



Pasadena Unified School District
Instructional Services
Gifted and Talented Education

GATE Project Proposal Synopsis, 2017-18

Julianne Reynoso, Assistant Superintendent, Elementary Education
Karen Anderson, GATE Teacher on Special Assignment

The main purpose of the GATE project proposal was to create and develop a more efficient and effective means to identify, serve and respond to the needs of GATE students in Pasadena Unified School District based on best practices from research. The goal was to work with the framework that already existed and formalize systems and structures to provide for more equitable and consistent services across the district.

The proposal consists of recommendations in six key areas:

- Certification of Teachers
- Student Identification
- Developing and Monitoring the Progress of GATE Students
- Increased focus on Secondary students & Enrichment
- Additional Support for Students and Sites
- Parent Resources and Supports

An important component of this proposal is to identify more effective and productive paths of expanding the certification and continued growth of our PUSD teachers. We have developed multiple pathways for certification and recertification, including training that provides one-on-one support in lesson planning, observations, and reflections from the **GATE TOSA**. We intend to have more teachers gain certification as well as complete that in less than two years. We also recommend **pathways** that include self directed study through a university program or conference attendance.

An intended outcome of the project proposal is to develop a **GATE Instructional Handbook** with resources and lessons that align to the PUSD curriculum. This handbook would provide teachers a toolkit for differentiation based on the *California Standards for Gifted Education*. This would also serve to support the teachers in making decisions as to the needs of their own professional growth and focusing their professional development pathway based on areas of growth.

Another goal of the proposal is to deepen the student identification process to include more categories of identification, and multiple measures to identify within these categories. The proposal suggests that we develop a **Secondary Review Process**, as well as look at alternative methods for identification of our youngest students. This process should be standardized across all schools and include both quantitative and qualitative indicators that are

culturally and linguistically responsive. An area of growth in our plan is the identification and support of students from various subgroups to align with the percentages of subgroup population in the district. The proposals recommends that GATE programming and goal setting should be evidenced in the SPSA per school site, with special attention paid to subgroups.

Next, we want to not only create better opportunities for the already identified students, but have **thriving environments** for those whose potential has not yet been revealed. This proposal suggests that the classroom setting is not about “more”, it is about the integration of depth, complexity, novelty and acceleration in the context from which we service our students during the school day. The other core element in servicing the needs of students is providing for enrichment opportunities beyond the school day such as clubs and competitions. A suggestion is to develop an **Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)** process for all GATE students to have the opportunity to engage in metacognition and goal setting. The proposal also points out that there is a need for **consistency in GATE programming** and communication. It suggests that the consistency of an in house GATE Specialist will help to further develop site level experts in the support of the implementation of ILPs, the identification process, and teacher coaching.

An important area of focus in the proposal is in our **secondary schools**. The alignment of the Honors and AP coursework to the GATE standards, as well as professional development for the teachers in instructional practices to better serve the needs, interests and abilities of gifted learners is needed. The proposal suggests the need for standardizing minimum **program requirements** across school sites to provide for more equitable and engaging opportunities for students, regardless of school of enrollment. There are also suggestions related to the transition to middle school and coursework to support the unique **social and emotional needs** of middle school gifted learners.

Parent education and support are needed in order to more deeply develop understanding around the needs of gifted and talented learners, as well as the ways in which our programs support multiple pathways for these learners. **Differentiated parent workshops** to meet the needs of our diverse population, with relevant and meaningful speakers, is suggested as one of the many tools for communicating effectively with our parents. The proposal also suggests the need for the development of a **parent handbook**, an updated website, and a **GATE brochure** and presence at enrollment and recruitment events. It is also recommended that each parent committee place focus on the GATE subgroup within their committee and report the needs back to the GATE department. The GATE parent committee is an important part of this communication, and the proposal suggests that each school have a representative designated in this role.

Many elements of the project proposal are already in development, with some elements prioritized for year one (2017-18), and other prioritized for year two (2018-19) and/or year three (2019-20). We are grateful to the team of educators, parents and administrators who spent a year researching best practices and developing this significant framework to serve the needs of 10% of our student population whose potential is limitless and deserves to be fostered appropriately.