



The Appeal Process

Questions & Answers

What do you mean by an "appeal"?

- ◆ An appeal is a request by a parent or district personnel for a district level committee to examine additional information about a particular student's qualifications for the GT program. It is made when a student does not initially qualify for the program.

Who can file an appeal?

- ◆ Parents, a teacher, or a school administrator can file an appeal. Older students (middle and high school) can file their own appeal.

Who makes up the appeals committee?

- ◆ This committee is composed of building administrators (counselors, assistant principals, principals, directors of instruction) or central office administrators who have six hours of training in the nature and needs of the gifted, and are familiar with the district's curriculum.
- ◆ Care is made to assure that this committee represents the cultural diversity of the district.

What are some reasonable considerations for making an appeal?

- ◆ **In order to qualify, a child must have high scores in both the achievement and ability areas.**
- ◆ Factors including illness, family crisis or interference with a student's special needs during testing may negatively impact testing results.
- ◆ An appropriate appeal includes those who missed qualifying by 5 matrix points.

Carla Butler,
HORIZONS Coordinator, K - 12
HORIZONS Office
10300 Jones Road, #721
Houston, TX 77065
Phone (281) 897-4075

How do you file an appeal?

1. First, discuss your concern with the counselor or director of instruction on your campus. He/she may be able to answer questions you have about the testing.
2. If you still feel an appeal is appropriate, submit a written request to the HORIZONS Coordinator. The request must include:
 - a. The student's name, grade, and school.
 - b. The parent's name, home address, home and work phone numbers, and email address.
 - c. A brief explanation of the reasons for the appeal.

The appeal request may be sent to
Carla Butler, Coordinator
HORIZONS Department
10300 Jones Road, Suite 721
Houston, TX 77065

or email to
sandra.stocks@cfisd.net.

Parents must appeal within 15 days of the date on the placement letter.

What does the HORIZONS office do after receiving the letter?

- Research on each student begins. The HORIZONS office will
- ✓ request academic data (TAKS, Benchmark scores, grades, previous test scores) and teacher data.
 - ✓ obtain additional information from the parent or guardian regarding the student's intellectual and academic development.

All information will be brought before the appeals committee. The committee will consider the information to make a placement decision for the child.

What additional information should I prepare for the appeal?

- ✓ Examples (no more than 3) of the student's writing, drawings, or math applications that show superior ability and advanced thinking skills (well above grade level).
- ✓ A list of books the student has read independently within the last six months.
- ✓ A brief summary (one page) of the child's extracurricular interests, hobbies, and strengths.
- ✓ A large self-addressed manila envelope with postage attached. The HORIZONS office will return the items submitted to the appeals committee for consideration.

Do NOT bring:

- ☒ report cards
- ☒ workbooks or worksheets
- ☒ trophies or plaques

What are the decisions that the appeals committee can make?

The appeals committee may:

1. Place the child in the HORIZONS program.
2. Provide HORIZONS services to the child for a one-year trial or probationary period. At the end of one year, the appeals committee will reconvene to review the student's progress and determine appropriate placement for the child.
3. Retest the student if there is documented evidence of illness or traumatic circumstances at the time of testing. (example: death in the family)
4. Confirm the original placement decision found on the HORIZONS Identification Matrix.

How will I know the decision of the appeals committee?

Parents will receive written notice of the committee's decision within 10 days of the Appeal Committee meeting. Committee decisions are final.