

Alta Loma School District



Alta Loma
SCHOOL DISTRICT

G.A.T.E. Master Plan

Procedures and Guidelines

Index

Introduction	3
Mission Statement	5
GATE Master Plan Purpose Statement	7
Program Narrative	9
Identification	11
GATE Criteria	13
Notification	16
Curriculum and Instruction	17
Social and Emotional Development	20
Professional Development	22
Parent and Community Involvement	23
Appendix	24

Alta Loma School District G.A.T.E. Plan

Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to provide an overview of Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) services available at the Alta Loma School District. Services are provided for all qualified learners in grades 4-8. Several program models are used to accommodate a variety of student needs. The district's GATE program may include special day classes, part-time groupings, and cluster groupings which are planned and organized as an integrated, differentiated learning experience within the regular school day. This program may be augmented or supplemented with other differentiated activities related to the core curriculum using such strategies as independent study, acceleration, and enrichment.

The unique needs of gifted and talented students often require a variety of educational provisions in the cognitive, affective, and creative areas. Students identified as gifted/talented are as different individually as are all children. Some possess a wide range of outstanding abilities, while others show outstanding ability in only one specific area. The Board of Trustees believes that all gifted and talented students be provided opportunities for learning commensurate with their particular abilities and talents. The district's program is designed to provide articulated learning experiences across subjects and grade levels and is aligned to state academic content standards and curriculum frameworks.

This booklet is intended to provide guidelines and procedures to be used in providing quality programs for able learners. The GATE program is a featured component of the *Local Control Accountability Plan* as reflected in stakeholder input from several parent, student, staff, and community groups that includes articulation with the Chaffey Joint Union High School District.

New California state standards provide guidelines in regards to learning that reflects the depth and complexity of understanding required for college and career readiness. Focusing on depth of knowledge and rigorous expectations, the standards provide an excellent road map for GATE students to reach their full potential. The district's focus on 21st Century learning skills aligns with the natural strengths of gifted students; critical thinking, collaboration, communication both orally and through written expression, as well as opportunities to exercise creativity. Collaboration with others is not always the

gifted students preferred model. Learning to work collaboratively with others is critical in preparing for the demands of a global workplace. Meeting the needs of gifted students is a cooperative effort between parents, students, teachers, GATE Coordinators, and administrators.

Mission Statement

The Alta Loma School District, in partnership with parents and community, provides a safe and supportive environment where students develop a solid foundation to become productive, responsible citizens and lifelong learners.

Alta Loma School District

Our beliefs.....

- Students are our highest priority
- All students are capable of learning and worthy of our best efforts
- All students are to be respected for their uniqueness
- All students need the skills, motivation, and positive self-esteem to become lifelong learners
- All students should have access to a balanced, rigorous, and challenging curriculum delivered through a quality instructional program.
- Students benefit when the home and school work together as a team

Our shared values are.....

- Excellence in student learning
- Safe and orderly school environments
- Active parent, school, and community involvement
- Responsible citizenship
- Maximization of district resources

Our strategies for success are aligned with the goals of the Alta Loma School District as outlined in the Local Control and Accountability Plan.

Our strategic goals....

- Provide high quality standards-based instruction that is rigorous and engaging
- Ensure the implementation of state academic, performance, and English language development standards embedded in 21st Century Learning Skills
- Provide all students a broad and enriching course of study at each grade level that reaches beyond the core
- Ensure that students are high school, college, and career ready by demonstrating continuous progress towards academic and English language achievement targets

- Provide opportunities for parent input on educational programs, services, and use of resources
- Provide a safe, attractive, and well maintained learning environment that supports student engagement, wellness, health, and school connectedness

GATE Master Plan Purpose Statement:

The Alta Loma School District GATE Master Plan has been developed in alignment with the Local Control Accountability Plan. The purpose of the GATE Master Plan is to establish a framework through which challenging, differentiated academic opportunities, designed to tap and develop students' potential, are provided to our community of learners.

GATE Program Goals

The purpose of the GATE program in the Alta Loma School District is to provide appropriate learning opportunities for students identified in the intellectual, creative, and high achievement categories and to help them develop into lifelong learners. Most GATE program facets provide services in the classroom. The GATE program is designed to:

- Provide activities that are differentiated in nature and require higher-level, logical, and creative thinking including the ability to develop self-generating problem-solving abilities
- Provide time for students to pursue in depth written and oral expression, projects, and activities at a more sophisticated level
- Empower students to use technology and advanced research tools to enhance their learning
- Provide opportunities for students to work collaboratively, enhance critical thinking, communicate in several different capacities, as well as develop creative solutions and products
- Encourage elements that help gifted and talented pupils develop sensitivity and responsibility to others as well as a realistic, healthy self-concept
- Give students opportunities to work with their intellectual peers for a portion of their school experience
- Provide opportunities to participate in visual and performing arts to further natural talents
- Develop independent study habits and social skills that will enable the students to work productively alone or with others
- Provide opportunities to appropriately accelerate the content and pace of instruction to meet the needs of advanced learners
- Provide beyond the regular school day enrichment opportunities to enhance and extend the learning experience

Standards

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.

- GATE students in grades 4-6 are clustered together in the classroom setting to provide opportunities to work with students of similar abilities
- GATE students in grades 7-8 may be placed in accelerated classes in language arts and mathematics after demonstrating academic and assessment achievement and obtaining a teacher recommendation
- GATE teachers incorporate advanced learning opportunities in at least four areas of differentiation: 1) acceleration/pacing 2) depth 3) complexity, 4) novelty/creativity of curricular tasks
- GATE students receive instruction from classroom teachers who have been trained in GATE icons and related gifted methodology to include Problem Based Learning and Design Learning
- The GATE program meets the social, emotional, and intellectual needs of gifted students
- The GATE program stimulates creative abilities, develops higher-level thinking processes, and provides opportunities for the gifted to pursue their particular interests
- GATE students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of visual and performing arts. Students at the junior high are offered several electives that include art, choral, and instrumental music
- The GATE program offers curriculum that promotes character development and understanding of morality and ethics
- Parents of GATE students participate regularly in the implementation and evaluation of the GATE program and are offered resources to better understand the needs of their gifted child

Program Narrative

Students are eligible to apply for the GATE program at the end of the second trimester of the third grade. Once a student is identified GATE in the Alta Loma School District, they qualify for these services for the duration of their attendance in our schools. Teachers receive training in differentiated instruction, Problem Based Learning, Design Learning, and GATE icons that correlate with the common core state standards. GATE students in grades 4-6 are clustered together in classrooms to provide opportunities for extended and enriched learning activities. Students are given an opportunity to share thoughts, feelings, and learning experiences. Students are encouraged to work with peers during opportunities of accelerated learning. GATE students in grades 7-8 may be placed in accelerated classes for English Language Arts and Math. Many extended school activities such as field trips to colleges and science museums are offered to junior high students.

Students in grade K-3 are informally identified through district running records, interim and achievement assessments, as well as observations of behavioral characteristics. They are grouped both heterogeneously and homogeneously for enhancement opportunities in language arts and math. Compacting and acceleration, as appropriate, are provided to further challenge the primary students.

The GATE program focuses primarily on the academic areas of Language Arts and Math. Enhancement opportunities are available to all students in Social Studies and Science. Activities relate to the district's core curriculum, expanding and adding depth, breadth, and complexity to the basic content. Musically talented students, however, receive instruction via the district's elementary band program or the junior high elective program. Students have the opportunity to participate in Honor Band (grade 6), Symphonic Band, and vocal music and performance elective classes (grades 7 and 8).

Alta Loma School District taps the resources of the community and surrounding areas to include pull-out programs to focus on student interest areas. Lessons in art, chess, science, career awareness, aviation, forestry, oceanography, engineering, and a variety of other subjects are offered several times in a trimester. Field trips to cultural sites, museums, college campuses, courthouses, aquariums, and other points of interest are scheduled once a trimester.

The district GATE Advisory Committee, whose member consists of a parent from each school, the district GATE Coordinator, and each site's coordinator, meets at least three times a year to support and review the needs of the program. On-line surveys are given to students, parents, and staff to solicit opinions and suggestions for improving the GATE program. Information from the surveys are shared both with the district advisory committee and each school's site council. Each school site hosts a GATE parent information night to disseminate information about the GATE program. A GATEways newsletter, written by GATE students, describes activities at each site and is made available on the district website each trimester.

Each school site has a GATE coordinator who is responsible for facilitating the program on his/her campus. The school site coordinator will involve both home and community in the school program. Parent experts are encouraged to enrich students' learning in various areas. For example, a local lawyer might coach students in conducting a mock trial, a mathematics professor might captivate students with mathematical mysteries, or a local artist or author might work with students in their areas of expertise. Field trips, after-school activities, Family GATE Days, and GATE newsletters provide additional opportunities for the GATE students and families to be involved.

All cluster teachers are required to attend in house GATE training, which is provided through a consultant or district Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) and/or lead teacher. In addition, K-8 teachers receive training in strategies for differentiating instruction that includes strategies such as the use of GATE Icons, multiple blog sites (Byrdsong.com, the Buck Institute), and tried and true strategies by Susan Winebrenner and Sandra Kaplan. Teachers are trained in various approaches to differentiating the curriculum to include; standards/objectives, depth and complexity, learn through the classics, thinking like a disciplinarian, current events, technology, independent study, and metacognition, or learning to think. Teachers are taught structures of analytic reading with new prompts of depth and complexity. Teachers are also trained in Problem Based Learning and Design Learning.

Identification:

The Alta Loma School District recognizes the **12 Traits of Giftedness** and includes them as considerations in the GATE identification process. They include:

12 Traits of Giftedness

Trait, Aptitude, or Behavior	General Description	How It May Look
Motivation Evidence of desire to learn	Internal drive or encouragement that initiates, directs, or sustains individual or group behavior in order to satisfy a need or attain a goal	Demonstrates persistence in pursuing or completing self-selected tasks (may be culturally influenced); evident in school or non-school activities. Enthusiastic learner; has aspiration to be somebody, to do something
Interests Intense, sometimes unusual, interests	Activities, objects, etc. that have special worth or significance and are given special attention	Unusual or advanced interests, topic, or activity; self-started; pursues an interest beyond the group
Communication Skills Highly expressive with words, numbers, or symbols	Transmission and reception of signals or meanings through a system of symbols (codes, gestures, language, numbers)	Unusual ability to communicate (verbally, nonverbally, physical, artistically, symbolically); uses particularly apt examples, illustrations, or elaboration
Problem-Solving Ability Effective, often inventive, strategies for recognizing and solving problems	Process of determining a correct sequence of alternatives leading to a desired goal or to successful completion of a performance task	Unusual ability to devise or adopt a systematic strategy to solve problems and to change the strategy if it is not working; creates new designs; inventor
Memory Large storehouse of information on school or non-school topics	Exceptional ability to retain and retrieve information	Already knows; needs only 1-2 repetitions for mastery; has a wealth of information about school and non-school topics; pays attention to details; manipulates information
Inquiry/Curiosity Questions, experiments, explores	Methods or process of seeking knowledge, understanding or information	Asks unusual questions for age; plays around with ideas; extensive exploratory behaviors directed toward eliciting information about materials, devices, or situations
Insight Quickly grasps new concepts; sees connections; senses deeper meanings	Sudden discovery of correct solution following attempts based primarily on trial and error; putting disparate elements together in unexpected ways	Exceptional ability to draw inferences; appears to be a good guesser; is keenly observant; heightened capacity for seeing unusual and diverse relationships, integration of ideas and disciplines
Reasoning Logical approaches to figuring out solutions	Highly conscious, directed, controlled, active, intentional forward-looking, and goal-oriented thought	Ability to make generalizations and use metaphors and analogies; can think things through in a logical manner; critical thinker; ability to think things through and come up with a plausible answer
Imagination/Creativity Produces many ideas; highly	Process of forming mental images of objects; qualities, situation, or	Shows exceptional ingenuity in using everyday materials; is

original	relationships which aren't immediately apparent to the senses; problem solving through nontraditional patterns of thinking	keenly observant; has wild, seemingly silly ideas; fluent, flexible producer of ideas, highly curious
Humor Conveys and picks up on humor well	Ability to synthesize key ideas or problems in complex situation in a humorous way; exceptional sense of timing in words or gestures	Keen sense of humor that may be gentle or hostile; large accumulation of information about emotions; capacity for seeing unusual; uncommon emotional depth; openness to experiences, sensory awareness
Intensity ("Over excitabilities") Strength of reactions, responses, behaviors	Very strong, even extreme, responses to stimuli in five areas: emotional, intellectual, sensory, psychomotor, and imagination	Intense desire for experiences in the area(s) of over excitability; powerful emotions; seeks intellectual stimulation; sensory experiences evoke strong responses; constant or repetitive movement or gesturing; intense fantasy life; may need creative outlets for intensity
Sensitivity Strong reactions to emotional stimuli	Events and situations in the affective and social domains elicit a stronger response than usual	Strong sense of compassion; keen sense of justice; empathy; moral and ethical sensibilities; sense of being "different" socially; existential worrying; often overly self-critical

GATE Criteria

Alta Loma School District utilizes identification procedures to ensure inclusion of students who demonstrate

- **Excellence in Academic/Achievement Areas**
- **Exceptional Intellectual and Reasoning Ability**
- **Multi-dimensional Areas:** Aggregate of talent, creativity, leadership, and the arts

Alta Loma School District seeks to identify and serve students who are truly gifted and to eliminate any possible cultural or linguistic differences. By addressing special consideration areas such as cultural diversity, English learners, special education identification, transiency, and economic disadvantage, the district compensates for students who may otherwise be overlooked in the identification process. The district continually reevaluates the identification process and procedure to ensure that underrepresented ethnicities are identified and served.

GATE Criteria used for identification includes the following:

- **Excellence in Academic/Achievement areas:** Data for GATE identification is an important part of the identification process. Several measures are considered and receive various point totals according to academic proficiency level.
 - **Third Grade Identification:** Third grade student scores are collected from several measures including:
 - Second Grade End of the Year District Interim Assessment in English Language Arts and Math
 - End of 2nd trimester STAR/SRI assessments in Reading and Mathematics
 - 2nd grade writing sample
 - 3rd Grade Running Records
 - Grade Proficiency Averages in Math, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies (1st and 2nd trimester)
 - **Fourth-Seventh Grade Identification:** Fourth-Seventh grade student scores are collected from several measures including:
 - California Assessment of Proficiency and Progress (CAASPP) Exceeding Proficiency and Met Proficiency level scores in English Language Arts and Math.
 - Grade Averages in Math, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies (1st and 2nd trimester)
 -

- **Exceptional Intellectual and Reasoning Ability**
 - **Third Grade Identification:** All third graders with parent permission will be screened for Intellectual and Reasoning Ability. A parent signature is required for assessment to occur.
 - CogAT Non-verbal: The CogAT non-verbal screen eliminates concerns regarding second language and experiential considerations to determine a non-biased indicator of a child's reasoning ability.
 - A parent and/or teacher may initiate a GATE student referral for placement consideration.
 - **Fourth-Seventh Identification:** Fourth-Seventh grade students will be assessed following a referral process. A parent signature is required for assessment to occur.
 - CogAT Non-verbal: The CogAT non-verbal screen eliminates concerns regarding second language and experiential considerations to determine a non-biased indicator of a child's reasoning ability.
 - A parent and/or teacher may initiate a GATE student referral for placement consideration

- **Multi-Dimensional Areas**
 - **Teachers** may recommend a student to the referral process based on classroom performance and observations. The GATE coordinator provides training regarding the identification process for administrators, teachers and support personnel. Nomination forms are available to all staff members who wish to recommend potential GATE candidates.
 - **Teachers** who nominate potential GATE candidates will complete:
 - Student Performance Survey
 - Characteristic Behavior Scale (TIP)
 - Provide Academic Achievement Proficiency records
 - **Third Grade:**
 - End of Year Interim Assessments (2nd grade)
 - Running Records (2nd and 3rd grade)
 - STAR Reading and Math scores (2nd grade)
 - Identify Special Considerations (physical disability, health impairment, other language, cultural diversity, economic disadvantage, interrupted schooling, learning disability, other)
 - Comment on Talent/Leadership if appropriate
 - Secure parent documents to complete the referral packet.

- GATE application
- Complete Parent Survey
- Complete Characteristic Behavioral Scale

- **Fourth –Seventh Grade:**

- CAASPP scores (4-7)
- Grade Averages in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies (3-7)
- Identify Special Considerations (physical disability, health impairment, other language, cultural diversity, economic disadvantage, interrupted schooling, learning disability, other)
- Comment on Talent/Leadership if appropriate
- Secure parent documents to complete the referral packet.
 - CogAT consent form
 - GATE application
 - Complete Parent Survey
 - Complete Characteristic Behavioral Scale
- Parents may request that their child be considered for the GATE program and enter them into the identification process. **Parents need to put their referral request in writing and submit it to the school office or teacher.** Parents complete the following referral documents.
 - Sign CogAT consent form
 - Complete the G.A.T.E. Referral Application
 - Complete Parent Survey
 - Complete Characteristic Behavioral Scale

Notification

Parents and teachers are notified of a student's eligibility for program placement in a timely manner. Parents are then contacted for written authorization of participation in the GATE program. Parents wishing to appeal a non-eligibility finding that results in his/her child not qualifying for the GATE program may contact the site administrator or the district GATE coordinator. A student may be asked to complete the Verbal and/or Quantitative Battery of the CogAT to determine eligibility or when eligibility is in question.

The district updates its identification criteria and makes changes as warranted based on student achievement and research-based recommendations from the *California Association for the Gifted*.

Students may be recommended for the GATE program more than once and are reassessed with each referral. **Students may not, however, be assessed more than ONCE per year.** The district maintains data on nominees and refers to this data in reassessing students who are referred more than once.

Once identified as GATE, a student will remain in the program while enrolled in the district and is qualified for all of the services offered. Should a student's academic performance be inconsistent with GATE expectations, a conference with parents will be requested to establish goals for the student and potentially make adjustments to the student's educational program.

If a student identified in the Alta Loma School District as GATE moves into another district, information about the identification criteria as well as achievement and assessment results will be forwarded. If a new, previously identified GATE student moves into the Alta Loma School District, inclusion into the program will require verification of GATE status in his/her former district through proper documentation.

Curriculum and Instruction

California state standards provide the foundation regarding the scope and sequence and curricular content of the GATE program. In particular, the state frameworks in ELA/ELD and Math standards, literacy standards in science, social studies, and technical subjects, Next Generation Science Standards, as well as visual and performing arts guide instructional content. The broader goal of the state standards is to create students who are high school, college, and career ready. This is especially important for our capable GATE students who have much to gain from reaching their full potential.

Education for the gifted requires a differentiated curriculum responsive to the potential and exhibition of talent and abilities among students. The Common Core State Standards represents another opportunity for gifted students to accelerate the application, analysis, and synthesis of standard expectations. The rigorous expectations of the Common Core State Standards are matched to the characteristics of gifted students. The standards require critical thinking, analysis, interdisciplinary connections, evidenced based communications, deep reading and thoughtful analysis. In math, students are expected to own and demonstrate the application of mathematics in real world scenarios through persistence and mathematical modeling, all while being able to articulate and argue mathematical thinking and the successful application of algorithms. No longer are students asked to produce just skill knowledge, but more importantly, they are being asked to apply information in meaningful, logical, and creative ways. State standards expectations and characteristics are pathways to college and career preparedness, the ultimate goal for student achievement. The standards provide the perfect vehicle for GATE students to build upon their strengths and abilities.

Within GATE cluster classrooms, students are given an opportunity to apply depth and rigor to activities, products, and performance tasks. Students are also given the opportunity for accelerated pacing. Students are able to go deeper or move on through the standards being taught as they demonstrate proficiency and mastery. For example, through curriculum compacting, students may take a pre-test in math and, by demonstrating mastery of skills and content, move on to the next unit or have assignments in which these skills are further developed and applied at a higher level.

School sites may also offer opportunities for part-time grouping to accelerate learning, compact curriculum, and provide opportunities for peer interaction,

enhancement, and enrichment experiences. School GATE coordinators are released from class to develop learning opportunities that offer challenge and choice to GATE students. In particular, coordinators have developed units of study involving Problem-Based Learning projects that become part of the Universal Access Choice and Challenge portion of the school day. During these differentiated class periods, GATE students are provided the opportunity to be involved in Problem Based Learning (PBL). PBL is a method whereby students gain knowledge, skills, and the opportunity to investigate and respond to a complex question, problem, or challenge. The PBL projects are cross-curricular and offer gateways into Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) as well as deeper analysis of English language arts and Social Studies. Essential Project Design elements of PBL include:

- **Key knowledge, Understanding and Success:**
 - Projects that involve skills that include standards-based content and skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and self-management
- **Challenging Problem or Question:**
 - The project is framed by meaningful problems to solve or answer at the appropriate level of challenge
- **Sustained Inquiry:**
 - Students engage in a rigorous, extended process by asking questions, finding resources and applying information
- **Authenticity:**
 - Features real-world context that speaks to students, personal concerns, interests, and issues in their lives
- **Student Voice and Choice:**
 - Students make decisions about the project including how they work and what they create
- **Public Product:**
 - Students make the project work public by explaining, displaying, and/or presenting it to audiences beyond the classroom

Students in grades seven and eight may be clustered into accelerated classes in English Language Arts and Mathematics. For those GATE students who qualify to be placed in accelerated classes, the content is compacted, the pace is accelerated, and topics/concepts are more complex in critical thinking expectations, rigor, and opportunities for creativity and self-expression. Mathematics acceleration may include:

- **Accelerated 7:** Compaction of seventh grade and most of eighth grade mathematic standards in one year in preparation for enrollment into Integrated I ninth grade course during the 8th grade year. Accelerated 7 students take the 7th grade CAASPP assessment at the end of the year.
- **Integrated I:** Compaction of remaining eighth grade standards and ninth grade Integrated I standards to prepare for higher mathematics in the high school setting. Integrated I students will take the 8th grade CAASPP assessment at the end of the year.

Social and Emotional Development

The Alta Loma School District endeavors to provide a nurturing environment for all students to help them reach their cognitive and affective potential. Teachers strive to create classroom environments where gifted children feel accepted and have opportunities to work collaboratively. To address the gifted students' social and emotional development, it is critical that teachers, counselors, and administrators recognize and understand the affective characteristics of giftedness, receive regular training on meeting gifted students' social/emotional needs in the classroom and become familiar with the district and community resources available to assist gifted students and their parents.

The Alta Loma School District recognizes the **Characteristic Strengths of Gifted Children and Possible Problems** as identified by the chart below:

Characteristic Strengths of Gifted Children and Possible Problems

Characteristics	Possible Problems
Acquires/retains information quickly	Impatient with others; dislikes basic routine
Inquisitive; searches for significance	Asks embarrassing questions; excessive in interests
Intrinsic motivation	Strong-willed; resists direction
Enjoys problem-solving; able to conceptualize, question teaching procedure; abstract	Resists routine practice
Seeks cause-effect relations	Dislikes unclear/illogical areas (e.g., traditions or feelings)
Emphasizes truth, equity, and fair play	Anxiety regarding humanitarian concerns
Seeks to organize things and people	Constructs complicated rules; often seen as bossy
Large facile vocabulary; advanced, broad information	May use words to manipulate; bored with school and age-peers
High expectations of self and others	Intolerant, perfectionistic; may become depressed
Creative/inventive; likes new ways of doing things	May be seen as disruptive and out of step
Intense concentration; long attention span and persistence in areas of interest	Neglects duties or people during periods of focus; resists interruption; stubbornness
Sensitivity, empathy; desire to be	Sensitivity to criticism or peer rejection

accepted by others	
High energy, alertness, eagerness	Frustration with inactivity; may be seen as hyperactive
Independent; prefers individualized work; self-reliant; nonconformity	May reject parent or peer input
Diverse interests and abilities; versatility	May appear disorganized or scattered; frustrated over lack of time
Strong sense of humor	Peers may misunderstand humor; may become "class clown" for attention

Teachers, counselors, parents, and administrators receive ongoing training to address the unique social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students. Part of this training includes information about the at-risk and/or underachieving GATE student. Throughout the year, GATE teachers may be given opportunities to meet together for GATE program planning as well as articulating solutions for GATE students who are demonstrating at-risk behaviors and/or achievement.

Parents of GATE students exhibiting at-risk behaviors are contacted and advised of available supports through teachers, administrators, and/or other district personnel. Students may be referred to a *Student Study Team (SST)* available at each school site where an intervention plan may be generated. The district junior high schools have a *Dean of Students* who provides guidance for students at-risk academically, socially, and behaviorally. The *Dean of Students* has been trained in the characteristics of underachieving, at-risk GATE students. If outside intervention is warranted, a referral may be made to counseling agency to provide individual services to all students who qualify.

A Parent University is held yearly and offers training to parents on a variety of instructional, academic, and behavioral topics including how to address both the academic and emotional needs of the GATE child. All parents are invited to attend the evening event and participate in self-selected sessions on a variety of topics. Parents also receive a GATEways newsletter each trimester, keeping them aware of current events, upcoming activities, and GATE resources regarding the unique needs and characteristics of the gifted and talented. The GATEways newsletter is written by GATE students and can be found on the district's website.

Professional Development

Alta Loma School District has clearly defined competencies for teachers of GATE students. Listed within those competencies are evidence of successful teaching experience, knowledge of the strategies for planning differentiated curriculum aligned with California state standards, and the ability to develop instructional support opportunities and materials for gifted students.

Teachers are surveyed annually to assess their training needs in implementing a quality program that effectively meets students' needs. From these surveys appropriate training is provided including ways to differentiate curriculum and instruction, as well as teaching strategies that are aligned with current research theories, such as iconic instruction, curriculum compacting, accelerated pacing, individual contracts, independent study, Design Learning, and Problem Based Learning. Teachers also receive training in 21st Century learning skills that include critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity. Teachers utilize Problem Based Learning during Universal Access Choice and Challenge classroom periods. GATE Coordinators are encouraged to attend California Association of Gifted (CAG) conferences.

Both consultants as well as in-house Teachers on Special Assignment and/or lead teachers provide researched-based training annually to teachers who have not participated in previous professional development on the gifted. Site coordinators meet several times a year to develop a curriculum scope and sequence and Problem-Based and Inquiry Learning projects. Students engage in multi-sourced projects and develop strategies in recognizing and applying key ideas and understandings, participating in challenge opportunities, discovering information through inquiry-based applications, posing real-world scenarios that generate solutions, and explaining and presenting information in the classroom and beyond.

The Alta Loma School District GATE coordinator is responsible for overseeing the identification process, providing teacher and other district trainings, scheduling site GATE coordinator meetings, arranging for assessment of the program, chairing the GATE Advisory Committee, and acting as the liaison with the administration and school board. Administrators and site GATE coordinators are trained as to their role in working with GATE students. Through site meetings they share program information, in-service staff on the identification process, and present teaching strategies to enrich the curriculum for GATE students. Each site

incorporates its GATE program into the *Single Plan for Student Achievement* (SPSA) and reviews the plan annually as part of the self-review process.

Parent and Community Involvement

Information about the GATE program and qualification referral process is made available to parents through the school newsletter in early November. Parents are advised to contact their school office or child's teacher for further information either about the program in general or in regards to the process to follow to refer their child for GATE program participation. Parents are notified, in writing, of their child's eligibility status and must sign permission slips for both assessment and, once identified, for program participation. All third grade students will have an opportunity to be screened using the CogAT Non-verbal assessment to determine his/her intellectual and reasoning ability. The CogAT Non-verbal assessment is used to eliminate bias regarding language acquisition and/or experiential understanding.

As part of the School-Based Coordinated Program, each school site develops a GATE plan in conjunction with its school site council. At the fall Back-to-School Nights, cluster teachers and the GATE coordinator describes their school-based program. Parents are informed of the program and are asked to give input as to areas of interest they would like to see incorporated into the program. Parents are informally surveyed regarding special talents, abilities, and/or occupations they might like to share with the GATE students. Soliciting parent assistance provides students the opportunity to learn from local lawyers, aviators, mathematicians, engineers, authors, artists, and other professionals. Parents are also invited to become a member of the *GATE Advisory Committee*. The advisory committee meets each trimester to review and evaluate the GATE program and its implementation. Committee members include parents of GATE students, site GATE coordinators, and the Associate Superintendent of Educational Services. An annual survey is sent to parents, staff, and students at the end of each year. The feedback provided is part of the program reflection and review process.

Each fall, GATE students and their families have a chance to work together in problem-solving and enrichment activities during *Family GATE Day*. Students are also provided the opportunity to participate in a *Chess Tournament* and earn participation ribbons and a first place trophy. A Parent University is held to

provide parents an opportunity to select informational sessions of interest that include GATE research-based information. A district wide *Spelling Bee* is held in the spring that encourages all GATE students to participate in teams representing various grade levels and schools.

Appendix

G.A.T.E. Identification Process – Flow Chart

3rd Grade Consent to Test

4th-7th Grade Consent to Test

3rd Grade G.A.T.E. Referral Application

4th-7th Grade G.A.T.E. Referral Application

Parent Survey

Teacher Indicator of Potential Survey

G.A.T.E. Identification Form