

# Encinitas Union School District

## Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Plan

Approved by the Board of Education

May 15, 2007

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## Program Narrative

I. The Encinitas Union School District (EUSD) is located on the coast in northern San Diego County serving the City of Encinitas and the La Costa area of Carlsbad. Approximately 5,600 students in Kindergarten through 6th grade are enrolled in the District's nine schools. The District serves a diverse and varied community. The student population is approximately 18% Hispanic, 6% Asian, 74 % Caucasian, and 2% other minorities. Approximately 13% of our students are English Learners. Twenty-one different languages are represented in this statistic. The largest percentage of our 740 English Learners speak Spanish. Approximately 15% of our students are considered socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Four of the district's nine schools receive Title I support under No Child Left Behind. Additionally one school is host to a regional special day class for the severely handicapped and another school is home to our early intervention pre-school. All of our District's schools have been recognized as California Distinguished Schools, and both La Costa Heights and Olivenhain Pioneer Schools have been recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools. Mission Estancia School was named a National Blue Ribbon Nominee with the potential of becoming a National Blue Ribbon School in 2007. Encinitas' history of recognition for outstanding schools is a tribute to the efforts of the Encinitas staff, students, community participants, and parents who are actively involved with the schools.

II. The goal of the EUSD GATE program is to provide gifted students with an exciting and rigorous program that will allow them to develop to their full potential. This is done through a research-based curriculum differentiated in core areas in terms of Acceleration, Complexity, Depth, Challenge, and Creativity so that students are engaged in higher level thinking. Students are identified for GATE services in the areas of Intellectual Ability, High Achievement, and Leadership Ability. Students are clustered in flexible groups for instruction with GATE trained teachers.

Professional Development for teachers in the area of gifted education is the focus of our GATE program and resources. Teachers receiving GATE certification complete training in working with gifted students in the areas of the research-based curriculum, characteristics of the gifted, features of differentiated instruction, identification, meeting the social/emotional needs, technology resources, and parent education for parents of gifted students.

Our District GATE Instructional Improvement Committee composed of teachers, administrators, and parents are the keepers of the vision for our GATE program. This group meets regularly and is critical to our success. Their active involvement in their school communities as well as willingness to look at current research will help us to keep constantly striving to improve our program.

**Standard 1.1 The plan for the district program has a written statement of philosophy, goals, and standards appropriate to the needs and abilities of gifted learners.**

**Philosophy**

In keeping with our belief that all children should be challenged to meet their full potential, Encinitas Union School District commits to serving those students who have the potential to be gifted and talented in the full range of academic pursuits regardless of their linguistic, racial, ethnic, cultural, or socioeconomic subgroup.

We recognize that gifted students possess unique abilities and talents as individual as each student. The District's GATE services are designed to meet those individual needs and encourage intellectual, social and emotional development.

The Encinitas Union School District supports the National Association of Gifted Children's definition of gifted and talented students as, "Children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment." We believe that gifted students will learn best when they have well-trained teachers who fully understand the affective and academic needs of gifted students and are provided high quality differentiated curriculum which extends student learning. All students, regardless of their school, must be provided equal access to trained teachers and the differentiated curriculum.

**Goals**

It is the district's goal to provide equitable, high quality differentiated learning opportunities that are both rigorous and engaging so that our GATE identified students reach their full affective and academic potential. Once identified, we feel it is our responsibility to provide students with the necessary support and high quality differentiated learning opportunities, that exhibit acceleration, complexity, challenge, depth, and creativity, enabling each student to fully develop his/her unique individual potential.

**Program**

GATE identified students will be provided an academic program which addresses their specific needs and potential. Gifted students' needs, in all classrooms at all grade levels, will be met through differentiated instructional models (e.g., tiered instruction, compacting, learning centers, learning contracts, acceleration, etc.). Additionally, a range of opportunities including flexible grouping within the classroom, cluster grouping and re-grouping for instruction may be provided to address the variety of strengths and learning challenges that our students possess to exceed state academic content standards.

A District GATE Coordinator, our Administrator of Special Projects, will be responsible for the overall management of the GATE program including: using multiple criteria and standardized procedures for identification; the written GATE Plan; and the monitoring and evaluation of sites for compliance with the GATE Plan and policy. A district-wide GATE Advisory Committee (our GATE Instructional Improvement Committee (IIC)) composed of teachers, principals, and parent-representatives, will provide input for the GATE Plan prior to School Board approval.

Information for parents regarding our GATE program is available in a variety of ways. The classroom teacher is the first important contact about the child and the GATE program. If further information or concerns are raised, parents are referred to the school principal, who is responsible for monitoring the program at the school site and evaluating teachers. Additionally, the School Site Council may make recommendations to the principal for the GATE program at the site. Another avenue for parents is our GATE Coordinator, the responsible person for monitoring the GATE program in accordance with the state, district, and school plans. Finally, a wealth of information regarding EUSD's GATE program is available on our district web site at [www.eusd.net](http://www.eusd.net).

The Gifted and Talented Education program promotes continuous student progress with academic objectives aligned to content standards and allows for accelerated and complex study. The GATE program is provided at all school sites in the Encinitas Union School District through School-Based Coordination, with broad-based involvement of staff, parents, and district-level support. This plan is monitored, supported, and modified by the *District GATE Instructional Improvement Committee*.

**Standard 1.2 The program provides administrative groupings and structures appropriate for gifted education and available to all gifted learners.**

The Encinitas Union School District is committed to providing a high quality equitable program for gifted and talented students in grades K-6 in all of its schools. The basic program at each of the elementary schools shall have the following common elements:

- The curriculum content is differentiated beyond the regular curriculum through acceleration, depth, complexity, challenge, and creativity, and programs to address affective learning.
- Techniques and teaching models from gifted education research, supplemental materials, curriculum, and technological equipment are used.

Currently, formal identification does not begin until the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. However, the EUSD is investigating the identification of GATE students beginning in the primary grades. Whether or not students are formally identified in the primary grades, they are provided with appropriate challenge and rigor. This is in line with the EUSD philosophy that all students should be challenged at an appropriate level for their abilities. The program options for our schools are as follows:

- CLUSTER GROUPING is made up of four to eight GATE identified students within a regular classroom setting who receive appropriately differentiated instruction with regular opportunities to work within their cluster group. If there are more than eight GATE identified students at a grade level, two or more clusters may be formed. School sites with a minimal number of GATE identified students are encouraged to provide an opportunity for GATE students to work together weekly across grade levels on research projects, enrichment, or leadership activities.
- RE-GROUPING is when students are grouped across the grade level according to instructional level for instruction appropriate to their abilities. For example students may be grouped by performance levels in math.

- FLEXIBLE GROUPING allows for teachers to group gifted students together or with other student groups to allow for leadership opportunities.

**Standard 1.3 The program is articulated with the general education program.**

The GATE program is articulated with the general education program through the District Strategic Plan. The planning process involves many teachers and parents/community members from every site as well as administrators. One of the areas of focus from our plan is to identify low performing students with high potential. Another goal within the District's Strategic Plan for GATE services is that "The needs of all students will be met through differentiated instruction."

As the District has such a strong commitment to the differentiated instruction for gifted students, much of the district-wide staff development will focus on this area. We have a certified GATE Administrator who coordinates the GATE services and who oversees state and federal programs. In addition, each school has two teachers (1 primary, 1 intermediate), and a parent member on the GATE Instructional Improvement Committee (IIC) who provide support and leadership at the site. District administrators work together closely to ensure all students' needs are met. The District counselor provides leadership and consultation in the area of Character Education and is available to all school sites by request. She also serves as a liaison during the transition period between our District and the high school district that students attend after promotion from sixth grade.

A parent survey is sent home to obtain feedback on how the GATE program has met student needs. This survey covers resources available to parents and students, as well as program offerings. This feedback provides important parental input into our program evaluation.

The involvement of parents and community is very important as we continue to develop our GATE program. Community involvement options include service learning options, partnerships and parent volunteers. Our GATE IIC (Instructional Improvement Committee) meets at least four times per year to give input as to how to improve the GATE program. Each school site addresses the needs of the gifted through school committees or through school site council. Our district website contains links to articles and strategies for parents to use with their gifted students at home. We will continue to offer specific parent training with Susan Winebrenner author of the book, Teaching Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom, and past presenter for our parent community. We will also apprise parents of trainings/lectures related to gifted children that are presented in the San Diego area through the GATE IIC and district newsletter. We are working to develop a focus group format to be conducted annually at each school-site as an evaluation tool giving us more input and information to improve our program. Parents may access the District's GATE web page to review the program design, goals, standards and procedures in both English and Spanish. An additional link will guide parents to informational GATE sites and organizations as well as parent education opportunities.

**Standard 2.1 The nomination/referral process is ongoing and includes students K-6.**

All students in the EUSD have an equal opportunity to be screened for the Gifted and Talented Education program regardless of their gender, linguistic, racial, ethnic, cultural,

or socio-economic sub-group. Identification procedures are limited to students currently enrolled in the Encinitas Union School District.

We are in the process of revising our nomination and referral process for the identification of gifted students, however the existing process will remain in place for currently identified students and phased out as students articulate through the grades. This way, students identified under our old plan, will retain their GATE designation and will continue to receive services. Once fully developed, our new identification plan will be communicated to staff and parents and begin with kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students from that point forward.

Our process will continue to be initiated annually, giving students an ongoing chance for identification. The district maintains and will continue to maintain records for students previously nominated for GATE to assist in the referral process. Staff are and will continue to be trained annually regarding the nomination and identification process including the characteristics of gifted learners. Each year the GATE Coordinator will conduct a training for site principals who will then train their teachers. Referral forms will be available to both parents and teachers at each school site.

Students currently and will continue to qualify for the GATE program in one or more of the following categories:

- Intellectual Ability – students whose general mental development is significantly accelerated beyond that of their chronological peers.
- High Achievement – students who consistently produce ideas or products of excellence and achieve superior levels on standardized tests over time.
- Leadership Ability –students who display the characteristic behaviors necessary for extraordinary leadership.

Referrals and nominations are and will continue to be sought among underrepresented populations, including English Learners, Special Education, and at-risk students. These are accepted from certificated staff members and parents. Referral forms are and will continue to be available at each school site and students may be referred more than once.

**Standard 2.2 An assessment/identification process is in place to ensure all potentially gifted students are appropriately assessed for identification as gifted students.**

Gifted and talented children shall be defined as those children who excel or show potential to excel well above others of their age in one or more of the following areas to the extent they need and can profit from specially planned educational services.

The three categories that are addressed for GATE identification include:

- Intellectual Ability
- High Achievement
- Leadership Ability

**Our existing identification process is as follows:**

The site GATE Representative at each school site maintains the data on GATE nominees and leads the committee review of the criteria on individual student eligibility. The data remains in the student’s portfolio, in the event a student requires re-assessment. Multiple measures are utilized to determine a student’s eligibility for GATE identification. Evidence includes:

- California Standards test
- Raven Standard Progressive Matrices
- Standardized test with national norms (3<sup>rd</sup> grade CAT/6)
- Student Performance Portfolio (District benchmark assessments and class tests)
- GATE Committee Recommendation

By using these criteria, students have ample opportunities to demonstrate their capacities. No single test score can make a child eligible or ineligible for the program. Our identification process begins with the administration of the Raven Standard Progressive Matrices to all third grade students. Any fourth through sixth grade students new to the District are also administered the Ravens Matrices. The third grade STAR test results are then reviewed for each student during the summer after administration. The results of any state testing are also reviewed for any new 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students in the same grade levels who speak a language other than English take the Raven non-verbal test. The scores of these tests form the basis for GATE placement. Teacher and parent nominations are also considered as well work from student assessments portfolios such as student work samples, inventories and parent input forms. Formal GATE identification occurs at the end of third grade based upon the RAVENS Matrices or beginning of 4<sup>th</sup> grade after review of CST data and/or student assessment portfolios.

A student’s profile must meet one of the following two options to qualify for the GATE services program under the intellectual ability, high achievement, or leadership ability categories

**Option 1**

1.	Non-Verbal Tests (Ravens Matrices) – 98%
2.	California Standards Test: Advanced score in English Language arts and Advanced Score in Mathematics
3.	Student Study Team (SST) Recommendation with Student Performance File (work samples indicative of ability-extensions, writing samples, etc.)

**Option 2 (Culturally/Linguistically Diverse or Economically Disadvantaged)**

1.	Non-Verbal Tests (Ravens Matrices) – 97%
2.	California Standards Test: proficient score in English Language arts and Advanced Score in Mathematics
3.	Student Study Team (SST) Recommendation with Student Performance File (work samples indicative of ability-extensions, writing samples, etc.)

Through parent and staff feedback we realize that this process is not serving the needs of our school community. Due to our research on effective programs, our GATE IIC has determined that the identification process needs revision.

**In order to facilitate this change in the identification process the GATE IIC will:**

- Select new multiple identification tools that are reflective of the district's population and are based on research.
- Begin investigating formal GATE identification in first grade, and discontinuing the label of Advancing Learner currently used for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- Create a trained subcommittee of the GATE IIC that will meet at regular intervals to make final determinations on each individual student's eligibility. The subcommittee will include the GATE Coordinator.
- Create a record keeping system in order for each child's nomination history to be recorded.
- Create a letter to notify parents of their child's eligibility for the GATE program including the appeal process of requesting an SST be held for their child.
- Develop a process and timeline to efficiently consider new and transfer students.
- A new process will be piloted and agreed upon by the conclusion of the 2007-08 School-year. Until that time, the existing process will remain in place, and be phased out over time.

**Standard 2.3 Multiple service options are available within the gifted education program and between other educational programs. Placement is based on the assessed needs of the students and is periodically reviewed.**

In our new plan we will continue to notify parents via a parent letter, once a student has been formally identified. Parents will continue to sign a permission form to allow students to participate in the GATE services and have the right to decline participation, if so desired. Copies of student's identification form are placed in his/her permanent file. Upon request parents may receive an additional copy of the identification record to take with them, should they change schools. The Site GATE IIC Representative informs all teachers and the site Principal of students meeting the criteria for GATE identification.

GATE students will receive services based upon having met the criteria, not any one person's perception. Once identified, a student remains in the program for the remainder of his/her tenure in the district, unless interventions have been implemented and an SST meeting is held with the parents and student.

A parent/student brochure will be created for the 2007/08 school year which will provide information regarding nomination, identification, and placement and participation options available in the District. This information will also be available on our district web site.

**Standard 3.1 A differentiated curriculum is in place, responsive to the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students.**

The EUSD offers a differentiated curriculum during the course of the school day to provide for continuous progress for students at all levels. All adopted texts must and do contain challenge materials developed specifically for GATE students.

Utilizing the aforementioned strategies within the frameworks of the state standards in all content areas enables teachers to engage students in a full range of learning experiences. Interest surveys as well as pre-testing of grade level content standards give teachers greater information about how to better meet the individual students' needs within a content area or grade level. Once common interests and/or knowledge level is ascertained flexible grouping takes place in classrooms. In order to continue to pursue the highest quality of instruction for our students, additional teacher training will take place in the areas of recognition of student differences and the utilization of differentiated strategies.

GATE students in the EUSD are provided with differentiated curriculum and instruction that meets or exceeds state academic content standards. Within the differentiated curriculum Acceleration, Complexity, Depth, Challenge and Creativity are utilized to go above and beyond the content standards. Pacing may be advanced and accelerated to meet individual student needs. Teachers differentiate curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of gifted students.

**Strategies used for differentiation include, but are not limited to:**

Acceleration

- ✓ Fewer tasks assigned to master standard
- ✓ Assessed earlier or prior to teaching
- ✓ Clustered by higher order thinking skills

Complexity

- ✓ Use multiple higher level skills
- ✓ Add more variables to study
- ✓ Require multiple resources

Depth

- ✓ Study a concept in multiple applications
- ✓ Conduct original research
- ✓ Develop a product

Challenge

- ✓ Employ advanced resources
- ✓ Use sophisticated content
- ✓ Make cross-disciplinary applications
- ✓ Reasoning is made explicit
- ✓ Reinforcing needs, interest & abilities

Creativity (Novelty)

- ✓ Design/construct a model based on principles or criteria
- ✓ Provide alternatives for task, products & assessments
- ✓ Emphasize oral & written communication to a real world audience

Additional

- ✓ Tiered assignments
- ✓ Flexible Skills grouping
- ✓ Independent projects
- ✓ Learning centers

- ✓ Interest centers/groups
- ✓ Contracts
- ✓ Compacting
- ✓ Mentorships
- ✓ Self-directed learning
- ✓ Metacognition
- ✓ Inquiry

Encinitas schools augment the differentiated curriculum with many opportunities for students to develop a sense of ethics, positive self-concepts, tolerance of and sensitivity towards others, and to make contributions to society. The District supports a strong commitment to the belief, *“Children and adults will come together to experience an educational journey that excites curiosity, promotes personal and professional growth and empowers all to become leaders of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Together, working as a team, all children will be empowered and inspired to make their dreams come true.”* Activities such as: Student Council, Service Learning, Peace Patrol, Study Buddies, and peer tutoring offer students chances to be role models to others, increase their self-esteem and appropriately contribute to the betterment of the whole group

**Standard 3.2 The differentiated curriculum for gifted students is supported by appropriate structures and resources.**

The GATE Program is offered at every site as an integral part of the school day.

The differentiated curriculum and instruction utilize a variety of teaching styles and learning strategies. The curriculum is based on the state content standards and is modified to meet the needs, abilities, and interests of the individual students. Clustering of identified GATE students and potentially gifted students is the primary administrative grouping used in the Encinitas Union School District. Part-time grouping, team teaching, and other options are offered as appropriate methods to meet student needs.

1. **Cluster Grouping:** Gifted students with similar areas of giftedness are grouped within a regular classroom setting. Students receive appropriately differentiated curriculum and instruction from the classroom teacher.
2. **Part-time Grouping:** Classes or seminars organized to provide advanced or enriched subject matter for part of the school day; may be used for learning specific curriculum, such as math or reading, as determined by a student’s level of achievement or ability; may also include mixed-age grouping.
3. **Team Teaching:** Students move to different classrooms for specific subject areas. Teachers meet and plan together to ensure a consistent educational experience for the gifted students.

Students may also participate in independent projects, interest groups, online learning opportunities, advanced use of technology, and flexible instructional groups, as determined by their individual needs. A variety of effective, research-based instructional models and strategies such as inductive and deductive reasoning, creative thinking, independent study, and learning centers are also incorporated into classrooms. Students are encouraged to

investigate using multiple and varied print and non-print resources. Teachers of GATE students are responsible for differentiating curriculum and instruction in order to meet the individual needs of the gifted students in their classrooms. Evidence of differentiation may be demonstrated through classroom and/or student observations, lesson plans, student work samples/portfolios, and/or student interviews.

Resources will include a variety of advanced materials and technology provided to extend the core curriculum. Materials to be used with gifted students will include, but not be limited to:

- Units of study developed by the Center for Gifted Education, College of William and Mary
- Jr. Great Books
- Every Day Math
- Successmaker
- Internet
- AIMS activities
- McGraw Hill Enrichment Activities
- Challenge Materials from Houghton Mifflin
- Susan Winebrenner strategies
- Interact Reading and Math Materials
- Math 24 Challenge
- ALEKS Mathematics
- CGI Math problem-solving strategy
- Websites that are research-based & appropriate.
- Brainpop & Math Forum

**Standard 4.1 Actions to meet the affective needs of gifted students are ongoing.**

The Encinitas Union School District recognizes the social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students and strives to provide for these needs in an appropriate manner. Site libraries house professional development sections that include several books on the social and emotional needs of gifted children for reference purposes. Parents in the District may also have access to these materials when requested. Both teachers and parents, when appropriate, are notified of lectures and presentations in the local area on this subject and they are posted on our website.

Character Education will also play a key role in the social and emotional development of gifted students. All students need to be aware of and learn to appreciate others' unique gifts. For this reason the Character Counts program has been identified as our district-wide program in Character Education and is being successfully implemented at all school sites. By training all staff in the pillars of this program we are increasing our effectiveness in nurturing the positive social and emotional development of our gifted students. Specific strategies in this area include:

- District teachers, administrators, and parents will be provided with information regarding characteristics and non-intellective factors related to GATE students, as well as their social and emotional development.

- Information regarding the social-emotional needs of gifted students will be disseminated through brochures, professional development activities, and District GATE IIC meetings.
- The district website will provide GATE information to staff, parents and the community.
- SST's including counseling & psychologist will be available as needed.

**Standard 4.2 At risk gifted students are monitored and provided support.**

Each school has a Student Study Team to assist all students who struggle with social/emotional issues, or who just don't quite "fit in". At-risk GATE students are referred to the site Student Study Team (SST) to determine appropriate interventions. Parents are an integral part of this process. A District Counselor is available for SST collaboration, intervention strategies and Character Education, as well as the Early Mental Health Initiative Program "A Time For Kids" on every site. An EMHI Coordinator works closely with the staff to identify students early in their school career who need emotional support.

Training will be provided for teachers and administrators on the characteristics of GATE students and the risk factors to look for in working with gifted students. Psychologists and counselors are able to recognize and support "at-risk" GATE students' social-emotional needs. The GATE IIC will study and develop sessions that will be provided for all staff to recognize symptoms of "at-risk" behaviors in GATE students, in order to appropriately refer students for interventions. At-risk GATE students are not excluded from the gifted program. Teachers and parents are provided information about appropriate intervention strategies. The program is adjusted to meet individual student needs.

**Standard 5.1 The district provides professional development opportunities related to gifted learners on a regular basis.**

Teachers of gifted students are provided professional development opportunities in order to ensure students have access to a high quality instructional program. Administrators, counselors, psychologists, support staff, school board members, and parents/community members are also encouraged to attend professional development opportunities. The district recognizes the wide range of knowledge and skills teachers have. GATE professional development must be ongoing and on varied levels to meet the needs of all teachers. Teachers of GATE students must maintain and update their professional development by attending district offered staff development and/or trainings offered outside the district that extend their knowledge and ability to teach GATE students.

The professional development plan for the Encinitas Union School District focuses on training teachers and administrators in a variety of strategies for working with gifted students. The District provides a range of professional development opportunities. All new teachers hired in the District are required to attend in-service meetings that introduce new materials, instructional techniques, and procedures for identifying gifted students. The District is committed to seeing that ALL teachers have the skills and strategies to provide quality differentiated instruction in every classroom.

The district promotes collaboration between sites throughout the district, by subject

areas and across grade levels, to discuss curriculum and share implementation ideas for GATE differentiation strategies at our GATE IIC meetings.

Based upon recent needs assessments and the recommendations of our 2006 GATE task force composed of teachers, parents, and administrators from across the district, an aggressive vision has been created for teachers in the area of gifted education.

Differentiating the curriculum for gifted and high ability students is a key component of our Summer Institute Staff Development program. This began with our first institute in 2006 and will continue each year. In 2007 Gifted Education Strands in the area of Language Arts and Science will be offered with Mathematics and History Social Science in 2008. Gifted education will continue to be a component of each Summer Institute, topics will be determined based upon needs from annual assessments.

Additionally, Encinitas Union School District will launch a new GATE Certification Program with its first cohort of teachers to be trained during the 2007-08 school year. This group will be expanded each year and become the district's GATE certification program.

The cohort design is as follows:

#### **Requirements of participants**

- Completed application for the GATE Certification Program
- Demonstrated commitment to differentiated instruction, acceleration, and the tenets of a high quality gifted program for students
- Participation in 2007 Summer Institute (College of William and Mary Differentiating Curriculum for Gifted Learners Strand -Language Arts or Science Section)
- Required participation in bi-monthly follow-up sessions (2 hour sessions, 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm)
- Training and use of videoconferencing technologies to expand learning beyond the classroom.
- District-funded participation in Annual California Association of Gifted (CAG) Conference
- Maintenance of a portfolio for presentation at an end-of-year colloquium.
- Conduct Parent Education Sessions in the area of Gifted Education
- Assistance in planning and presentation of gifted Education Strand of Summer Institute 2008

#### **Components of Professional Development/Areas of Study**

- Research-based instructional model in collaboration with the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia
- Junior Great Books – Inquiry Method
- Everyday Math Program Components
- Characteristics of gifted students
- Features of differentiated instruction for gifted students
- Identification of gifted students
- Meeting the social/emotional needs of gifted students
- Technology resources for gifted students
- Parent Education for parents of gifted students

#### **Incentives and Compensation**

- Supplemental GATE materials and equipment supporting the program will be provided to each teacher accepted into the certification program.
- Remuneration in accordance with certificated contract for attendance to all meetings/workshops (outside the work day).
- Paid membership in the California Association for the Gifted (CAG)

- Beginning Fall 2008, a cluster of GATE identified students will be assigned to certified teachers classrooms.

**Standard 5.2 District personnel with direct decision-making and/or instructional responsibilities for gifted students are provided with role specific training**

The District GATE Coordinator, in conjunction with the GATE IIC is responsible for coordinating the program throughout the district, planning district-wide professional development, and conducting the annual district-wide needs assessment. The District GATE Coordinator and site administrators are provided opportunities to gain expertise in gifted education in order to carry out the duties of this position.

North County Professional Development Federation (NCPDF), a consortium of 23 districts that collaborate to plan systematic and effective staff development, and the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) will be involved with the furthering of skills and strategies to provide a strong gifted education instruction throughout the District. Support staff, such as the district arts specialist, counselor, and bilingual literacy teacher, also attend these workshops. District administrators attend workshops in the area of gifted education. The 2007 Management retreat will include a one day in-service on effective gifted education programs presented by faculty from the Center for Gifted Education, College of William and Mary. Follow-up meetings will be planned for subsequent years.

On-going collaboration and communication will occur at District GATE IIC meetings and at the individual school sites. Teachers, administrators and support staff will participate in staff development and grade level planning sessions held on modified days. Through this collaboration, staff will become experts in differentiated instruction to maximize student potential. The utilization of additional resources such as Beginning Teachers Support and Assessment (BTSA) will continue to insure that new teachers receive a seamless and focused staff development program focused on differentiation and service learning.

The following criteria may be used to select GATE cluster teachers:

- Knowledge of all aspects of EUSD's GATE program.
- Knowledge and understanding of gifted students.
- Ability to apply various strategies for curriculum and instruction differentiation.
- Ability to work collaboratively with GATE staff and parents.
- Commitment to personal intellectual growth.
- Commitment to the identification of students.
- Commitment to maintaining the integrity of the program.

**Standard 6.1 Open communication with parents and the community is maintained.**

Information regarding the GATE program and the identification process and criteria is provided to parents through the district website, publications, parent education meetings, and individual conferences with teachers and/or administrators. Information is provided in both English and Spanish.

Annually, each site conducts at least one GATE parent orientation/information meeting. The agenda for this meeting must include:

- An overview of the District GATE program.
- An overview of the District GATE IIC and introduction of the participants that serve on that committee.
- An overview of differentiation strategies used with GATE students.

Additional site GATE parent meetings may be planned based on the site's formal and informal needs assessment. In addition to site GATE meetings, all parents of GATE students are invited to attend the district-wide GATE Parent workshops. The topics of these meetings are determined based on the annual district-wide needs assessment.

The needs assessment survey, distributed annually to GATE parents, is utilized to determine topics of interest for parent education meetings at district and site levels. Parents collaborate in the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and modification of the district's GATE Plan as well as section(s) of their school's Single Plan for Student Achievement. This collaboration takes place through membership on the District GATE IIC, and School Site Councils (SSC).

Parent volunteers, including those with special talents, regularly support and supplement both our core and differentiated curriculum. They work within classrooms and throughout the school.

**Standard 6.2 An active GATE advisory committee with parent involvement is supported by the district.**

The District GATE IIC, along with the District GATE Coordinator, and the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services collaborate in the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and modification of the district's GATE program. This committee also collaborates in the planning of Parent workshops, makes recommendations for and approves the district's GATE application, and brings suggestions, concerns, and/or questions from individual school site committees. A parent member of the GATE IIC signs the state application.

The District GATE IIC includes parents and/or community members, as well as a primary and intermediate teacher representing each school site and administrators. Every effort is made to encourage all parents of gifted students, including those with special needs and English learners, to become involved in their child's education. Meeting times and places are scheduled to meet the needs of parents. Written and verbal communication with parents is translated into Spanish as needed. Parents and GATE IIC members are invited and encouraged to attend professional conferences related to gifted education.

Advisory committees are informed of current research and literature at least annually. This information may also be shared at our GATE parent information meeting.

The GATE IIC solicits presentations from the community as needed, to support our ongoing program. This has included staff from the high school district, to which our students articulate, local publishers, as well as parents and community members.

**Standard 7.1 The district provides ongoing student and GATE program assessment that is consistent with the program's philosophy, goals, and standards.**

The Encinitas Union School District assesses the District's GATE program by monitoring GATE students' growth, service options, delivery methods, identification procedures, curriculum and staff evaluation. The District's GATE IIC, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and GATE Coordinator are chiefly responsible for the collection and analysis of feedback stemming from the evaluation of these areas. Annual reports are presented to the School Board, and recommendations for modifications.

The growth of individual GATE students is monitored on an on-going basis by classroom teachers using criteria such as: the results of standardized and teacher-made tests, work samples and products included in the student portfolio, report cards, teacher's anecdotal notes and observations. These results are shared with parents two times a year at parent conferences. Additionally, principals monitor the performance of GATE students by looking at three year trend data from the STAR test and district benchmark assessments.

The District's GATE IIC evaluates the program annually. Teachers and parents are surveyed regarding the program using the annual District GATE survey and evaluation form. Additionally, parent focus groups, conducted at each school site will be explored during the 2007-08 school year as a method for gaining data regarding the effectiveness of the GATE program.

Program evaluation is continuous and parallels instruction through formal assessment at both site and district levels. Formal program needs assessment occurs annually (CST) and triennially (district benchmarks) to evaluate the progress of GATE students and the effectiveness of the GATE program. GATE students are expected to score Advanced on the CST and rubric 4 on benchmarks, in their area of giftedness.

**Site Level**

The School Site Council uses site needs assessment information when developing the school's Single Plan for Student Achievement each year. They determine modifications needed to the site program and inform all stakeholders of any modifications to the site GATE program.

**District Level**

The District GATE Coordinator, in conjunction with the GATE IIC

1. Facilitates the program evaluation at the district level by preparing, mailing and collecting parent and staff surveys. Prepares a summary of findings and sends the summary to sites.
2. Reviews data, from the California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) results, writing assessment results, and the number and percent of students referred and identified as gifted.
3. Determines district-wide program modifications needed.
4. Informs all stakeholders of any district-wide modifications to the GATE

program.

**Standard 8.1 The district GATE budget is directly related to the GATE program objectives with appropriate allocations.**

Expenditures of state GATE funds supplement, not supplant, district funds. GATE funds, in conjunction with other funding sources as appropriate, are allocated to address:

- Professional development, at the site and district level
- Direct student services
- GATE student identification process
- District and site level coordination
- Accelerated materials and curriculum
- Program evaluation

Carry-over monies are no more than 10 % at site level. Carry-over monies in excess of 10% are returned to the district GATE account. Indirect costs do not exceed state limitations.

Our Administrator of Special Programs assists with our GATE program in the capacity of GATE Coordinator. Given the size of our district and scope of her responsibilities, this is appropriate to meet the needs of this position. She is GATE certified and has expertise in this area and a portion of her salary is supported by the GATE budget.

The district encourages the use of multiple sources to support gifted education. School sites also support their gifted students with other categorical funds in addition to GATE funding.

# GATE Program Evaluation

## **1. Review of Student Academic Progress**

### **Analysis of the academic achievement of GATE students on the California Standards Tests:**

Identified GATE students are performing well above non-GATE identified students on the California Standards Test in all areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics and science. This is supported by the fact that 81% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, 76% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 80% of 6<sup>th</sup> grade GATE identified students scored in the advanced range on language arts as compared to 51% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, 47% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 46% of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students district-wide.

In the area of mathematics, 81% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, 84% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 67% of 6<sup>th</sup> grade GATE identified students scored in the advanced range as compared to 48% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, 48% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 37% of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students district-wide.

Additionally In the area of science, 45% of 5<sup>th</sup> grade GATE identified students scored in the advanced range as compared to 16% of all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students district-wide.

## **2. Review of the Administration of the GATE Program:**

### **Analysis of administrator, teacher, parent, and student satisfaction surveys and/or interviews related to implementation of the various components of the GATE program.**

Data collected from parent surveys and parent forums over the past several years indicate a need for improved communication regarding our GATE program. While the majority of parents were happy with the individual programs their child has received, there was concern regarding the consistency of the program grade to grade and school to school. A desire for better communication regarding our program as well as more parent education was also articulated.

A need for a more clearly defined program with earlier identification of students was also apparent from the surveys and forums. Parents are generally pleased with the direction that the district is taking in the area of gifted education. Parents are also very willing to lend support in improving our Gifted Education Program.

## **3. Procedures for Modifying the District GATE Program Based on the Annual Review(s):**

Provide information regarding the district's plan for modifying the GATE program based on the annual review for each of the various program components listed below. Identify program strengths, needs, and improvement goals.

## **Section 1: Program Design**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- There is a strong commitment to differentiated instruction for gifted learners.
- The district includes identification of students in the area of leadership and offers service learning opportunities for these students.
- A range of grouping opportunities are available for gifted learners.
- Students are provided with both cognitive and affective learning opportunities.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- The program needs to be more clearly sequenced and structured across grades and across schools.
- There is currently no formal sequenced program for primary students.
- More training is needed for support services.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- A clear definition of program offerings will be developed so that students receive the same GATE offering from school to school throughout the district.
- Sequenced offerings will be developed and offered to students in the primary grades.
- Training of both support and general staff in the area of meeting the needs of and supporting gifted learners will be provided.

## **Section 2: Identification**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- EUSD has an ongoing referral process that is ongoing that ensures access to all gender, ethnic, and demographic groups, both linguistically and socio-economic.
- Parents are regularly notified regarding student placement in the program.
- The diversity of the program is increasingly being reflected in the GATE population.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- Current identification procedures to match research for effective processes – students must perform well in both Language Arts and Math on the CST.
- Current tools such as the CST have a ceiling, which do not reflect a student's total potential
- Students are not formally identified until the end of third grade.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- A new identification process will be piloted, developed and implemented.
- Separate criteria for identification will be developed for Math and Language Arts.
- GATE Identification of students will begin in the early primary grades.

## **Section 3: Curriculum and Instruction**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- The core curriculum is compacted for gifted students.
- The differentiated curriculum reinforces the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students.
- The differentiated curriculum utilizes a variety of teaching and learning strategies.
- The differentiated curriculum is planned for both groups and individual gifted learners.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- The curriculum needs to be better articulated within and among grade levels as well as school to school.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Specific curricula and resources for gifted learners will be identified.
- Teachers will be trained in the delivery of these curricula.

## **Section 4: Social and Emotional Development**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- Resources, such as books, web sites and speakers have been identified and offered to parents of gifted students.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- Teachers and principals need more training in offering guidance and counseling services for gifted learners.
- Teachers need more information regarding what is available and how to make referrals for students in need of social and/or emotional support.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Annual training will be provided for teachers and administrators in ways to identify students in need of support as well as ways to support them.

## **Section 5: Professional Development**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- A district process to identify teachers of gifted learners is in place.
- Professional development in the area of differentiating curriculum has been provided for many teachers.
- Teacher to teacher professional development is valued and strongly encouraged.
- A professional development plan for gifted education is in place.
- Support personnel from both inside and outside the district have been identified to assist in meeting the needs of gifted students.

### **GATE Program Needs**

- A more rigorous process of formal GATE certification is needed.
- More follow-up to insure deep implementation of differentiation strategies is needed.
- More training in the area of gifted learners and differentiation for gifted learners is needed for administrators.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- A formal GATE cohort which will go through extensive training in gifted education and differentiated instruction will begin in August of 2007
- Teachers trained and completing the first year of training will be GATE certified and begin training additional teachers.
- GATE training will continue to be part of our annual summer institute.

## **Section 6: Parent and Community Involvement**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- Parents actively participate in our district GATE Instructional Improvement Committee
- Parents are actively involved in the development, evaluation, and revision of the GATE plan.
- The talents of GATE parents in our community have been tapped as resources to supplement our core curriculum.
- Parent information nights were held at each school

### **GATE Program Needs**

- More parent representation is needed from English Language Learner and special needs populations.
- Additional parent education for gifted learners is needed.

### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Make-up of parent representation of the GATE Instructional Improvement Committee will be reviewed to insure that ELL and Special Needs populations are represented.
- We will expand upon GATE parent education opportunities.

## **Section 7: Program Assessment**

### **GATE Program Strengths**

- Parents have the ability to give open candid feedback regarding the GATE program.
- Both strengths and weaknesses of the program are identified in the evaluation process.
- Student assessment data are reviewed as part of the evaluation process.

#### **GATE Program Needs**

- More parent education and input regarding the evaluation process is needed.
- Teachers need training in reviewing data to determine effectiveness of their instructional program.

#### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Parent surveys need to be revised to provide better data regarding the program
- A parent focus group format will be developed as part of the evaluation process.
- Teachers and principals will begin looking more closely at GATE student performance data.

### **Section 8: Budget**

#### **GATE Program Strengths**

- The district encourages fiscal collaboration between categorical programs in order to meet the needs of gifted learners.
- Professional development and appropriate curricula are the focus of GATE expenditures.
- Indirect costs do not exceed state limitations

#### **GATE Program Needs**

- Continued focus of staff development.

#### **GATE Program Improvement Goals**

- Funds will continue to be allocated to provide necessary training for all staff that work with gifted learners.