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## **An Overview of HORIZONS Program Services for Gifted Students**

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### **Mission of Gifted and Talented Education in CFISD**

The CFISD Curriculum and Instruction Department - along with parents, teachers, and administrators - will recognize and support the unique academic, social, and emotional needs of the gifted to enable HORIZONS students to develop their talents and gifts to their greatest potential in the classroom and community.

### **HORIZONS Program Philosophy**

CFISD's HORIZONS program is dedicated to providing instruction that meets the needs and interests of academically gifted and talented students. We recognize that gifted students require curriculum differentiation in pace, depth, or complexity to provide an appropriate level of challenge and to allow students to reach their full academic potential.

- ❖ We believe students in the HORIZONS program benefit academically and emotionally when given opportunities to develop effective inter-and intra-personal skills related to their giftedness; to develop advanced, self-directed learning skills; to internalize advanced processing skills; and to develop original products of relative complexity and sophistication
- ❖ We believe that these students learn best when provided with multi-sensory instructional services which are both age-and ability-appropriate.
- ❖ We believe these students need instructional time to work with their same age peers, to work with their intellectual peers, and to work alone in independent study.
- ❖ We believe the instructional program for gifted and talented students should challenge and stimulate students to excel as independent, responsible, contributing members of society.

### **Goals of the HORIZONS Program**

- ❖ Ensure that the curriculum includes appropriate levels of extension, enrichment, and acceleration to satisfy students' intellectual curiosity.
- ❖ Offer a wide variety of learning opportunities that encourage students to refine their creative and problem-solving abilities.
- ❖ Provide teachers with current philosophy and methodology for gifted education.
- ❖ Establish communication with parents to create partnerships that promote children's social and emotional well-being and confidence as students.

## K-12 Gifted and Talented Program Services

### Kindergarten

Services for kindergarten students begin in March each year as mandated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Gifted program services for kindergarten occur through interdisciplinary units to promote high-level thinking skills and creativity in both reading and math. Students will receive services in a pull-out model each week.

### Grades 1-12

Identified students are grouped together so that they are provided opportunities to work with their intellectual peers. Starting in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, identified gifted students receive services in language arts, math, social studies, and science.

All HORIZONS classes seek to meet the social, emotional, and intellectual needs of gifted students through a variety of learning experiences including independent study and research.

### Secondary HORIZONS-Only Courses

Grades 6-12 HORIZONS courses are designated specifically for gifted students. These specific courses are open only to identified gifted students:

- 6<sup>th</sup> grade-World Cultures H
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade- Texas History H
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade- US History H
- 9<sup>th</sup> grade- English I H, World Geography H
- 10<sup>th</sup> grade-English II H, World History H, World Geography H
- 11<sup>th</sup> grade-World Geography H
- 12<sup>th</sup> grade-World Geography H

Students may also receive services through one of these designations:

- Level 1/HORIZONS (middle school) or
- K-level/HORIZONS (high school) cluster courses.

These cluster classes allow gifted students to work with their intellectual peers.

In all cases, HORIZONS-designated instruction is presented by teachers who have completed a minimum of 30 hours of required training in gifted education.

### Advanced-Level Products

The Texas Education Agency requires teachers to engage students identified as gifted in the development of advanced-level products and performances and in opportunities for students to accelerate in their areas of strength. You may refer to <http://texaspsp.org/> to find more information about the state initiative to assist students in the production of new knowledge, not simply reproducing information.

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD established the HORIZONS Showcase to provide an arena for students to showcase their advanced products. Review the HORIZONS website to find the dates for the HORIZONS Showcase held each year.

### **Exiting from the HORIZONS Program**

The District shall monitor student performance in response to gifted and talented program services. If at any time the selection committee or a parent determines it is in the best interest of the student to exit the program, the committee shall meet with the parent and student before finalizing an exit decision.

Students at the secondary level who enroll in K, AP, Dual Credit, or HORIZONS courses are expected to follow both entry and exit criteria established for these courses.

In order to re-enter the program, the student who has been administratively exited must be retested and qualify for the program by meeting the most current gifted/talented qualification standards.

If a student has been administratively exited from the program, the student or his or her parent has the opportunity to request reassessment no more than one time in elementary school, one time in middle school, and one time in high school.

### **Furloughing from HORIZONS**

The district may place on a leave of absence, or furlough, from the HORIZONS program any student who is unable to maintain satisfactory performance or whose educational needs are not being met within the structure of the gifted and talented program. A furlough may be initiated by the District, the parent, or the student.

- ❖ A student must be enrolled in a minimum of one HORIZONS course to be considered active in the program.
- ❖ In cases of furlough, the student will not participate in any HORIZONS courses for a specified reason(s) and for a specified period of time, yet the student will not be removed from the program.
- ❖ At the end of a furlough, the student may reenter the gifted and talented program, be placed on another furlough, or be exited from the program.
- ❖ The identification process must be re-initiated if a student exits the program.