



Sherman
Independent School District

Gifted and Talented Handbook

District Gifted Mission Statement:

Sherman I.S.D. teachers and staff will provide Gifted & Talented students with differentiated educational opportunities that inspire and empower them to meet their maximum potential and to become productive citizens and lifelong learners in a diverse and complex world.

Sherman I.S.D. teachers and staff will provide information, resources, and support to the families of GT students as they help their child discover and develop their unique talents and abilities.

Sherman I.S.D. will support teachers and staff as they provide research-based instruction and differentiated opportunities that help students achieve their highest levels of potential.

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Contact Information:

Mrs. Amy Porter- Director of Elementary Education; aporter@shermanisd.net 903-891-6421

Mr. Blake Hays- Director of Secondary Education; blhays@shermanisd.net 903-891-6421

Mrs. Cyndi Petray- Challenge/GT Program Facilitator; cpetray@shermanisd.net 903-891-6670

State Goal for Services for Gifted Students

Students who participate in services designed for gifted students will demonstrate skills in self-directed learning, thinking, research, and communication as evidenced by the development of innovative products and performances that are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment and reflect individuality and creativity. High school graduates who have participated in services for gifted students will have produced products and performances of professional quality as part of their program services.

[Texas State Plan for Gifted and Talented- English and Spanish](#)

State 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: (1.) exhibits high performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area; (2.) possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or (3.) excels in a specific academic field.

SISD Program Design

The Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students requires that gifted students have opportunities to work independently, with other classmates, and with other gifted students during the school day and through the entire school year.

Sherman ISD will assure an array of learning opportunities that are appropriate to the abilities of gifted and talented students that emphasize content in the four core academic areas (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies).

Grades K-5 are served through a GT pull-out program, **Challenge/GT Program**, delivered by GT trained specialists as well as through differentiated activities when appropriate in the regular classroom.

Grades 6-8 are served through GT classes in the four core academic areas. A student may participate in all four GT classes but it is not required. A GT student must participate in at least one GT class or he/she will be placed on **furlough**.

Grades 9-12 are served through academic course options at the high school. GT students can take GT designated Pre-AP and AP English courses all four years. The courses do not always have enough GT students to create a class, but are offered annually and scheduled if numbers permit. GT students also have the opportunity to take advanced courses (Pre-AP, AP, and Advanced CTE) in all areas including core academics, fine arts, and career and technical education.

Tiers of Service

Gifted students are gifted all day, every day. Even when a gifted student is in a regular classroom situation they deserve an intellectual challenge and a learning environment that meets their social and emotional needs. Sherman ISD offers an array of services beginning with differentiation in the regular classroom and extending to pull-out classes at the elementary level, GT content classes in grades 6-8, or Advanced Academic classes in grades 9-12. We refer to this as tiers of service and it all begins with Tier 1, Universal Instruction.

Teachers responsible for gifted students as part of the gifted service design must have a minimum of the state-required 30-hour training for gifted education and receive an annual 6-hour update. With this training, Tier 1 teachers are able to differentiate for students in the regular classroom when appropriate.

Tiers of Service	
Tier 1	Differentiation within the regular classroom
Tier 2	<p>Elementary- Pullout (Challenge/GT Program)</p> <p>Middle School - GT Classes for ELAR, Math, Science, and Social Studies</p> <p>High School—Pre-AP and AP classes, Dual Enrollment College classes, advanced Fine Arts classes, advanced Career and Technology classes</p> <p>Team Competitions (Future Problem Solvers, UIL, 4H Robotics)</p>
Tier 3	<p>Acceleration by grade level or single subject</p> <p>Individual Academic Competitions</p>

Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted Learners

Gifted students have unique social and emotional needs. All GT teachers and counselors have received training to support both the cognitive and affective needs. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities that bring them personal satisfaction. Parents are encouraged to provide a balance of “out of school” activities that are appropriate to the social and emotional needs of their children.

Screening/Assessment Process

A student in grades K-11 may be referred for the assessment process by parents or teachers. Students in grades 7-11 may refer themselves. Parents will be notified if they did not originate the referral and they must give permission for the student to be tested.

The Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, 3rd Edition (NNAT3) will be administered to all second grade students as a universal screener for the gifted program. Students scoring in the top 5% of each campus group will be included in the assessment process. Parents will be notified of the results of the NNAT3 assessment.

Referral forms are available on the Sherman ISD website, at each school campus, or at the following link:

[Parent Referral Form](#)

Students will be assessed with a minimum of three (3) criteria to gather qualitative and quantitative information. These may include but are not limited to:

- Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, 3rd Edition (NNAT3)
- Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (KABC)
- Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, 2nd Edition (KBIT2)
- Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
- Gates Inventory
- Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS)
- Gifted Rating Scale (GRS)
- iReady
- mClass

A student profile will be used to collect information from assessment instruments. Additional data from state assessments, local benchmarks and student performance products may be included in the student profile.

Detailed Description of Referral, Screening, and Selection by Grade Level

Sherman ISD GT Referral and Identification Timeline

Grades 1-5 New to SISD	Referrals accepted from parents and teachers for students new to SISD	Mid October
Grades 1-5 New to SISD	Assessments conducted after receiving written parent permission	Early November
Grades 1-5 New to SISD	Parents notified of testing results. Parental permission required for identified students to participate in programming	Mid November
Grades 1-5 New to SISD	Gifted services begin at next appropriate unit/break	December-January
K	Kindergarten behavioral checklist screening	October-December
K	Referrals accepted from parents and teachers for Kindergarten students	Early January
K	Assessments conducted after receiving written parent permission	Early February
K	Parents notified of testing results. Parental permission required for identified students to participate in programming	Late February
K	Gifted services begin for Kindergarten students	March 1
Grade 2	NNAT3 Testing for all 2nd grade students	Mid-January
Grades K-11	Referrals accepted from parents, teachers and students	April
Grades K-11	Assessments conducted after receiving parent permission	April-May
Grades K-11	Parents notified of testing results. Parental permission required for identified students to participate in programming	June
1-12	Gifted services begin the following fall for students identified in spring or summer testing	August
6-12	New to SISD (Students who enroll in SISD during the school year will be tested as needed.)	August (See page 19)

Kindergarten Program

Phase 1- Formation of the Screening Pool (Mass Screening)

During the first semester, G/T specialists will review district iReady data as a mass screener for kindergarten. Students scoring in the 85th percentile will be considered for Phase 2.

Phase 2- Referrals

In January, the Gifted and Talented Facilitator, Challenge/GT Program specialists, and principals will secure the names of children who are to be considered for possible placement in the Kindergarten Challenge/GT Program. Those names may be secured in one of the following ways:

1. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from teachers.
2. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from parents.
3. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from other sources.

Students meeting any of the conditions above could move onto the testing phase.

Elementary Program New to District (first semester)

Formation of the Screening Pool

The Gifted and Talented Coordinator, Challenge/GT Program specialists, and the elementary principals will secure the names of students in 1st - 5th grade (first semester) who are new to Sherman ISD, and being considered for possible placement in the Challenge/GT Program.

The names of potential students will be secured in one of the following ways:

1. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from teachers.
2. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from parents.
3. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from other sources.

Students meeting any of the conditions above could move onto the testing phase.

Elementary Program (second semester)

Phase 1 - Formation of the Screening Pool

1. Data collected from the mass screening of all second graders using the NNAT III.

Phase 2 - Referrals

The Gifted and Talented Coordinator, Challenge/GT Program specialists, and the elementary principals will secure the names of the students in grades K-5 (not tested in the previous 12 months) who are to be considered for possible placement in the Challenge/GT Program.

The names of potential students will be secured in one of the following ways:

1. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from teachers.
2. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from parents.
3. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from other sources

Students meeting any of the conditions above could move onto the testing phase.

Middle and High School Program:

Phase 1 - Formation of the Screening Pool

School Counselors, Advanced academic teachers, and the school principals will secure the names of the students in advanced level courses first and second semester who are to be considered for possible placement in the Gifted Program.

The names of potential students will be secured in one of the following ways:

1. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from teachers.
2. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from parents.
3. Completed referrals and evaluation scales from other sources

Students meeting any of the conditions above could move onto the testing phase.

Identification

The student profile will be used to build an extensive picture of each learner that highlights the student's strengths and weaknesses. Students who are identified as needing gifted services must score the appropriate number of points on the district identification matrix. Each profile will have student identification masked before it is reviewed by a Gifted Identification Committee (GIC) that consists of educators trained in the unique characteristics and needs of gifted learners. The GIC will determine the appropriate placement for the student and parents will be notified about the decision in writing. Participation in the Gifted Program is voluntary.

Transfer Students

When a student identified as gifted by a previous school district transfers into SISD, the student's records shall be reviewed by the Gifted Identification Committee (GIC) to determine the appropriate placement of the student. The committee shall make its determination within 30 days of the student's enrollment in the District and shall base its decision on the transferred records, observation reports of District teachers who instruct the student, and student and parent conferences.

Appeal of Committee Decision

A parent or student who is not satisfied with the decision of the Gifted Identification Committee may appeal to the GIC. An educator from the committee will review the student profile with the parent or student and discuss the results. Any subsequent appeals shall be made in accordance with [FNG \(Local\)](#)

Reassessment for Gifted Services

Students who have been placed in the Challenge/GT Program will not be re-screened from year to year for GT identification. Identified students will continue in the program as long as they demonstrate a need for services.

Gifted programming shifts from a pull-out model in grades K-5 to a subject-specific content program in grades 6-12. To ensure proper placement in appropriately challenging coursework, student progress/performance will be periodically assessed. Qualifying students will be encouraged to participate in Math and Science GT classes, or English Language Arts and Social Studies GT Classes, or the recommendation could be for the student to participate in all four GT content classes.

Probation/Furlough/Exit Procedures

Probation

A teacher may recommend probation for a GT student that is not consistently performing at the advanced standard required for the gifted program/class (i.e. report card grade below 70 in core classes). Notification will be provided to the parent so that they can collaborate with the teacher and participate as a partner in education to support the student.

The teacher will complete an SISD Gifted Probation Recommendation Form (see appendix) to be reviewed by the Gifted Identification Committee (GIC). The form will include at least two specific differentiation strategies attempted with the student prior to the probationary referral. During the probationary period, teachers will attempt a minimum of two additional differentiation and/or intervention strategies and execute a process to monitor the progress of the student during the probationary period (usually 3-

9 weeks). The GIC will review the student's progress and will make one of three recommendations:

1. Remove the student from probation and return him/her to good standing in the gifted program and/or class.
2. Continue with the probationary period for an additional nine weeks with additional intervention and progress monitoring.
3. Recommend that the student be furloughed from the gifted program/class for the remainder of the school year.

A student recommended for furlough will have the opportunity to participate in the gifted program/class the following school year. If a student is recommended for probation for a second year, the GIC may recommend exiting from the GT program/class.

Furlough

A student may be placed on furlough (leave of absence) from the gifted program for up to one year. A furlough may be initiated by a parent, the Gifted Identification Committee (GIC), or the student, with parent permission for any of the following reasons:

1. The student has been on probation and the GIC recommends furlough
2. Furlough would be in the best interest of the student because of extenuating circumstances such as health concerns, family issues, or extreme time commitments outside of school hours.
3. The student is not participating in any gifted programming (pull-out, GT course, advanced course) during that school year.

A parent or student may request a furlough from the school counselor or the GT teacher.

Exit

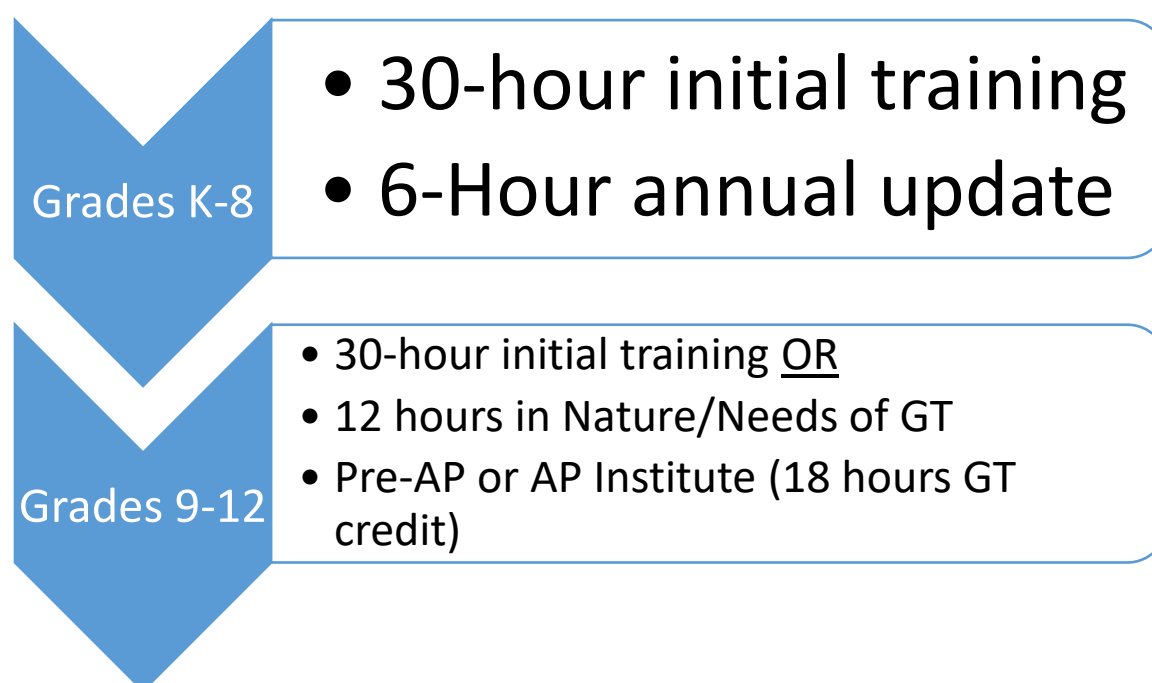
A student may be exited from the program by the GIC if Probation/Furlough requirements have not been met. The parent may also request that the student be exited from the program. Once exited, a student must go through the referral, assessment and identification process to re-enter the gifted program.

Professional Development

Sherman ISD is committed to providing appropriate and meaningful professional learning which allows the staff to meet the unique social, emotional, and cognitive needs of gifted and talented students. All teachers who provide instruction and services to GT students in grades K-12 are required to complete the 30-hour GT

Foundation Training and participate in at least six hours of annual professional development to support gifted learners. Administrators and counselors who have authority for service decisions are required to complete a minimum of six hours of professional development that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students and service options for gifted/talented students (19 TAC §89.5 and TAC §233.1).

It is the practice of Sherman ISD Challenge/GT Program specialists that they receive 18 hours of professional development annually that includes nature and needs of gifted/talented students.



Program Evaluation

Sherman ISD will evaluate the gifted program annually. Evaluation data will be included in the district and campus improvement plans. A program review will be presented annually to the board of trustees.

Websites on Gifted and Talented Resources-- [Gifted and Talented Resources](#)

Glossary

Accelerated Learning - A strategy of progressing through education at rates faster or at ages younger than the norm.

Advanced Placement - A program developed by the College Board where high schools offer courses that meet criteria established by institutions of higher education. In many instances, college credit may be earned with the successful completion of an AP exam in specific content areas.

Affective Curriculum - Curriculum that focuses on person/social awareness and adjustment, and includes the study of values, attitudes, and self.

Appeal - Process by which parents or students may question placement decisions for the gifted program. Appeal shall be made first to the campus administrator.

Aptitude - An inclination to excel in the performance of a certain skill.

At-Risk/Special Programs - Limiting factors as established by the state of Texas Education Code §29.081, including Economically Disadvantaged, Section 504 and Dyslexia, Special Education, Hearing Impaired, Asperger's Syndrome, and Autism.

Cluster Grouping - A grouping assignment for gifted students in the regular heterogeneous classroom. Typically, a small group of gifted students with similar needs, abilities, or interests are "clustered" in the same classroom, which allows the teacher to more efficiently differentiate assignments for a group of advanced learners rather than just one or two students.

Compacted Curriculum - After showing a level of proficiency in the basic curriculum, a student can then be allowed to exchange instructional time for other learning experiences.

Criterion-Referenced Test (C.R.T.) - Criterion-referenced tests measure how well the child has mastered the expected content, generally including all the expected content at a single level. Criterion-referenced tests cannot measure how well a child has done on any level except the level it is written to measure, usually a single grade level, or even a half of a grade level. Particularly at younger grades, tests may be normed for "spring" or "fall" administration. State grade-level achievement tests are nearly always criterion-referenced tests.

Critical Thinking Skills - Using higher order thinking skills, analysis, or evaluation, to gain understanding of complex problems or ideas.

Differentiated Instruction - Refers to a systematic approach to planning curriculum and instruction for academically diverse learners. It is thinking about the classroom with the dual goals of honoring each student's learning needs and maximizing each student's learning capacity.

Educational Assessment - The process of collecting data, usually in measurable terms; knowledge, skills, and abilities. SISD uses both objective and subjective instruments.

Exiting - Formal process for withdrawal of a student from participation in the G/T program.

Furlough - Students who are unable to maintain satisfactory performance within the structure of the gifted and talented program may be placed on furlough by the selection committee. The purpose of such a furlough is to provide the student an opportunity to attain performance goals established by the selection committee. A furlough also may be granted at the request of the parent or student (of legal age).

A student may be furloughed for a period of time deemed appropriate by the selection committee. At the end of the furlough, the student's progress shall be reassessed, and the student may reenter the gifted program, be removed from the program, or be placed on another furlough.

G.A.T.E.S. - The Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scale comprises 50 items that describe characteristic behaviors of persons who are gifted and talented. It is easily completed by teachers, parents, and others who are knowledgeable about the students being considered for a gifted and talented program. The *GATES* is a norm-referenced instrument that assesses the characteristics, skills and talents of gifted students.

Gifted and Talented Student - "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. [Education Code](#)

Identification Criteria -- Students shall be identified as gifted/talented in accordance with a written policy that includes:

1. Provisions for ongoing screening and selection of students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment in the areas defined in Education

Code 29.121.

2. Assessment measures collected from multiple sources according to each area defined in the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students.
3. Data and procedures designed to ensure that students from all populations in a district have access to assessment and, if identified, to services provided for the gifted/talented program.
4. Provisions for final selection of students to be made by a committee of at least three local district educators who have received training in the nature and needs of gifted students.
5. Provisions regarding furloughs, reassessment, exiting of students from program services, transfer students, and appeals of district decisions regarding program placement. *19 TAC 89.1*

I.T.B.S. - Iowa Test of Basic Skills Survey Battery - A norm-referenced assessment that measures student achievement in the academic areas of reading (including vocabulary and reading comprehension), language and mathematics.

K.A.B.C.III - Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children, Second Edition - An individually administered, norm-referenced, culturally fair test to measure cognitive abilities and processing skills for 3 to 19 year olds. KABC-II subtests are designed to minimize verbal instructions and responses. It yields a true picture of a child's abilities - even when language difficulties or cultural differences might affect test scores.

Matrix - An explicit set of criteria used for assessing a particular type of work or performance. A matrix usually also includes levels of potential achievement for each criterion, and sometimes also includes work or performance samples that typify each of those levels. Levels of achievement are often given numerical scores. A summary score for the work being assessed is produced by adding the scores for each criterion. SISD uses matrices for identification, furlough, transfer and exiting the program.

N.A.G.C.- The National Association of Gifted Children - An organization of parents, teachers, educators, other professionals, and community leaders who unite to address the unique needs of children and youth with demonstrated gifts and talents as well as those children who may be able to develop their talent potential with appropriate educational experiences.

N.N.A.T. III® - The Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test® -- A norm-referenced test used as an alternative screener for G/T identification. The NNAT® is a short, multiple choice test, with no reading. As the test name suggests only non-verbal (also called spatial or

figural) reasoning ability is tested. Tests include up to four different types of questions - pattern completion, reasoning by analogy, serial reasoning and spatial visualization.

Norm-Referenced Test - A test referenced to norms based on the performance of other students across the nation which is designed to compare student achievement relative to other students' achievement. Scores on norm-referenced tests are reported as percentiles; a student with a percentile score of 90 scored higher than 90% of the students who were in the norm group. **National norms** are based on a group of students of the same grade who were tested to establish the test's results, during test development. A well-designed test should include a cross-section of gender, race, income, urban-suburban-rural schools, etc.

Objective Assessments - Objective assessment is a form of questioning which has a single correct answer.

O.L.S.A.T.- Otis-Lennon School Ability Test- The OLSAT is a norm-referenced test designed to measure verbal, quantitative and figural reasoning skills that are most closely related to scholastic achievement. Tasks such as detecting likenesses and differences, recalling words and numbers, defining words, following directions, classifying, establishing sequence, solving arithmetic problems and completing analogies are included, because they have been shown to be valid measures of an individual's ability to reason logically. The OLSAT measures cognitive abilities related to a child's aptitude. This test assesses a child's thinking skills, specifically abstract thinking and reasoning.

Percentile rank (PR) - Allows the student's score on a test to be compared to other children who have also taken the test. An average score on a test yields a percentile rank of 50, meaning that the child scores higher than 50 percent of the children in the comparison group. Talented children tend to score in the top 5 percent to 10 percent when compared to children their own age.

Pull out Program - A part-time special education program that takes like ability learners out of the mainstream class for specific instruction. Many elementary gifted programs are once a week, pull-out programs that provide enrichment activities.

Referral - The nomination of a student for screening by the GT specialists or counselors to determine a student's need for GT services. Parents, educators and students may submit names for referral.

Screening - A process designed to determine an individual's eligibility for participation in a GT program.

Confidential

Grades K-5
SISD Elementary Challenge Program Matrix



Date _____
Student ID# _____
Grade _____
Home Language _____
Special Programs _____

Sample

Julie Sharp _____
Jennifer Parker _____
Andrea Wiggins _____
Cyndi Petray _____

	1	2	3	4	Score
Individual Ability Score (K-3 & 4 Fall) (4th Spring/5th as needed)					
KABC _____	(84%ile or below) 115 or below	85-92%ile 116-121	93-97%ile 122-129	98%ile+ 130+	
OTHER _____					
Group Ability Score (K-5)					
NNAT _____	(84%ile or below) 116 or below	85-92%ile 117-123	93-97%ile 124-131	98%ile+ 132+	
OLSAT _____					
OTHER _____					
Achievement Scores (mCLASS K-2; ITBS 3-5)					
ITBS (R, M, or TB) _____	84%ile or below	85-92%ile	93-97%ile	98%ile+	
mCLASS / IDEL (R) _____					
I-READY (R/M) _____					
OTHER _____					
STAAR (3 Spring/4-5)					
READING _____	Meets either Math or Reading	Meets both Math and Reading	Masters either Math or Reading, with a Meets on the other	Masters both Math and Reading	
MATH _____					
Grades (3-5)					
READING _____	87 or below	88-92	93-96	97+	
MATH _____					
AVERAGE _____					
Behavioral Rating (K-5)					
GATES ASSESSMENT _____	110 or below	111-130			
Special Analysis: Students may qualify for special analysis if they have discrepancies in data, belong to special programs, exhibit rapid language acquisition, or do not meet the criteria by one point.					
TOTAL					

QUALIFY

K-2 = 11 Points
3rd = 13 Fall/16 Spring
4th = 16 Fall/13 Spring
5th = 13 Fall/Spring

_____ NO

_____ YES

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Sherman ISD Gifted Probation Recommendation Form

SECTION ONE:

Student Name _____ Grade _____

Teacher _____

GT Class/Gen Ed Subject not meeting standard:

☐ Math ☐ Science ☐ English Language Arts ☐ Social Studies ☐ Challenge

According to the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted Students*, "Districts meet the needs of gifted/talented students by modifying the depth, complexity, and pacing of the curriculum and instruction ordinarily provided by the school."

Use the following section to indicate the types of differentiation that have been provided to the student **prior to** placing the student on a plan. If differentiation has not been provided, the student cannot be placed on a probation plan.

Date this section was completed by teacher: _____

Differentiation Strategy	Explanation/Example(s)
Choice of Product	
Problem-Based Learning	
Tiered Assignment	
Flexible Grouping	
Pre-Assessment	
Most Difficult First	
Alternative Assignment	

Other:	

Sherman ISD Gifted and Talented Student Improvement Plan (cont.)

SECTION TWO:

Gifted students may struggle in class due to behaviors associated with underachievement. This section helps to target the causes of underachievement and provide a plan for the student that prescribes specific interventions and monitors the student's response to those interventions.

Date this section was completed by teacher: _____

Date parent was notified of concerns: _____

Academic Concerns	
Unproductive or Destructive Actions	
Social-Emotional Concerns	

List possible action steps to address the concerns:

Sherman ISD Gifted and Talented Student Improvement Plan (cont.)

Start of Plan (date): _____

Checkpoint Date:	
Action Step	Evidence of Progress
Checkpoint Date:	
Action Step	Evidence of Progress
Checkpoint Date:	
Action Step	Evidence of Progress

Student will show improvement by (date): _____