any additional information or data gathered as a result of the appeal), and make a determination regarding placement of the student in question.

- Parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the team’s recommendations and decisions.
- Any subsequent appeals should be made in accordance with FNG (LOCAL) beginning at Level 2.

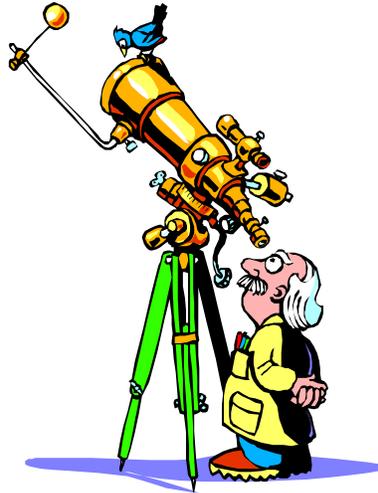
Transfer Students

In the event that an identified student from China Spring I.S.D. transfers out of the district, China Spring I.S.D. will send documentation of screening/identification, with the other records of the student, to the receiving district.

When a student identified as gifted and talented by another district transfers into China Spring I.S.D., the campus GT coordinator will review the student’s records to compare with our district matrix. If the previous school records compare to our district matrix, the campus GT coordinator can make the decision to place the student in the China Spring ISD Gifted and Talented program. If there are major discrepancies or not enough evidence between our district matrix and the previous school records, a GT committee will meet to determine placement in the GT program. Further assessment may be requested. The campus GT coordinator or GT committee will make its determination within 6 weeks of the student's enrolment in the district. Parents will be notified in writing as to the decision of the GT Committee.

*Campus GT coordinators are the campus counselors.

Program Design



Program Design

China Spring I.S.D. will offer a flexible system of viable program options throughout the district that provide a learning continuum and reinforce the strengths, needs, and interests of gifted and talented students. The district will provide an array of learning opportunities that are commensurate with the abilities of gifted/talented students, and that emphasize content in the four (4) core academic areas (English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies).

- Services will be available during the school day as well as the entire school year.
- Parents will be informed of the educational options available to identified students.
- Program options will enable students to work together as a group; work with other students; and work independently as a direct result of GT program services.
- Flexible grouping patterns and pacing will be employed to meet the needs of gifted and talented students.
- Identified students will be provided with out-of-school educational opportunities which focus on differentiated learning experiences. These opportunities may include student seminars, meetings with mentors, academic competitions, and field trips addressing in-depth, complex content.
- Local Board policies are developed that are consistent with State Board of Education rules on credit by examination and early high school graduation opportunities.
- No more than 15% of state funds allocated for gifted/talented education are spent on indirect costs. At least 85% of the funds allocated to gifted/talented education are spent on assessment and services for gifted students.

China Spring I.S.D. will encourage input and recommendations from an advisory group that will review gifted and talented program policies and procedures on a regular basis.

Program prototypes will include:

Primary Talent Pool Program for Kindergarten-Second Grade:

Students will be tested using a nonverbal ability test in the winter of the kindergarten year. Students will be provided with open-ended learning experiences that elicit behaviours indicative of giftedness. These learning experiences will focus on creativity and intellectual strengths. Planned portfolio activities will be a part of the Talent Pool program; products from these activities will be used in the screening process at the end of second grade. The classroom teacher, parent or other individuals may recommend a student for the talent pool. At the beginning of the spring semester, kindergarten students who were nominated and met the documentation selection process or were identified G/T will be served in a Talent Pool program, and services for them will start by the beginning of March of each school year. Students who qualify for the Primary Talent Pool program will be served by participating in differentiated learning activities that focus on their area(s) of strength. The students in the talent pool may be re-evaluated by the end of the second semester of their second grade year to see if the gifted program is the appropriate placement based on the recommendation of the Primary Talent Pool teacher and GT committee.

Grades 3-5

Identified students will be served with curriculum designed to meet the needs of gifted and talented students in several ways. Options shall include instructional and organizational patterns that enable identified students to work together as a group, to work with other students, and to work independently as a direct result of GT program services.

The GT program will include a pull out program. GT students may be pulled from class each week for some given amount of time. GT students from two or more grade levels may be combined for this pull out program.

Gifted students will be placed in the classrooms of teachers who have received thirty hours of training in the area of gifted and talented education required by the state. GT students may be served in the regular classroom (in addition to the pull out program) in cluster groups of at least three and no more than seven. Classroom instruction will offer differentiated learning experiences such as: Socratic questioning, creative and critical thinking, in-depth/complex content, enrichment, and acceleration. In sixth grade only, the differentiated learning experiences will be offered in those subject areas selected by the student. Parents and teachers will supervise selection of subject area(s) for differentiation. If a student does not respond to the opportunity to select areas of differentiation, it will be assumed that the student chooses to be served in ALL core subject areas.

Grades 6-12

The Gifted and Talented Program in grades 7-12 will include differentiated instruction in the subject area(s) chosen by the student at the beginning of each year (see p. 11 under Curriculum and Instruction). If a student does not respond to the opportunity to select area(s) of differentiation, it will be assumed that the student chooses to be served

in ALL core subjects. Students will have in-class and out-of-class learning opportunities such as:

In-Class Learning Opportunities

- Pre-AP (Advanced Placement) Classes with differentiation
- AP classes with differentiation
- Dual/Concurrent enrolment
- Independent study/project related to interests
- Multi-Media project
- Texas Performance Standards Projects

Out-of-Class Learning Opportunities

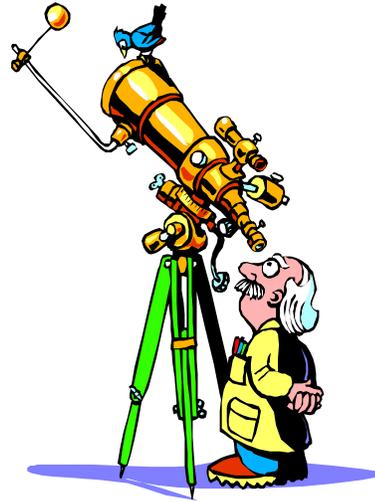
- Leadership Activities
- Extracurricular involvement
- UIL Academic involvement
- Academic competition
- Various school clubs
- Community Service

A contact teacher will be assigned to each GT student in order to encourage and support the student throughout the school year. Each student, with the help of the contact teacher, will complete a Gifted and Talented Development Plan at the beginning of each year. This plan will indicate the learning opportunities in which the student has chosen to participate throughout the school year. The contact teacher will review the plan in the middle and at the end of the school year. (Appendix 12)

Program Evaluations

Parents/guardians will be informed of instructional opportunities offered as part of the gifted and talented program. District and campus improvement plans will include provisions to improve/modify services offered to gifted and talented students. These modifications/improvements will be based on evaluations of the program. (Appendix 10) District and campus administrators will monitor the development and delivery of curriculum for gifted/talented students.

Curriculum and Instruction



Curriculum and Instruction

China Spring I.S.D. will offer differentiated instruction that includes accelerated pace and increased depth and complexity of studies. Instruction may include the following strategies:

- Content (Topic)
 - Pretest – identify the students who do not require direct instruction.
 - Accelerate the Pace – students who show a high level of competence can work through the curriculum at a faster pace. (Compacting the Curriculum)
 - Independent Study
- Process (Activities)
 - Tiered Assignments – various activities are assigned based on individual student needs
 - Graphic Organizers – students use organizers to show comprehension of concepts taught
 - Learning Contract – an agreement between teacher and student to allow the student to complete various activities independently
- Product
 - Vary the complexity of the product that students create to demonstrate mastery of the concepts taught.
 - Multi-Media Project
 - Produce work that requires more complex or more advanced thinking.

- Environment

Adjust environment - lower lighting, formal/casual seating, classical music, etc.
Allow for learning styles: auditory, visual, kinaesthetic

The campus principals, district GT coordinator, and district curriculum director will monitor curriculum development.

At the beginning of each school year, the GT pullout teacher will administer an interest survey to GT students in grades 1-5 (Appendix #11). This survey will be used to help define areas of study for the year's pull out program. When possible, community members will be contacted to serve as mentors to students with particular interests. Senior citizen groups may be used as mentors and as an audience for students' projects. Baylor students may serve as mentors for GT students. TSTC and MCC students may serve as mentors in computer technology, music, art, theatre, and other areas of interest.

The GT pullout teacher (grades K-5) or core subject teachers (grades 6-12) will provide a continuum of learning experiences that leads to the development of advanced level products and/or performances such as those provided through the Texas Performance Standard Projects. For example, each department/grade level may focus on one big project per semester with a goal of developing sophisticated products and/or performances. A chart or checklist may be developed to establish which products or performances will be required each year.

GT students will be encouraged in the area of independent study, having a goal of developing higher level questioning skills, beginning in the lower grades. The first semester may focus on research and lead to self-directed learning and research skills. In the second semester, students may choose research projects. Strategies will be used to motivate students to write and ask higher level thinking questions.

Students will have the opportunity for Internet links to career and leadership mentors.

Provisions to improve services to GT students are included in district and campus improvement plans.

Professional Development

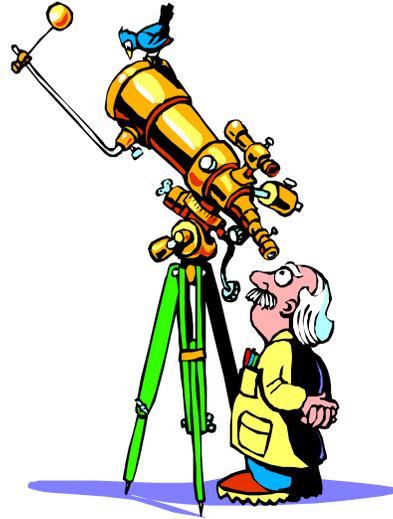


Professional Development

All personnel involved in the planning, development, and delivery of services to gifted students will have ample knowledge to enable them to offer appropriate options and curricula for gifted and talented students.

- Teachers who provide core subject instruction and services that are a part of the gifted and talented program 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. Teachers without required training who are assigned to provide instruction and services that are part of the district's defined GT services are required to complete the thirty (30) hour training within one semester. Following the initial thirty (30) hours of training, teachers will also receive a minimum of six (6) hours annually of professional development in gifted education.
- China Spring I.S.D. will support and encourage teachers who are responsible for providing instruction and services that are a part of the gifted and talented program by providing opportunities for them to receive professional development in gifted and talented education and by, when possible, releasing them from other duties to acquire this additional training.
- Administrators and counselors who have authority for program decisions will have a minimum of six (6) hours of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted students and program options for gifted and talented students.
- An orientation session that focuses on the gifted and talented program will be provided annually for teachers new to the district.
- GT teachers may be given release time to work on curriculum with other teachers in the district. Time on selected staff development days may be available for brainstorming and developing differentiated activities at all grade levels. GT teachers and administrators will be encouraged to visit successful programs at other schools for first-hand information for program improvements.
- Professional development may also include the opportunity for teachers to work in small groups on curriculum with other teachers in the district.
- Member of the China Spring Independent School District Board of Trustees will be encouraged to receive training on the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.

Family and Community Involvement



Family and Community Involvement

China Spring I.S.D. will encourage family and community participation in services designed for gifted and talented students. Written policies of student identification, approved by the Board of Trustees, will be disseminated to parents, as will be information regarding the learning opportunities offered to identified students as part of the gifted and talented program. China Spring I.S.D. will evaluate the effectiveness of the program annually and will use the data gathered to modify and update district and campus improvement plans. Parent surveys are sent home to include the parents in the evaluation process.

- An orientation will be provided annually in the fall to inform parents and community members of assessment procedures, district programs, and issues relating to gifted and talented education.
- Progress reports will be sent to parents/guardians each semester informing them of the performance of their child in the gifted and talented program.
- Parents will be informed of available out-of-school, weekend, and summer programs for gifted students.
- Parents and community members will be given the opportunity to serve as mentors and/or experts for gifted students. These volunteers must complete a volunteer paperwork before being approved.
- Parents and community members will be encouraged to visit classrooms and view products developed by gifted students.
- Products and achievements of gifted students will be shared with families and community members.

- China Spring Independent School District will encourage community members and businesses to be involved in and support programs and services for gifted students.
- A listing of community resources and mentors may be maintained as a reference for students, teachers, and parents.

China Spring Independent School District will encourage parents to participate in a parent association for the gifted and talented. The district may also offer professional development opportunities to community members and parents and organize/train community volunteers to work with identified students.