

# **Parent Handbook**

## ***Gifted and Talented Education Program***



**Hemet Unified School District  
Educational Services**

[www.hemetusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.hemetusd.k12.ca.us)

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# GATE Mission Statement

The Hemet Unified School District participates in the California Gifted and Talented Program to achieve the following goals:

- 1) To identify those students who are gifted and talented
- 2) To provide a differentiated curriculum to meet the special needs of the identified students
- 3) To provide training necessary for teachers to deliver a differentiated curriculum
- 4) To provide training necessary for parents to provide assistance to the students, teachers, and programs

## Program Design

The Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program is funded by a state grant and administered through the Categorical Programs Office. On January 1, 2001, Assembly Bill 2313, Gifted and Talented Pupils, became law and changed some of the existing regulations for GATE programs throughout the state - the first changes in 20 years. These are the highlights of the changes that affect the Hemet Unified School District.

- Apportionment of funds is now a per-pupil amount based on average daily attendance rather than on the number of participating pupils.
- There is no longer the 200 minute per week requirement for gifted and talented programs. Rather, the new law requires that programs be “planned and organized as an integrated differentiated learning experience within the regular school day, and augmented with other differentiated activities related to the core curriculum.”

Differentiation of the core curriculum to provide advanced learning opportunities, in an environment that encourages students to become stakeholders in their own education, is the foundation of the Hemet GATE plan. Students are clustered in a classroom with a trained teacher, and GATE services are integrated into the regular school day. After-school enrichment activities, mentorships, independent study, Advanced Placement or Honors classes may be offered at various sites.

## Identification

In an effort to include non-English speaking students and/or students with learning disabilities the Hemet Unified School District's GATE program first identifies students as being potentially gifted and talented at the end of second grade. With parent permission, all students enrolled in second grade are screened for identification; their classroom teacher, site administrator or parent may refer all other students in grades 3-8 for screening.

The district's identification procedures are equitable, comprehensive and ongoing Pursuant to Title 5A, Section 3820, of the California Administrative Code – all students are eligible for consideration for identification as potentially gifted and talented.

Students are evaluated using multiple criteria including:

- Raven Progressive Matrices test
- Achievement Tests – state adopted California Standards Test
- Parent Surveys
- Teacher Surveys
- Creativity Survey
- Leadership Survey
- Talent Survey
- Inhibiting factors, such as language, hearing loss, learning disability, etc.

Upon identification, a letter will be sent to the parents/guardians confirming the student's eligibility. If a student does not qualify, a letter will be sent to advise the parent/guardian that the regular educational program best suits the child's educational needs.

## Transfer Students

A student, who was previously identified as gifted in another California public school district by an identification process similar to the above mentioned, will be placed in a GATE cluster at the appropriate grade level. If the process used for identification is not similar, a district examiner will retest the student during the next testing cycle.

# Characteristics of the Gifted

## High Achiever vs. Gifted

### Bright Child

- \* Knows the answers.
- \* Is interested.
- \* Is attentive.
- \* Has good ideas.
- \* Works hard.
- \* Answers the questions.
- \* Top group.
- \* Listens with interest.
- \* Learns with ease.
- \* 6–8 repetitions for mastery.
- \* Understands ideas.
- \* Enjoys peers.
- \* Grasps the meaning.
- \* Completes assignments.
- \* Is receptive.
- \* Copies accurately.
- \* Enjoys school.
- \* Absorbs information.
- \* Technician.
- \* Good memorizer.
- \* Enjoys straightforward, sequential presentation.
- \* Is alert.
- \* Is pleased with learning.

### Gifted Learner

- \* Asks the questions.
- \* Is highly curious.
- \* Is mentally and physically involved.
- \* Has wild, silly ideas.
- \* Plays around, yet tests well.
- \* Discusses in detail, elaborates.
- \* Beyond the group.
- \* Shows strong feelings and opinions.
- \* Already knows.
- \* 1–2 repetitions for mastery.
- \* Constructs abstractions.
- \* Prefers adults.
- \* Draw inferences.
- \* Initiates projects.
- \* Is intense.
- \* Creates a new design.
- \* Enjoys learning.
- \* Manipulates information.
- \* Inventor.
- \* Good guesser.
- \* Thrives on complexity.
- \* Is keenly observant.
- \* Is highly self-critical.

# Characteristics of the Gifted

## Intellectual Characteristics

Exceptional reasoning ability  
Intellectual curiosity  
Rapid learning rate  
Facility with abstraction  
Complex thought processes  
Vivid imagination  
Early moral concern  
Passion for learning  
Powers of concentration  
Analytical thinking  
Divergent thinking/creativity  
Keen sense of justice  
Capacity for reflection

## Personality Characteristics

Insightfulness  
Need to understand  
Need for mental stimulation  
Perfectionism  
Need for precision/logic  
Excellent sense of humor  
Sensitivity/empathy  
Intensity  
Perseverance  
Acute self-awareness  
Nonconformity  
Questioning of rules/authority  
Tendency towards introversion

## Gifted Profiles

### Successful

Positive Self Concept  
High Achiever  
Convergent Thinker  
Unaware of Deficiencies

### Underground

Unsure  
Wants to belong socially  
Quiet to Shy  
Invoked outside of school

### Double Labeled

Weaknesses  
Hidden strengths  
Unaccepted  
Frustrated

### Challenging

Bored and Frustrated  
Defensive  
Creative  
Independent

### Drop Out

Resentful and Angry  
Poor Self Concept  
Unaccepted by Adults  
Creative

### Autonomous

Self Confident  
Positive Self Concepts  
Appropriate Social Skills  
Independent Learning Skills

### Learning Disabled

Performs poorly on sequential tasks  
Above Average understanding of "Big Picture"  
Intuitive  
Above Average participation on discussion and activities

# Differentiated Curriculum

The Hemet Unified School District's GATE program is a child-centered program based upon the unique needs of each gifted student. Gifted students require a differentiated educational program in order to achieve their potential. Differentiation is the primary focus of our GATE program. It takes into consideration individual learning styles and special abilities, helping to develop positive attitudes toward school and peers as well as building skills in the area of independent study, research, creative thinking, critical thinking and communication.

Differentiation uses a variety of classroom projects or activities, which allow students more than one possible outcome to satisfy or complete an assignment and demonstrate competency. Depending on the student's strengths and the curriculum being covered, the teacher will begin with the core curriculum and then incorporate one of the following methods to adequately challenge the gifted student.

## Four Methods of Differentiating

### **Depth**—Elaborating

Students determine facts, concepts, and major principles when moving from the concrete to the abstract or known to the unknown in the discipline they are studying. Depth is an elaboration of the core curriculum.

- Skills associated with Depth:
  - Elaborate measure
  - Extrapolate
  - Replicate gather evidence
  - Generalize
  - Define ambiguity
  - Judge paraphrase
  - Describe
  - Restate
  
- Examples of student products:
  - Participate in a discussion
  - Make a model
  - Graph a concept
  - Teach a lesson or give a demonstration
  - Create an original product such as a game
  - Translate into another form • Debate an issue
  - Draw a diagram
  - Make a flow chart

### **Complexity**—Making Relationships

Students study issues, problems, or themes and make connections between ideas within disciplines or topics.

- Skills Related to Complexity:
  - Prove/disprove
  - Categorize

Show relationships  
Extrapolate  
Estimate  
Provide evidence  
Check for authenticity  
Collect data for problem solution  
Test hypothesis to determine relationships compare and contrast  
Draw conclusions  
Negotiate  
Define the problem  
Note ambiguity  
Revise with new data  
Sequence ideas chronologically

- Examples of student products:
  - Web a concept or series of ideas
  - Construct Venn diagrams
  - Develop hierarchical charts
  - Relate multiple ideas in a single design
  - Classify to show cause and effect relationships
  - Produce the same idea from a different perspective •Design flow charts
  - Draw a matrix

### **Novelty**—Personalizing Understanding

Students make original interpretations and restatements of existing information in ways that are personalized or individualistic.

- Skills Related to Novelty:
  - Prioritize
  - Observe
  - Hypothesize
  - Predict
  - Use trial and error explain the main idea
  - Resolve the conflict
  - Ask questions
  - State your opinion
- Examples of student products:
  - Debate an issue
  - Editorialize an opinion
  - Make a choice or decision
  - Tally research results
  - Interview a person
  - Prepare an investigative report
  - Use raw materials to solve a problem
  - Prepare a scrapbook or collection
  - Accommodate a new viewpoint
  - State cause and effect relationships
  - Develop an original product that utilizes your talents/abilities

## **Acceleration**—Pacing

Students are encouraged to work at a more efficient or effective pace through the core curriculum when provided challenging and appropriate opportunities.

- Skills Related to Acceleration:
  - Initiate
  - Hypothesize
  - Explore combine elements or materials
  - Retain information
  - Use parallel structure
  
- Examples of student products:
  - Elaborate on a topic
  - Demonstrate inductive learning and problem solving
  - Select a more difficult response
  - Demonstrate diversity of interest and ability
  - Demonstrate independence in work and study

## Differentiated Teaching Strategies

- Compacting: The procedure used to streamline the regular curriculum for students capable of mastering a task at a faster pace.
- Complex Instruction: A specific type of cooperative learning in which students are actively involved at classroom centers.
- Cooperative Grouping: The practice of assigning a common task and/or project to a group of students with varying ability levels often reflecting the full range of student achievement and aptitude.
- Flex Grouping: Homogeneous groups formed on a temporary basis to address specific skills.
- Independent Study: Allowing students to follow individual or self-selected areas of interest and specific aptitude by designing and implementing their own study plans. Close monitoring by teachers is an essential component of independent study.
- Interest Groups/Centers: Grouping students by interest/choice provide enrichment for students who can demonstrate mastery or required assignments.
- Peer Coaching/ Mentoring: A practice which indicates voluntary or assigned matching of students by shared characteristics, such as age, ability, need, and/or interest in order to affect teaching and learning.
- Reading Workshop: An instructional management system in which students are actively involved in the selection of reading material and how they will respond.
- Socratic Seminar: An open-ended circle discussion centered around a certain text where student interaction guides the discussion by stated opinion and supportive remarks.
- Thematic Instruction: The use of encompassing classroom themes or generalizations that allows students to explore and discover relationships and connect concepts through an interdisciplinary approach.
- Tiered Instruction: The use of homogeneous groups to explore a common theme at multiple levels utilizing varied resources and assignments.

# Parent Advisory Committee

The GATE Parent Advisory Committee meets a minimum of three times throughout the school year to promote the exchange of ideas and information regarding GATE programs and services in order to better serve the needs of our identified students and to ensure a cooperative climate among the community, parents and district. It is the district's belief that parents/guardians who are aware of district programs can be much more effective partners in their children's education.

Each site administrator is encouraged to select one parent who is interested in representing their school site and sharing information from the GATE Advisory meetings with their School Site Councils, PTA/PTO, and school community. Parents interested in representing their school site should contact their child's site administrator

In addition to regularly scheduled PAC meetings, each school site's GATE Coordinator will organize an orientation/information meeting in early Fall to outline the District's GATE program and their school site's GATE plan.

During the school year parents will be invited to attend district sponsored Parent Information Nights lead by educational leaders in the field of gifted education. These sessions include discussion and information on issues relating to the social, emotional and educations needs of the gifted child in grades kindergarten through twelfth.

# Gifted & Talented Education Resources for Parents

## Parents' Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Why doesn't HUSD use IQ tests to identify GATE students?**

**A:** IQ tests measure a narrow subset of human characteristics and present only partial information about cognitive skills. They typically do not measure important characteristics such as effort, motivation, leadership, or creative ability, and they have been shown to be racially bias. Districts may use them under the following conditions: 1) that districts not use IQ tests for racial or ethnic minority students unless the IQ test helps the student get into the GATE program; and 2) identification as gifted must never be based on IQ score only. (See Education Code Section 60600 et. seq. and California Department of Education Legal Advisory #LO:1-92 for additional information about the use of IQ tests).

**Q: Why doesn't HUSD identify and serve students in kindergarten and primary grades?**

**A:** State Law (AB 2313 effective January 1, 2001) requires districts to serve students in all grades. It is not necessary to identify kindergarten and primary students formally, although some districts may choose to do so. Districts are required to provide teachers with the means to recognize gifted children using the strategies and resources to meet their educational needs. This can be done even if formal identification does not take place until later.

**Q: How does differentiated gifted education relate to standards-based education?**

**A:** Standards-based education is a solid foundation on which to build appropriate instruction for all students, including gifted and talented students. Standards-based education requires educators to have clear content and performance objectives for their students. Both the Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools and the Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools discuss the need for teachers to assess students in order to know what must be learned and to design instruction to move them forward. Both of these documents apply this principle to all students, including advanced and gifted students, even if it means working between grade levels. Key to accomplishing this for all students is differentiation of the core curriculum to meet various student needs.

**Q: Must HUSD serve all identified gifted and talented students?**

**A:** Yes, once we accept GATE funds we must serve all identified GATE students unless the parent or student declines participation. HUSD has an obligation to seek out, identify and serve underachieving gifted and talented students and to serve unidentified primary students since our district does not offer formal identification in the early grades.

**Q: My child is not identified as gifted but is high achieving. Does my child receive any special instructional services?**

**A:** With the passage of AB 2313 gifted and high achieving students are to receive differentiated core curriculum instruction at their ability level by a teacher trained in differentiated instructional strategies.

**Q:** Must GATE funding be distributed to schools based on the number of identified GATE students at that school?

**A:** No. HUSD may allocate funds in this way but is not required to do so. GATE funds should be distributed according to the needs of students and according to the District's written GATE Plan.

**Q:** How should parents be involved in the GATE program?

**A:** The Education Code and regulations specifically require that parents be involved in the planning and evaluation of programs. Many districts have a committee composed of parents, school site GATE advisory committees, or a GATE subcommittee of the school site council. SBCP programs involve parents as members of school site councils. Parents are a tremendous source of support for GATE programs and educators should take care to utilize that support without abdicating educators' responsibilities for meeting the needs of all GATE students.

**Q:** Is HUSD required to do an annual evaluation of its GATE program?

**A:** Yes, an annual evaluation of the GATE program is required by law. School districts are required to do an annual, school site evaluation. The evaluation should be designed to provide the district with helpful information about how to best meet the needs of GATE students. It does not have to be expensive or burdensome. It can be as simple as sending out an annual evaluation form at the end of the year asking teachers, parents, and students to provide feedback about the quality of programs and services for GATE students. It can be coupled with a needs assessment, which is a set of questions added to the school accountability report card, or a survey that the classroom teacher would send home and then collect. It must include information on the academic progress of GATE students, such as that gained from an analysis of CA. Standards test results or other district-wide assessments. When submitting a full application for GATE plan approval, districts must submit the results of their program assessment.

## **Dealing with Stress**

By Carol A. Strip, PhD.

Stress is part of everyday life, and all children need to deal with and manage their stresses. Children must learn to master challenges, meet goals and deadlines, and behave responsibly; and all of this learning is accompanied by a fair amount of stress. Sometimes, however stress can overpower and distract the gifted child.

Reasons for stress in the life of a gifted student:

- 1) Expectations for success are too high – Gifted students do not always receive all A's or 4's on their report cards even when they are working to their full potential.
- 2) Concern for the world – Gifted students often have considerable global awareness and worry about the ills of society.
- 3) Overly intense parents – There's a fine line between encouraging a child and pushing them.
- 4) Disconnected parents – Parents can also fail to provide enough structure and discipline. Gifted children are still children even though they may seem like adults.
- 5) Too many activities – Gifted students have so many interests that they want to try everything, and usually all at once.
- 6) Lack of fit – Gifted students may not fit intellectually, socially or physically into their peer group

- 7) Boredom – Experts theorize that nearly one-quarter to one-half of gifted students time is spent waiting for the other students to catch up
- 8) Needless rigidity at home or in the classroom – Excessive authoritarian discipline at home or school can result in a power struggle.
- 9) Loneliness – It can be difficult for gifted students to find peers, particularly because their interests don't fit with those of their classmates.

How can parents help:

- 1) Encourage your child to relax – Have fun! Learn relaxation techniques
- 2) Give your child outlets for their feelings of altruism – Life is hard, but we can do things to help those who are less fortunate than ourselves.
- 3) Do not over-emphasize conversation about scholastic achievement – Gifted children should not be given the idea that they're worthwhile only if they're making good grades or top in the class.
- 4) Monitor your child's activities – Help you child limit their schedule to allow time to play.
- 5) Help your child overcome lack of fit – Help them establish relationships with intellectual peers, sports peers, interest peers, and activity peers.
- 6) Emphasize what your child does well – Parents cannot expect their gifted child to act exactly like other children. They are creative, unique individuals. Embrace them.

## Websites for Parents

### **Hemet Unified School District – Gifted Education**

[http://www.hemetusd.k12.ca.us/edserv/grnt\\_prg/gate/gate.html](http://www.hemetusd.k12.ca.us/edserv/grnt_prg/gate/gate.html)

American Association for the Gifted (AAGC)

<http://www.jayi.com/sbi/aage/index.html>

California Association for the Gifted (CAG)

<http://www.cagifted.org>

California Department of Education

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

Center for the Evaluation of Gifted Children

<http://www.a-gifted-child.com/>

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

<http://www.cec.sped.org>

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

<http://www.ericir.syr.edu>

Educational Testing Services (ETS)

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

Future Problem Solvers

<http://www.fpsp.org>

Gifted Children.Com

<http://www.gifted-children.com>

Gifted Website for Children and Parents

[http://www.osbornet.org/Inv/gifted\\_websites/Webpages/englinks.htm](http://www.osbornet.org/Inv/gifted_websites/Webpages/englinks.htm)

Kid Source Online

<http://kidsource.com/index.html>

Marissa K. Lingen, the Lesson Tutor

<http://www.lessontutor.com/mlhome.html>

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)

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

National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented

<http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/>

Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG)

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

United States Department of Education

<http://www.ed.gov>

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

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

## Great Books to Read

Bringing Out The Best - A Resource Guide for Parents of Gifted Young Children, by Jacquelyn Saunders with Pamela Espeland. (1986) Information on young children and their range of abilities.

Coping for Capable Kids: Strategies for Parents, Teachers, and Students, by LeoNora M. Cohen and Erica Frydenberg. (1996) A guide for gifted kids, their parents and teachers. Contains information on social problems, perfectionism, time management, goal setting and more.

The Faces of Gifted, by Nancy L. Johnson. (1989)

An overview of the many types of giftedness - a resource for parents and teachers.

Gifted Kids Speak Out, by James Delisle. (1987)

Gifted children talk about school, friends, families and the future.

The Gifted Kids Survival Guide (ages 10 & under) and The Gifted Kids Survival Guide II (ages 11-18), by Judy Galbraith and Jim Delisle.

Books for kids and parents; a chance to explore who you are and what being gifted means. Exposes kids to the idea that they aren't alone and aren't "weird".

Helping Gifted Children Soar: A Practical Guide for Parents and Teachers, by Carol a. Strip, with Gretchen Hirsch. (2000) A user-friendly guidebook that educates about gifted issues (working together, social & emotional needs, parent support, etc.)

How to Help Your Child with Homework, by Marguerite C. Radencich and Jeanne Shay Schumm. (1988) This is a guide for parents of kids ages 6-13, full of strategies and techniques for helping your child get his/her work done.

On the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Children, by Tracy Cross. (2000)

Contains information on the social and emotional needs of gifted children, and includes suggestions and ideas for guiding and supporting the development of gifted children.

A Parent's Guide to Standardized Tests in School, by Peter W. Cookson and Joshua Halberstam. (1998)

Contains information about the different kinds of standardized tests that are used by schools, how to read test scores, and how to help your child do his/her best.

Perfectionism - What's Bad About Being Too Good, by Miriam Adderholdt. (1999)

All about perfectionist tendencies, and strategies for managing.

Playing Smart - A Parent's Guide to Enriching, Offbeat Learning Activities for Ages 4-14, by Susan K. Perry.

(1990) Contains ideas for what you can do with your child that is different, enriching, and fun.

The School-Savvy Parent, by Rosemarie Clark, Donna Hawkins, and Beth Vachon. (1999) 365 tips to help you help your child; on everything from starting the school year to safety, talking with teachers, etc.

Stand Up for Your Gifted Child, by Joan Franklin Smutny. (2001)  
A guide for being an advocate for your gifted child at home and in school.

The Survival Guide for Kids with LD\* (\*Learning Differences), by Gary Fisher and Rhoda Cummings. (1990)  
Information on differences in how children learn, and how they can get along better at home and in school.

The Survival Guide for Parents of Gifted Kids, by Sally Yahnke Walker. (1991)  
Information about parenting gifted children.

When Gifted Kids Don't Have All the Answers, by Jim DeLisle and Judy Galbraith. (2002) Great overview of gifted education topics, including the kids' perspective.

You Know Your Child is Gifted When...., by Judy Galbraith. (2000).  
General information about characteristics, challenges and joys of raising a gifted child.

## Student Internet Use

Gifted students and the Internet are natural partners in learning, but there are important factors to consider when using the Internet.

### Top Ten Tips for “Surfing the Net”

- 1) Never give out your name, address or phone number to anyone on line.
- 2) Do not give out your parents’ name.
- 3) Never agree to meet on-line friends fact-to-face without asking permission from your parents first
- 4) Be aware that people may not always be who they say appear to be. Someone who claims to be a 12-year-old girl could actually be a 40-year-old adult.
- 5) Never send photos of yourself to anyone on-line
- 6) If someone is sending you email or chat requests that make you feel uncomfortable, log off and tell your parents or teacher.
- 7) Treat strangers on the Internet the same way you would treat strangers on the street.
- 8) If you use more than one password for on-line activities, write them down and keep them in an easy to find place, but do not give them to other people.
- 9) Be sure you have filled out a school waiver before using the Internet at school.
- 10) Before downloading and printing articles, check length.

Ask Jeeves

<http://www.ajkids.com/>

Google

<http://www.google.com>

Yahoo

<http://www.yahoo.com>

Yahooligans, The Web Guide for Kids

<http://www.yahooligans.com/>

Excite

<http://www.excite.com/>

## Gifted Student’s Bill of Rights

By Marissa K. Lingen

Each gifted child can say...

- 1) I have the right to challenge myself. I should realize that my interests and my thoughts are valid and should be pursued. If you don't limit me, I'm less likely to limit myself.
- 2) I have the right not to have other people interfere with my learning. I am not a teacher's aide, nor am I the sole source of all group projects--I should not be treated as if I was.

- 3) I have the right not to be physically or mentally abused for being gifted. If a teacher looks the other way while others taunt me or beat me up, he or she is in the wrong--there is nothing wrong with me for being smart. If a teacher or other authority figure is doing the abusing, it is still wrong, and I have the right to recourse.
- 4) I have the right to be looked at as a human being. Nobody should ever assume that everything in my life is okay just because I'm smart.
- 5) I have the right to make mistakes. This right I must guard most closely against myself. Chances are pretty good I have always been my own worst critic. I must remember that I am not perfect, and that that's okay.
- 6) I have the right to ask for help. If you cannot help me, don't pretend--try to find someone who can. I learn quickly, but I don't learn by osmosis. Sometimes I will need a hand, and my needs are just as valid as those of students who learn slowly.
- 7) I have the right to be my age. If I'm a smart 7-year-old, I'm a smart 7-year-old, not a smart 30-year-old.
- 8) I have the right not to be forced into your notions of childhood. If I want to be a marine biologist when my classmates want to be firefighters, so be it.
- 9) I have the right to an advocate. Please remember that the system is skewed against me, for you adults. If you see these rights being violated, speak for me, and help me speak for myself.
- 10) I have the right to some privacy. Not everything I do should be put on a microscope slide just because I'm smart. Let me decide what to share with the world and what to keep.

\*Marissa K. Lingen is a freelance writer living in Hayward, California

# NOTES