INFORMATION SHEET 06/19/2017 TRUSTEES' MEETING

To: Jim Bridges, Superintendent

For: Board of Trustees

From: Sarah Steen

Re: Revisions to the Jefferson School District GATE Plan

On May 17, 2017, the Jefferson School District GATE Advisory Committee finalized and approved revisions to the JSD GATE Plan. In the revision process we updated: Services, identification criteria, procedures, curriculum, staff training and roles.

Recommended Action: Please approve the revised GATE Plan as presented.

Jefferson School District
GATE PLAN

Jefferson School District
Gifted & Talented Education
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Revised May 2017

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GATE Program Design

How does your LEA provide a comprehensive continuum of services and program options responsive to the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students and based on philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support and related services? (EC 52205d & 52206a)

Mission Statement

The mission of the Jefferson School District's Gifted and Talented Education Program is to provide gifted and talented students differentiated instruction that is commensurate with their abilities. The District will establish programs for gifted and talented students to work together under the guidance of trained teachers in an atmosphere that is intellectually and academically rigorous, fosters creativity, and provides emotional support.

Purpose

The purpose of the GATE program in the Jefferson School District is to provide appropriate learning opportunities for students identified in the intellectual, high achievement, and creative ability categories and to help them develop into autonomous, lifelong learners. The GATE program is designed to:

- Challenge students to achieve high academic standards
- Develop students as critical thinkers
- Develop students' independent and cooperative learning habits
- Enable students to work with their intellectual peers for a portion of their school experience

Belief Statements

- GATE students will be clustered together to provide opportunities to work with students of similar abilities.
- GATE students will receive instruction from classroom teachers trained in differentiated instruction.
- The GATE program will stimulate creative abilities, develop higher-level thinking processes, and provide opportunities to pursue interests.

Authors of the GATE Plan

The Jefferson School District GATE Plan was written by classroom teachers, parents and administrators. The plan is approved by the Board of Trustees. The Advisory Committee reviews the plan annually to discuss standards, students' needs, goals and program logistics. The GATE plan and GATE brochure are available to parents at all school sites, the district office, and accessible on the Jefferson School District website. (www.jeffersonschooldistrict.com)

Program Design

GATE students are recognized through a variety of identification options. State standards and district guidelines are used to plan instruction and curriculum that is organized as an integrated, differentiated learning experience within the regular school day. The Jefferson School District educators work toward developing a vision of excellence. Our GATE students are provided an enriched and challenging curriculum at all grade levels.

- Gifted and high achieving students in the seventh and eighth grades are provided differentiated opportunities through core curriculum. An accelerated math pathway is available to students who meet the district requirements.
- Teachers use the elements of differentiation, including depth, complexity, rigor, acceleration, and novelty to modify the core curriculum for GATE students.
- Teachers provide the GATE students with the option to choose the process of learning in some situations.
- Students can also access various areas of content of interest to them that also meet state standards
- Students are allowed to produce various products to show their understanding of concepts and attainment of standards.
- Students who have been identified by any of the three criteria; intellectual, creative, or high achievement ability are eligible participants of the program.
- Students may work individually, in small groups and as a whole class on the grade-level content standards, but at different levels of ability.
- Students are clear on the expected outcomes of their learning and students are encouraged to self-assess.
- Enrichment programs are available for identified students in grades 3-8.
- Leadership opportunities are provided to students through cooperative class activities, student government, community service and a range of athletic activities.
- Gifted and high achieving students are encouraged to participate in Science Olympiad, Math Olympiad, , Science Fair, and Spelling Bee, and other academic activities as offered.
- Academic field trips are arranged for students.

The GATE program involves the school district, the home and the community. Administrators at all schools, in conjunction with the District GATE Coordinator, manage the overall GATE program. A GATE Site Coordinator at each site and administration will provide more specific support to teachers, students and parents through newsletters, workshops, informational meetings and individual conferencing. Parents are active partners in the district's GATE program. They help to plan and evaluate the program, volunteer in classrooms, and are encouraged to participate in School Site Councils, attend Jefferson School District board meetings, and Parents Club.

GATE Identification

Which of the following categories will your district use in identifying gifted and talented students, and what criteria will be used to identify in each category? Describe how your identification procedures are equitable, comprehensive, and ongoing, and how they reflect the district's definition of giftedness and its relationship to state criteria. (EC 52205: Title 5, Section 3822)

__x_Intellectual Ability (required)
____Leadership Ability
__x_Creative Ability
__x_High Achievement
____Specific Academic Ability
____Performing and Visual Arts
____Other (please describe)

Identification Process

The Jefferson School District has developed an identification process that ensures all students, including those from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, equal opportunity to be identified and participate in the GATE program. A method to identify GATE students in the following categories: intellectual ability, high achievement ability and creative ability are present in the plan. Although formal identification is not usually available below fourth grade, differentiated instruction and curriculum occurs within the classroom to meet the needs of the younger gifted students.

The district establishes and implements both traditional and nontraditional instruments and procedures for searching for gifted students. All data are used to ensure equal access to program services. There are three processes whereby a student can be identified as GATE: California State Standardized Assessments, Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT), or by teacher recommendation by meeting the District GATE portfolio guidelines.

Qualifying by Intellectual Ability or High Achievement Criteria

1 a. Identification by Standardized Assessment (2013 and earlier)

A student may be identified as GATE in the categories of intellectual ability and high achievement ability utilizing evidence from standardized assessments. In order to have qualified, students must have scored "Advanced" on STAR California Standards Test in English Language Arts AND in Math for two consecutive years up to the year 2013.

1 b. Identification by Standardized Assessment (2015 and after)

A student may be identified as GATE in the categories of intellectual ability and high achievement ability utilizing evidence from standardized assessments. In order to qualify, students must score a 4 on both Math AND Language Arts for two consecutive years on the CAASPP Summative Assessments.

2. Identification by OLSAT Test Results

A group administered Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) is offered at every school site in the fall and spring of each year. The OLSAT is designed to assess a student's thinking and reasoning skills that relate to a student's ability to learn in school. All students in grades 3-8 are eligible to participate in the district-wide testing program for GATE eligibility in the fall. All students in grades 2-7 are eligible to participate in the district-wide testing program for GATE eligibility in the spring. Second graders taking the OLSAT in the spring will test in a separate location from other grade levels as the test is orally administered. They may be referred by parents, teachers or administrators as early as the first day each school year by filling out a testing application. A Standard Score of ≥125 on the OLSAT is required for qualification. No student will be retested with the OLSAT for the following three years from the previous testing date without the recommendation from a Student Success Team.

3. Identification by Teacher Recommendation and Portfolio Assessment

A student may qualify for the GATE program by nomination from the student's classroom teacher. The classroom teacher must submit an application to the district GATE Coordinator. A Portfolio Work Sample must be collected containing 3-5 student created products that support recommendation in both English Language Arts and Math. The samples should include work that demonstrates higher-level thinking, problem solving skills, creativity, and working beyond the assignment. All work should

demonstrate extraordinary ability beyond the level expected of the student's chronological peers. The samples should be comprised of teacher observed or on-demand assignments rather than work or projects that were completed at home. In the spring of the application year, the GATE committee will evaluate the portfolio to determine if the student demonstrates giftedness. A student may be recommended by a teacher multiple times.

Qualifying by Creative Ability Criteria

1. Identification by Teacher Recommendation and Portfolio Assessment

Any student in grades 3-8 who is recommended by their classroom teacher is eligible to participate in the district-wide Portfolio Assessment for Creative Ability. The classroom teacher must submit an application to the district GATE Coordinator. A Portfolio Work Sample must be collected containing 3-5 student created products that support recommendation in both English Language Arts and Math. The samples should include work that demonstrates perception of unusual relationships among aspects of the student's environment and among ideas, innovative methods for overcoming obstacles to thinking and doing, and original production of unique solutions to problems. All work should demonstrate extraordinary ability beyond the level expected of the student's chronological peers. The samples should be comprised of teacher observed or on-demand assignments rather than work or projects that were completed at home. In the spring of the application year, the GATE committee will evaluate the portfolio to determine if the student demonstrates giftedness. A student may be recommended by a teacher multiple times.

Identification of Transfer Students

It is the responsibility of the registering parent/guardian to indicate on the registration form if a student has been previously identified as GATE. The registering site office will then submit the registration form and supporting documentation from the student's cumulative folder to the District GATE Coordinator for evaluation. If the student's prior qualifying data does not meet the criteria set forth for qualification in the Jefferson School District GATE Plan, the parent/guardian may elect to have their student (3rd -8th Grades) take the OLSAT test at the next available testing session. Transfer students are also eligible to qualify on the basis of their California standardized assessment scores as well as through Teacher Recommendation with a Portfolio. Until they are confirmed GATE eligible according to the standards of Jefferson School District, they will be provided differentiated instruction and the opportunity to participate in enrichment activities.

Parent Notification

The District GATE Coordinator notifies parents, teachers, and administrators of a student's eligibility for program placements. All test scores are mailed to the parents. Records are kept for all students who have been referred for testing, regardless of their qualification status.

Upon identification in the GATE program the criteria for GATE identification are included in each GATE student's cumulative file. The blue GATE folder is placed in the cumulative folder once a student has been identified. The GATE folder holds a copy of the student's registration, copy of the letter of intent, OLSAT test scores, copies of student work (ongoing assessment), and GATE application. In order for qualified students to participate in the GATE program, their parents must give written consent. The Jefferson School District GATE Advisory Committee reviews the screening process and assessment criteria annually and revises it if necessary.

Training and Information

The District GATE Coordinator will provide each site a list of all identified GATE students by or before the first week of school to allow teachers to plan differentiated activities for these students.

A joint effort of the District GATE Coordinator, Site Administration and GATE Site Coordinator will provide training to staff about the characteristic indicators of gifted students and the nomination process during grade level and staff meetings, as well as communicating information concerning gifted students, handouts, GATE applications, timelines, and district brochure.

Ongoing staff development at both site and district levels concentrates on strategies including student focus groups, and collection of student work products compared with samples of "typical products" from age/grade level peers. Training is provided in terms of working with English Language Learners, and teachers are encouraged to look for students who are rapidly acquiring the English language, using advanced vocabulary in either language, showing advanced skill in areas not requiring extensive language knowledge, and ability to achieve a high score on writing prompts. Teachers are always encouraged to use informal classroom observation to note evidence of GATE and high achieving characteristics.

Ongoing Monitoring

Students who meet eligibility requirements will continue to be monitored for academic success. Identified GATE students in grade 3 should maintain grades of Satisfactory or above with no “S-“ or “N”. Identified GATE students in grades 4-8 should maintain a GPA of 3.0 with no “D” or “F” letter grades. At risk GATE students will be provided a Student Study Team meeting. The interventions developed in the SST meeting are implemented and assessed for their effectiveness on an ongoing basis. If the student still has not progressed satisfactorily by the follow-up SST meeting, the team may determine that withdrawal from the GATE program is in the student’s best interests.

Teachers should also monitor the progress of GATE students by analyzing district and classroom assessment data during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. During PLC meetings, grade level teachers can strategize and plan for lessons that will best meet the needs of GATE students.

GATE Curriculum and Instruction

How does your district develop differentiated curriculum, instructional model, and strategies that are aligned with and extend the state academic content standards and curriculum frameworks? Is the differentiated curriculum related to theories, models and practices from the recognized literature in the field? What specific examples illustrate how this standard is implemented in the Jefferson School District? (EC 52206 a & b)

The scope and sequence for the Jefferson School District’s gifted program is based upon the California academic content standards and curriculum frameworks in Language Arts, mathematics, social science, and science in grades K-8. In all classrooms, teachers use these standards as a framework to guide instructional content and use a variety of differentiation models to support pedagogy.

After identifying the essential skills and knowledge required for students to master the content standards, teachers assess students' prior knowledge and mastery using formal and informal assessments. Curriculum may be compacted for students who have demonstrated mastery of material and skills or to prevent redundant learning experiences. Teachers employ a variety of flexible grouping strategies to best deliver curriculum e.g. group, homogeneous and heterogeneous groups, and independent study while taking into account on-going pre-assessment results, along with both group and individual goals.

Differentiation recognizes that students not only differ in their readiness to learn, but also in their interests and preferred learning styles. Teachers in Jefferson School District adapt their lessons to accommodate these various preferences and abilities so that the entire range of students in the classroom are engaged in learning and achieve success.

Teachers implement a variety of differentiation strategies to meet the needs, interest, and abilities of all learners. Curriculum is differentiated through content, process and product.

Differentiation strategies vary and may include:

- Students are assigned different novels based upon reading level in their literature circles
- Flexible, leveled math groups
- Variation in assessment
- Tiered activities and products
- Group investigations
- Independent learning outcomes
- Product criteria negotiated jointly by student and teacher
- Novelty, the unique and original expression of student learning, is encouraged in all classrooms.
- Students are given opportunities to demonstrate understanding through multiple products when they are provided with choices.
- Teachers regularly incorporate questions and strategies that address the elements of depth and complexity, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation levels in order to encourage higher order thinking skills. Teachers also employ instructional strategies which recognize and nurture multiple intelligences, encourage metacognition and stimulate creativity in students.

California State Adopted English Language Arts and Math Programs The district curriculum adoption plan specifically supports the need to choose materials that support differentiation for all students.

English Language Arts (ELA) / English Language Development (ELD): The ELA / ELD curriculum for K-5 is McGraw Hill Wonders and 6-8 grades have adopted College Board SpringBoard. The teachers use the Challenge guidelines found in the Teachers Edition, Challenge Handbook, Universal Access Handbook, as well as Bloom's Taxonomy of questioning, tiering and compacting when appropriate to provide rigor and challenge to high achieving students.

Mathematics: The Mathematics curriculum for K-8 is Houghton Mifflin California Go Math. K-5 completes their work in whole group and ability group settings in the regular classroom. When appropriate, challenge activities are given. Homework includes challenging work and introduces

concepts at grade level and above. This program promotes differentiation which allows for development of metacognition, and enriching discussion. This program allows the teacher to adjust the depth and complexity of each assignment by the question the students are asked to complete.

Through various funding sources, the district has been working for some time to provide varied references from different genres including print and non print sources. All students have access to leveled non-fiction reading materials. Students have access to internet research and are guided in to use the internet as another way to investigate and evaluate information. School site councils work to concentrate resources that extend learning and enrichment for all students.

Social and Emotional Development

How does your district establish and implement plans to support the social and emotional development of gifted learners to increase responsibility, self-awareness, and other issues of affective development? (EC 52212 a-1)

The Jefferson School District endeavors to provide a nurturing environment for all students that assists them in reaching their cognitive and affective potential. Teachers strive to make classrooms places where gifted children feel accepted and are encouraged to learn and work collaboratively with others. To address gifted students' social and emotional development, it is critical that teachers and staff recognize and understand the affective characteristics of giftedness and know the district resources available to assist gifted students and their parents.

Jefferson School District personnel carefully monitor each identified GATE participant. Teachers and school staff receive resources as well as intervention strategies to address the social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students. Teachers and other school personnel will learn how to encourage gifted students to take risks and accept failure, set realistic goals and benchmarks, manage stress, communicate with peers and adults, and prioritize tasks. Teachers and other school personnel also help gifted students learn how to use their unique strengths. Students are informed of career and college opportunities, especially those related to the student's areas of strength.

Students who have more severe social/emotional needs may be referred to a site-based Student Study Team. The GATE Site Coordinator, teachers, school counselor or psychologist, parents, and the students are invited. At the meeting the student's specific social/emotional challenges are addressed and a plan is developed. The site administrator acts as the case manager to ensure that the plan is being implemented as written. Students who are not achieving at the appropriate level may meet with a counselor to determine if there is a social and emotional need that requires further counseling. Counselors and school psychologists are trained to provide therapy and will closely monitor students in need of additional counseling. Counseling is provided by contracted outside services. If the student's social and emotional needs become too severe for the counselor and/or school psychologist to address in the school setting then they will refer to outside services.

Professional Development

How does your district provide professional development opportunities related to gifted education to administrators, teachers, and staff to support and improve educational opportunities for gifted students? (EC 52212 (a) sec 1)

With the understanding of differentiation, the capability to learn and implement instructional strategies to help with the movement toward effective differentiation and to understand the professional responsibility to engage each child in meaningful learning we have created the GATE Site Coordinator position. At each site the principal will appoint a certificated teacher as the GATE Site Coordinator who will serve as the site's GATE representative.

The GATE Site Coordinator will:

- Have experience and knowledge of gifted education or will have the opportunity to gain such knowledge and experience
- Attend appropriate professional development activities for meeting the needs of Gifted and Talented students
- Provide resources for staff members, model lessons and provide support to teachers
- Maintain student GATE folders in cumulative folders (2 student work samples at the end Trimester 2 and 2 student work samples at the end of Trimester 3)
- Attend GATE SST and GATE advisory meetings as needed

Professional learning comes from ongoing collaboration that teachers engage in during PLC meetings. Work is focused on: student need, planning, classroom environment, instruction, , planning differentiated lessons, creating differentiated curriculum, providing opportunities for teachers to visit other classrooms, giving access to novel resource materials, making teachers feel safe in trying new strategies and approaches, giving meaningful feedback, providing encouragement, and expressing clear appreciation when they have done a good job. The district will continue to encourage teachers to engage in peer coaching and collaboration through the PLC process.

Resources

School site libraries are being developed with resources that are available to teachers that support differentiated teaching. Titles may include: *Teaching What Matters Most: Standards and Strategies for Raising Student Achievement; Leadership for Differentiating Schools and Classrooms; How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms; Strategic Teaching and Learning: Standards-Based Instruction to Promote Content Literacy in Grades Four Through Twelve.*

Website resources include:

Jefferson School District GATE Resources www.jeffersonschooldistrict.com
California Association for the Gifted www.cagifted.org
National Association for the Gifted www.nagc.org
California Department of Education www.cde.ca.gov/sp/gt/

Parent and Community Involvement

How does your district provide procedures to ensure consistent participation of parents and community members in the planning and evaluation of your program for gifted students? (EC 52205 f)

Parent representatives, district staff, administrators and the district GATE Coordinator make up the GATE Advisory Committee which allows parents to participate in the development and ongoing planning of the district GATE program. The GATE Advisory Committee, including parents, teachers and administrators meets at least three times a year.

Suggested District/Site Advisory committee meeting calendar:

September	review plan and set goals
January	needs assessment
May	reflect and project for upcoming year, evaluate GATE portfolios

Parents are strongly encouraged to join site councils and the GATE Advisory Committee and are informed of current research and literature in gifted education. Efforts are made to ensure that representation of GATE parents on the GATE Advisory Committee reflect the demographics of the GATE student populations, including gifted English Language Learners and gifted disabled students. Parent involvement may also include: providing input in the development of a student's GATE Portfolio; aiding the teacher in the classroom; soliciting and locating community resources; attending and reporting on professional development activities to staff, parents, and community members related to gifted education, GATE conferences; and participating in parent meetings. A parent survey on evaluating the efficacy of the GATE program is sent out annually. This survey helps ensure parent participation in planning and evaluation of the program.

The parents who serve on the GATE Advisory Committee play a key role in program design and with our continual efforts to provide quality services to our gifted student population. Parents are provided with opportunities to learn about the role of differentiated instruction in a standards-based system. The GATE Coordinator will continue to provide opportunities for parent education during Advisory Committee meetings.

Communication with parents is an essential component of the GATE program. Parents of GATE students receive district mailings explaining the GATE program and are informed of the qualification procedures. Parents receive a GATE brochure that explains eligibility and application process. On the district website, parents and community members have access to GATE information, application periods and test dates. Sites communicate updates to the sited based GATE program through the website and/or newsletters. The GATE plan, GATE resources and Advisory Committee agendas can be found on the district website www.jeffersonschooldistrict.com.

Program Assessment

How does your district establish formal and informal evaluation methods and instruments that assess the gifted program and the performance of gifted students? How are the results of the data collected, including state standardized tests, used to assess the value and impact of the services provided and to improve the program and gifted student performance? (EC 52212 a-1)

The district provides ongoing student and GATE program assessment that is consistent with the program's philosophy, goals and standards. Components of the program are reviewed by the GATE Advisory Committee and the results are used for continuing program development.

Classroom teachers use a wide range of strategies to assess student progress. Classroom and district-wide benchmark assessments are used for both formative and summative assessment information. Results of state assessments are shared with administrative cabinet, teachers, students, parents, and the Board of Trustees. Assessment data of the GATE students is analyzed at PLC meetings and annually to ensure increasing achievement.

Teacher members of the GATE advisory committee share curriculum content, while differentiated teaching strategies are modeled so that parents can better understand how teachers are supporting our gifted students. The committee will continue to look at ways to use district and classroom assessments to help drive the success of the GATE program.

The GATE program is evaluated annually. Parents and staff are surveyed annually regarding the effectiveness of the GATE program. Survey responses will be used to assist in setting goals for the GATE Advisory Committee and GATE program.

Budget

How does your district budget for gifted program support and provide for all the components of the district's GATE program and meet the related standards? (EC 52209, 52212 a-1, 2, 3)

The Jefferson School District is committed to providing a GATE program for the district's gifted and talented students. Funding for GATE testing is paid by the Jefferson School District. The remainder of state funding for the GATE program is allocated among all four school sites according to their specific GATE population. GATE funds are used to supplement services available to our GATE student population. Funds are also used to address professional development needs, especially in differentiated instructional needs, direct student services, and enrichment programs.

In addition to GATE funds, professional development funds are used to pay for teacher release time for peer coaching, modeling of differentiated strategies, and for professional development conferences. Monies have been utilized to create professional libraries at each site which will allow teachers, administrators, parents, and support staff the availability of resources that support our program design model and professional development plan.

GATE funds will also be utilized to pay teachers at each site to conduct before/after school GATE programs. GATE classes are supported with funds for materials and supplies. The district is actively recruiting staff to help guide the planning of and to provide support for the implementation of before and after school programs and GATE classes and to supplement the differentiation provided during the regular school day.