

DE LEON ISD SPECIAL PROGRAMS HANDBOOK

The De Leon ISD does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex or disability in providing education or providing access to benefits of education services, activities, and programs in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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Title I School Wide Program

A Title I, Part A school wide program permits a school to use funds from Title I, Part A and other federal education programs and resources to upgrade the entire educational program of the school in order to raise academic achievement for all the students. School wide programs can use their Title I, Part A funds in the manner they choose, as long as they engage in reform strategies that increase the amount and quality of learning and help provide high-quality curriculum for all children, according to a comprehensive to help children meet the state's student performance standards. Each school in De Leon Independent School district participates in the Title I School wide program.

Ten Components of the School Wide Program

1. Comprehensive Needs Assessment

- A comprehensive needs assessment has been written for De Leon ISD. The guidelines presented in ESC20's CNA Tool were followed. The needs assessment is obtained by establishing a district team comprised of parents, members of the community, teachers, principals and other administrators. The committee decided on which questions needed to be answered and what data to collect to answer these questions. The group met several times during the process of following the ESC20 CNA Tool. Information from the comprehensive needs assessment will be reported to each campus principal and superintendent for use in campus and district planning.

« 2. School-wide Reform Strategies

District State Rating

2013 through 2017 met standard

2017 through 2020

A Rating

- « Schools administer benchmark tests to all students to determine academic need. A reading fundamentals program and STAAR tutorials are offered to students. In addition, the schools use supplemental software. Guided reading is utilized with leveled books.
- Schools provide learning labs in math and reading, and after school tutoring. ALEKS and Study Island was purchased for curriculum enrichment. Teachers, principal, and counselor continually monitor the needs of students for additional services.
- The high school benchmarks all students three times during the school year in order to assess all students' progress. In addition, the school has increased the college course offerings to provide more challenge and higher level learning for students. Tutoring is offered to all students during a flex period. Teachers, principal, and counselor continually monitor all students for additional needs.

3. Instruction by Highly Qualified Teachers (No longer required as of 2016, but DISD still recruits HQ teachers)

- It is the intention of De Leon ISD to increase academic achievement of all students by improving teacher quality. It is the goal of De Leon ISD to continue having 100% of the staff recognized as highly qualified each year.

4. High-Quality Professional Development

- De Leon ISD offers teachers, staff members and administrators the opportunity to attend staff development offerings. In addition, the district is offering several staff development workshops during teacher in-service as well as periodic trainings throughout the year.

5. Strategies to attract High-Quality, Highly Qualified teachers (No longer required as of 2016, but DISD still recruits HQ teachers)

- « For the past several years, De Leon ISD has used several strategies to attract high quality, highly qualified teachers to the district. Those strategies include a competitive salary scale, positive work environment, and TEEG grant incentive pay. De Leon ISD will solicit and interview highly qualified teachers. This will be accomplished by attending job fairs and posting positions through the service center.

6. Increase parental involvement

- De Leon will continue to make a concerted effort to increase parental involvement. Our Title I Parent Meetings are held during open house each fall. Other parent involvement projects include a parental involvement newsletter posted quarterly on the district's website and School Messenger.

7. Assist preschool children in their transition from early childhood programs

- In order to assist preschool children in their transition, De Leon elementary school offers Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start for all qualifying students in the district.

8. Include teachers in decision making regarding the use of academic assessments

- Teachers are included in decision making as often as possible. One way teachers are included is through district and campus site based decision making committees. Additionally, teachers are invited to participate in ARD and LPAC committee meetings. Staff meetings, department and team meetings are also held to allow teachers the opportunity to have a voice.

9. Provide activities to ensure students with difficulty mastering proficient levels of academic standards. This includes effective timely additional assistance, manipulatives, extended learning opportunities.

- Students are provided with tutoring during the school day schedule. A reading fundamentals program as well as use of supplemental materials and informal assessments are also utilized.

10. Coordination and Integration occurs between federal, state and local services and programs.

- Coordination and integration is looked into as each program is evaluated. If coordination and integration is lacking, a plan is put into place to improve.

Parent Involvement

The goal for the Title I Statewide School Support/Parental Involvement Initiative is to increase collaboration between TEA, the Education Service Centers, and Local Education Agencies to impact student achievement and build the capacity of parents to better meet the academic needs of their children.

Statement of Purpose

De Leon Independent School District is committed to the goal of providing a quality education for every child. In order to accomplish this goal, partnerships must be established with parents and the community. Everyone gains if school and home work together to promote high achievement for our children. Neither home nor school can do the job alone. Parents play an extremely important role as children's first teachers. The District recognizes and encourages parents in the four key roles that they play in their children's learning as:

- Teacher — helping their child at home,
- » Supporter — contributing their skills to the school,
- Advocate — helping their child receive fair treatment, and
- Decision Maker — participating in joint problem-solving with the school at every level.

Parent Involvement in Developing the Policy

The district Parent/Community Advisory Board is composed of parents, community leaders, school board members, and district personnel. The Advisory Board has direct input in developing the parent involvement policy on an on-going basis. The Campus Improvement Committee on each campus provides input concerning the campus-based policy. Parent comments from parent/teacher conferences, parent surveys, and other meetings to solicit parent input are used in the development and revision of this policy.

De Leon ISD Parent/Student Partnership Compact

In order for school, parents, and students to share responsibility for high student achievement, the De Leon ISD/Parent Compact is reviewed each year by campus improvement committees and by the Parent/Community Advisory Board. This compact is included in each campus handbook for the school official, parent and student to sign and return to the home campus. A copy is distributed to parents at the parent/teacher conference. The Compact outlines school, parent, and student responsibilities necessary for effective learning to take place.

Types of Parental Involvement

The district Parent Involvement Director, in coordination with campus principals, provide the technical assistance and other support necessary to help schools plan and implement effective parental involvement efforts. The Director may also provide teacher training in working with parents. Realizing the value of parents and their contribution to the partnership of creating successful students, input will be requested to assist education personnel in building upon that partnership relationship to strengthen ties between home and school.

The following are possible opportunities for home-school partnerships that parents are encouraged to take advantage of throughout the year.

- » Parent education workshops
- » Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC)
- Home visits
- PTA/PTO
- De Leon ISD/Parent Partnership Compact
- » Title I meetings as designated by each Title I campus
- De Leon ISD website
- Parent Surveys

Staff/Parent Communication

Communications with parents, as well as materials and notices sent home, are provided in Spanish as needed.

Teachers will provide progress reports for parents every three weeks. At least one conference concerning the child's progress will be held at the elementary level. Secondary level conferences are held as needed. Conferences may also be held at the request of the parent or teacher. Additional communication may come home in the form of: phone calls, newsletters, weekly memos, notes home, school marquee, and district and campus websites.

Evaluation

Evaluations will be conducted through:

- District Parent Involvement Advisory Board Review
- Annual Title I meetings on Title I campuses
- Annual Public Hearing for Title programs
- Campus surveys conducted with parents

The district and campuses will use information from these sources to design strategies for school improvement and to revise the parental involvement policy.

Homeless Education

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B-Education for Homeless Children and Youth) reauthorized in January 2002 as part of the No Child Left Behind Act, ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. De Leon ISD identifies and provides services to homeless children as required by NCLB. Definitions of “homeless” below are taken from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001 (Sec. 725)

Who is homeless? (Sec 725)

The term homeless “children and youth”-

- Means individuals lack a fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1) [Cited as U.S.C. Title 42, Chapter 119, Subchapter 1 below]); and
 - « Includes:
 - o (i) Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement
 - o (ii) Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
 - o (iii) Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings and
 - o (iv) Migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Federal Programs

De Leon ISD receives funds from various federal grants. Our special programs department is responsible for the following programs in our school district:

Title I, Part A

Title II, Part A

Title III, Part A

The following is a description of the federal programs currently being implemented in our school district.

- Title I, Part A — Improving Basic Programs
 - o The purpose of Title I, Part A funds is to provide supplemental funding to our district for resources to help out schools with high concentrations of students from low-income families provide a high-quality education that will enable all children to increase the amount and quality of learning to meet the state’s student performance standards. Title I, Part A supports our schools in implementing a school wide program. Our program implements effective methods and instructional strategies that are grounded in scientifically based research.

- « Title II, Part A- Teacher and Principal Training & Recruiting *(TPTR)
 - o TPTR provides supplemental funding to improve student achievement by elevating teacher and principal quality through recruitment, hiring and retention strategies to improve teacher and principal quality and increase the number of highly qualified teachers in the classroom and highly qualified principals in the schools. The program uses scientifically based professional development interventions and holds districts accountable for improvements in student academic performance.

- » Title II, Part D-Enhancing Education through Technology (**funding has ceased**)
 - o Title II, Part D provides supplemental funds to improve student academic achievement through the use of technology in elementary and secondary schools. It is also designed to assist every student in becoming technologically literate by the end of eighth grade and to encourage the integration of technology resources and systems with the teacher training and professional development to establish research-based instructional models.

- Title III, Part A- Language Instruction for LEP Students
 - o The purpose of Title III, Part A program is to provide supplemental resources to our district to help ensure that our children who are limited English proficient attain English proficiency at high levels in the core academic subjects to meet state mandated achievement performance standards.

- Title IV, Part A- Safe & Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) **(funding has ceased)**
- o The SDFSC program provides supplemental funding to develop and enhance education programs targeting violence prevention and drug prevention strategies in elementary and secondary schools for all students and employees.

State Compensatory Education

Guidelines for Compensatory Education

Compensatory education is defined in law as programs and or services designed to supplement the regular education program for students identified as at risk of dropping out of school. The purpose is to increase the academic achievement and reduce the dropout rate of these students.

Compensatory Education Goals

The goal of state compensatory education is to reduce any disparity in performance on assessment instruments administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 30, or disparity in the rates of high school completion between students at risk of dropping out of school and all other district students (Section 29.081 TEC).

Compensatory Education Objectives

State compensatory education funds were authorized by the legislature to provide financial support for programs and/or services designed by school districts to increase the achievement of students at risk of dropping out of school. State law, Section 29.081, Texas Education Code, requires school districts to use student performance data from the state's legislatively-mandated assessment instrument known as the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests and any other achievement tests administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, of the Texas Education Code, including norm-referenced tests approved by the State Board of Education to provide accelerated intensive instruction to students who have not performed satisfactorily or who are at risk of dropping out of school.

State Criteria for Identification of Students at Risk of Dropping Out of School

Section 29.081 of the Texas Education Code defines the State criteria used to identify students at risk of dropping out of school.

A student at risk of dropping out of school includes each student who is under 21 years of age and who:

1. In pre-kindergarten, kindergarten or grade 1, 2, 3 and did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered during the current school year;

2. Is in grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12, and did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the preceding or current school year or is not maintaining such an average in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum in the current semester;
3. Was not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years;
4. Did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered to the student under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, and who has not in the previous or current school year subsequently performed on that instrument or another appropriate instrument at a level equal to at least 110 percent of the level of satisfactory performance on that instrument,
5. Is pregnant or is a parent;
6. Has been placed in an alternative education program in accordance with Section 37.006 during the preceding or current school year;
7. Has been expelled in accordance with Section 37.007 during the preceding or current school year;
8. Is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution, or other conditional release
9. Was reported through the Public Education Information Management System (PIEMS) to have dropped out of school;
10. Is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by Section 29.052
11. Is in the custody or care of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or has, during the current school year, been referred to the department by a school official, officer of the juvenile court, or law enforcement official;
12. Is homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvement Act of 2001, Section 725; or
13. Resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a residential placement facility in the district, including a detention facility, substance abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house or foster group home.

Funding for Compensatory Education Programs

Funding allocated for state compensatory education programs and/or services is based on the number of educationally disadvantaged students in the district.

High School Allotment

The High School Allotment provides funding to district high schools to prepare students to go on to higher education, encourage students to take advanced academic course work, increase the rigor of academic course work, align secondary and postsecondary curriculum and support promising high school completion and success initiatives in grades 6 through 12.

English as a Second Language

ESL

De Leon ISD currently offers English as a Second Language (ESL) to students in Grades K-12 who speak or hear a language other than English in their home and who have difficulty in English. ESL is intensive English language instruction provided by teachers in our district trained in recognizing and working with language differences.

Our ESL program provides intensive instruction in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending English. Our ESL teachers use the academic and cultural experience of the student as a platform to provide the appropriate instruction in English. The program teaches language arts, mathematics, science and social studies using strategies and methodologies appropriate for second language acquisition.

The purpose of our ESL program is to help students develop competence in English. It also helps prepare students to be successful in all academic subjects.

For additional information regarding the ESL program, please visit <http://tea.texas.gov>.

Career and Technology

Career and Technical Education courses are offered in De Leon ISD in the following program areas to help introduce students to specific career areas and provide options for continuing education or employment upon graduation.

- Agricultural Science and Technology
- Business Education
- Technology Education
- Family Consumer Science

The goal of the De Leon ISD Career and Technical Education program is to offer a comprehensive program that provides students the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and skills needed for a lifetime of learning and success by providing a rigorous academic foundation and career preparation to be part of a well-educated workforce. De Leon Career and Technology program will:

- Provide quality career guidance and counseling

- Provide career pathways with seamless transitions to postsecondary learning
- Form connections to postsecondary education
- Provide students with the opportunity to take dual enrollment courses and advanced technical credit courses
- Offer leadership opportunities through CTE student organizations
- Incorporate the diversity of the student body into CTE classes
- Provide opportunities for students of all learning abilities
- Provide LEP students enrolled in CTE courses support services such as
- translators, texts in native language etc.
- Provide links to business and industries in the area
- « Provide students and parents with regional workforce data and information
- Provide students an opportunity to develop and revise graduation plans based on their interests, aptitudes and talents

Through Career and Technology courses De Leon ISD is committed to helping students reach their career objectives, and become successful citizens realizing a high quality of life. Counselors, school administrators, teachers, and parents will be assisting students in selecting a career area of interest from one of the selected endorsements. Course selection materials will be organized around the *Educational Endorsements* making it easy for students to select and follow a coherent sequence of courses that will help lead them to their career goal.

Tech-Prep through Statewide and Local Articulated Courses

Students at De Leon ISD can earn college credits while in high school through participation in the various locally and statewide articulated courses students may take while in high school. Through these programs, students can begin a college technical major while in high school. In these programs, the student begins his/her course of study in high school and continues it in a community or technical college. This course of study may lead to a certificate or an Associate's degree in a career field. Upon completion of the Associate's degree a student may choose to attend a major university to complete a Bachelor's degree in a related field of study. Articulation agreements combine the academic courses needed for success in high school with the technical courses that begin to prepare the students for a career.

A number of De Leon ISD's Career and Technology (CTE) courses are "articulated" courses, which means that they are aligned with the curriculum of community and technical college courses locally or throughout the state of Texas. When a student takes one of these courses in their Junior or Senior year, they can get college credit as well as high school credit. De Leon ISD currently has articulation agreements with Ranger in the following courses:

- « LVN Pathway
- « Welding

Certifications

De Leon Career and Technical Education program will offer students an opportunity to gain certification in the following area:

- Welding
- Hunter Education
- Computer Applications

Program Evaluation

De Leon Career and Technical Education department will conduct an annual program effectiveness review with all Career and Technical teachers, secondary administrators and guidance counselor participating. Surveys may also be periodically administered to students and parents of students enrolled in Career and Technology courses. These two evaluation tools will be assessed by members of a local advisory committee that will propose changes in the program to ensure that Career and Technical education provide students at De Leon ISD with courses that will enable students to be prepared for a lifetime of success.

Carl Perkins Grant

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) purpose is to provide individuals with the academic and technical skills needed to succeed in a knowledge- and skills-based economy. Perkins supports career and technical education that prepares its students both for postsecondary education and the careers of their choice.

Federal resources help ensure that career and technical programs are academically rigorous and up-to-date with the needs of business and industry. State and local funding supports the career and technical education infrastructure and pays teachers' salaries and other operating expenses. Federal funds provide the principal source for innovation and program improvement, and help to drive state support through a "maintenance-of-effort" provision in the federal law. De Leon is currently involved in a shared services agreement with the Educational Service Center 12 for the districts portion of the Carl Perkins Grant.

Types of Activities Supported: State and local funds generally are to be used for the following types of activities:

- « Serving as a catalyst for change by driving program improvement
- Developing a strong accountability system that ensures quality and results
- « Strengthening the integration of academic and career and technical education
- « Ensuring access to career and technical education for special populations, including students with disabilities
- Developing and improving curricula
- « Purchasing equipment to ensure that the classrooms have the latest technology
- « Providing career guidance and academic counseling services
- Providing professional development and technical assistance for teachers, counselors and administrators
- « Supporting career and technical education student organizations

Gifted and Talented

Defining Gifted and Talented

“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 capacity in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area, possesses an unusual capacity for leadership, or excels in a specific academic field. TEC §29.121

Position Statement

Research indicates that there are many students in our nation’s schools who have high capabilities, but have been generally unchallenged by the regular educational environment and have failed to develop their full potential. There is a need for educational institutions to provide experiences consistent with the abilities and potential of gifted and talented students.

The De Leon Independent School District has students who readily master the basic skills but who, when are not challenged, become regimented in their ability and creative thinking.

The De Leon ISD Gifted and Talented Program is designed to make maximum use of the personnel, facilities, and resources available and reinforces and is compatible with other programs within the school district.

Goals

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 reflect individuality and creativity and are advanced in relation to students of similar age, experience, or environment.

Nomination

Nomination letters shall be sent out to teachers and requesting parents in the early part of each spring semester. Students in Grades K-12 who are nominated, shall be assessed. An identification packet shall be sent to parents and teachers of nominated students. If identified, students will be provided gifted /talented services.

Nomination procedures and forms for assessment of gifted/talented students are communicated to families in English and Spanish (as needed). They will receive an overview of the services for gifted/talented students and assessment procedures.

Students who are new to the district (enrolling in the first six weeks of school) and have not had the opportunity to participate in G/T screening, are eligible to participate in a limited special screening to be conducted at the first of every school year. Students transferring in from a school district that has G/T in place and who have had the opportunity for nomination and screening will not be eligible for this special screening. Students who are transferring in from other districts who are already

identified G/T will be reviewed by a selection committee for placement into the G/T program within thirty days.

Screening

Screening is the process of determining which nominated students will qualify for placement into the G/T program. This process includes collecting kinds of information which are effective indicators of a student's need for a differentiated program and summarizing that data.

Assessment tools that may be used include: student product portfolios, achievement tests (full battery), intelligence tests, behavioral checklists completed by parent and teachers, teacher nominations based on classroom observations, student parent conferences and creativity tests.

The criteria will ensure the fair assessment of students with special needs, such as culturally different, the economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities. Data and procedures will assure that all populations of the district will have access to assessment and, if identified, services will be offered as part of the program for gifted and talented students. The district will strive toward having the population of the gifted program reflect the population of the district.

Selection

Selection of students for program participation is based upon data collected during screening. Final selection of students for services designed for gifted students is made by a committee including at least one educator in the district who has completed thirty (30) hours of gifted and talented training and are current with the six hour update as required in 19 TAC 89.2(2). Each campus principal will appoint a member of the campus selection committee.

Selection decisions are based on multiple criteria rather than a single scores or performance. Based on review of information gathered during the assessment process, the selection committee recommends placement for students whose data reflect that program placement is the most appropriate educational setting.

Families and staff are informed in writing of student placement and given opportunities to schedule conferences to discuss assessment data, Participation in the gifted program is voluntary and requires written permission from the parents and student before placement of the student is made. Results from the screening process parent permission to test, and parent and student permission forms to participate will be kept in the student's permanent file (green folder).

Reassessment

The district does not perform routine re-assessments.

Annual Student Progress Review

At the end of each year, each student's progress will be reviewed. Teachers, students, or parents will make recommendations for continued placement or exit. The selection committee then meets to act on those recommendations. Unless there is documentation of evidence that a student has been misidentified, students will remain in the program at each campus level.

As identified students move from one campus to the next higher level within the ISD, it shall be the responsibility of the screening committee to review data and recommendations from the sending campus based on each student's annual review regarding placement.

Furlough Policy

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 student and/or parent for other specified reasons.

A student may be furloughed in the program 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 re-enter the gifted program, be removed from the program, or be placed on another furlough.

Exit Provisions

Multiple criteria will be used to determine if a student should be exited from the program. Such information will include but is not limited to: 1) student is not maintaining satisfactory performance in the G/T program, 2) student or parent requests exit, 3) student must have been placed on at least one furlough before exiting.

If a student or parent requests removal from the program, the District shall honor that request after a conference with the selection committee or its representative. The student's most appropriate educational placement must have been discussed.

Students and parents will be notified in writing of the selection committee's decision to exit the student from the program.

Appeals

Parents or students may appeal any final decision of the selection committee regarding the selection or removal from the gifted program during the same school year. Appeals will be processed in a timely manner.

Program Evaluation and Planning

The gifted and talented program shall be evaluated annually and evaluation information shall be shared with the Board members, administrators, teachers, counselors, students, parents and community members. The purpose of the evaluation process is to determine the program's effectiveness and use the evaluation data to modify and update district and campus improvement plan.

