Gifted and Talented News



Volume 6 Issue 1 October 2024

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Meet the District G/T Contacts

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District G/T website: www.hayscisd.net/gt



Meet the Elementary Campus G/T Contacts

Campus	Counselor/Testing Contact	G/T Liaison
Blanco Vista	Nereida Navarro	Angelica King-Payne
Buda	Debbie Daniel	Marta Sarkady
Camino Real	Heather Trupia Veronica Cervantes	Roshni Varghese
Carpenter Hill	Danae Lancaster	Christina Harlan
Cullen	Maria (Angie) Torres	Vanessa Jimenez
Elm Grove	Robyn Bergeron	Sarah Marshall
Fuentes	Melinda Dechick	Sidnei Whatley
Hemphill	Vanessa Duran	Julie Zaniboni
Kyle	Judith Martinez	Michelle Zuniga
Negley	Katie Taylor	Stephanie Estes
Pfluger	Charlene Criner	Stephanie Collins
Science Hall	Stephanie Wick	Yolanda Argueta
Sunfield	Candace Barnes	Denny Schulte
Tobias	Jennifer Herbst	Debbie Gorubec
Tom Green	Monica Cottrill	Shonda Davilla
Uhland	Isabel Marquez	Kayla Mead

Who to Contact:

For testing questions or social/emotional questions, contact the counselor.

For all other questions, contact the G/T Liaison.

Click on a name for a link to email for each person.

Meet the Secondary Campus G/T Contacts

Campus	Counselor/Testing Contact	G/T Liaison
Barton	Amy Guerra (testing)	Cathryn Stewart
Chapa	Magda Flores (testing)	Jeremy Thoman
Dahlstrom	Jessica Leinen (testing)	Edith Kuhn
McCormick	Rosario Rodriguez (testing)	Patrick Flanagan
Simon	Camille Lister (testing)	Jennifer Gonzalez
Wallace	<u>Vanessa Juarez</u> (testing)	<u>Lindsey Taylor</u>
Hays	Sarah Limerick (testing)	Kelly Zarate
Johnson	Counseling Website	Paige Sumers (testing)
Lehman	Counseling Website	Leah Cochran
Live Oak	Shawna Mayerson	Shawna Mayerson (testing)

Who to Contact:

For social/emotional questions, contact the counselor. For testing questions, see note for who to contact. For all other questions, contact the G/T Liaison. Click on a name for a link to their email.

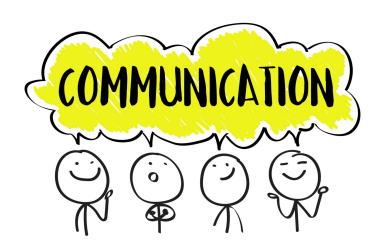


Communication

Campus Newsletters

Each campus will share newsletters in November and April. The newsletters will be sent via email and posted on the campus G/T website. If you do not receive a copy, please contact the G/T Liaison at your child's campus. Contact information is included on the previous slides..





Elementary Progress Monitoring Reports

At the elementary level, progress monitoring reports will be shared at the end of the first and second semesters. This is a way for teachers to communicate strategies that are working well to meet the needs of your child.



Campus Webpages

The G/T Liaison at each campus manages a G/T webpage. Please click on THIS LINK to view the webpage for each campus. Each page should have the most recent newsletter for the campus.



Gifted and Talented Advisory Council (GTAC)

We are recruiting parents to serve on the district Gifted and Talented Advisory Council (GTAC) for the 2024 - 2025 school year. This council is made up of district staff and parents who work together to ensure quality services are provided for gifted students and their families. GTAC will meet on the dates listed below at 5:00.

November 19 April 8

If you are interested in serving as a representative, please contact your child's principal. Each school can have up to one member.



Service Design

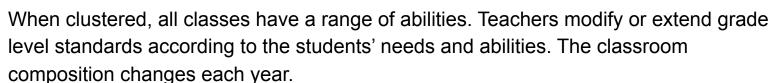
In Hays CISD, we offer an array of learning opportunities emphasizing the four core content areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies. These opportunities include G/T cluster grouping and differentiation.

Cluster Grouping

A group of identified G/T students are grouped (or clustered) together in a mixed ability classroom with a G/T trained teacher. The official name of the model for clustering Hays CISD uses is the Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model (SCGM). This is based on Susan Weinbrenner and Dina Brulles' book titled *The Cluster Grouping Handbook*.

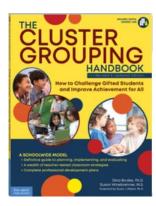
The schoolwide cluster grouping model is a method that provides full time gifted education services with the potential to raise achievement for all students. In this model, all students are purposely placed into classrooms based on their abilities, potential, or achievement. This model does not include G/T only classes. The SCGM allows schools to employ the critical elements of a gifted program including

- •flexible grouping
- differentiation
- continuous progress
- intellectual peer interaction
- continuity
- teachers with specialized education



There are several advantages to cluster grouping including providing social, emotional, and academic advantages. Teachers can focus their instruction to better meet the academic needs of all students. This causes achievement levels to increase.

Gifted students need to spend time with others of like ability so they can experience challenge and make academic progress. Being with their learning peers helps them better understand their learning differences. An important point to note is that teachers are more likely to provide differentiation when there is a group of students rather than an individual student.



Service Design

Differentiation

Differentiation is an instructional model that guides teachers in developing classrooms that meet the needs of academically diverse students. Differentiation is meeting students where they are. No two students are exactly the same. They all have different learning styles, interests, and abilities. Teachers have the difficult challenge of trying to make instruction applicable to a diverse audience.

In a differentiated classroom, students have multiple options for taking in information (which is the content), making sense of the ideas (which is the process), and expressing what they learn (which is the product). The content is provided to teachers through the district curriculum, and they have required content and objectives they are responsible for teaching. However, teachers can differentiate how students learn the content and how students express their learning for different types of learners.

One thing to keep in mind is that parents/guardians may not always see the differentiation at home. Many differentiation strategies occur in the classroom. Examples of this include questioning, flexible grouping, seating arrangements, choice on books, etc. Examples of differentiation that one might see at home include menus where students have choices of products to demonstrate learning and individual research projects tailored to students' interests.

Please remember that every single lesson will not be differentiated. The teacher will differentiate based on student need.

Identification Areas

- K-2 = General Intellectual Ability
- 3rd-12th
 - English Language Arts/Social studies
 - Math/Science

Service Design

In addition to cluster grouping and differentiation, below are opportunities available for students beginning in middle school.

- Advanced Math Middle school students with strength in Math are eligible to participate in advanced Math services utilizing a compacted curriculum. Four years of math instruction are compacted into three years with students completing Algebra I in their eighth grade year.
- Advanced Courses (formerly Pre-AP) Beginning in 7th grade, advanced classes are offered in Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies by educators who are trained in advanced curriculum and in gifted and talented education.
- AP Beginning in high school, AP classes are available. These courses offer college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. American colleges and universities may grant placement and course credit to students who obtain high scores on the examinations.
- Dual Credit Through our partnership with ACC, we offer dual credit courses where students can earn both high school and college credit. Students receive one grade that is recorded on both the high school and the college transcript.
- UT OnRamps Through our partnership with University of Texas, we offer UT OnRamps which are dual enrollment courses where students can earn both high school and college credit. Students receive two grades, one for the high school coursework and one for the college work. Students may choose whether or not to transcript passing college grades with UT.

Parent Meeting

On September 25, we held a meeting for parents of newly identified (Spring or Summer of 2024) students. The presentation can be viewed at <u>THIS LINK</u>.

Academic Contests

Click on images below for more information.



Each year, our annual "I Am Texas" theme encourages student contestants to use historical artifacts found in The Bryan Museum as inspiration to express their creativity.

The Take Care of Texas Video Contest is a fun way for young people to learn about protecting the environment and come up with creative ways to share this knowledge with others! Students create a 30-second video that shows positive ways to Take Care of Texas. Contest sponsor Waste Management of Texas, Inc. will award prizes to the creators of the best videos.



Academic Contests

Click the links below for more information.

Hays CISD is excited to announce the third annual Hays History Day will be held on January 25, 2025 at LHS. Our district History Day competition is in conjunction with the Texas History Day competition hosted by the Texas State Historical Association and the National History Day organization. History Day's purpose is to equip students with college and career ready skills of collaboration, research, writing, and innovative thinking that come from the study of history and civics. It is a wonderful way to incorporate Social Studies and Reading and Language Arts state standards into innovative projects. The competition is open to students from grades 4 through 12. Students can create seven types of projects either individually or in groups of 2-5 centered around a theme provided by National History Day. National History Day is a non-profit that coordinates History Day competitions for the last fifty years in the United States.

What is History Day? (3 minute video)

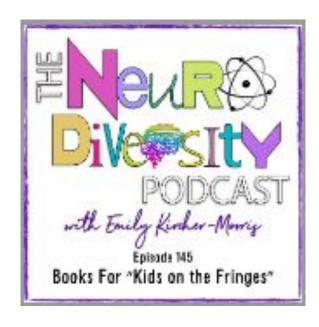
<u>History Day Theme Video 2025</u> (11 minute video)

General History Day Slides



Parenting the Gifted

Click on images below for more information.



Parent Webinar: Balancing Brilliance: Nurturing Executive Function and Mental Health in Gifted Kids (Available in English and Spanish)

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

KEYWORDS: Parenting Strategies

PARENTING



Parenting the Gifted

Elevating Excellence

Helping Parents Support their Advanced Elementary Students

Join us for a dynamic conference on gifted programming and STEM practices, designed for parents of advanced elementary students.

This unique event provides valuable insights and strategies for supporting your advanced child at home.

We'll focus on gifted programming and STEM practices. Public, private, and homeschool parents are welcome!





Register today! Scan the QR code or visit esc13.info/elevatingexcellence

VIRTUAL EVENT:

- Understand STEM learning
- · Get resources to supplement and support formal learning
- Connect with other parents

Upcoming Events

- October (varies by campus): PSAT 8 for grade 8
- PSAT for grades 10 and 11 (and 9th grade students who have registered)
 - October 16 at HHS and JHS
 - October 23-25 at LHS
- December 4-6: Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented Conference (San Antonio)
- January 7 Navigate Your Future (current 8th graders)
- January 23 Paving the Way for Post-Secondary Success (current 9th-11th graders)
- Spring (TBD): SAT School Day for grade 11
- March (more information to come): G/T Parent Meetup: Summer Opportunities
- January May: Campus IDEAS showcases



G/T Referral Period Open

Students who participate in services designed for gifted/talented students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication. These skills are often evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that reflect individuality and creativity. Furthermore, these skills are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment.

Hays CISD campuses will accept referrals for gifted and talented services from October 1 - 31. Referrals can be made in two different ways. The first option is to complete an online referral at THIS LINK. The second option is to complete a paper referral. Copies of the paper referral form are available in the front office of each campus and should be returned to the campus counselor.

Assessments will be conducted in November through January. Evaluation of student data and selection of services occur in February. Parents are notified by email in March of the final determination of services.

On September 25, a parent meeting was held to provide an overview of the characteristics of gifted students, the referral and assessment timeline and procedures, and Hays CISD's gifted service design. To view the presentation, click on THIS LINK.

If your child is already identified as G/T, he/she does not need to be reassessed. However, if you have another child you would like to refer for services, now is the time!

G/T Spotlight Award

Each year we recognize individuals who provide quality services to support the academic and social and emotional needs of gifted students. This can be any staff member including counselors, teachers, instructional coaches, administrators, etc. Nominations were made by parents and co-workers. One staff member was selected as the honoree for each campus. Please review the staff members who were recognized for each campus for the 2023 - 2024 school year on the following slides. If you are interested in nominating someone for the 2024 - 2025 award, please CLICK HERE.



Elena Padilla - Blanco Vista Elementary

"Ms. Padilla excels with her 5th graders by scaffolding curriculum extensions for her GT students. She makes it fun and interesting!"



Hillary Price - Buda Elementary

"Ms. Price does an amazing job of connecting with her GT students! She really takes the time to listen to their needs and problem solve ways to best support them. She gives GT students the opportunity to explore their interests and expand their knowledge. Thank you for encouraging and supporting our GT students!"



Elizabeth Villalobos - Camino Real Elementary

"Ms. Villalobos does an amazing job of supporting G/T students! She provided students with Genius Hour time so they could work on interest based projects. She also incorporated thinkLaw lessons into her weekly plans to enhance student critical thinking skills. She managed a Destination Imagination team providing G/T students the opportunity to participate in different challenges. Thank you for supporting our G/T students!"





Alissa Spry - Carpenter Hill Elementary

"Mrs. Spry has really vamped up her stations to meet the needs of her gifted learners. She provides student choice and allows students to explore their creativity. She creates a learning environment where students are not afraid to take challenges."

Sarah Marshall- Elm Grove Elementary

"She goes above and beyond to make sure that she is meeting the needs of all her G/T students!"





Kristen Martinez - Fuentes Elementary

Ms. Martinez does a great job of differentiating for her GT students! She provides opportunities for GT students to learn through project based learning. GT students created a business/marketing plan and sold hot chocolate during their lunch/recess time. Thank you for supporting your GT students and making the projects applicable to the real world!

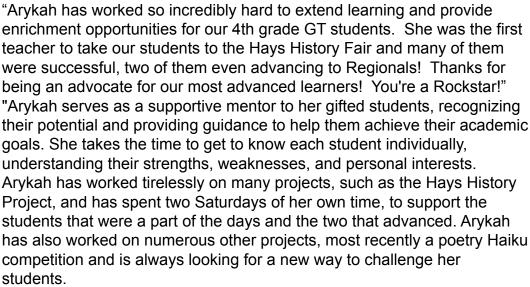
Nissa Hotchkiss - Hemphill Elementary

I nominated Mrs. Hotchkiss because she goes above and beyond to create meaningful and engaging extension activities for her class. She shares resources and activities with our grade level team that she finds and makes.

Ms. Hotchkiss does an amazing job of providing enrichment to her G/T students! Students have a portfolio of all the projects they have worked on throughout the year. Ms. Hotchkiss also incorporates District created resources in her stations. Thank you for all that you do to support G/T students!



Arykah Navarro - Kyle Elementary



Overall, Arykah Navarro's dedication, personalized approach, and advocacy for gifted students make her a deserving candidate for the gifted and talented spotlight. Her commitment to excellence in teaching and her profound impact on the academic and personal growth of her gifted students truly set her apart as an exceptional educator."

"Ms. Navarro goes above and beyond to help all of the 4th grade GT students focus on their projects. She is always there to guide them, keep them focused, and pushes them to do their best. Our 4th graders are extremely fortunate to have her!

Mrs. Navarro completely understands and meets the needs of her gifted students. She took on the role of leading History Day projects across the grade-level this year and rocked it. She puts in work to get to know her students and form relationships with them. She is a team player and always willing to try new things in her classroom for her gifted students.





Jenne Brauchle - Negley Elementary

"Ms. Brauchle does an amazing job of making learning contextual to real-world experiences. She creates a classroom environment where students feel supported during their learning journey by giving them the opportunity to propose their own ideas for products in stations. She then differentiates student learning based on their interest."

Jackie Bittner - Pfluger Elementary

Bittner is super sweet & patient with her students. She's knowledgeable & supports them in their creativity academically/emotionally. My child is super proud to say she is "my teacher".

"Mrs. Bittner has a passion for science and math and encourages students. She encouraged my student by sending home additional materials for him to work on and challenge him. She makes science and math exciting and fun. My son always talks about her classroom and the things that they are learning about."

"Mrs. Bittner is an exceptional educator who goes above and beyond to create a positive and engaging learning environment for her students. Her dedication to teaching is evident through innovative teaching methods and ability to connect with each individual student.

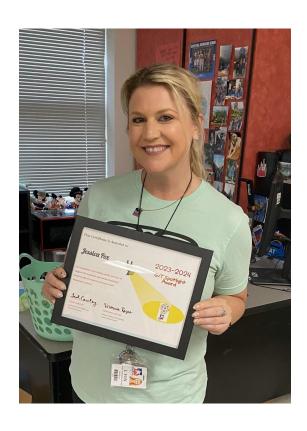
Mrs. Bittner consistently demonstrates a deep understanding of their subject matter and effectively communicates complex concepts to her students. She has a passion for learning and inspires her students to develop a love for the subject as well. In addition to her outstanding teaching skills, MRs. Bittner is also a strong advocate for her students. She takes the time to understand each student's unique needs and provides the necessary support to help them succeed academically and personally.

Overall, Mrs. Bittner is an exceptional educator who deserves recognition for her dedication, passion, and commitment to her students' success. Nominating her for the Spotlight Award would be a fitting tribute to her outstanding contributions to the field of education."



Jessica Fox - Science Hall Elementary

"Jessica is new to Science Hall this vear and has done an amazing job with the G/T students in her class. Even though she only has two identified G/T students in her class, Ms. Fox makes sure to differentiate her instruction to meet the needs of the students. She builds trust with her students and invites them to be challenged. She has worked individually with a student and he has made tremendous gains both personally and academically since the beginning of the school year. She is also not shy about asking for help and collaborating with others when needed. She is truly a remarkable educator of gifted students."





Denny Schulte - Sunfield Elementary

"Ms. Schulte does an amazing job of supporting G/T students! She is an advocate for the G/T program and serves as her campus liaison. She provided G/T students with an ocean themed challenge day which encouraged G/T students to think critically and solve problems with a team. Thank you for all that you do to support our G/T students!"

Felicia Colunga and Laura Villarreal - Tobias Elementary

"Ms. Colunga & Ms. Villarreal worked together as a team to provide enrichment for their G/T students. They provided students the opportunity to work on projects across curricular. Students had multiple projects to present at the IDEAS showcase. It was a true team effort! "



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Alisha Martinez - Tom Green Elementary

"I am thrilled to nominate Alisha Martinez for the GT Spotlight Teacher. She consistently seeks out innovative opportunities for her students, ensuring they have access to unique learning experiences that challenge and inspire them. She goes above and beyond to find creative ways for her students to showcase their learning fostering a sense of excitement and pride in their achievements."

Ana Zavala Tamayo - Uhland Elementary

"She provides opportunities for her students to explore their passions, embrace their creativity and encourages their self-directed learning."



Cathryn Stewart - Barton Middle School

"Cathryn works very hard to provide engaging higher level activities in her class ranging from hands-on projects to participation in Socratic Seminars. She also does an outstanding job as the G/T Liaison. She meets with students throughout the year to ensure they are making progress towards participation in the IDEAS showcase. Barton is lucky to have a teacher who is dedicated to meeting the needs of advanced level students in her Language Arts classes and throughout the school."



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Ruth Thompson - Chapa Middle School

"Mrs. Thompson goes above and beyond in scaffolding her GT students by constantly providing feedback and pushing them to excel in everything they do."

Jessica Leinen - Dahlstrom Middle School

"She's great at getting all of her students encouraged and making sure they are included in UIL events. She's dependable and thorough and gets answers if she doesn't know something. Also very good at assisting kids with recommendation letters which is important."



Kelli Shelly - McCormick Middle School

"Kelli is an outstanding Instructional Coach who works to meet the needs of all students. This year she focused on differentiation for advanced level students when completing class visits and planning with teachers. In addition, she worked with district staff to create a professional development opportunity specifically focused on how to differentiate for advanced level students."





Blair Hanner - Simon Middle School

"Coach Hanner challenges students to expand their knowledge of science on a daily basis."

Taylor Benavidez - Dahlstrom Middle School

"This teacher works so hard to challenge and encourage her G/T students. She works with them to ensure their projects are exactly what they want them to be. She has a positive and exuberant attitude that is contagious to not only her students but her fellow teachers. She clearly has a passion for teaching all her students, but the attention to her G/T students has certainly been noticed."





Nathan Matthews - Hays High School

"Nathan is a pioneer serving G/T students in secondary advanced academics! He piloted the Chemistry OnRamps curriculum at Hays HS this year and has done such a fabulous job working with his kids to earn them college credit. He expects an overwhelming majority of students to receive four hours of UT credit for all their hard work. Further, his success is also shown by the expected growth of the program for the 24-25 school year, with enrollment requests more than doubling the 23-24 totals!"

Dr. Deb Rang - Johnson High School

"Academically, Dr. Rang's students have the opportunity to choose their content, product, and process paths in class throughout each learning opportunity. Students are also given the option of proposing another way to complete assignments. For example, during learning about the Sun, students work from a choice board to decide the path they would like to follow to share their learning. Emotionally gifted students may struggle with anxiety and/or the need for perfection. For these situations, Dr. Rang's students are frequently monitored, especially at the beginning of an assignment. Students are also monitored and supported during any assignment and an open-door policy is in place to support them as they move forward with their learning."





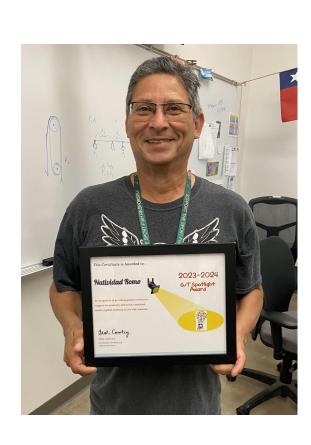
Hannah Hatch - Lehman High School

"I am nominating Ms. Hatch because of her commitment to pushing the rigor in her classroom and making a true GT course for our students that is aligned to the AP and advanced curriculum. Ms. Hatch teaches AP World History, AP Government and next year, after she proposed and successfully recruited enough students, will be teaching an Art History AP."

Natividad Romo - Live Oak Academy

"He works with many G/T students on project based learning incorporating each student's individual skills and interests."

"Mr. Romo provides projects that give students opportunities outside of the regular curriculum. He allows for students to create their own projects. He teaches science in such a way that students find it fun and are enthusiastic about their creative work."



G/T Organizations

These are independent organizations not associated with Hays CISD that provide support for families of students identified as Gifted and Talented.



The Texas Association for the Gifted & Talented (TAGT) connects and empowers educators and parents to meet the unique needs of gifted and talented students from every cultural background who see the world in unique ways and are developing minds that just might discover innovative answers to the most challenging questions of their generation.

Chartered in 1978, TAGT is the nation's largest state advocacy group of its kind, providing more than 4,000 members a forum for exchanging ideas and information about the education of G/T students. TAGT recognizes the unique social, emotional, and intellectual needs of gifted and talented students and provides educational services to meet these needs. TAGT is statewide, individual membership association and is classified as a 501(c) 3 charitable nonprofit organization.

TAGT Mission Statement

The Texas Association for the Gifted & Talented connects and empowers educators and parents to meet the unique needs of gifted and talented individuals through awareness, advocacy, and action.

TAGT Vision Statement

The Texas Association for the Gifted & Talented strives to positively impact the lives of gifted and talented individuals by providing relevant, innovative programs and services through an engaged, diverse membership.



The TAGT Podcast covers a wide range of topics, all focused on the unique needs and experiences of gifted and talented individuals. Here's a glimpse of what you can expect:

Interviews: Experts from the field of gifted education come together to share their knowledge, insights, and best practices.

Insights: Discover innovative teaching strategies, curriculum ideas, and classroom experiences tailored to gifted students.

Parenting Support: Get guidance and tips for parenting gifted children, including navigating challenges and nurturing their talents. **Advocacy and Action:** Learn about the latest advocacy efforts and

actions that are shaping the world of gifted education in Texas and beyond.

Spotlights: Hear from gifted and talented students, educators, and coordinators themselves as they share their achievements, challenges, and aspirations.



G/T Organizations

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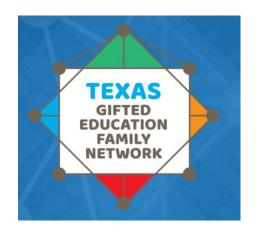
SENG is a nonprofit network of people who guide gifted, talented, and twice-exceptional individuals to reach their goals intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.







NAGC is the nation's leading organization focused on the needs of gifted and talented children. Dedicated to uplifting and empowering those who support children with advanced abilities, NAGC provides energizing professional learning, impactful research, and inspiring advocacy to ensure all children have equitable opportunities and support to develop their gifts and talents.

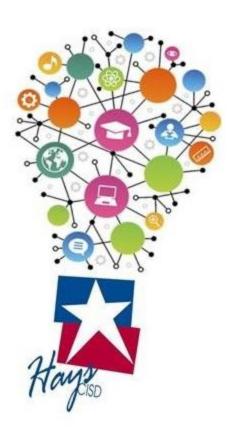


The Gifted Education Family Network of Texas supports excellence and equity in gifted education by engaging in activities in three areas: (a) connecting families who have an interest in gifted education, (b) educating and supporting families on topics related to gifted education and talent development, and (c) advocating for strong, vibrant, and appropriately challenging education programs that benefit students who demonstrate exceptional performance or the potential for exceptional performance.

Thanks for Reading!

Hays CISD G/T Magazine

* Required



Please leave a positive comment about the magazine.

Your answer

In what ways do you think we can improve the magazine?

Your answer

Do you have any additional comments?

Your answer