

Fullerton School District Gifted And Talented Education Program Frequently Asked Questions

What are the steps to identifying my child as Gifted/GATE?

GATE screening is an ongoing process, and all students have an equal opportunity to be screened for placement in the GATE program.

All second grade students currently enrolled in the Fullerton School District will participate in the first round of the screening and identification process. This is done so that all students have an opportunity to display their gifted abilities. Parents who choose to “Opt Out” of this process must be aware that once a child has “Opted Out” they may not be added to the testing list for the remainder of the school year.

Students may be nominated for screening by parents, teachers, the school’s Student Intervention Team, or other persons familiar with the student’s performance. Standardized test scores and student work are monitored each spring to ensure that students demonstrating extraordinary achievement are found either through nomination or by a review of the data.

Participation in the screening process does not guarantee participation in GATE ability testing.

What criteria qualifies my child?

Once the test is complete, it is scored and parents are notified by mail of the results. Our district offers several ways in which a child can be identified GATE:

- **General Intellectual** -A student must obtain a total score of 98%ile or above on a nationally normed cognitive abilities test. Teacher observation of exceptional classroom performance and/or ability, along with observations of characteristics of a gifted child contribute to this identification
- **High Achievement** -A student must obtain a total score of 95%ile or above on a nationally normed cognitive abilities test **AND** California State Test and FSD District Benchmark scores in the High Advanced range in English Language Arts and Math over a period of two years. Teacher observation of exceptional classroom performance, along with observations of characteristics of a gifted child contributes to this identification.
- **Multi-Dimensional** -A student must be close to meeting test score criteria in General Intellectual or High Achievement categories. This category is provided to ensure equal opportunity for students from varying linguistic, economic and/or cultural backgrounds and for students with learning disabilities. Students are evaluated according to a

combination of factors. These include District Benchmarks, intellectual ability, achievement, student portfolio, and observations of gifted characteristics.

- **Project Discover** -A student attending a Title 1 school must demonstrate exceptional classroom performance and excellence in critical thinking, creativity and problem solving ability as measured by three or more of the following: Alternative Identification Project Assessments including a student portfolio, Alternate Ranking Process, Slocumb/Payne Teacher Perception Inventory, FSD appraisal of gifted characteristics, achievement tests, verbal or nonverbal ability tests, and District Benchmark exams.
- **Visual and Performing Arts** -A student in 7th or 8th grade must demonstrate exceptional talent in visual and/or performing arts as measured by teacher recommendation and audition and/or student portfolio.

GATE TESTING

Who administers the tests for GATE identification?

The GATE Coordinator for the district or a School Site GATE Coordinator/Administrator administers the group ability test. Second grade teachers will give the screening test to all participating students in their class. The FSD GATE Coordinator, or the School Site GATE Coordinator will administer subsequent tests.

What is the timeline for GATE testing?

Second Grade Students: The GATE screening process for enrolled second grade students begins in the fall of each year. During the month of September, parents will have the opportunity to decline testing for their child. The identification process begins in the months of September, *October and November*, when all students in the second grade across the district will be taking a general abilities test to begin the screening process for the gifted and talented program (GATE).

Students scoring in the 89th percentile or above on the first test go on to the second round of testing, held in October or November of the school year. The results of the first test determine who will move on to a second round of testing. The GATE identification Team will use both tests, teacher input, and District exams to determine GATE identification.

The Identification and Placement Team at each school meets to discuss the tested students and their potential placement for the following year. Parents will be notified of the testing results after the Identification and Placement meetings and prior to the end of the school year. It is anticipated that results of the GATE identification process will be available in January of the school year.

Third Through Seventh Grade Students: GATE testing for third through seventh grade students

takes place each year in October and November for enrolled students, including students new to the Fullerton School District. Students are screened with parent permission if they have shown gifted characteristics throughout that school year, received advanced test in Language Arts and Mathematics the prior year, are scoring in the High Advanced range on current year District Benchmark assessments in Language Arts and Mathematics, are recommended by their teacher, and/or a parent has requested this testing. Testing occurs when recommended students meet the established screening criteria. Once a student has been identified as GATE, they are eligible to participate in the GATE Program the following school year.

How many tests will my child need to take?

Students in second grade can take two tests before identification. The two tests are ability tests given in a group situation. Participation on the second test is dependent on scores from the previous test.

Students in third through eighth grade will take one ability test. Identification will come through this ability test, scores from California Standards Tests, and other criteria.

What happens if my child does not meet GATE identification criteria?

Students who qualify for GATE may attend one of the GATE Designated Schools or remain at their home school. Project Discover-GATE students will be clustered at their home school. Students who do not meet established criteria may be re-evaluated in future grade levels, for up to three test cycles.

How many times may I have my child tested?

In the Fullerton School District, students are tested up to a total of three times which includes their second grade screening. All identification is done after a parent, teacher, the student intervention team, or other persons familiar with the student's performance have nominated the child.

Is it possible to see my child's results after the test?

Tests scores are sent from the GATE office. These are percentile scores and have been normed on a national scale. Please remember that the name of the specific tests will not be released.

GATE test scores are reported as percentile rankings, which represents how well a student performs compared to other students in a nationwide norm sample for their age. Percentile is not related to the percent of correct answers a student gets on a test. This is unlike a percentage score, which refers to what portion out of a group of 100 falls into a category.

What kind of test is the GATE identification test?

The Fullerton School District uses nationally normed cognitive abilities tests to assess verbal and nonverbal reasoning potential. This reasoning potential is strongly related to success in school. However, it is not a test for which a student can study.

To assess reasoning potential, the tests use tasks such as detecting likenesses and differences, recalling words and numbers, defining words, following directions, classifying, establishing sequence, solving arithmetic problems, and completing analogies. This is done since these tasks have been shown to be valid measures of an individual's ability to reason logically.

What is the difference between Ability Tests and Achievement tests?

An Ability test is a test of general reasoning skills, which is the type of test used for identifying gifted students. An Achievement test is a test of developed skill or knowledge, such as the State Tests and Benchmarks or those used in the classroom to check progress. Our Ability tests identify Non-verbal/Verbal reasoning ability. The first test measures ability without the requirement of reading, writing, or speaking. It focuses on reasoning and problem-solving skills. The second test assesses five areas which are verbal comprehension, verbal reasoning, pictorial reasoning, figural reasoning, and quantitative reasoning.

IDENTIFICATION

Does my child lose identification if he/she does not attend a GATE school?

Once a child has been identified as GATE, they will keep that identification even if they do not choose to participate at a GATE Designated school. They will retain their GATE identification while they attend the Fullerton School District.

Is private testing accepted for identification?

Private assessments are not accepted as part of the evaluation process. The identification process established by the Fullerton School District ensures that pupils in the district have equal access to screening and referral as required by Categorical Program Monitoring (CPM VI-G 6.2).

If my child was identified in another school district, may he/she be identified in this district?

GATE is not a mandated program in California. Therefore, each district develops its own criteria for identification. Eligible students must meet the GATE Identification Criteria established by

the Fullerton School District in order to be identified as GATE in the district.

PROJECT DISCOVER-GATE

How are students identified for the Project Discover-GATE Program?

Project Discover-GATE is a program for students at Title 1 sites that demonstrate exceptional classroom performance and excellence in critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving ability as measured by three or more of the following: Alternative Identification Project Assessments including a student portfolio, Alternate Ranking Process, Teacher Perception Inventory, FSD appraisal of gifted characteristics, achievement tests, verbal or nonverbal ability tests, and District Benchmarks exams. These students receive Project Discover alternative identification when they show exceptional performance on the above measures, but do not test at the 98% percentile on GATE Ability Tests. Project Discover identifications allow students to receive GATE instructional services. However, Project Discover identification does not allow for them to attend GATE Designated Sites.

What is the Project Discover-GATE instructional program?

Project Discover-GATE Cluster students are high potential students from diverse backgrounds who are formally identified for Project Discover-GATE, clustered in the regular classroom at their resident school sites, and provided a differentiated curriculum as an integral part of the school day. The Project Discover cluster groupings provide for intellectual peer interaction, focus on language development and critical thinking skills, while meeting the student's specific instructional needs.

Teachers involved in the Project Discover program are GATE trained and are given assistance and instructional support by the FSD GATE office. At Title I schools, teachers emphasize in-class projects and products. Teachers differentiate the level of difficulty and complexity of learning, through the use of Junior Great Books, supplemental science materials, and by utilizing the elements of depth and complexity developed by Sandra Kaplan.

For information regarding placement of Project Discover-GATE students, please see the **Placement** section of our **Frequently Asked Questions**.

JUNIOR HIGH-HONORS

Do you have GATE classes in Junior High?

GATE Program classes for students in grades 7th and 8th are incorporated into the student's basic program requirements in Language Arts and/or History/Social Science. These GATE/Honor's students participate in at least one class per day with other gifted students. Those students who are gifted in visual or performing arts, once identified through audition or portfolio, may participate in advanced classes in their specific area.

What happens to my child's GATE identification when he/she enters high school?

Once a child has been identified as GATE, they will retain their GATE identification while they attend the Fullerton School District. As students move up to the High School level, their identification is given to the High School District; however, students may have to meet the criteria established by the high school district for Honors or Advanced Placement.

PLACEMENT

If my child is identified as GATE, which school would he/she attend?

Once a child is identified as GATE, they are invited to participate in the GATE program. The Fullerton School District has designated schools for clustering those students with GATE identification.

| Home School | Designated GATE School |
|--|------------------------|
| Acacia, Commonwealth, *Fisler, *Maple, Raymond, *Rolling Hills, *Woodcrest | Acacia |
| Golden Hill, Fern Drive, *Orangethorpe, *Pacific Drive, *Valencia Park | Golden Hill |
| Beechwood, *Fisler, Hermosa Drive, *Rolling Hills | Hermosa Drive |
| Laguna Road | Laguna Road |
| Maple, Orangethorpe, Pacific Drive, Richman, Valencia Park, Woodcrest | Richman |
| Sunset Lane | Sunset Lane |
| <i>GATE Identified students may decide to remain in attendance at their home school.</i> | |

* Depending on enrollment numbers

If my child is identified as Project Discover-GATE, which school would he/she attend?

Once a child is identified as a Project Discover-GATE student, they are invited to participate in the Project Discover-GATE program at their resident school. The Fullerton School District provides Project Discover-GATE classes at the following schools:

| Project Discover-GATE Designated Schools |
|---|
| Commonwealth |
| Maple |
| Orangethorpe |
| Pacific Drive |
| Raymond |
| Richman |
| Valencia Park |
| Woodcrest |

What if we want our GATE identified student to stay at their home school?

Students identified as GATE may decide to remain in attendance at their home school, not participating in a specific enrichment program at a Designated Special Day Class site. These GATE identified students may or may not be grouped together in the same classroom at their school. Questions regarding placement at the home school should be directed to the school principal. All Fullerton School District schools work to meet the academic needs of each student, providing differentiated instructional activities within the class.