



Guide for Parents & Families of GATE Identified Students

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VISION

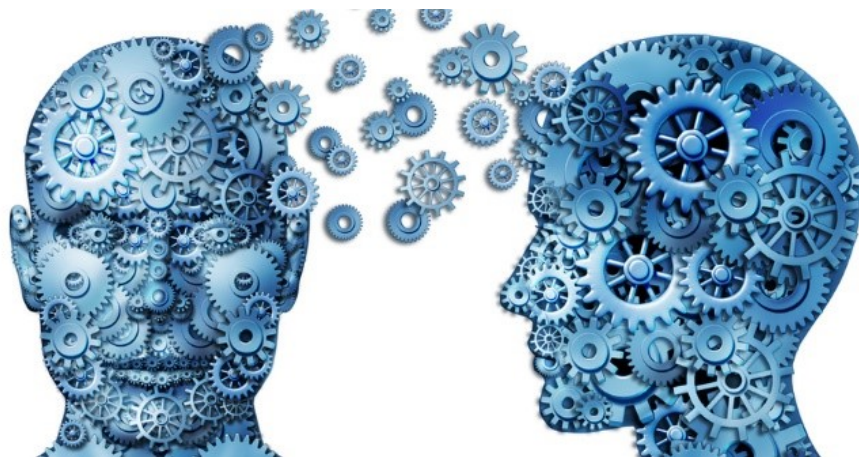
To provide a comprehensive high quality program that meets the intellectual, academic, and social/emotional needs of all Intellectually Gifted students in the Burbank Unified School District.

MISSION

It is the mission of the Burbank Unified School District's Gifted and Talented Education Program, in partnership with parents, community, and staff, to provide a high quality educational program for gifted students in order to develop their knowledge, skills, abilities, and values. The district's GATE program currently serves one category of gifted students: *intellectually gifted*—students with high potential in the areas of abstract thinking and reasoning ability as applied to school learning situations.

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What is Giftedness?

There are many definitions for the term, giftedness. Burbank Unified's working definition is based on intellectual giftedness: "Students with high potential in the area of abstract thinking and reasoning skills as applied to school learning situations."

Students Who Are Identified as Intellectually Gifted...

Children who have been identified as intellectually gifted may exhibit the following **positive** characteristics:

- Easily grasp new ideas and concepts
- Understand ideas and concepts more deeply than their same age peers
- Apply new knowledge in creative and novel ways
- Easily memorize facts, lists, dates, maps, names
- Seem to never forget information
- Learn new concepts quickly
- Really LOVE to learn (may or may not enjoy school)
- Enjoy playing complex or strategic games
- Enjoy older peers or even adults more than chronological peers
- Enjoy books, games, experiences meant for older children or adults
- Know many things that other children their own age or even adults seem unaware of
- Show extreme passion or focus for one particular area
- Have an unusual sense of humor
- Keenly observant
- Hyper-sensitive about animals, world issues, fairness

Gifted children exhibit **asynchronous** development. This means that they do not develop at an age-typical rate intellectually. There are three areas where we see development in children: physical, intellectual, and

today? What did you hear about today that you may like to learn more about at home?

HIGH-ACHEIVERS typically...	Intellectually GIFTED Kids typically...
Know the answers	Ask the questions
Are interested	Are extremely curious
Pay attention	Get involved physically and mentally
Work hard	Can be off-task and still get good grades
Answer questions	Challenge the answers
Enjoy same age peers	Prefer adults or older children
Are good at memorizing	Use prior knowledge to guess well
Learn easily	Know many of the answers already
Listen	Show/Hide strong feelings and opinions
Are self-satisfied	Are highly self-critical/perfectionistic

MYTH #2: All children are gifted in some way.

While all children are unique, and at times may show amazing aptitudes and skills, and have huge potential for cognitive growth, not all children are intellectually gifted. Intellectually gifted students have developed faster than their chronological peers. They begin at different starting points than the majority of their classmates.

****From One Parent to Another:** Intellectually gifted children often feel “different” from an early age. Even if the “gifted” label is never applied to them, they tend to know they are not the same as their peers. Sometimes this can lead to self-doubt, anxiety, or even egotism. Try to focus on the child not the label. Every child is unique and requires thoughtful, focused interactions to help with the soci-emotional needs of this group.

MYTH #3: Gifted children are gifted in all areas.

The gifted population is as diverse as the mainstream population. Students who are particularly gifted in language and reading may struggle in math. Students who have a mind for incredibly complex

Key Elements of Burbank Unified's Program

Identification

BUSD's GATE identification procedures are equitable, comprehensive, and ongoing to reflect the District's definition of intellectual giftedness and that relationship to current state criteria.

The student population of the BUSD GATE Program should proportionately represent the student population of the District with regard to gender, race, and ethnicity, and current efforts are focusing on increasing the numbers of students from underrepresented groups.

Students can be nominated for the GATE program by parents, teachers, administrators, and/or counselors using a nomination rating scale. Nominated students will be screened with the CogAT 7 test. If students score 80% or higher on the screener they will move on to the full assessment. The qualification criteria are as follows:

CogAT scores minimum criteria:

- 90th percentile in two of three subtests
- 88th percentile in two of three subtests with 1-risk factor
- 86th percentile in two subtests of three subtests with 2-risk factors
- 90th percentile in one subtest and 87-90th percentile in another subtest **combined with** a composite score of 90th percentile or profile in the 8th stanine

Additional data may be provided to supplement test scores and recommend students for program placement as decided by the GATE Identification Committee.

Students may also use WISC and WNV scores to qualify. (Please contact GATE Coordinator for more information on this option.)

The Identification committee will take into consideration nominations, test scores, and any other relevant educational data in their final decision to include students into the program.

Curriculum and Instruction

Burbank Unified School District will provide a comprehensive continuum of services and program options responsive to the needs, interests, and abilities of intellectually gifted students; based on philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support.

Differentiated curriculum responds to the needs, abilities, and interests of intellectually gifted students. Curriculum should facilitate the ability of each student to meet and exceed the core curriculum standards.

Burbank Unified School District defines *differentiation* as, “a sequence of common sense decisions made by a teacher with a student first orientation.” It is the practice of “teaching up” to challenge and support all students to achieve at high levels. Differentiation is valuing and planning for diversity in students. It is designed to address content as well as students learning and affective needs (Tomlinson, ASCD 2014).

Key Principles of Differentiation

1. ENVIRONMENT-Offer each student a positive, secure, challenging, and supportive learning environment.
2. CURRICULUM-Provide a meaning-rich curriculum that is designed to engage learners and is built around clearly articulated goals known to both teachers and students.
3. ASSESSMENT-Use persistent, varied, and differentiated formative assessments to ensure that teacher and students alike are aware of student status relative to the specified learning goals, and that teacher and student alike know what next steps are most likely to propel a given learner forward.
4. INSTRUCTION-Plan instruction based on formative assessment information to attend to whole-class, small-group, and individual differences in readiness, interest, and approach to learning.
5. CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP&MANAGEMENT-Work with students to create and implement classroom management routines that allow both predictability and flexibility (Tomlinson & Murphy; 2015).

Program Options May Include but are Not Limited To...

Clustering/Self-Contained Classes • Grades 4-8

GATE students are clustered or grouped together in the regular classroom and provided appropriately differentiated instruction of the core curriculum.

Acceleration • Grades 4-12

GATE and high-achieving students may advance beyond their present mathematics grade level in course content, and project complexity for other subjects.

Honors • Grades 9-12

Any student who meets performance-based prerequisites may take courses that provide differentiated instruction of the core curriculum, which incorporates acceleration/pacing, depth, complexity and novelty. Successful completion of honors courses is appropriate preparation for advanced placement classes.

Advanced Placement • Grades 10-12

Any student who meets performance-based prerequisites may take college level courses. Students take exams to receive college credit or placement in more advanced college course work.

Post-Secondary Opportunities • Grades 9-12 Students who are prepared to undertake college course work may enroll in a local community college on a part-time basis.

Social and Emotional Development

Burbank Unified School District supports the social and emotional development of intellectually gifted learners to increase responsibility, develop self-awareness, engender ethical behavior and assist other issues of affective development.

This is a major focus of the BUSD GATE program. Gifted students socio-emotional needs set them apart sometimes far more than their academic needs.

Professional Development

The Burbank Unified School District provides professional development opportunities related to gifted education to administrators, teachers, and staff to support and improve educational opportunities for gifted students.

Teachers and staff will be offered the following types of training yearly:

- Interdisciplinary Planning

- Differentiation 101
- Introduction to GATE Education
- Social-Emotional Needs of Gifted Students
- Myths and Realities of Gifted Students
- Gifted Adolescents
- Understanding and Reversing Underachievement in Gifted Students
- District GATE Conference
- Fostering a Classroom Environment That Support High Potential Students
- Effective Questioning For Higher Level Thinking
- Inquiry Learning and Formative Assessment
- Cultivating Curiosity and Creative Thinking

Parent and Family Involvement

The Burbank Unified School District views parent and family involvement as a critical aspect of the GATE program's effectiveness.

Parents are informed of the district's criteria and procedures for identifying intellectually gifted students as well as the program options and learning opportunities available.

Parents of students identified as intellectually gifted are invited to attend an annual orientation that explains the goals and objectives of the GATE Program, thus enabling an informed choice by parents on behalf of the children. In addition, parents and students are invited to attend open houses and site presentations of GATE student projects, and student productions.

The GATE Program Master Plan, identification criteria, and placement procedures are available on the district website and in the normal orientation materials provided by the district about the district. The identification criteria are explained in the district's GATE guide, at a parent education night meeting, by teachers at parent conference time when applicable, and in school and parent group publications.

On-going parent involvement is encouraged. Translations for documents and translators for meetings are provided as needed.

GATE parents are involved in the on-going planning and evaluation of the GATE program and assist with business and community outreach.

Program Assessment

The District (annually) accurately assesses the progress and quality of the GATE program, and provide the results of all assessments to parents, staff, and the Board of Education

It is only through comprehensive review and analysis that those who are charged with implementing and supervising this program will develop a thorough understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and know where improvement is needed. Surveys, Gate Advisory Council, Site Walk-Throughs, Student Work Analyses, Teacher Articulation Meetings, and Data Analyses, will be major ways in which we evaluate program effectiveness.



What Can Families Do to Support Their Intellectually Gifted Students?

At Home

Talk.

Gifted children have a lot going on in their heads. While not all of them will openly share, more than likely they have a lot to say. Asking questions is a good place to start. When you hit on an area of interest stay there for a while. You might be surprised by what you learn.

Listen.

As parents, we tend to want to jump in and fix things or give advice. Gifted children have strong feelings about the way things “ought” to be. Make sure that you are listening to your student’s affective needs. The way they want to handle a situation might not be what you would do, but will be effective for them.

Feed their passions.

We know from research that gifted students develop strong passions at an early age. They may perseverate on dinosaurs, legos, numbers, etc. Research has found that a high percentage of gifted children actually end up doing as adults something related to a passion they had when they were little. Sometimes parents worry that they are getting stuck and should explore other things. While it is always good to broaden horizons, keep in mind that their passions give them immense amounts of joy and intellectualism. Make sure there is time for them to pursue their passions.

Encourage them to observe others.

In an educational setting, gifted students can be very self-reliant. They have little need to seek help from others. By encouraging them to observe the strengths of others, you can help them to recognize the value of the people around them. They can see the benefit of asking for help or partnership. Focusing on strengths helps gifted kids see the value of relationships.

Encourage goal-setting.

Gifted children often have strengths and interests in a variety of things. This in combination with a fast-processing mind can lead to what seems like a lack of focus, messy handwriting, executive functioning deficiencies, and/or organizational issues. Help your child by talking about and making small achievable goals.

Use the “talk” of Growth Mindset.

We know through the research of Carol Dweck and others that there are two prevalent “mindsets” amongst learners.

Carol Dweck writes “In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort. They’re wrong.

In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Virtually all great people have had these qualities.”

Due to the emphasis placed on gifted children being “smart” many have developed a fixed mindset. When faced with a challenge they may shut down and/or become easily frustrated. As parents, we should help them understand that mistakes are learning points. They are a beginning. We need to help them understand that a failure signals not an end but simply a sign that a new course of action is required.

One of the simplest ways parents can help here is to make sure to praise appropriately and specifically. Use descriptive, accurate, and constructive feedback. For example, “I saw how you really tried different methods to make that work.” vs. “Great! You’re so smart.”

Find ways to channel excess energy.

Some gifted students learn with their whole bodies and minds. They spend a lot of time at school trying to control that energy. Making sure movement, sport, song, dance, silliness, and just plain fun are a part of your day can help release energy.

At School

Volunteer.

Helping at school or in classes can help you make connections with the GATE community at your student’s school.

Make positive connections with teachers and administrators.

As parents we are our children’s first teachers and have the greatest and most lasting impact on their lives. It is important that we advocate for our children through positive and productive connections with our student’s teachers and administrators. Teachers and administrators want to work in partnership with you. Emailing and making appointments to speak to teachers is a good way to open the lines of communication. If you have concerns, remember that a problem-solving approach is always appreciated. When cool things happen in class and your child is excited, that’s a great time to reach out with specific positive feedback.

Listen and share.

Great connections and ideas are out there.

District-Wide**Join the Gate Advisory Committee.**

The GATE Advisory Committee is a group of parents, teachers, and administrators, who come together to discuss the wants and needs of the district GATE program. The primary objectives involve:

- Communication between the district and school sites regarding GATE activities.
- Evaluation of GATE Program
- Outreach, Advocacy, and Support.

Meet with District GATE Coordinator.

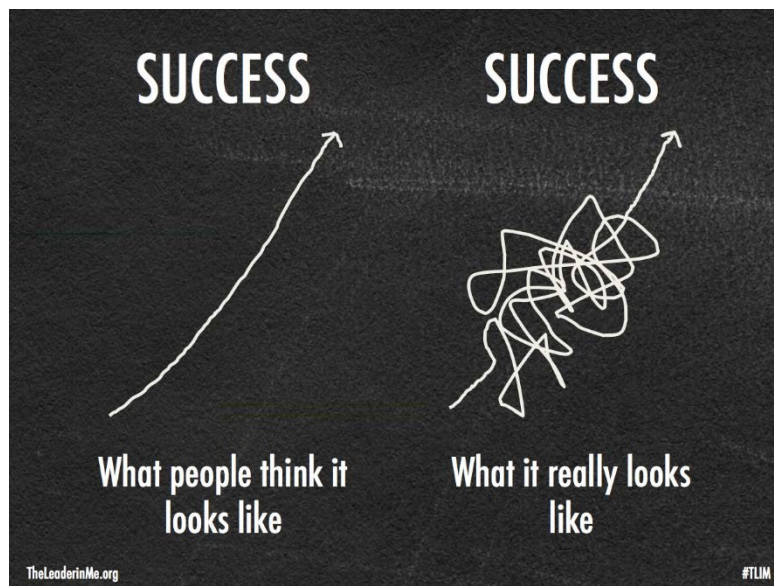
If you should need anything or have concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Do research.

There are many resources online and in paper to help you understand giftedness and gifted children. Please see the bibliography for more information.

Make connections.

Widening your circle to other parents at other sites can help you to build a network of support. Be sure to check out the GATE section on the District's website and the parent Facebook group.



Where To Go For More Information...

California Association for the Gifted: Position Paper on Twice Exceptional Students

<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cagifted.org/resource/resmgr/docs/position16twicee.pdf>

National Association for the Gifted-CEC

Teacher Preparation Standards in Gifted & Talented Education

<http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/standards/NAGC%20CEC%20CAEP%20standards%20%282013%20final%29.pdf>

National Association for the Gifted: Advanced Standards in Gifted & Talented Education

<http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/national-standards-gifted-andtalented-education/advanced-standards>

National Association for the Gifted: Advanced Standards in Gifted Education Teacher Preparation

<http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/standards/Advanced%20Standards%20in%20GT%20%282013%29.pdf>

CA State Board of Education

Recommended Standards for Programs for Gifted & Talented Students

[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cagifted.org/resource/resmgr/Docs/gate05standards\(1\).pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cagifted.org/resource/resmgr/Docs/gate05standards(1).pdf)

California Association for the Gifted: Position Paper – Teacher Qualifications

<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cagifted.org/resource/resmgr/docs/position10tq.pdf>

California Association for the Gifted: Position Paper – High School Programs for Gifted Students

<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cagifted.org/resource/resmgr/docs/position18hs.pdf>

California Association for the Gifted: GATE Recommended Standards for Programs for Gifted and Talented Students

[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cagifted.org/resource/resmgr/docs/gate05standards\(1\).pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cagifted.org/resource/resmgr/docs/gate05standards(1).pdf)

Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted sengifted.org

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Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

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Leading for Differentiation: Growing Teachers Who Grow Kids

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You Know Your Child is Gifted When...A Beginner's Guide to Life on the Bright Side

Galbraith, Judy (2000)

Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing

Why Smart Kids Worry

Edwards, Allison (2013)

Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, Inc.

Gifted Children: Myths and Realities

Winner, Ellen (1996)

New York, NY: Basic Books

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