
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 on March 1 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 for no fewer than 3 hours per week.

Grades 1-12

Identified students are grouped together so that they are provided opportunities to work with their intellectual peers. Starting in 1st 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:

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

At the elementary level, identified gifted students may be removed from the HORIZONS program if they are not meeting performance expectations with a minimum grade average of 75 in any HORIZONS course to which they are assigned. Prior to removal, campus personnel must establish an Action Plan. The purpose of the Action Plan is to implement strategies to facilitate student success in the program. At the conclusion of Action Plan I, Action Plan II must be implemented if the student continues to fall below expectations. Each Action Plan encompasses a minimum of one grading period and must seek to engage all stakeholders responsible for facilitating student success.

If a student's Action Plan 1 begins in the final grading period and no progress occurs before the school year ends, then the plan will carry over into the next school year when Action Plan 2 will be initiated.

At the secondary level, all of the information stated above applies to HORIZONS-only courses. An Action Plan is not required for removal from a K, AP, Dual Credit, or HORIZONS course. Students are expected to follow both entry and exit criteria established for H courses.

At every grade level, the identification process must be re-initiated once a student exits the program.

Furloughing from HORIZONS

Parents/guardians may request that their child take a one-year leave of absence or furlough from the HORIZONS program only once in elementary school, once in middle school, and once in high school.

- ❖ A student must be enrolled in a minimum of one HORIZONS course to remain in the program.
- ❖ In cases of furlough, the student will not participate in any HORIZONS courses for the remainder of the school year, yet the student will not be removed from the program.
- ❖ Parents must send a written request for the student to re-enter the program at the beginning of the next school year.
- ❖ If a parent does not provide a written request for the student to re-enter the program in the following year, a child may be exited from the program. The identification process must be re-initiated once a student exits the program.