

# **SANTA BARBARA SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

## **Secondary GATE Program Recommendations**



Santa Barbara  
**SCHOOL  
DISTRICTS**

**May 6, 2008**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Santa Barbara High School District updates its GATE Plan every 3 years, submitting it to the California Department of Education for certification. In previous years the Districts' plans have been certified as "exemplary". The GATE Office is required to submit a plan to the CDE in the spring of 2008, reflecting the recommendations in this plan. In an attempt to further improve the secondary district's GATE plan, a GATE planning committee was formed. The planning committee was composed of parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators at the elementary and secondary levels. This comprehensive recommendation plan is the culmination of the efforts of the planning committee, and represents input from students, teachers, parents and administrators from the Santa Barbara School Districts, our feeder school districts, and neighboring private schools. If the Board of Education approves the recommendations listed in this plan, they will be enacted over a two-year period.

The following represents the initial work of the GATE planning committee, leading to the recommendations for Board approval:

### **Secondary GATE Planning Committee Statement**

The Santa Barbara School District GATE planning committee believes that a successful GATE program is well-defined and has consistent practices across the district. In order to ensure this consistency and to continually monitor the quality of the program, site-level GATE coordinators, under the direction of a district-level GATE coordinator, should be charged with conducting ongoing oversight of the program and create regularly scheduled online performance surveys.

The secondary program should use standardized criteria that identify the participants as truly gifted and talented students who will learn together with their intellectual peers. The program should also include an outreach program, ensuring that the population of the GATE classes will reflect the general student population and giving equal access to all who qualify. Moreover, the program should give support for all students. This support should include a student orientation program, parent-education sessions, counseling staff that is trained in the special needs of GATE students, and a systematic pyramid of interventions for underperforming students. Finally, the program should offer ongoing training for teachers and counselors.

## **Internal Review Focus Areas:**

Using the information that was gathered from focus groups, discussions, email, and meetings with parents, students, teachers, and administrators from the Santa Barbara School District and from our feeder districts, we focused our internal review in the following areas:

- **GATE Identification**
  - **Student Populations** (*How to best ensure an equitable process for all demographic subgroups, in the SBSD and in the feeder districts*)
  - **Process** (*How to best ensure a fair and open process of identifying students for the secondary GATE program, meeting State and District guidelines*)
  - **Alignment with feeder districts** (*How to best ensure a closely aligned method of student identification among each of the SBSD feeder districts, leading to student placement within the GATE programs in the secondary schools*)
- **Potential GATE Parent Education Program**
- **Aligning Curricular Offerings in GATE and Honors at Each Secondary School**
- **Comparison Data from Exemplary GATE Programs within California for the purpose of:**
  - Recommending consistent professional development, focusing on “GATE-level” instructional strategies and grading practices, for future teacher training in the GATE program
  - Recommending intervention processes, including social and emotional support systems for GATE students

## **Meetings**

Meetings were regularly held at Santa Barbara Junior High School, Rm.108, from 3:30–5:00 pm. Meeting dates and locations were regularly sent to the community as reminders. Members of the public were welcome to attend these regularly scheduled meetings.

## **Steps in the Internal Review Process**

- Form a GATE Planning Committee to conduct an internal review of the secondary GATE program
- Hold a total of 6 focus groups with parents, students, teachers, and administrators to determine baseline successes and concerns with the secondary GATE program
- Research major areas of focus from other exemplary school districts, and from the discussions held with parents, students, teachers, and administrators
- Develop and publish a draft of new identification criteria for the secondary GATE program on the SBSD website
- Develop a draft of recommendations regarding any potential modifications to the secondary GATE program
- Publish the draft of recommendations to the public and to the Board of Education for review and comment
- Revise the draft of recommendations and present to the public and the Board of Education for adoption

## **The GATE Planning Committee**

Paul Turnbull, Asst. Supt., Secondary  
Robin Sawaske, Asst. Supt., Elementary  
Sandy Robertson, SBSD GATE Coordinator  
Dr. Davis Hayden, Director, Research & Technology  
Nancy Harter, Board of Education member  
Kate Parker, Board of Education member  
David Ortiz, Principal, La Colina JHS  
Donna Ronzone, Roosevelt, Principal  
Melisa Perez, SBHS counselor  
Paul Campbell, GVJHS teacher  
Joan Cotich, SMHS teacher  
Barbara Schreibke, Franklin parent  
Janet Rowse, Senior High parent  
Jill Feldman, GUSD parent  
Pat Santiago, Principal, La Patera School, GUSD  
Niloofer Kilpelainen, District GATE Advisory Committee

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## SECONDARY GATE QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

The proposed criteria were posted on the Santa Barbara School Districts website from March 14, 2008 to May 9, 2008. Public comments and suggestions were solicited before finalizing the criteria below. Local schools, in addition to neighboring school districts and private schools, received reminders of the proposed criteria and were asked to contact their parent communities in order to provide additional input.

### These proposed changes would take place for the 2009 – 2010 school year.

An incoming student or a student being tested will be deemed qualified for the GATE program and, based upon his/her scores, for placement into appropriate GATE classes/programs if he/she attains

- A **composite** score on a district-approved **cognitive abilities** test in the **95th** percentile or above at any time before entering the secondary district.

OR

- **Two or more subscale** scores with one having to be a non-verbal or equivalent on a district-approved **cognitive abilities** test in the **95th** percentile or above at any time before entering the secondary district.

OR

- A **composite** score on a district-approved **cognitive abilities** test in the **93rd** percentile or above at any time before entering the secondary district **AND** score at the **98th** percentile or higher on either a district approved math **achievement test** (such as Math CST) **or** a district approved English **achievement test** (such as ELA CST) within two years of entering the secondary district.

A parent or student can ask for an appeal of the above criteria if the student has a **composite** score on a district-approved **cognitive abilities** test in the **93rd** percentile or above at any time before entering the secondary district, but the expectation is that only exceptional circumstances and an absolute demonstration of exceptional ability (by student portfolio) will be approved. An approved appeal will constitute completing a Renzulli scale, as prescribed by the GATE Office guidelines, and a positive recommendation by the GATE selection committee.

- *If a GATE identified student returns to the SBSD after moving out of the SBSD for a period of 2 years or longer, the student will be required to successfully retest (using the CogAT) in order to be classified as a GATE identified secondary student.*
  - **NOTE: The committee was split on this section of the identification criteria, and believes that there may be a need to revisit the policy in the future.**

## SECONDARY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

### PHASE 1 (2008 – 2009)

#### Professional Development

Program/Practice	Point Person	Funding Source	Completion Date
GATE/Honors teachers (grades 7 - 10) take differentiation training <u>OPTION 1:</u> AVID Content Area Training <u>OPTION 2:</u> Pre-AP Differentiation and/or "Cornerstones" Training, or IB Middle Years Program Training	Dist. GATE Coordinator AND Principals	Title II	Ongoing
Counselors attend CA Assoc. for the Gifted (CAG) training sessions focused on the social/emotional needs of GATE students	Principals, GATE Team	Title II/DAC	Ongoing

#### Intervention (Social/Emotional) Program

Program/Practice	Point Person	Funding Source	Completion Date
Each site has a GATE Team (Administrator, Coordinator, Counselor, Teachers) to provide ongoing support for GATE students	Principals, Site GATE Team	N/A	Beginning of School Year
GATE at-risk counselors paid through AB1802 funds	Principal	AB1802	Ongoing
Underachieving GATE students referred to GATE counselor and AVID classes for support	Principals, Site GATE Team	N/A	Ongoing
Site GATE coordinators refer students needing further interventions to SST and GATE administrator as necessary	Principals, Site GATE Coord.	N/A	Ongoing

#### Parent Education Program

Program/Practice	Point Person	Funding Source	Completion Date
Site GATE Administrator and Coordinator host concurrent Back to School Night orientations for parents of GATE students: <b>A. Introduction to GATE Program and administrative structures</b> <b>B. Introduction to Social/Emotional supports for GATE students</b>	Principals, Site GATE Team	N/A	1st Month of School
Parent Orientation meeting is held concurrently in multiple languages at each school site	Site GATE Administrator	Title I, Title III, EIA	1st Month of School
Resources are given to parents in re: social/emotional needs of gifted students.	Site GATE Counselor	Title I, Title III, EIA	End 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter
Parents are represented on the District Advisory Council	District GATE Coordinator	N/A	Ongoing
DAC members attend workshops by experts such as Dr. Webb - special needs issues of GATE students	District GATE Coordinator	N/A	Ongoing

## PHASE 2 (2009 – 2010)

### Professional Development Requirements

Program/Practice	Point Person	Funding Source	Completion Date
GATE/Honors teachers (grades 7 - 10) attend on-site workshops, in conjunction with Sped dept., to identify at-risk indicators and intervention strategies with gifted students	Principal, Site GATE Admin/Site Coord	Title II	End 1 <sup>st</sup> Month of School
GATE/Honors teachers (grades 7 - 10) attend presentations on underachieving and under represented gifted learners; recognition of cognitive, social, emotional needs; characteristics by types of giftedness - giftedness in poverty and at-risk students	Dist. GATE Coordinator AND Principals	Title II	Bi-annually
GATE/Honors teachers (grades 7 - 10) take differentiation training <u>OPTION 1</u> : AVID Content Area Training <u>OPTION 2</u> : Pre-AP Differentiation and/or "Cornerstones" Training, or IB Middle Years Program Training	Dist. GATE Coordinator AND Principals	Title II	Ongoing

### Intervention (Social/Emotional) Program

Program/Practice	Point Person	Funding Source	Completion Date
GATE Administrator, Coord, and Counselor host workshops, in conjunction with Sped dept., for GATE teachers to identify at-risk indicators and intervention strategies with gifted students	Principal, Site GATE Team	Title II	End 1 <sup>st</sup> Month of School
Presentations by experts to staff on: underachieving and under represented gifted learners; recognition of cognitive, social, emotional needs; characteristics by types of giftedness - giftedness in poverty and at-risk students	GATE Admin/ Site Coordinator	Title II	End 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester
GATE students may withdraw from the program for a period of time AFTER: parent, teacher, counselor meetings; documented interventions have been implemented; documented parent consent and review date put in student file	GATE Admin/ Site Coordinator	N/A	Ongoing
Site GATE Team collects annual survey to determine effectiveness of program	Principal, Site GATE Coordinator	GATE Funds	End 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter

### Parent Education Program

Program/Practice	Point Person	Funding Source	Completion Date
Parents have access to parent groups w/in Sped and Gifted programs	Principal, Site GATE Counselor	N/A	Ongoing
DAC members attend workshops by experts such as Dr. Webb - special needs issues of GATE students	District GATE Coordinator	DAC	Ongoing
DAC parents organize and host a GATE Career/College event for parents of GATE students in grades 7 – 12	District & Site GATE Coordinators and DAC	DAC	Bi-annually

# **GATE PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT**

1. The Assistant Superintendent (K – 12), in conjunction with District GATE Coordinator, will monitor site GATE programs for consistency of implementation across each school.
2. Student placements in GATE classes will be monitored by the Assistant Superintendent (K – 12) and site principals to ensure consistency across school sites.
3. The Assistant Superintendent (K – 12) and the Director of Research and Evaluation, in conjunction with the District GATE Office, will enact an outreach plan to identify underrepresented minorities and Title I students who qualify for the secondary GATE program.

## **FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS**

4. Investigate formalizing a rigorous honors program to allow flexible student placements beyond the GATE program.
5. Investigate aligning SBSD advanced-level course designations (GATE and Honors) with University of California and California State University entrance requirements.
6. Consider requiring College Board-approved professional development for all high school teachers wishing to teach Advanced Placement courses.
7. Consider having site teams and designated counselors develop site-based pyramids of intervention throughout the 2008 – 2009 school year, specifically targeting support structures for at-risk students.
8. Investigate the potential of requiring a certificate in GATE Education for teachers of GATE classes throughout the secondary district.
9. Consider having the District GATE Advisory Committee (DAC) assume oversight of the monitoring and implementation of this plan, beginning in the fall of 2008.

## **SCHOOL SITE GATE COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The District GATE Coordinator oversees the District GATE Advisory Committee and each school site GATE Coordinator. The school site coordinators report directly to the principal of their respective schools; however, each site coordinator is expected to follow the direction of the District GATE Coordinator in order to carry out the required duties of the secondary GATE program.

**In addition to teaching at least two GATE classes, the School Site Coordinator shall be responsible for the following:**

- ❖ Attend monthly District Advisory Council Meetings
- ❖ Act as the liaison between the GATE Office and GATE teachers, students, and parents.
- ❖ Conduct an annual Pre Back-to-School Night GATE information meeting for GATE parents
- ❖ Conduct meetings of GATE Site Council (includes GATE teachers and parent representatives) 3 times per year
- ❖ Recruit parents and maintain active participation from school site and at district level
- ❖ Solicit and edit articles from GATE/AP teachers and students for the GATE Newsletter
- ❖ Assist with annual DAC fund-raising efforts, ensuring flyers are delivered home
- ❖ Encourage the active support of GATE parents in school and district activities
- ❖ Participate in the selection for identification of students for the gifted program (Renzulli and portfolio screening, usually once a year)
- ❖ Approve expenditures of GATE funds for field trips, supplies, materials, etc.
- ❖ Solicit teacher requests for DAC funds
- ❖ Provide support and resources for teachers of gifted students (that you find yourself or that become available from the GATE Office)
- ❖ Coordinate and assist with the annual GATE Program Evaluation at your school
- ❖ Attend professional workshops and meetings to stay informed about current ideas and practices in gifted education
- ❖ In accordance with annual DAC goals, participate in sub-committees as needed
- ❖ Meet all deadlines and respond to requests, emails, and other communication in a timely manner

The Site Coordinator receives a stipend equivalent to that of a Department Chair, and it is the intention of this description to reflect commensurate responsibilities.

# APPENDIX 1

## RESOURCES

The National Association for Gifted Children

<http://www.nagc.org/CMS400Min/index.aspx?id=574>

The California Association for the Gifted

[www.ca gifted.org](http://www.ca gifted.org)

The California Department of Education Gifted Website

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/gt/gt/>

The Santa Barbara School District Gifted Website

<http://www.sbsdk12.org/programs/gate/secondarygate.shtml>

The Santa Barbara School District GATE Advisory Committee Website

<http://www.sbceo.org/~sbhsgate/index.html>

The College Board (Advanced Placement)

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/Controller.jsp>

The International Baccalaureate Organization

<http://www.ibo.org/>