

Board of Education Executive Summary

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Policy Revisio and Update

April 21, 2016

I. Overview of the Gifted and Talented and AP Programs

The Sacramento City Unified School District is fully committed to preparing its students to be college and career and life ready. The district's goal is to provide all students with rigorous academic experiences that are appropriately challenging, preparing them for success and to achieve their full potential in life. Recognizing that students demonstrate advanced or beyond age level capacity for learning at all development levels and across all domains, the district is committed to identifying these students early and providing an infrastructure of support and services based on research and exemplary practices to af

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achievement; increased access to challenging curricula, rigorous educational programs, and selective institutions of higher education; access to out-of-school supplemental programs and community and family support.” Providing gifted and talented students with a range of both academically challenging and appropriately relevant and engaging learning experiences is singularly powerful in reducing the risk of those learners “dying on the vine.”

As stated by Ford (2010) and highlighted in the publication *Overlooked Gems: A National Perspective on Low-Income Promising Learners* (2007), “We can and must look for gifts and talents early among students, particularly among low-income and/or low-SES students.” SCUSD has a long standing commitment to identifying high-ability students early in their educational careers, so that they can access the challenging curricular experiences they require to reach their full potential. However, in order to effectively prepare our students to achieve that full potential in the 21st century workforce, our racially, ethnically, culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students must be provided with enriched educational environments that develop their talents and foster the creative thinking skills necessary to become the creative producers of the future.

Gifted and talented students along with those who possess high abilities need gifted education programs and services that will challenge them in regular classroom settings, through enrichment and accelerated programs to enable them to make continuous progress in school and life. While research in the field varies widely in identifying percentages of gifted, talented and highly-ability students who underachieve, the achievement benefits for those students who do receive appropriate academic and talent development services are clear. Several longitudinal studies (Benbow, 2001 and 2013) have shown that gifted programs have a positive effect on students’ postsecondary plans. Gifted education services are about more than just giving students challenge in classrooms: Gifted programming positively influences student’s futures.

Consequently, it is vital that SCUSD provide Gifted and Talented Education programs and services to give students the opportunities they need in order to achieve their life’s potential. An updated Board Policy, reflecting the exemplar programs and services already in place while providing opportunities for open instruction, expansion, implementation, and root the program in research validated best practices, is an essential step in

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to ensure that the number of students formally identified to receive GATE services is consistent with research validated percentages, and the identified rate is representative of local demographic norms. Student level data will be monitored year to year through a variety of assessment tools as students matriculate through the district including student work samples, common assessments, performance based assessments, and standardized assessment results (CAASPP, PSAT, SAT and AP Exam results).

As students' progress through the school years, their opportunities to engage in and benefit from appropriately targeted advanced learning pathways should continue to expand. The district will monitor expanded access by reviewing data at the secondary level related directly to authentic acceleration, including open access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses districtwide, AP course completion and pass rates, and expansion of dual/concurrent enrollment opportunities district wide. Additionally during the elementary and middle school years, the district will seek to implement Talent Development opportunities that are both academic and interest based for all students.

The quality of teaching and learning will be determined through monitoring participation and completion of GATE Certificate course completion and teacher engagement with ongoing professional

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components that will ensure that students are provided with services positioning them for life success and productivity.

- x Section one provides updated language to original content in the existing policy. It describes the district's intent to provide all students with appropriately challenging, academically rigorous school day experiences that are commensurate with their particular abilities and talents. It addresses the importance of GATE services in developing the creative producers of the 21st century.
- x Section two reflects entirely new content, addressing the breadth through which students may be formally identified for Gifted and Talented Education Services. This identification process begins by first assessing a student's ability and secondarily assessing academic achievement. By these means, the process seeks to include those students who may be underachieving or are traditionally underrepresented in advanced or gifted and talented programming.
- x Section three expands upon original content, outlining in greater detail the educational opportunities that may be available to students as they matriculate through their school years, grades K-12. Furthermore it addresses the vital support of student's social and emotional needs for success not only in school but also in life.
- x Section four presents new policy language, stipulating the significance of ongoing, research based professional learning to support and develop the professional capacity building of those teachers and administrators who provide gifted education services to students. It is imperative that teachers in classrooms supporting gifted and talented students are equipped to meet those student's academic and social/emotional needs.
- x Section five adds greater detail to existing language, delineating that the Superintendent or designee shall involve a range of stakeholders in the monitoring of GATE programs and services. Furthermore ongoing monitoring of the GATE Department will include a regular report to the Board regarding program implementation and the progress of students.

Ensuring that a broad based coalition of the district's stakeholders had a voice in the process, the policy development engagement approach as outlined in the Board's bylaws was utilized. As a result, the proposed revised Gifted and Talented Student Program policy was vetted with the district English Learner Advisory Committee, and the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education. The policy was also shared with the district Gifted Education Advisory Committee, consisting of teachers, principals, and parents. Input from the various stakeholders helped to shape the development of the revised policy.

Revised GATE Identification Criteria

With the goal of a GATE program reflective of district demographics and expanding opportunities to provide gifted and talented educational services to a wider array of students, the district continues to expand the number of diverse students who are served through an ever increasing range of advanced learning pathways in grades K-12.

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5. Golden Empire
6. John Bidwell
7. Martin Luther King Jr.-~~X~~
8. Matsuyama
9. Theodore Judah
10. William Land

Neighborhood School GATE Services represent an expansion of gifted education and/or talent development services available to advanced and high ability students across the district. These services enable those students who are identified for GATE services to remain in their neighborhood school to receive GATE services from within their community by teachers who have formally engaged in GATE Department facilitated professional learning through participation in Collaborative Planning Time (CPT) and/or completion of the SCUSD GATE Certificate. The GATE Department is currently building out a model for the scope, implementation, and development of these advanced learner services for the 2016-17 academic year.

Targeted Ongoing Professional Learning

The district is committed to robust, ongoing, collaborative professional learning, in alignment with the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Gifted Education Teacher Preparation Standards, that fosters deep understanding about the needs of gifted, talented, and high ability learners, positively impacting learning environments and student learning outcomes. To end, the goal is building capacity for professionals to understand:

- x Individual learning differences, focusing on how language, race/ethnicity, economic status, family background and/or disability impacts the learning of individuals with gifts and talents
- x The nature of multiple learning environments for gifted and talented learners, including creating safe, inclusive, culturally responsive environments for all learners continuum of services that respond to individual gifts, talents, motivations, culture and linguistic differences.
- x The use of core and specialized curricula to advance learning, assess in order to differentiate and accelerate instruction, and select, adapt, and plan for the use of a variety of evidence-based instructional strategies.
- x

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Since the 2013-14 academic year, teacher participation in both GATE Certificate courses and professional learning opportunities has increased. Currently 42 teachers from GATE service elementary school sites are engaged in GATE Certificate coursework. There are 35 teachers from designated GATE service classrooms who are in the process of completing their GATE Certification. Between the school years 2013-2015, 22 teachers from a variety of elementary schools have completed their GATE certification. For the 2015-16 school year, it is anticipated that as many as 20 teachers be able to complete all components required for certification by June 2016. At the 15 schools providing designated Gifted and Talented Education Services, 46% of the teachers in classrooms providing those GATE services are GATE certificated. This percentage is expected to increase to 79% by the end of this school year.

Plans are in place with the College Board to provide Advanced Placement Workshops on SCUSD High School campuses for the 2016 academic year. Opening our high school campuses up to the region for these College Board facilitated professional learning opportunities means that SCUSD teachers will be able to participate in valuable ongoing professional learning and be able to do so at a significantly reduced cost.

VII. Lessons Learned/Next Steps

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Sacramento City USD

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~~Gifted and talented programs may offer special day classes; pairing; enrichment activities; cluster grouping; independent study; acceleration; postsecondary education opportunities; services for underachieving, linguistically or culturally divergent and/or economically disadvantaged eligible students; and special counseling or instruction not offered in the regular classroom.~~

Educational Opportunities

Sacramento City USD

Board Policy

Gifted and Talented Student Program

BP 6172
Instruction

Overview

The Governing Board believes that all students deserve an education that challenges them to reach their full potential. The district shall provide gifted and talented students with opportunities for learning commensurate with their particular abilities and talents. By cultivating their exceptional abilities or talents, these students may contribute significantly to our society's progress in diverse fields.

(cf. .0200 – Goals for the School District)
(cf. 0460 – Local Control and Accountability Plan)
(cf. 6000 – Concepts and Roles)

Identification

The Superintendent or designee shall identify students for the district's gifted and talented education (GATE) program on the basis of any of all of the following: demonstrated or potential intellectual development, creative or productive thinking, consistently high achievement levels, or academic ability in a particular subject area(s). Identification practices shall ensure that multiple criteria are used which measure potential (ability/aptitude), performance (achievement) and qualitative data (descriptive).

The Superintendent or designee shall provide eligible students, including economically disadvantaged students, English learners, Twice-Exceptional and students of varying cultural backgrounds, with full opportunities to participate in the GATE program and shall provide targeted supports to help such students to succeed in the program.

(cf. 0410 – Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
(cf. 6164.2– Guidance/Counseling Services)
(cf. 6174 – Education for English Language Learners)

Educational Opportunities

The district's GATE program shall be designed to provide articulated learning experiences across subjects and grade levels and shall meet or exceed state academic content standards.

(cf. 6011 – Academic Standards)
(cf. 6142.91 – Reading/Language Arts Instruction)
(cf. 6142.92 – Mathematics Instruction)
(cf. 6142.93 – Science Instruction)

(cf. 6142.94 – History/Social Science Instruction)

(cf. 6178 – Career Technical Education)

Educational opportunities in the district's GATE Program may include:

1. 1. Cluster groupings in which students are grouped within a regular classroom setting and receive appropriately differentiated learning activities from the classroom teacher who is trained in gifted education.
1. 2. Parttime flexible, groupings, in which students attend classes or seminars that are organized to provide advanced or enriched subject matter for a part of the school day.
1. 3. Special Day Classes which are taught by a ~~class~~ teacher who is training in gifted education and are designed to meet specific academic needs of gifted and talented students and are appropriately differentiated from other classes in the same subjects at the school.
1. 4. Acceleration, in which students are placed in grade levels or classes more advanced than those of their chronological age group.

(cf. 5123 – Promotion/Acceleration/Retention)

1. 5. Opportunities to attend classes conducted by a ~~post~~ secondary institution

(cf. 6172.1– Concurrent Enrollment in College Classes)

1. 6. Enrollment in Advanced Placement classes, International Baccalaureate program or honors classes.

(cf. 6141.5– Advanced Placement)

In addition, the district's program shall support the social and emotional development of GATE students in order to promote student engagement in school and success in life.

(cf. 5113.1– Chronic Absence and Truancy)

(cf. 5147 – Dropout Prevention)

Professional Learning

Ongoing professional learning, including GATE certification, shall be provided to support teachers in understanding the unique learning styles and diverse abilities of gifted and talented students and in developing appropriate instructional strategies.

(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)

Program Evaluation

As appropriate, the Superintendent or designee shall certify staff, students,

parents/guardians and community members in the planning, implementing and evaluation of the