

5-25-2010

## GATE IDENTIFICATION Proposal to Amend Criteria

### **BACKGROUND:**

The current GATE plan identification criteria:

#### Assessment/Identification Criteria:

Any student in grades 4-12 meeting two of the following four categories of criteria for giftedness or talent will be made GATE eligible.

1. Score at or above the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile in two consecutive years on any portion of the STAR test program, excluding the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade CAT/6 Language and 8<sup>th</sup> grade CST General Math tests.
2. Teacher report based on work samples, student projects, and portfolios.
3. A rating of student from current teacher at or above the standard score of 111 on the GATES Evaluation Scales in the area of intellectual ability, academic skills, creativity, leadership, and/or artistic talent.
4. A cumulative middle school academic grade point average of 3.5 beginning in grade 7. A cumulative high school academic GPA of 3.5 beginning in grade 10 (GPA from middle school would be used for identification of students in grade 9).

### **CONCERNS:**

After two years of implementation, concerns about the use of the GATES evaluation scales have been repeatedly raised by parents, administrators, and teachers. Parents have found the measure to be too restrictive and subjective and teachers have found the measure to be too subjective and uncertain about the validity of the results. At times, disagreement over the GATES results has unfortunately resulted in conflict between teachers and parents.

## **RECCOMENDATIONS:**

**It is recommended that the District discontinue use of the GATES Evaluation Scales and pilot a more objective measure in its next round of GATE identification.** Use of a standardized measure of intellectual functioning would meet this interest. Measures such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities Test, Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, or the Cognitive Abilities Test are commonly used in GATE identification. These measures are widely recognized as valid and reliable and can be group administered in less than an hour.

In order to pilot such a measure(s), the District would identify each of the students in grades 4-5, who scored at the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile on the 2008-2009 and 2007-2008 California Standards Tests, and offer the parents of these students the opportunity to be assessed for GATE eligibility utilizing a standardized measure of intellectual functioning. The administration of the assessment would occur in the first month of school. Any additional students, who are referred for GATE eligibility determination in the fall, would also be administered such a measure.

The District is in the process of reviewing which measure(s) would best serve our interests. Issues that need to be considered include any possible test bias (e.g. English Learners), length of administration, usefulness of results for teachers and administrators, cost of materials, and validity and reliability.

Given that next year, the GAC will be developing a new GATE Plan for submission to the State in June '11, the results of this pilot would inform the groups thinking about permanent revisions to the current identification criteria.

This pilot does not address all concerns related to the current identification criteria. Additional issues the GAC should consider next year include:

1. If we are to proceed with a standardized measure, should it be administered to all students?
2. Grade level at which GATE identification will begin.
3. Whether or not to continue use of the GPA criteria at the secondary level.
4. The District referral process based on STAR.

# **GATE Professional Development Activities 2009-2010**

## **Participation in ACOE GATE certification workshop:**

6 teachers (2 PHS; 4 Elementary).

## **Attendance at California Association for the Gifted (CAG) State conference:**

6 teachers (3 elementary; 1 PMS; 1 PHS)  
1 Administrator

## **Participation in other workshops addressing GATE:**

7 elementary teachers.

- In addition, all elementary and many PMS and PHS teachers participated in workshops with our Differentiated Instruction coach, Anne Beninghof.

- We are in the process of discussions with the Alameda County Office of Education about the idea of bringing GATE certification workshops to PUSD in 2010-2011.

- A result of teachers attending the CAG conference has been discussion of the School Wide Cluster Grouping Model at two elementary staff meetings to date. Administrators are also discussing the issue.

- A group of teachers has begun meeting with the District GATE coordinator to address issues and directions serving our gifted and talented students.

