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Equitable Access to Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)

Operationalizing Systemic Policies and Effective Practices to Address Underrepresentation of Diverse Learners

October 2023





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**Gifted/Talented Programs | Advanced Learning Options
Office of the Chief of Special Education, Equity and Specialized Programs
Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)**

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LAUSD 2022–26 Strategic Plan

Pillar 1: Academic Excellence

High-Quality Instruction

Enriching Experiences

Eliminating Opportunity Gaps

College and Career Readiness

Pillar 2: Joy and Wellness

Welcoming Learning Environments

Whole-Child Well-Being

Strong Social-Emotional Skills

Outstanding Attendance

Pillar 3: Engagement and Collaboration

Strong Relationships

Accessible Information

Leading for Impact

Honoring Perspectives

Pillar 4: Operational Effectiveness

Data-Driven Decision-Making

Modernizing Infrastructure

Sustainable Budgeting

District of Choice

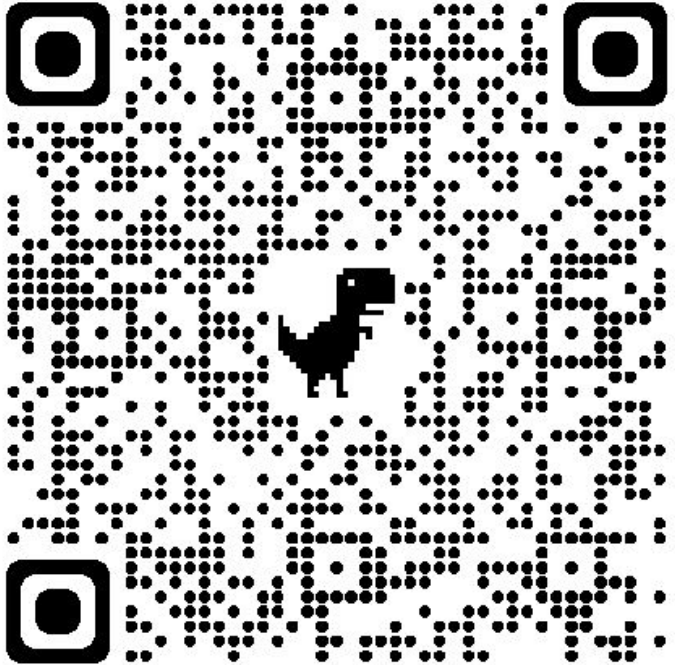
Pillar 5: Investing in Staff

Diverse Workforce

Professional Learning

Staff Wellness

High Performance Standards



GATE in the LAUSD Strategic Plan

Pillar 1: Academic Excellence

Enriching Experiences

1B.S5 – Increase access to gifted and talented programs by addressing the disproportionality of students identified to receive services

Pillar 4: Operational Effectiveness

District of Choice

4D.S3 – Improve data-informed decisions to expand learning options such as magnet, dual language, specialized career pathway programs, Schools for Advanced Studies, and virtual and independent learning options, based on student needs

GATE Measure of Success for 2026

By 2026, we will:

Increase the districtwide percentage of students identified for gifted/talented education programs to **14.8%** (from 12.5% in 2018-19).

As of September 2023, we are at **13.93%** (58,662 identified gifted/talented students).

LAUSD 2022-26 Strategic Plan

What guides our work?



The goal of Gifted/Talented Programs is to **identify** gifted and talented students including those from diverse racial, socioeconomic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and to **provide high-quality differentiated opportunities** for learning that meet students' unique abilities and talents.

No Group Has a Monopoly on Giftedness

“No group has a monopoly on giftedness, regardless of its form. It is illogical and statistically impossible for giftedness to be the prerogative of one racial, gender, or socioeconomic group.”

Dr. Donna Ford, 1996

LAUSD GATE

- LAUSD has developed a plan for K–12 Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) which includes District policies and procedures for identifying gifted/talented learners and providing services, support and program options to meet their academic and social–emotional needs.
- LAUSD Gifted/Talented Programs is driven by a philosophy of equitable and inclusive access.
- **All K–12 LAUSD schools** must provide a GATE program.

GATE Program Components in LAUSD

**Gifted/
Talented
Identification
and
Verification**

**Instruction
and
Academic
Achievement
of GATE
Learners**

**Knowledgeable
and Skilled
Staff**

**Parent, Family,
and
Community
Engagement**

Each K-12 LAUSD school is required to complete an **Annual GATE Report** including a data-driven analysis of the school site GATE program.

How is Los Angeles Unified Different?

Equitable access to GATE services and support is at the core of our work in LAUSD Gifted/Talented Programs, Advanced Learning Options.



LAUSD identifies gifted/talented students in **seven distinct categories**, more than any district in the state or nation – Intellectual Ability, High Achievement Ability, Specific Academic Ability, Creative Ability, Leadership Ability, Visual Arts Ability, and Performing Arts Ability (voice, dance, and drama).



In addition to formal gifted/talented assessment and identification, LAUSD also has a **verification process** to provide access to GATE programs for non-identified students; identification and verification carry **equal weight** in the selection and placement process for GATE programs.



LAUSD GATE participation includes: A) identified gifted learners, B) students verified based on academic achievement data, and C) students verified based on critical thinking and problem-solving skills in their primary language.

How is Los Angeles Unified Different?



Los Angeles Unified is one of the few large, urban school districts that utilizes an annual **universal screening assessment** (OLSAT-8) to ensure that all District students have the opportunity to be screened for gifted identification.



Many identification categories include assessment options that are **culture and language-neutral** and evaluation methods that **do not rely on standardized assessment results**, e.g., portfolio for Creative Ability and Leadership Ability.



The highly-effective **Targeted Identification Program (TIP)** was created in 2008 to address the disproportionate gifted identification rates of African American and Latino students.

Gifted/Talented Identification

LAUSD identifies gifted/talented students in seven categories:

- Intellectual Ability (Grades K-12)
- High Achievement Ability (Grades 2-3, 5-12)
- Specific Academic Ability (Grades 5-12)
- Creative Ability (Grades 2-12)
- Leadership Ability (Grades 2-12)
- Visual Arts (Grades 2-12)
- Performing Arts – Voice, Dance, and Drama (Grades 2-12)

Removing Barriers to GATE Access

In addition to systemic and comprehensive practices to identify gifted/talented students, we need to go further. To ensure equitable access, students do not need to be formally identified as gifted or high-achieving to receive GATE services and support in LAUSD.

Verification of Eligibility

LAUSD has developed a process to verify the eligibility of students who have not been formally assessed or identified as gifted/talented to enable them to participate in District GATE programs and classes. **Non-identified students may be verified for GATE participation if they:**

- Meet **standardized test score criteria** from the most recent year (e.g, Smarter Balanced Assessment, OLSAT-8) **OR**
- Demonstrate the ability to meet **critical thinking and problem-solving skills in their primary language:**
 - Explain meanings or relationships among facts, information or concepts that demonstrate depth and complexity
 - Formulate new ideas or solutions and elaborate on the information
 - Use alternative methods in approaching new or unfamiliar mathematical problems
 - Use extensive vocabulary easily and accurately to express creative ideas

Who can be verified?

The verification process creates an additional pathway to GATE services and support for Emergent Bilingual students, able-underachieving students, twice-exceptional learners, and other targeted student populations. Verification carries the same weight as identification in GATE program selection.

GATE Participation

**Identification + Verification =
Equitable GATE Participation**

LAUSD GATE Program Options

- GATE cluster in all K-12 schools/programs (including local schools of residence)
- Honors and Advanced Placement courses (secondary schools)
- Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS)
- Gifted Magnet Programs
- Highly Gifted Magnet Programs
- Saturday Conservatory of Fine Arts

Differentiated GATE Instruction

GATE instructional strategies must be implemented as part of the District's Teaching and Learning Framework.

- Accelerated or above-grade-level content
- Accelerated pacing
- Content imperatives
- Cluster grouping
- Curriculum compacting
- Culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy and literature
- Flexible grouping by academic readiness, interest, learning style, and social-emotional needs for group projects/tasks
- Future ready skills and instructional technology
- High-level questioning
- Independent study
- Interest-based learning and student choice (connected to standards)
- Learning/interest centers
- Novel products
- Project-based learning
- Prompts of depth and complexity
- Tiered lessons
- Universal themes and big ideas

Knowledgeable and Skilled Staff in GATE

- Effective implementation of all GATE Program Components starts with GATE-specific professional development
- LAUSD Gifted/Talented Programs offers a variety of GATE professional development options to meet the needs and interests of educators
- Ongoing and meaningful GATE professional development is essential to ensure that educators have the mindset, tools, and research-based practices to understand and address the unique (and often misunderstood) characteristics and academic/social-emotional needs of gifted learners from diverse backgrounds, including underrepresented groups
- The LAUSD recommendation for GATE teachers is 16 hours of GATE-specific professional development annually (4 hours for administrators)

Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

- Gifted/Talented Programs values parents and families as an integral part of their children's education
- Schools must schedule a minimum of two GATE parent/family meetings annually
- LAUSD Gifted/Talented Programs offers bi-monthly parent/family webinars, monthly GATE Parent Hour live Q&A sessions, quarterly parent/family newsletters, and online trainings and resources
- LAUSD Gifted/Talented Programs advertises parent/family events via a districtwide communication and notification system (Blackboard Connect)
- LAUSD families may access student information and program applications via an online Parent Portal



The flyer is for a webinar titled "Gifted/Talented Programs Invites You! GATE/SAS WEBINAR". It features the LAUSD UNIFIED logo at the top left and a circular seal on the top right. The main text describes a live webinar for parents of children in Gifted/Talented Programs, covering the application process and eligibility. It includes a circular inset image of a person writing in a notebook. The event is titled "CHOICES for Gifted and High Ability Students" and is scheduled for Wednesday, October 18, 2023, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. A prominent blue button contains the Zoom link: <https://lausd.zoom.us/j/89329024343>. At the bottom, there is contact information for Susanna Furfari, District Coordinator, and a note that the presentation is approved by the Director of Advanced Learning Options.

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**Gifted/Talented Programs Invites You!
GATE/SAS WEBINAR**

Join Gifted/Talented Programs for a live webinar on how Schools for Advanced Studies and Gifted Magnets can meet your child's learning needs. This webinar will provide an overview of the Choices application and verification of eligibility process. Gifted testing and identification are not required to apply for a GATE Program. Spanish translation will be provided. This presentation will be recorded and posted on our website after the event.

CHOICES for Gifted and High Ability Students

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Zoom Link
<https://lausd.zoom.us/j/89329024343>

Questions?
Contact: Susanna Furfari, District Coordinator
susanna.furfari@lausd.net or (213) 241-6500

www.lausd.org/GATE

Approved by: *E.J. Erin Youlde-Thomas*,
Director, Advanced Learning Options

Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

GATE Student Advisory Council (GSAC)

- New this year
- Meets twice in person and monthly on Zoom
- Participants are high school students (grades 9-12) from across the District with different gifted/talented eligibilities (including several students not formally identified as gifted)
- Purpose:
 - Provide input on District GATE policies and programs
 - Provide input on how to improve schools to support GATE students
 - Provide students with information so they can advocate for themselves and other students





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Thank you for the opportunity to share about LAUSD GATE programs.

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