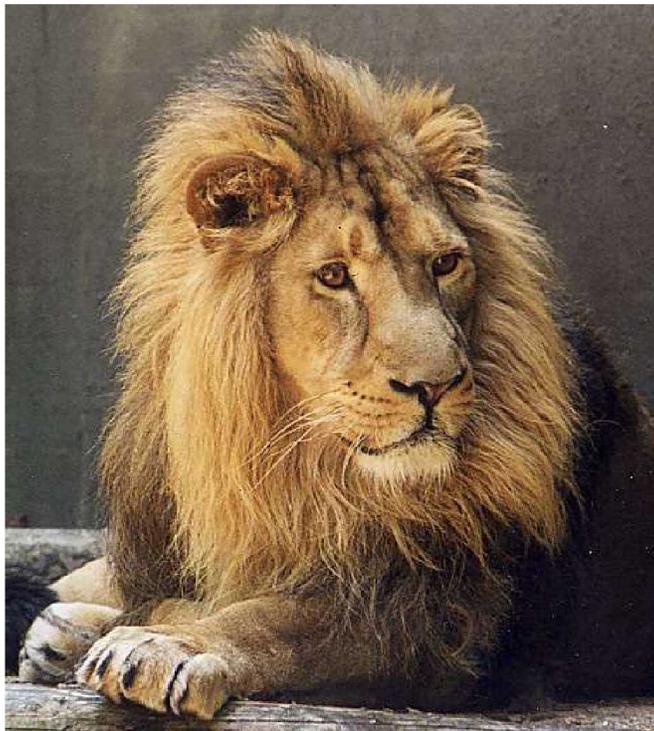


# GATE

## Gifted and Talented Education Handbook



*Ennis Independent School District*



*Revised August 2022*

*Approved by the EISD Board of Trustees on December 13, 2022*

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## **PREFACE**

This handbook presents the official policies, processes, and procedures for organizing, operating, and evaluating the Ennis Independent School District's program for the academically talented students. This program is to be known as the GATE Program.

Copies of all forms used to implement and maintain the program are on file in the Curriculum and Instruction Department office.

This handbook is intended to be used as a working guide for the GATE Program. Any element is subject to change in State/Federal guidelines, or recommendations by the Advisory Committee with the approval of the Superintendent and School Board.

## **STATE DEFINITION OF GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS**

"Gifted and talented student" means a child or youth who performs at or shows the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment and who:

1. Exhibits high performance capability in an intellectual, creative, or artistic area;
2. Possesses an unusual capacity for leadership; or
3. Excels in a specific academic field.

*Education Code 29.121*

## **PHILOSOPHY/RATIONALE**

The philosophy of the Ennis Independent School District reflects an understanding of the uniqueness of individual students. Because the learning characteristics of gifted and talented students dictate learning experiences that differentiate from those provided for them in the regular school program, the district recognizes that special provisions must be made for these students in order to stimulate and maximize their achievement.

The Ennis Independent School District recognizes that gifted and talented students are found in all cultures, socioeconomic groups, and environments. The Ennis ISD will serve the needs of those students who demonstrate above

average achievement or potential in the areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies as identified through multiple and specific criteria.

## **GATE PROGRAM GOALS**

1. The GATE program is to assist academically talented students to reach, through enrichment, the upper levels of achievement. The purpose is to accelerate students in the content area and to increase extension and abstraction in the existing programs of instruction.
2. Students in the program will develop to a greater degree their critical and creative thinking skills and apply them in solving problems and creating advanced products.
3. Students in the program will reinforce their self-directed learning skills through investigating advanced, more complex subject matter to help them become independent, life-long learners and creative producers.
4. Students in the program will develop a more positive self-concept so that they can interact more effectively with peers, adults, and society.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

1. Assure all students equal opportunities to be screened, identified, and placed in the GATE program.
2. Utilize a differentiated program, which will meet the diversified needs of identified students.
3. Provide a learning environment/experiences, which will enable students to develop skills in higher orders of intellectual activity.
4. Nurture creativity and flexibility.
5. Develop the skills for initiating, planning, and conducting independent research.
6. Utilize the cultural, instructional, natural, and industrial resources of the region.
7. Provide opportunity for academically talented students to associate with and share ideas with peers of similar intellectual abilities.

## **PROGRAM PROTOTYPE**

The prototype determines the setting and organization in which learning will take place and is itself determined by the nature and needs of the students selected for the program and by the resources and limitations of each campus.

Mental ability is defined by some educational psychologists as being an indicator of rate or pace that an individual is capable of learning. Research has shown that students who achieve at a faster rate or pace need to be a part of a learning environment that allows for independent study, group work with peers who represent a heterogeneous population. Therefore, the GATE Program is one in which identified students will be scheduled into a G/T language arts, math, science, and/or social studies class each day with specially trained teachers as specified in TAC §89.2.

A student's enrollment in the GATE Program will not supplant his/her enrollment in the regular language arts, math, science, and social studies program.

Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students will receive differentiated instruction within the regular classroom setting.

Identified students in grades 4-5 will receive services through a cluster program with specific emphasis on the student's identified area of strength.

Identified students in grades 6-12 will be taught by specially trained teachers in the areas of language arts, math, science, and social studies.

## **THE DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN FOR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION**

INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. **SCHOOL BOARD:**
  - a. Approve all policies regarding the district plan for gifted and talented education
  - b. Participate in training to ensure program accountability based on the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students
  
2. **SUPERINTENDENT:**
  - a. Approve and recommend all policies regarding the district plan for gifted and talented education
  - b. Approve selection of program personnel.
  - c. Review evaluation data
  - d. Consider and/or initiate recommendations for program revision
  - e. Make notifications regarding revisions of program policies and procedures

3. *PRINCIPALS OR CAMPUS COMMITTEE:*
  - a. Serve on the Screening and Selection Committee
  - b. Serve on the Exit Committee
  - c. Serve on the Advisory Committee
  - d. Evaluate program elements and staff
  - e. Collect grievances and recommendations for program improvement and relay to the GATE Coordinators
  - f. Make recommendations for selection of program personnel
  - g. Provide information about the program to new students
  - h. Participate in required state training
  
4. *PROGRAM STAFF:*
  - a. Provides input for planning and evaluation of the program
  - b. Serve on the Exit Committee
  - c. Develop curriculum providing opportunities for cognitive and affective growth
  - d. Provide instruction for students in the program
  - e. Maintain students' files and records
  - f. Evaluate students to determine academic growth
  - g. Attend workshops and/or conferences for professional growth
  - h. Communicate information about students to their parents
  - i. Select and order materials for the program
  - j. Develop and maintain resource file
  - k. Participate in required state training
  
5. *COUNSELOR and/or INSTRUCTIONAL COACH:*
  - a. Serve on Screening and Selection Committee
  - b. Collect and assemble data for Screening and Selection Committee
  - c. Provide assistance in interpretation of test scores
  - d. Serve on the Exit Committee
  - e. Participate in required state training
  
6. *ADVISORY COMMITTEE/COUNCIL:*
  - a. Consider and analyze evaluation data
  - b. Make recommendation for program revision
  - c. Serve as a source of information to the school staff, parents, and community members concerning the gifted and talented program

## **IDENTIFICATION PROCESS**

Identification and selection of students for the GATE Program must be determined through a comprehensive process consisting of three steps:

1. **REFERRAL**- involves the collection of data from which selection will be made

2. **SCREENING-** the process designed to identify students for the program
3. **SELECTION-** involves consideration of each referred and screened student and the placement of those students who match (meet) the criteria for the program

Specific identification procedures and entry/transfer/exit guidelines for grades K-12 outlined in *Guidelines for Referral section*.

The Kindergarten referral/screening/selection process will be conducted each spring semester with placement and services implemented as specified by TEA guidelines.

## **GUIDELINES FOR REFERRAL**

Referrals may be obtained from a person(s) familiar with the student's abilities, potential, performance, or past records and may include the following:

1. Parent
2. Peers
3. Teacher/Administrators
4. Counselor
5. Librarian
6. Community member

The Curriculum and Instruction Department, assisted by the building principal, counselor(s), and teaching staff will be responsible for disseminating and collecting the referral forms. A list of all referrals will be maintained by the Curriculum and Instruction Department and considered by the placement committee.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SCREENING**

Each spring all Kindergarten students, all 2nd Grade students, and all other referred students will participate in a verbal and a non-verbal cognitive abilities test. Students scoring in the 95th percentile or above on either the verbal or non-verbal sections of the cognitive abilities test will automatically be referred for further testing.

Permission is secured from parents for special testing of students. Testing of students for the program will be conducted by qualified personnel.

## KINDERGARTEN & 2nd GRADE

Referred students will be screened using

1. Standardized achievement reading test
2. Standardized achievement math test
3. Renzulli/Hartman Scale for Rating Behavioral Learning Characteristics of Superior Students will be completed by the classroom teacher

## GRADES 1 & GRADES 3-11

Referred students will be screened using

1. Standardized Achievement reading test
2. Standardized Achievement math
3. Group Cognitive Abilities Test – Verbal Score
4. Group Cognitive Abilities Test – Non-Verbal Score
5. Renzulli/Hartman Scale for Rating Behavioral Learning Characteristics of Superior Students will be completed by the classroom teacher

Identified students will continue to be served unless exit or furlough procedures are implemented.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PLACEMENT**

Placement is conducted by a committee consisting of the following members:

1. Curriculum and Instruction Department
2. Campus principal
3. Campus counselor

Review and evaluation of student data will be of a confidential nature. The placement committee will consider student performance and scores in multiple instruments to determine if a student shows a need for gifted and talented services.

Once placement has been determined, notification of student recommendation for participating in the GATE Program will be the responsibility of the Curriculum and Instruction Department. Principals and parents will receive written communication of placement recommendations. A copy of the matrix with assessment data will be kept in the student's cumulative file on the campus they attend.

## **PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING IDENTIFICATION DECISIONS**

Parental or teacher grievances regarding selection of students for the GATE Program may be submitted in written form to the building principal or the Curriculum and Instruction Department. The Curriculum and Instruction Department will notify the selection committee. The committee will make arrangements for a conference with the person(s) submitting the grievance. If a consensus cannot be reached, an appeal may be made to the superintendent. For EISD grievance procedures, see Board Policy FNG (LOCAL).

## **PROCEDURES FOR TRANSFERRING STUDENTS**

- A. Students transferring to Ennis Independent School District who have participated in a gifted and talented program in another school district will be exempt from the referral process. The decision for entry will be made within the first 30 calendar days and based on consideration of the following:
1. Prior district's documentation of qualifying the student
  2. Past records of the student's achievement test scores in reading and math and past records of the student's cognitive abilities test
  3. Observation records of the EISD receiving teacher
  4. Student / parent conferences at the receiving campus
- B. Students currently enrolled and students transferring into EISD during the school year who have not participated in a similar program may be referred in the spring semester of the current school year for consideration of entry into the program the following year. All referrals should be in writing and routed directly to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. (See *Guidelines for Referrals* section)

## **PROCEDURES FOR EXIT FROM PROGRAM**

The selection committee makes the final decision regarding exiting students from the program for educational, psychological, or personal reasons after consultation with both the student and parents. Consultation and decision made will occur after multiple conferences between the parent and the teacher. Immediate action will be taken, should an emergency situation arise. Decisions are based on the following:

1. Parental (written) request for withdrawal from the program
2. Teacher recommendation based on observation of student performance, behavior, and products (*Interventions are provided and*

*multiple teacher/parent conferences will occur with documentation required)*

3. Student request for withdrawal from the program with written parental permission
4. Personal or social stresses which prevent a student from performing in a self-satisfying manner

Exit forms are available from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and should be completed by contributing parties when such action is deemed necessary.

## **PROCEDURES FOR FURLOUGH**

The selection committee may place a student on furlough from the GATE Program if the student is unable to maintain satisfactory progress. The purpose of the furlough would be to attain performance goals established by the committee. A furlough may also be requested by the student and/or parent. A student may be furloughed for a period of time deemed appropriate by the selection committee. At the end of the furlough, the student's progress will be reassessed, and the student may re-enter the gifted program, be removed from the program, or placed on another furlough.

## **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

1. Days 1 and 2 of the GT Foundations 30 hour training will be presented during inservice annually. Participants will complete the remaining 18 hours online through the Region 10 ESC before the end of the first semester.
2. A 6-hour annual update will be provided annually and will be based on the needs of the instructional staff relating to the special characteristics, needs, and services provided by Ennis ISD for GT students.
3. Summer options will be available for instructional staff to complete the 6-hour update before returning to school for the fall semester.
4. A staff awareness training will be scheduled for each campus prior to the start of the referral process annually.
5. Staff members will be encouraged to attend professional conferences and workshops for the purpose of improving competencies in instructional strategies and program development.

6. All teachers must meet the staff development requirements as specified by the Texas Education Agency. This includes the 30 hour foundations training and a subsequent annual 6 hour update.
7. All counselors will attend a 6-hour training that includes nature and needs of GT students, service options for GT students, and social emotional learning for GT students and will participate in subsequent 6 hour annual updates.
8. All administrators will attend a 6-hour training that includes the nature and needs of GT students, service options for GT students, and social emotional learning for GT students and will participate in subsequent 6-hour update every three years.
9. Trustees will attend training to ensure program accountability based on the Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students and are encouraged to pursue professional development on the Texas State Plan.

## **CURRICULUM**

Curriculum consists of the content to be learned and the processes, which make learning possible. Curriculum for the academically talented must be differentiated from that in the regular classroom and congruent with the characteristics of gifted children. Documentation of student mastery of the state curriculum is mandated by state rules relating to curriculum. The curriculum for the GATE Program will be based on the following guidelines.

1. Individual needs, abilities, and interests will be a consideration in planning learning activities.
2. Learning activities will emphasize the development of thinking skills rather than mere accumulation of knowledge.
3. Oral and written communication skills will be developed.
4. Learning activities will emphasize the learner as a producer of information.
5. The curriculum will facilitate the development of the higher order thinking processes, including analysis and evaluation.
6. Divergent and creative thinking skills will be developed including fluency, flexibility, elaboration, and originality.
7. Activities will focus on the active involvement of the learner.

8. Activities will be designed to develop self-directed and independent learning skills.
9. Problem solving skills including investigating and exploring real problems will be developed.
10. The curriculum will facilitate the development of an understanding of a student's capabilities and responsibilities, including the development of a healthy self-concept and relationship with peers.
11. Means of differentiating the curriculum may include:
  - a. Accelerated or advanced content
  - b. Complexity of content which requires higher-level thinking
  - c. Introduction of content beyond basic curriculum
  - d. Student selected content and activities according to interest and abilities
  - e. Use of higher-level responses
  - f. Use of multiple and varied resources including technology

## **PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Education for the academically talented requires a strong partnership between parents and teachers and cooperation with the community. The EISD GATE Program will promote the active involvement and support of parents and community through the following:

1. Parent and community members will continue to have input in program organization through parent and community representatives who will serve on the advisory committee.
2. A parent awareness meeting will be conducted annually prior to the start of the referral process.
3. Parents and community members will participate in the identification process by being allowed and encouraged to refer prospective students for the program.
4. Parents and community leaders will be invited to serve as resources for the program.
5. Parents and community leaders will be invited to visit the GATE classes.

6. Community awareness will be developed by setting up displays of students' work in public places such as the library.
7. Information concerning the program will be relayed through correspondence, news releases, presentations to community clubs and organizations, parent-teacher organizations, and reports to the board of trustees.
8. Parents will be given the opportunity to complete a program evaluation survey each year.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Evaluation of the GATE Program will be conducted yearly to:

1. Discover if and how effectively the objectives of the GATE Program are being attained.
2. Discover unplanned and unexpected consequences that are resulting from specific program practices.
3. Determine the underlying guidelines and related activities that contribute to the success of the program.
4. Provide continuous feedback at appropriate intervals throughout the school year.
5. Suggest realistic alternative courses of action for program modification.

## **PROCEDURE FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Data will be collected from students, teachers, parents, counselors, and principals to assess the success in achieving the program goals and objectives.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAM REVISIONS**

The Advisory Committee will analyze the collected data and make recommendations for program revision. Revision of the program will be based on the following:

1. Changes in state/federal guidelines.

2. Recommended changes may originate at any level and must be presented in writing to the program coordinators.
3. After review by the Advisory Committee, recommendations then must be approved by the Superintendent and the Board of Trustees.

## EXPLANATION OF TERMS

**Academically Talented** – possessing superior intelligence with potential or demonstrated achievement in designated fields of study, ability to perform complex mental tasks

**Specific Subject Matter Aptitude** – possessing superior ability or potential in a specific course of study

**Program Goals** – statements related to student development that is expressed in global terms and indicate a long-range outcome that students are intended to attain

**Program Objectives** – measurable statements that indicate the direction and intent of the program components

**Program Prototype** – administrative methods and procedures to organize the delivery of the instructional program

**Student Identification Matrix** – a chart showing the achievement/abilities of a student in relation to the identified criteria for a program

**Student Objectives** – statements of measurable learner expectations around which the curriculum and associated activities are based

**Curriculum** – an organized plan of instruction that includes the content to be learned, the processes to facilitate the learning, and the products that result in the learning

**Differentiated Curriculum** – modification of student goals, objectives, instructional strategies, and learning experiences to meet the needs and interests of academically talented students

**Scope and Sequence** – the range and order in which curriculum is developed and presented

# APPENDIX



GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAM  
(GATE)

PARENT AND COMMUNITY REFERRAL  
FORM

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please complete this form if you would like to refer a student for screening into the GATE Program. The Screening Committee will review each student's case study based on specific criteria established for placement in the program. The selection criteria used by Ennis ISD includes but is not limited to: standardized achievement test scores, Renzulli Learning and Motivational checklists, and educational abilities test scores. Gifted students almost always:*

- *Enjoy challenging or intellectual tasks*
- *Exhibit preference for complexity*
- *Produce original solutions for problems or tasks*
- *Show sustained interest in a particular skill or subject*
- *Exhibit highly advanced communication skills (vocabulary/reading/writing/speaking)*
- *Spend spare time working on a particular subject/skill*
- *Dependable/responsible*

**Only one referral form is necessary per student.**

*Considering the previous characteristics and those on the back of this form, please write a short statement about this student.*

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN TO:** Dr. Melinda Domain, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction,  
P.O.Box 1420, Ennis, TX, 75120 (or your campus principal/counselor)

**Referral forms are due by January 2, 2022.**

## Characteristics of Giftedness

Cognitive	Creative	Affective	Behavioral
Keen power of abstraction	Creativeness and inventiveness	Unusual emotional depth and intensity	Spontaneity
Interest in problem-solving and applying concepts	Keen sense of humor	Sensitivity or empathy to the feelings of others	Boundless enthusiasm
Voracious and early reader	Ability for fantasy	High expectations of self and others, often leading to feelings of frustration	Intensely focused on passions - resists changing activities when engrossed in own interests
Large vocabulary	Openness to stimuli, wide interests		Highly energetic - needs little sleep or down time
Intellectual curiosity	Intuitiveness	Heightened self-awareness, accompanied by feelings of being different	Constantly questions
Power of critical thinking, skepticism, self-criticism	Flexibility	Easily wounded, need for emotional support	Insatiable curiosity
Persistent, goal-directed behavior	Independence in attitude and social behavior	Need for consistency between abstract values and personal actions	Impulsive, eager and spirited
Independence in work and study	Self-acceptance and unconcern for social norms	Advanced levels of moral judgement	Perseverance - strong determination in areas of importance
Diversity of interests and abilities	Radicalism	Idealism and sense of justice	High levels of frustration - particularly when having difficulty meeting standards of performance (either imposed by self of others)
	Aesthetic and moral commitment to self-selected work		Volatile temper, especially related to perceptions of failure
			Non-stop talking/chattering

<https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/my-child-gifted/common-characteristics-gifted-individuals/traits>



**ENNIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
GATE PROGRAM  
Parent Evaluation**

Please complete this checklist and add any comments and/or suggestions about your child's progress in the GATE Program this year. Information received from these forms will be considered in future planning.

Observed Improvement In:	GREAT	SOME	LITTLE	NONE	NEED MORE TIME
Vocabulary					
Study Habits					
Self Esteem					
Ability to Research					
Ability to analyze & solve problems					
Ability to cooperate & work with others					
Tolerance for ideas of others					
Creative means to solve problems					
Enjoyment of enriched academic content					
Organizational Skills					

Comments/Suggestions: (If additional space is needed, please use back of form)

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Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN TO:** Dr. Melinda Domain P.O. Box 1420, Ennis, TX, 75120, within 5 working days. Information will be kept confidential.



**ENNIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
GATE PROGRAM  
Principal Evaluation**

Please make any comments and suggestions that will assist in improving and planning the GATE Program for the next school year.

1. What do you see as the greatest benefit(s) for the students who have participated in the GATE Program this year?

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2. What do you perceive to be the least effective aspect of the program?

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3. From your observation, has parent and/or community involvement been satisfactory?

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4. List any suggestions you may have for improving the GATE Program.

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**Principal's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return to Dr. Melinda Domain, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, via interschool mail.*



**ENNIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
GATE PROGRAM  
Teacher Evaluation**

Please make any comments and suggestions that will assist in improving and planning the GATE Program for the next school year.

1. What do you see as the greatest benefit(s) for the students who have participated in the GATE Program this year?

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2. What do you perceive to be the least effective aspect of the program?

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3. List any suggestions you may have for improving the GATE Program.

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**Teacher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return to Dr. Melinda Domain, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, via interschool mail.*



**ENNIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
GATE PROGRAM  
Placement and Screening Committee**

The Ennis Independent School District Placement and Screening Committee met to review and verify the collected student data attached to this report on \_\_\_\_\_.

_____ Signature	_____ Position





**ENNIS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
GATE PROGRAM  
Community Survey**

The GATE Program would like to offer you the opportunity to share your knowledge and expertise with students to further their learning opportunities. The school district would appreciate it if you would take the time to complete the form below and become part of the volunteer resources for the program.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Area in which I have a special talent or interest and can share with the students: (hobbies, travel, art, literature, photography, theatre arts, collectibles, etc.)

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2. My occupation about which I can inform students is:

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*If applicable, please return to Dr. Melinda Domain, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, P.O. Box 1420, Ennis, TX 75120.*