

***El Segundo Unified School District***



***Gifted and Talented Education***

**GATE Program**

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**Grace Long, M. Ed.**

District GATE Coordinator

## **Philosophy**

The El Segundo Unified School District is committed to an educational program that recognizes the unique value, needs, and talents of individual students. The GATE Program is designed to provide access to appropriate and unique learning opportunities through a variety of strategies including differentiated instruction and project-based assessment.

The program endeavors to:

- Increase the application of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities
- Promote social-emotional well-being
- Stimulate creative abilities
- Motivate students to reach their highest potential
- Meet student needs through flexible grouping and opportunities that promote intellectual peer interaction
- Provide equal opportunity and access to enrichment for a diverse student body
- Supply a fundamental understanding and application of technology to real-world problem solving

## **GATE Identification Criteria and Process**

The district conducts a universal GATE screening for students in grade 3 in the Spring of every school year.

Parents can opt out their 3rd grade child to take either the online version of the OLSAT or NNAT assessment to determine eligibility in the GATE program, which begins in 4th grade. Students must score a 95% or higher on either assessment to be eligible for the program.

## **What is the GATE Program**

Students in grades 4-8 are eligible to participate in the ESUSD GATE program. Each school site works with the district to develop a program to meet the needs of its students. The majority of the program occurs within the classroom through differentiated instruction. Teachers apply key principles and instructional strategies of differentiation to the core curriculum through depth and complexity, while developing curricula aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

At the elementary level, "Out-of-the-Box" classes are offered through the Ed! Academy to support GATE students in their collaboration with one another and develop skills to extend their learning.

The middle school provides imbedded differentiation through their International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program. Students are encouraged to develop holistic skills that foster creativity and innovation through collaborative, problem-solving Units of Inquiry. Fee-based after school programs are offered to GATE students throughout the year through the Ed! Academy.

The high school offers Advanced Placement and Honors courses for GATE students, and these students are encouraged to join other enrichment activities such as Academic Decathlon and Robotics. ESUSD's Pathways Program allows students to excel in courses of their choosing starting in grade 9.

## **The Role of Parents**

The interests of GATE students are best served when parents and educators work cooperatively. Parents are encouraged to participate in school site committees, serve as volunteers in the classroom, and support the learning of their child at home.

While the ESUSD will consider previous GATE certification of students transferring in to the district, students must qualify for GATE in the El Segundo Unified School District by adhering to the requirements for GATE certification of district students. Parents must notify the District Coordinator of any previous GATE eligibility or referral upon registration. The OLSAT/NNAT will be administered to these transfer students in a timely manner.

ESUSD makes a conscious effort to search for and serve underrepresented populations in our GATE program, and encourage all eligible students to participate in the screening process.

## **Gifted and Talented Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **What is GATE?**

*The State of California provides program and funding support to local school districts to establish Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) programs. Local GATE programs are to develop and provide unique opportunities for pupils in California public elementary and secondary schools that have been identified as gifted and talented, including those who are high-achieving and underachieving.*

### **How does my child qualify for GATE program participation?**

*GATE students are identified in grade 3 by participating in either the Otis Lennon School Ability Test assessment or the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test assessment and scoring at or above the 95th percentile.*

### **Why is state testing no longer being used as identification for the GATE program?**

*Upon re-evaluation of program eligibility criteria, and due to the suspension of the California Standards Test (CST), ESUSD will no longer be using assessments that measure knowledge derived from classroom instruction. In our interest to identify gifted students, ESUSD will be using assessments that measure a student's natural cognitive ability. These are not assessments in which students can prepare for ahead of time. Students should approach the assessment with no inhibitions.*

### **What is the OLSAT?**

The Otis–Lennon School Ability Test (OLSAT) is a test of abstract thinking and reasoning ability of children. The OLSAT is an on-line multiple choice assessment that measures verbal, quantitative, and spatial reasoning ability. The test yields verbal and nonverbal scores, from which a total score is derived, called a School Ability Index (SAI).

### **What is the NNAT?**

The Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT) is a nonverbal measure of general ability. Like all nonverbal ability tests, the NNAT is intended to assess cognitive ability independently of linguistic and cultural background. This assessment is typically used with students whose first language was something other than English.

### **When can my child take the OLSAT/NNAT?**

If your child is in 3rd grade they are eligible to take the OLSAT/NNAT assessment in the Spring of the 3rd grade school year.

### **Can my 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grader take the OLSAT/NNAT?**

Students who have not been assessed, were assessed in the past school year and scored between the 90<sup>th</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup> percentile, and students new to ESUSD can participate in OLSAT/NNAT testing.

### **Can I choose to not have my child assessed?**

Third grade parents will have the option to have their child opt-in to the OLSAT/NNAT testing.

### **My child has an IEP or 504. Can he/she still participate in the assessments?**

Yes.

### **What happens after the OLSAT/NNAT assessment?**

Once the testing window is completed you will receive a copy of the OLSAT/NNAT Student Score Reports for your records and notification of GATE eligibility.

### **If my child is in GATE, will they automatically be enrolled in advanced courses in middle and high school?**

No, it is important to note that while GATE participation is one of the criteria that could potentially identify secondary students in honors courses, it is not the only or most important criteria. Participation in GATE does not automatically guarantee that secondary students will be identified for honors/AP courses, and students not participating in GATE may still participate in honors/AP courses.

**If I feel my child is gifted at an age younger than 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, can I recommend that they be tested?**

*No, students are only eligible in the spring semester of their 3<sup>rd</sup> grade year.*

**Are there any exceptions made to GATE identification criteria?**

*No.*

**Who can I contact with questions about GATE?**

*Please contact our GATE Coordinator, Grace Long at 310-615-2676 #4303 or [gate@esUSD.k12.ca.us](mailto:gate@esUSD.k12.ca.us) if you have any further questions.*

*For more information contact:*

**Grace Long  
District GATE Coordinator  
(310) 615-2676 x4303  
[gate@esUSD.k12.ca.us](mailto:gate@esUSD.k12.ca.us)**

**Resources:**

[www.cagifted.org](http://www.cagifted.org) (Cal. Assoc. for the Gifted)

[www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org) (National Assoc. for Gifted Children)