

## **NISD Gifted & Talented Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

4:00 - 5:00

Annex Building, room 209

**Attendees:** Nicole Schuelke, Kari Whitlow, Rissa Springs, Jennifer Benner, Janna Smith, Julie Farris, Daniel Meyers, Sammie Baron, Susan Mitchell

We welcomed and introduced new members - Sammie Baron, Susan Mitchell, Daniel Meyers

We briefly discussed the purpose and location of our GTAC bylaws, the GT Handbook, and the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted Students.

Our current testing instruments were discussed and in an effort to identify a more diverse group of gifted students the decision was made to replace the NNAT3 with the CogAT (Cognitive Ability Test) as our cognitive ability assessment. Also, we will replace the district made parent and teacher academic behaviors questionnaire with the Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) form. Janna Smith has vast experience using the CogAT and believes that instrument gives us a better picture of student abilities. The SIGS collects more specific information about student academic behaviors than the brief questionnaire currently in use. The change will take place immediately. The remaining NNAT3 tests will be used in cases where more data is needed.

The committee reinforced the expectation that all teachers, K - 6, should receive the basic 30 hours of GT training. We agreed that while GT students are grouped at the beginning of the year it is always possible for a student to move into the district or to be newly identified as gifted and that student might not be in the GT cluster classroom. It is important that all elementary teachers understand how to identify gifted students for screening, understand the nature and needs of gifted students, and know how to plan lessons and activities to extend the learning of gifted students.

The committee discussed the service design of the GT program in 1st - 5th grade where GT students are clustered in pods. The possibility of creating Challenge Labs at the Elementary and Intermediate schools was discussed. Challenge labs would serve GT students for pullout classes, as well as serving other high performing students during RtI. We will discuss Challenge labs at our next meeting. We also briefly discussed adding field trips for the Junior High and High School GT students.

Our next meeting will be March 30, 2021. One item on the agenda will be the appointment of a secretary for our committee.