



Sisters School District
"Home of the Outlaws"

TAG

SSD Handbook

Talented and Gifted Program
2023-2024



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SSD TAG Coordinators

Sisters School District TAG Coordinator:

Lorna Van Geem

lorna.vangeem@ssd6.org

541-549-2099

Sisters Elementary School:

Erika Velikonia

erika.velikonia@ssd6.org

541-549-8981

Sisters Middle School:

Deb Riehle

deb.riehle@ssd6.org

541-549-2099

Tanya Young

tanya.young@ssd6.org

541-549-2099

Sisters High School:

Samra Spear

samra.spear@ssd6.org

541-549-4045



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TAG Flowchart

1. Student is referred to TAG by coordinator, staff member, parent, self
2. TAG Coordinator Sends Parent Notification of Referral along Parent Behavioral Information Form and Parent Permission to Evaluate Form
3. If the parent consents, proceed to Step 4. If not, file form in folder of no consent to evaluate
4. Teachers fill out Behavioral Information Form and Rate/Level
5. Student completes Student Interest Survey
6. Student completes CogAT Test
7. Form Case Study Team to review all documentation
8. Team comes to identification recommendation and complete Identification Report
9. Eligibility
 - a. Eligible
 - i. Send Notification to Parents
 - ii. Collect parent reply of acceptance or declining of services
 - b. Not-Eligible
 - i. Keep copy of ineligibility letter
10. Post-Eligibility
 - a. For students accepting TAG services complete PEP with teacher and student input
11. Review and update PEP as needed throughout the year
12. If a parent ever wishes to stop TAG programming, send Decline Services form and keep a signed copy in students TAG file



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TAG Glossary of Terms

Differentiation: To differentiate instruction is to match lessons, activities, and assignments to different students’ learning needs, levels, rates, interests, and styles. It involves tailoring the content, process, and/or products of teaching and learning to enhance each student’s learning experience and outcomes.

Differentiated instruction is the opposite of “one size fits all”; it reflects the teacher’s commitment to serve diverse learners with equally diverse instructional approaches. ***Our TAG program is based on the use of this critical method to meet the needs of the district’s TAG students.***

Rate: A measure of the pace at which a student progresses through the curriculum after being placed at the appropriate level. A student’s rate of learning will vary depending on the following:

- Subject
- Point in the learning process
- Degree of interest to the student
- Level of difficulty of the material and/or
- Learning style of the student.

Level: The Student’s instruction level in the curriculum, the place where the student will be successful, but will encounter knowledge and skills he or she has not yet learned or mastered. The place where the student will learn something NEW.

Potential to Perform: Potential to Perform **DOES NOT** mean that a student missed eligibility by a number of % points, instead it means that a student has something that hinders their accessibility to the measures being

used to determine eligibility, i.e. an ELL student that is having a hard time with the language of the test, a SPED student who has other issues that are masking their potential.

PEP- A Personal Education Plan is a plan that states the instructional modifications for the student based on their level and rate of learning. This is a “living,” document that is modified and adjusted as needed. It is critical that the teacher, student, and parent have input on this plan and that the plan is shared with parents. ***ALL TAG students will have a PEP in place ready to be signed by parents during the October Conference session. These will be updated/revised as needed prior to or at Winter Conferences.***

Tiered Assignments: Teachers use tiered assignments so that ALL students focus on essential understandings and skills but at different levels of complexity, abstractness, and open-endedness. The teacher keeps the FOCUS of the activity the same but provides routes of access at varying degrees of difficulty.

Curriculum Compaction: This is a three step method for streamlining the regular curriculum and providing time for advanced study.

1. Master of the regular curriculum is pre-assessed.
2. Students work on content and skills that they have not yet learned and mastered.
3. Students work on advanced assignments during the time they have saved.

Acceleration: This is when a student may be ready for an advanced class in one subject, but may not be in all subjects. Example: A second grade student working at a fourth-grade level in math would go to a fourth grade class for math everyday, but return to their regular class for the rest of the day.

Another example is having a student complete two grades in one year. This is often a preferred method to having a student skip an entire grade.

Individualized Instruction: Individualized instruction may be used to enrich and extend learning opportunities, and to offer special topics, projects or units of study.

Small Group Instruction: In small group instruction, students may be grouped within a skill area according to need, interest or ability.

Whole Class Instruction: Teachers may conduct whole class instructional lessons in such a way that the needs of advanced students are appropriately addressed within this format.

Fast Paced Group: Fast paced groups offer curriculum at a faster rate than usual.

In-Depth Study: In-depth study provides students with the opportunity and challenge of combining content learning with the skills of productive thinking, decision making, action taking, communicating and evaluating. In-depth study may be conducted by individuals or groups.

Learning Centers: Learning centers encourage participatory learning and can be designed to offer challenging experiences for advanced as well as other students.

Modify Content: Content may be modified by extending, enriching and/or accelerating the curriculum.

Modify Process Skills: Process skills enhance content-based learning and provide students with the tools for lifetime learning. These process skills include: productive thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking and problem solving; decision making; action taking; and communicating (reading, writing, listening and speaking). Process skills can be modified to strengthen skills and can provide additional learning challenges.

Modify Products or Outcomes: Student products or outcomes can be made more difficult or multi-faceted to reflect the higher expectations for advanced students.



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TAG Mission Statement

The mission of the Talented and Gifted (TAG) program in the Sisters School District is to provide an educational environment that recognizes the unique intellectual, academic, and social/emotional needs of gifted students. We are therefore committed to providing differentiated, in-depth, complex and accelerated opportunities for TAG students. The Sisters School District and the TAG Program strives to provide a quality educational experience in a cooperative atmosphere. Differentiation for gifted and talented students throughout their educational program results in improved teaching, student learning, and school performance. This is a cornerstone of programming, where the education of TAG students must be flexible and responsive to their unique needs. The experiences for highly able students, both in and out of the classroom, should be purposeful and rigorous, motivating and meaningful. Through a balance of acceleration and enrichment, the abilities of gifted learners are recognized, developed and challenged.



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TAG Protocols

1. At the beginning of the school year, each school's TAG Coordinator will forward TAG files they have to the next school for students transitioning into a new school (applies 4th to 5th and 8th to 9th)
2. TAG Coordinators will update their list of TAG students and forward it to Tyler SIS point person at the District Office.
3. In a confidential manner, each school's TAG Coordinator will share the list of TAG students as well as the students PEP to the teachers on that student's schedule.
4. At the HS level, lists of TAG Students will be sent by schedule/teacher at the start of each grading term.
5. TAG coordinators will send TAG Team Decision Reporting form to the District Coordinator and place one in the student's TAG file.
6. ALL Students have a PEP (ES, MS, HS)
 - a. Parents and Students have an opportunity at Conferences to provide input on this plan
 - b. Teachers with TAG students have an opportunity prior to Fall and Winter conference to have assistance on developing PEPs
 - c. PEPs are written with a plan to meet the students' ***rate and level***
7. Hard copies of TAG forms need to be in the **Confidential TAG Folder kept in School** to include all forms used in the identification process:
 - a. Talented and Gifted Checklist
 - b. Talented and Gifted Case Study Form
 - c. Inventories
 - d. Parent Notification Letter
 - e. Parent Option to Refuse (***If applicable***)
 - f. Outside Testing (***If applicable***)
 - g. **PEP – do not clean out old PEPs- keep as a record**
8. TAG Coordinators and classroom teachers can also keep a “Working File.”
9. Classroom teachers should have ready access to their students' PEP as this is a living document and requires ongoing revision and input.
10. Option to Decline Services (send copy to District Coordinator)
 - a. Have parents sign “Parent option to decline services”

11. Lines of Communication-
 - a. School based – Teacher(s)
 - b. School based-TAG Coordinator
 - c. District-District Coordinator

12. District Benchmark Testing and/or State Testing Math/Reading level- 97% is an indicator that a student needs to be evaluated for TAG- Don't identify based solely on this score.

13. Potential to perform- does not mean that a student missed 97% by a few points, instead it means that we need to look for students, i.e. SPED, ELL, etc...that perform at a level that catches our attention when considering that English is their second language, or they have learning disabilities that make accessing the test difficult.

14. For students moving into the district already identified for TAG, TAG coordinators will:
 - a. Review student cum file
 - b. Complete SSD eligibility paperwork to confirm previous identification
 - c. Develop appropriate PEP
 - d. Send paperwork to District Coordinator

15. Professional Development
 - a. District teachers will have professional development opportunities to enhance TAG knowledge and skills
 - b. TAG Coordinators will continue to build capacity PD opportunities and TAG coordinator meetings



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What is the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)?

The CogAT is an administered mental ability test, typically referred to as an IQ test. **The test has three batteries: Verbal, Quantitative, and Nonverbal.** **The Verbal Battery** appraises the child's verbal inductive and deductive reasoning skills as well as flexibility, fluency, and adaptability in working with verbal materials and solving verbal problems. **The Quantitative Battery** appraises high-level problem solving with quantitative symbols and concepts. **The Nonverbal Battery** appraises general inductive reasoning skills in using and adapting cognitive strategies. This battery contains the most novel problems and uses only geometric shapes and figures. The battery requires no reading and no outside knowledge. The CogAT testing session usually takes approximately two hours.

The resulting score for each battery is reported to parents as a national percentile ranking in the Mental Ability section on the Eligibility Report. The national percentile ranking allows you to compare your child's results to others of the same age across the nation. The typical child will score around the 50th percentile while a 97th percentile and above is a qualifying score in the mental ability category for talented and gifted services.