Rhodes School for the Performing Arts

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

INFORMATIONAL PACK

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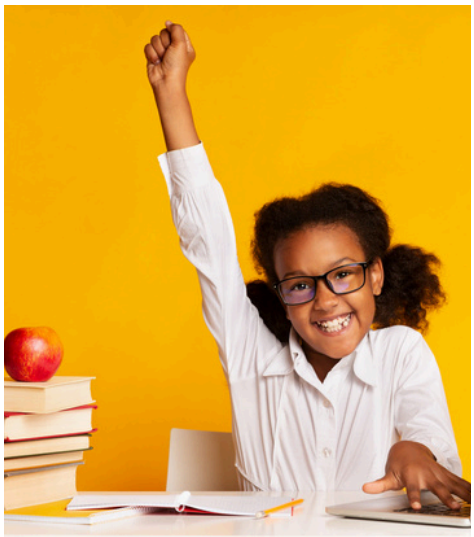
RSPA's GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

About Us

Our students have many gifts and talents, ranging from academics to art, performance, music, and athletics. At Rhodes School for the Performing Arts, we are committed to meeting the needs of all students, including this special population. The Gifted and Talented Program at RSPA was developed to ensure that our most able learners are challenged to meet their highest potential and that the curricula and learning opportunities are in line with student needs.

Gifted and Talented Services, the RSPA way

GATE students on the elementary and secondary campuses are typically served in their general-ed classrooms. Services can and do vary based on the campus and student needs. Teachers work to differentiate curriculum, instruction, and assessments for gifted students. Differentiation or different instructional strategies for GATE students typically come in the form of open-ended questions, depth and complexity, small groups, and learning stations, but do not have to be in this format. Additionally, GATE students attend pull-out sessions throughout the school year to work with the GATE coordinator on special extended learning projects, attend field experiences in the community, and participate in various academic competitions such as the GATE Symposium.



Rhodes School for the Performing Arts

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

RSPA's GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

What is Gifted and Talented (G/T)?
According to the Texas Education Code, section 29.121, Gifted and Talented means a child who performs at or shows the potential for performing at a 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

How do I know if my child is Gifted and Talented?

All gifted children are not the same. It is important to note that there are not ***one*** or ***two*** characteristics that an educator can point to in order to say that a student is G/T. It is a ***combination*** of characteristics. Some signs that a student might be gifted include, but ***are not limited to***:

- Extraordinary memory compared to peers
- Highly curious
- Highly creative
- Exhibits abstract reasoning and problem-solving skills
- Draws inferences and grasps underlying principles
- Initiates projects
- Discusses things in detail, elaborates

What does "GATE" mean?
Here at RSPA, "GATE" means the same thing as Gifted and Talented. "GATE is used to refer to G/T programs, whereas Gifted and Talented refers to the student.

What is RSPA's GATE program?
RSPA's GATE program is designed for G/T students in grades K-8 who excel in general ability in combination with having exceptional creative/productive thinking and/or leadership ability. Our GATE program provides services for these students that are comprehensive, structured, and appropriately challenging. The GATE curriculum (or plan of study) is a supplement to students' general classroom experience and is differentiated by modifying the depth and complexity of the general school program, utilizing higher-level thinking skills and developing independent research skills focusing on advanced level products.

Who qualifies for GATE?
While many children are bright and high-achieving students, not all would be considered gifted learners. Below is a chart that highlights the traits of both gifted learners and high-achieving students to help determine if the GATE program might be a good fit for your child.

Bright Child	Gifted Learner
Knows what it takes to succeed	Demonstrates advanced aptitude
Focused on the end product	Focused on the journey
Readily grasps meaning	Draws additional inferences
Absorbs info	Manipulates information
Enjoys School	Loves to learn
Knows answers	Poses questions
Words hard to perform well	Performs without significant effort
Works to get top grades	Not motivated by grades
Loves rules	Own ideas of how things should be done
Straightforward/sequential thinker	Wants basic guidelines; Thrives off complexity
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetition for mastery
Memorizes	Makes connections
Pleased with progress; extrinsic motivation	Self-critical; intrinsically motivated
Enjoys peers	Looks for older or adult companionship

How does my child apply for the GATE program at RSPA?

Students in grades K & 5 will receive a universal screening. Parents of students in grades 1st-2nd can request screening for GATE services at RSPA via parent and/or teacher referrals during the referral window (September 16th - October 6th). Parents and teachers may refer students in grades 1st-2nd for testing, while students in grades 3rd, 4th, 6th - 8th, may only be referred by a teacher during the referral window. Parents must complete the Parent Referral packet in order for their child to be tested. Note, for grades 1-2, parents must complete the parent referral

All students referred for GATE will undergo a screening process to see if they qualify for GATE identification. RSPA utilizes abilities test scores, achievement test scores, along with input from parents and classroom teachers, to assess student giftedness. Parent notification letters indicating whether or not a child qualifies for the GATE program will be sent out following the receipt of student results.

What happens after my child is identified as G/T?
Once notified of G/T identification, students in grades 1-8 will begin receiving services in the spring of their current school year. Kindergarten students will receive services the following school year. Students already identified as G/T will begin receiving services in October 2026.

If my child has already taken the G/T test and has qualified for GATE services, do I need to reapply or test again?
Students who are identified within the last 3 years, will automatically receive GATE services, and he or she does not have to reapply/test, but they will need to take a copy of the identification matrix paperwork to the registrar on campus. Additionally, students do not need to retest to stay in the GATE program. After 3 years, students will need to retest. Once your child qualifies to receive GATE services, they will continue to receive them unless you request otherwise.

Can my child be tested more than once a year?

No, he or she can only be tested once every two (2) years to qualify for GATE identification here.

What if I no longer want my child to receive G/T services at RSPA?

At anytime during the school year, you have the option to voluntarily withdraw your child from the G/T program by submitting the Voluntary Exit Form to the GATE coordinator at your child's school.

Who has the final say over whether or not my child is admitted to the GATE program?

RSPA's Curriculum and Instruction Department develops the criteria for admission, which is based on the ***Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students***. While parent and teacher input is considered during the screening process, acceptance into the GATE program is determined by student performance on the abilities and achievement tests.

Who do I contact for more information or additional questions regarding GATE?

For more information, please contact the GATE Administrator, Coordinator, Kenitra Bennett, at ***kbennett@rhodesschool.org***, the GATE Coordinator, Tiffany Simon, at **tsimon@rhodesschool.org**, or reach out to your child's teacher.

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