

FAQs

PROGRAM

What does G.A.T.E. stand for?

Gifted and Talented Education

My child gets good grades or SAT-9 scores or both. Does that mean he/she is Gifted?

It could indicate that your child is gifted or that he/she is a very strong student or both.

Who are gifted students?

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement in the U.S. Department Education definition is:” Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience or environment.”

If I have a child identified for the GATE program should I expect school to be easy for him/her?

Not necessarily. Every person is unique. Everyone has strengths and weakness.

What are characteristics of gifted children?

In general, gifted learners show characteristics that differ from their age peers in every area of function: cognitive, affective, physical and intuitive.

What is the purpose of a GATE program?

The purpose of the GATE program is to meet the unique needs of gifted children.



Why do GATE students need a special program?

Recent research shows that if a child is gifted, he/she needs a program that is responsive to their level of learning and thinking.

Is GATE the same as Special Education?

The program is designed to meet the unique educational needs of gifted children as defined in the state standards for gifted students, the GATE program it is not a function of Special Education.

What are the advantages / disadvantages of being in a GATE class?

The advantage of the GATE program for gifted students is that it is designed to meet the unique needs of gifted students. The disadvantages are that it may not as convenient for parents as a neighborhood school.

My child is so good at some things but only average in others. Can he still be GATE?

Yes, many of our students are able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and learn how to set short and long term goals for improvement.

If my child is gifted why does he seem to lack common sense?

The “adult like” intellectual conversations you can have with a gifted child can be deceiving. In fact their social and emotional development may be commensurate with their age level peers. This can lead to some confused expectations on the part of parents and teachers. A good rule of thumb...remember that they are kids first.

How can I help a GATE child who is perpetually bored? If a child is in a gate program and perpetually bored, it usually means that there is an issue not being addressed. Boredom stems from lack of involvement. If students are not involved in their school work, you should begin by getting a clearer picture of the problem by meeting with the teacher. Together you can help the student devise a plan for becoming and staying involved.

LOGISTICS

What grade levels offer GATE or Advanced classes?

Grades 1-6 7-8 and 9-12

Where are the GATE programs located?

Elementary GATE classes are offered at Allen , Peters , and at Patton. Intermediate and High School Campuses offer Advanced and Honors classes for GATE and high achieving students.

Are GATE programs the same in every district?

The state of California has Recommended Standards for GATE programs. All districts are required to adhere to these standards. There are many variations of these standards based on the district. Most are very similar in structure.

Will the GATE program take up too much of my child's free time?

The GATE program should not take up any more time than a regular class. Homework and grading requirements are the same.

TESTING

How is a child recommended to take the GATE test?

All teachers are sent instructions on how to recommend students for the GATE testing. Teachers make recommendations in October based on characteristic behaviors of Gifted Children. Parents may recommend their own child.

What is the usual method for testing for the GATE program?

Students are recommended for testing based on characteristic behaviors of GATE students. They are then given a Nationally Normed Group Test which has been an effective tool for identifying gifted students throughout the nation.

How can I have my child tested for the GATE program?

If you feel like your child should be tested for the GATE Program, discuss it with his/her teacher at the first teacher/parent conference in October. If a teacher does not feel that this is an appropriate referral and you strongly disagree, you may use a parent referral form.

When does testing occur? Where?

Spring testing is during the month of Feb and March at each elementary and secondary school. Summer testing takes place in August at a site determined by the district.

When will I get the results?

Spring results should be received by the end of the second week of May. Summer results are processed and returned by mid September.

If my child does not pass the test, will they be allowed to take it again?

Students may take the test up to three times. They may only take the test once in a twelve month period.

Will my child have to be re-tested each year to stay in the program?

No, once a child has passed the GATE test, he/she will not have to retake the test.

Should I prepare my child for taking the test?

No. It is not necessary or preferred.

Is there any way to help my child become GATE?

No. Giftedness is not something you can practice.

What if my child does not pass the test but has a lot of characteristics of GATE children?

Most of us have some characteristic of giftedness. A truly gifted child will have many of the characteristics to a very pronounced degree.

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Will my child still learn the basic skills?

Absolutely, the GATE program uses the same state standards, core curriculum and basic skills as the regular program.

How is a GATE class different from a regular class?

GATE students are grouped with their intellectual peers with the goal of building the capacity for highly complex thinking and analysis in an interactive environment.

What kind of training do GATE teachers receive?

In order to teach GATE the state says that teachers must receive ongoing training in differentiating the core curriculum specifically for advanced learners. Teacher must also receive training on meeting the social and emotional needs of gifted students.

Is there more homework in the GATE program?

GATE students receive homework commensurate with district guidelines for their respective Grade level.

Is the grading the same for GATE and non-GATE students?

Yes. All students are graded on their report card using the State Grade Level Standards.

How is the program different or enhanced?

The GATE program meets the unique needs of gifted learners by enhancing the core standards, with depth, complexity, novelty and acceleration. The program is research based and also meets the unique social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

What is Differentiation?

Differentiation is a term that is widely used in the field of education. It's meaning varies to basically mean to meet the differing needs of the students in the classroom. In the field of Gifted Education, it indicates a need to make lessons accessible to all types of learners and to tap into the advanced levels of intellect of our learners.

Why is Differentiation important?

The process of differentiation for advanced learners is research based and allows for advanced levels of cognitive development. It does not include more of the same or “increased difficulty”. For Gifted students, learning becomes a dynamic process which develops complex cognitive thinking skills by “digging deeper” into the learning process. Students are with their mental peers thereby creating an environment for high-level interactive learning.

Can my child be thrown out of the GATE program?

The GATE program is not a panacea and may not be appropriate for all students. Experience tells us that most children need a period of adjustment for any type of change. Decisions on appropriateness of placement is made jointly by the GATE office, school site and parents.

INTERMEDIATE

Is there a GATE program at the Junior High / Intermediate Level?

Yes. Each intermediate school addresses the needs of their gifted population in a different way using the state approved structure for gifted education.

What is the GATE structure at the Junior High?

Academically accelerated students and gate identified students are placed into classes designated for students achieving at the highest levels. They are often referred to as advanced classes

Why does the program structure change at the Intermediate Level?

GATE identified students and academically accelerated students compliment each other and learn together in order to provide more interaction at the highest levels of learning. Research tells us that developmentally, the social and emotional needs of gifted students are best met in this way beginning in the preteen years.

HIGH SCHOOL

What is the GATE program at the high school level?

All students at the High School level can qualify for classes designated as “Honors” courses beginning in the 10th grade based on teacher recommendation. These classes offer a more rigorous and challenging dimension to the curriculum. Advanced Placement classes “AP” courses are courses designed to parallel college level courses. They are rigorous, time intensive and offer a weighted grading scale.

An “AP” exam is offered at the end of the course by the college board. Students passing the test can receive college elective credit that will transfer to most universities.

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL CONCERNS

Why should I put my child in the GATE program?

If your child is gifted, it means they have the capacity to easily acquire content that is complex. Research tells us that grouping these children with their mental peers is important for academic and social/emotional development.

What if my child does not want to go to or be in the GATE program?

No one necessarily likes change that removes them from their comfort zone. Children are no different. Adults should make the ultimate decision regarding what is best and support the emotions that come with change.

Is the competition common among high achieving students overwhelming in the GATE setting?

In the GATE program, collaboration replaces competition as the primary vehicle for learning. It does take a shift in thinking for those students who are at the top of their class if they always view themselves as “the best”.

Do they have the opportunity to be a part of the school activities?

Yes. GATE students are integrated in all non-academic activities.

My child has been identified as gifted but has a great deal of difficulty with change. How can I help him/her make the transition to a new school?

Visit the area, look for familiar landmarks connecting home to school. Walk the campus to gain familiarity with it. Think about all of the things that you do when you have to make a change in your home location or work location. Once you put yourself in the position of having to make a change, you will think of many ideas that will make the transition easier.

My child is very smart and I often have a battle of wits and intelligence with him/her. Can someone help me with this?

GATE students are just regular kids with an advanced intellect. But remember they are still children. The GATE staff has a great deal of experience and will be able to help you guide your gifted child.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Where can I find more information about Gifted Children?

www.cagifted.org

www.hoagiesgifted.org