



DEBRA KUBIN, SUPERINTENDENT

Gifted & Talented Education Program

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Ukiah Unified School District

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Plan

2017-2018

Section 1: Program Design

GATE PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The legislature finds and declares that it is in the public interest to support unique opportunities for high-achieving and underachieving pupils in the public elementary and secondary schools of California who are identified as gifted and talented. The legislature further declares its intent that special efforts be made to ensure that pupils from economically disadvantaged and varying cultural backgrounds be provided with full participation in these unique opportunities. (EC 52200 a)

It is the philosophy of the Ukiah Unified School District to encourage academic rigor, to identify gifted students among the diverse populations in our district, and to address the social, emotional and learning needs of gifted students. Our goals are to challenge all students, and provide specialized programs for GTL to support individual excellence and achievement.

GATE PROGRAM GOAL

The goal of the GATE Program is to provide equitable, high quality differentiated learning opportunities for GATE identified students in order to assist each student to reach his/her full affective and academic potential. Our intent is to continue to develop an effective program. Each identified student will be provided opportunities for differentiation within the school day, which will address his/her needs and potential. A district GATE Specialist will be responsible for the overall management of the GATE program including utilizing standardized procedures for identification using multiple criteria, and the implementation of the written GATE plan. There are approximately 235 district-identified GATE students: 197 are secondary students, 38 are elementary. This plan is being developed by the District GATE Specialist. The district Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment will be responsible for evaluating the plan annually.

The district plan will be available to parents and community members on the UUSD website.

Students are formally identified using standardized multiple criteria in grades 2-11. The criteria includes: performance on classroom tasks, norm-referenced tests, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT), teacher observation, parent referral, surveys of traits and characteristics, impact factors (i.e., medical history, economic, and rapid English acquisition), as well as grades. Identification is in the following areas: intellectual and achievement.

To address the intellectual needs of GATE students, training in differentiated curriculum, best practices, and training in the use of Icons of Depth and Complexity in the classroom is offered to all teachers. Training for counselors on the social and emotional needs of Gifted and Talented Learner will also be offered. The following is a description of the comprehensive GATE plan to address the needs of gifted learners within and across grade levels, K-12. The use of ongoing assessment allows students to move beyond the concepts and skills they have already mastered and continue to progress at a rate and level that insure intellectual growth. Our district supports cluster grouping of gifted students. Flexible grouping allows all students to interact with materials that are appropriately challenging and provides opportunities for intellectual peer interaction. It is our intent to assist identified pupils to acquire skills and understanding commensurate with their potential.

The 3-6 Elementary GATE Program

The GATE Program for grades 3-6 involves formal district-wide identification of students in grouping arrangements determined by the school site. To support the cognitive and affective learning of gifted students, it is recommended GATE students be clustered in classrooms. Typically, the clusters will consist of 4-8 students, but no more than 10. Each year teachers will be invited to participate in training focusing on differentiated instructional strategies, including compacting, learning contracts and project menus.

The GATE Specialist will facilitate training for teachers and share professional literature regarding GATE student needs. He/She will also consult with teachers and counselors regarding the social and emotional needs of gifted learners.

The 6-12 Middle School and High School GATE Programs

Gifted learners in grades 6-12 have the opportunity to enroll in self-contained Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. All of the Honors/AP classes can and do include high-achieving non-identified students as well as gifted students. At the middle school and high school level, high-achieving students, including GATE identified, are placed in Honors/AP courses according to individual course requirements. Student performance, teacher recommendations, and entrance exams are factors in determining placement. 6-9 grade GATE students will be cluster grouped by their English class and will be provided differentiation within the classroom. The following opportunities also exist at the secondary level: Science Olympiad, at Pomolita, and Robotics at the High School

All secondary students receive the guidance of counselors in completing a four-year plan. School counselors monitor and support students in middle school and high school with academic and personal guidance. After the first quarter of instruction, if a student is underachieving, a triage is put in place including parents to provide counseling and tutoring. Middle school students can attend the high school to meet their academic goals. Students can enroll in the local community college while attending high school to pursue advanced studies and individual interests. The District GATE Specialist will continue to work with secondary schools to provide resources regarding conferences, workshops and publications that address gifted student academic, social and emotional needs.

Enrichment Activities

The District GATE Specialist will work with parents to develop appropriate enrichment opportunities for students including after-school workshops, field trips, family days at venues of interest, and parent workshops.

Section 2: Identification

Students are identified as gifted using multiple criteria that focus on students who have or exhibit the potential for exceptional achievement in comparison to same-age peers. All second grade students and new transfers to Ukiah Unified will be universally assessed using the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT).

Training Key Staff in Identification

Ukiah Unified will provide training for teachers and administrators in identifying potentially gifted students with a particular focus on identifying students from previously underrepresented groups.

Informing Teachers and Parents of the Process

The District GATE Specialist developed a GATE web page on the UUSD website to provide a variety of information for parents, teachers, and administrators. It contains information regarding the characteristics of gifted children, the UUSD referral and identification process, the District GATE Program Plan, and links to organizations and resources for gifted education. The GATE office will send screening criteria to schools to be shared with teachers. This includes the teacher and parent referral forms and a written description of the referral process. The GATE Specialist is available to conference with parents regarding identification and our current GATE plan.

English Language Learners

The GATE Specialist works closely with the Director English Language Learners as well as the District Student Success Coordinator. This collaboration will review English Language Development test results and recommend students to the GATE program.

Identification Placement and Appeals

The district maintains a database on all students who have been identified as gifted. Once a student has been identified they maintain in the database until the student moves out of the district. We adhere to a come: stay policy wherein students who have qualified in other districts will be considered qualified in UUSD. Duplicate GATE records are provided to parents upon request. The GATE Specialist will use multiple criteria to identify GATE students. The Naglieri Non Verbal Ability Test for grades 2-11 was selected as one of the identification tools because it is a culture fair, non-verbal measure of school ability. The intent for using the Naglieri is to have the GATE student population more closely reflect the diversity of the district's student population.

The GATE Specialist conducts the GATE testing at each school site as needed. GATE identification criteria include, but are not limited to: teacher recommendation, achievement tests, impact factors and parent recommendation as reflected on the GATE Parent Referral Form. Before testing, parent permission is secured. At the middle and the high school level additional criteria is used to determine student inclusion in Honors and Advanced Placement classes.

Identified students are those who meet the established multiple criteria requirements. Before identification, parent permission to identify is secured. Once students are identified, they remain GATE identified for the duration of enrollment in Ukiah Unified. Each school will include in their Single School Plan how the needs of GATE students will be met within the regular classroom. To ensure equity, GATE services are made available to "twice exceptional" students and these students will be included in GATE cluster and part time groupings. For students who do not qualify, a letter is sent to the parent, along with information on who to contact with further questions. The teacher and school site are notified of the results as well. Students may be reevaluated for qualification, within 18 months, for a total of two evaluations per student.

Section 3: Curriculum and Instruction

Ukiah Unified implements a K-9 district and state adopted, and Common Core standards-based curriculum for English language arts, math, science and history/social science which includes teacher resource materials for compacting and differentiating the core curriculum for GATE students within the regular classroom. Student progress is measured using a district established standards-based and performance based report card. Student achievement is monitored and reported using common assessments. At the middle school level, GATE students may have the opportunity to enroll in specific content courses—honors language arts and social studies and advanced math courses. We are seeking to create alternative learning environments in which gifted learners can acquire skills and understanding commensurate with their potential.

Specific course content for 10-12 honors and Advanced Placement classes for GATE and high achieving students has been written and revised based on both Common Core Standards and college level expectations for coursework in English, math, social science, foreign language, science and the visual and performing arts.

Differentiation of the core curriculum is done in response to the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students. Compacting, independent study and learning centers allow gifted students to learn more advanced information and skills as well as pursue individual interests. Performance is assessed as standard not met, standard nearly met, standard met, or standard exceeded. In response to specific academic and social needs students are flexibly grouped either within or across grade levels. Gifted students need an advanced interdisciplinary and accelerated curriculum that is presented with more depth. Differentiation of the curriculum emphasizes the processes of learning higher order thinking skills: problem-solving, classifying and categorizing, comparing and contrasting, making judgments according to criteria and multiple perspectives, doing research utilizing numerous kinds of resources, discussing, debating, analyzing group process, and evaluating experiences.

Student interests determine and motivate the development of enrichment opportunities provided during the school day and after school. This includes opportunities to participate in Odyssey of the Mind, workshops, field trips and family days organized at appropriate venues.

Section 4: Social and Emotional Development

The District GATE Specialist provides parents with resources regarding conferences, workshops and publications that address gifted students' academic, social and emotional needs as well as the unique characteristics of gifted learners. The Ukiah Unified GATE Specialist will provide counselors with current research driven strategies to improve gifted student achievement and enhance the social and emotional development of gifted students.

Every school has a team to address academic, social and emotional needs of students. If a gifted learner is referred to this team, the GATE Specialist can also attend these meetings. The team is responsible for developing an intervention plan to address the expressed needs of the student and to monitor its implementation.

The District GATE Specialist will share the list of gifted students in middle and high school each year to the school counselors to ensure that gifted students are monitored. There are standard procedures in place at each school for referral to school support programs and outside agency services.

To help bridge the transition from sixth to seventh grade and from eighth to ninth grade, the middle schools and the high school provide informational meetings for students and parents about school

programs, course offerings, expectations, and the availability of counseling services to support the academic and social/emotional needs of students.

All freshmen begin working on an individual four-year plan with counselors. This helps students focus on their future and make decisions about courses needed to reach their goals. Four-year plans are updated yearly and juniors and seniors are regularly counseled about future opportunities, college preparation, and testing deadlines. The counselors work individually with parents and students to research colleges and scholarship information based on student interests. The counselors instruct each student on the college scholarship application process to ensure successful completion.

Section 5: Professional Development

Districts provide professional development opportunities related to gifted education to administrators, teachers and staff to support and improve educational opportunities for gifted students. (EC 52212a1)

Ukiah Unified School District demonstrates its commitment to the long term improvement of educational opportunities for gifted students by investing in the systematic training of administrators, counselors, and teachers who are ultimately responsible for monitoring, implementing and evaluating programs and their impact on student learning.

The District GATE Specialist

The district will provide ongoing training for the GATE Specialist by supporting attendance at local and state meetings and trainings. The District GATE Specialist holds a multiple subjects teaching credential, is certified to teach English Language Learners, and NCLB compliant.

Section 6: Parent and Community Involvement

Districts provide procedures to ensure consistent participation of parents and community members in the planning and evaluation for gifted students. (EC 52205 2f)

Ukiah Unified School District provides a variety of opportunities for parental involvement, including parent conferences, back-to-school night, family nights, open house, and a GATE Parent Advisory Committee for federal and state programs. The GATE Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) will meet at least three times per school year.

GATE Parent Advisory Committee Meetings (2017-2018)

- Meeting 1: Monday, September 11th 2017 - 5:30-6:30 at UUSD Service Center – 511 S. Orchard
- Meeting 2: Monday, January 29th 2018 - 5:30-6:30 at UUSD Service Center – 511 S. Orchard
- Meeting 3: Monday, April 30th 2018 5:30-6:30 at UUSD Service Center – 511 S. Orchard

Section 7: Program Assessment

The GATE Specialist will use surveys to collect data about our gifted program. We will evaluate diversity of students served, differentiation of instruction, opportunities for intellectual peer interaction, and variety of enrichment opportunities.

Criteria for Levels of Performance

GATE students are invited to participate in all program components regardless of school performance.

Section 8: Budgets

Ukiah Unified is committed to using multiple funding sources to support a quality GATE program which includes the identification of gifted learners, direct services to GATE students, professional development, and program assessment. GATE expenditures at the district and site levels follow the California State requirements. The GATE Specialist, the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, develop the GATE budget. UUSD is committed to a comprehensive GATE program