

Vistas Talent Pool

PARENT GUIDE



What is the Vistas Talent Pool?

The Vistas Talent Pool is a group of students who possess demonstrated or potential ability to perform at exceptionally high levels on campuses that receive Title I funds or designated as low-Social Economic Schools (low-SES). These students may be referred to as high-potential learners. The purpose of selecting students to participate in the Vistas Talent Pool is to provide early enrichment for those students whose talents must be nurtured in order for these talents to fully develop. These students are not automatically identified as gifted. They must be formally identified by meeting certain criteria.



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How are students selected for the Vistas Talent Pool?

Students are selected for the Vistas program through formal (e.g., cognitive abilities assessments) and informal (e.g., teacher observations) measures that provide evidence of high ability. All kindergarten students attending a campus that receives Title I funds or is designated as a low-Social Economic School (low-SES) participate in a universal screener to determine eligibility for the Vistas Talent Pool. Kindergarten teachers use the FBISD Gifted Behavior Observation questionnaire to identify students who exhibit high ability or gifted potential characteristics in the classroom.

Selection Criteria

- An ability score at or above the 71st percentile in at least one area (non-verbal, verbal, quantitative) on the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT).
- A score at or above the 80th percentile on the FBISD Gifted Behavior Observation Questionnaire
- Teacher observations of student behavior

What is a high-potential learner?

High-potential learners are students who learn and comprehend at a faster pace and more complex level than their age peers. These students often acquire skills earlier and progress at an accelerated rate.

What are informal assessment measures?

Informal assessment measures rely on observations and professional judgment rather than being standardized or norm-referenced with numbers and scores. Examples of informal assessment measures used to determine high potential in kindergarten students include behavior checklists, anecdotal records, work samples, products and performances.

Who are the members of the Vistas Talent Pool Selection Committee that identify students for participation in the Vistas Talent Pool campus program?

The Vistas Talent Pool Selection committee consists of kindergarten teachers, a school counselor, a school administrator, and a gifted education representative.

How many Kindergarten students are selected to participate in the Vistas Talent Pool at a campus?

It is important to cast a wide a net to provide early enrichment for high potential learners. Campuses select a minimum of ten (10) students up to a class size maximum of 20 students. The students selected represent the top 15% to 25% of the kindergarten population on that campus.

How are students referred for the Vistas Talent Pool Program?

There is not a referral process for the Vistas Talent Pool program. Kindergarten students attending a campus that receives Title I funds or designated as low-Social Economic school (low-SES) participate in a Universal Screener. The data from that screener along with teacher observations are used to identify students for the Vistas Talent Pool program.



How are students served in the Vistas Talent Pool program?

Students participating in the Vistas Talent Pool program will receive differentiated services that match their needs, interests, and abilities. Vistas Talent Pool students are cluster-grouped for reading and math. A GT-trained classroom teacher will enrich the curriculum to build the verbal intelligence of students. To strengthen verbal intelligence, instruction focuses on the linguistic and nonlinguistic aspects of background knowledge through language rich classrooms. Students receive services in a classroom that nurtures the traits, aptitudes, and characteristics of gifted students through rich learning opportunities. In addition to the standard curriculum, Vistas students benefit from an enriched language environment to develop verbal and quantitative reasoning skills, logic, sequential memory, and vocabulary. Teachers provide opportunities for students to use nonlinguistic representation, questioning, and extensive practice in the language of the discipline for added depth and complexity.

Do Vistas Talent Pool students have a GT Learning Plan (GTLP)?

GT Learning Plans are not a service for Vistas Talent Pool students, but the teacher(s) providing services to Vistas Talent Pool students should have a record of differentiated instruction and enrichment opportunities provided for students.

Do Vistas Talent Pool students automatically qualify as gifted students once they exit the Vistas Talent Pool and move into 6th grade?

Vistas Talent Pool students must be formally identified in one or more areas of giftedness through FBISD's GT identification process. While participating in the Vistas Talent Pool, students complete additional screeners in second and fourth grade to determine eligibility for gifted services. If not qualified for GT services by the end of fourth grade, teachers and/or parents may refer students for evaluation at the beginning of fifth grade during the fall GT referral window.

Where can I get more information?

You may contact your campus GT counselor for specific information about the Vistas Talent Pool program on your child's campus.

