



Modesto City Schools

Gifted and Talented Education

Program Handbook

District Overview

The philosophy of Modesto City Schools' Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program is that each student should make the most of his/her potential and it is our responsibility to give students opportunities that promote higher level thinking. While all students have special talents, GATE students are exceptional in their ability to grasp abstract concepts, symbols, and ideas. In order for these students to reach their true potential, they need teachers, parents, and administrators who exert their own creative and intellectual abilities to provide enrichment, challenges, and motivation.

Modesto City Schools offers GATE Learning Centers at three school sites: Lakewood, Martone, and Sonoma.

The programs are self-contained and limited transportation is provided to attend GATE programs. Junior High Honors classes are based on Teacher recommendations. High school Advanced Placement classes as well as the IB Program at Modesto High use transcripts to place students.

Students in Learning Center programs are exposed to an enriched and enhanced curriculum including foreign language, fine arts, and consultants from the community who provide students with experiences to enhance their education. Students are also challenged to study the Common Core State Standards, at broader and more in-depth levels. Supplemental and enrichment materials are utilized to provide students with a more complete and comprehensive mastery of each essential standard.

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their student's education. Information about the GATE Advisory Parents Committee (GAPS) and the GATE Website are in this handbook and parents who want to stay current with the trends, changes, and current research pertaining to Gifted and Talented Education across the state and within our district can also access the GATE website for links and resources.



FAQ

What happens if my student is identified as GATE but does not receive a placement?

Students who either elect not to accept a placement or who are not offered a placement due to program size constraints remain in their regular education classroom.

Do I need to submit a portfolio to increase my student's chances of receiving GATE placement? Portfolios, outside letters of recommendation, or other materials are not part of the screening process. These documents can add to the picture of the whole child but are not weighted in the screening point system.

Does the GATE program accelerate the curriculum? Modesto City Schools GATE uses enrichment to take curriculum into more depth and breadth, ensuring more complete mastery of grade level standards. Students are tested on grade level standards.

What does it mean to be on a waiting list? Students on the waiting list are eligible for placements should space become available. The waiting list is created in order of rankings by points from the screening process. Spots are offered over the phone and acceptance or denial is required before the GATE office moves to the next student on the list. Students are not moved after the first month of school.

How are Learning Centers Assigned? The three Learning Center sites have specific feeder schools (based on proximity and similar schedules). When a student is screened, the school at which they are attending



GATE Identification Criteria

Parents, teachers, administration, students, and/or the GATE office may nominate student candidates for the GATE screening process. GATE referrals are accepted by each elementary site representative. A “Parent Information” form is mailed by the GATE office to the parents of each student that has been referred. At this time, parents have the right to call the GATE office and Opt their child out of GATE screening. The following documents are collected for students referred for GATE evaluation:

- Report card for the 2nd Trimester
- Assessment and Benchmark Scores
- Current year teacher recommendation form
- Student response form with a writing task (filled out by the student)
- Aptitude test (to all 2nd grade students) as well as students being evaluated for GATE in grades 3-5

The aptitude test is administered at each site by a district proctor. Testing dates will be determined by the GATE office in conjunction with the sites. Students nominated are given the aptitude test appropriate to their grade level. **Students may not retake the aptitude test once they have taken it during an academic year.**

The GATE screening committee meets in the spring to review candidates. Each folder is screened by GATE committee members before a determination is made.

Placement/Reassignment

Once the screening committee has reviewed the student folders, recommendations are made. Students will receive one of three recommendations: **Provisional**-this means a student has met the GATE criteria and is recommended for placement in a Learning Center program. Students are then ranked and placed in Learning Center programs based on available space.

Provisional-Not Placed-this means a student has not quite met the criteria for placement, but the committee feels a GATE placement might be appropriate after additional instructive reevaluation. **Does Not Qualify**-while the information collected is impressive, it does not meet the requirements for GATE certification.

If a student is struggling in a Learning Center placement, interventions will be put in place by the GATE classroom teacher. Support can include a Student Contract which makes specific accommodations for a student academically and/or behaviorally. Parent(s), student, and teacher will develop a student contract that best meets the needs of the student and the GATE classroom. Specific time periods are mandated in the student contract. At the end of that period, the group will meet again and include site administration. Additional steps and interventions can be taken at that time if warranted. If a student is going to be considered for reassignment, a meeting will be held and a Request for Reassignment form will be completed. Parents must understand that once a student is exited from a Learning Center program, readmission may only be obtained by completing the screening process again.

Elementary Learning Centers and Curriculum

Curriculum-The GATE classrooms follow the state adopted textbooks and curriculum and teachers enrich and enhance as they see opportunities. Many teachers draw upon outside resources to enrich their curriculum, including websites and webgames that promote learning, research and student skills, reading materials (both fiction and non-fiction) that capture student interest, and speakers to give students the opportunity to have alternate perspectives on issues.

Differentiated instruction ensures that students are met at their individual learning levels. The state adopted textbooks provide differentiated learning levels and enrichment activities that are utilized by GATE teachers.

There is collaboration among GATE teachers at individual sites as well as collaboration across the district program as a whole and by grade level. Staff development opportunities are provided to GATE teachers with regard to current research and trends in teaching GATE students. Additionally, GATE teachers have opportunities to attend conferences and to take continuing education courses specifically focused on teaching gifted students. Staff development and conferences give GATE teachers the opportunity to network with other GATE teachers and programs to expand their knowledge of the state curriculum and best practices for teaching GATE students. Refer to the GATE website for links to new research regarding GATE students and their learning/study habits.

GATE Advisory Parents Committee (GAPS)

In January 2022 we will be meeting to discuss balloting for the Jr. High Honors program. Dates, times and locations will be determined soon. Please look out for a flyer and an automated phone message with the information.

Website

To access the Modesto City Schools GATE website, log on to the Modesto City Schools home page at www.mcs4kids.com Under the “District” tab, you will see a link for **Directory**. Once you find that link, click it. You will then be redirected to the District Directory. Look under the letter ‘G’ and you will see a link for GATE. Click there and you will open to our home page. The GATE website features information about the GATE Learning Center program, certification criteria, links to local and state resources for GATE parents and students, and much more.

Contacts

Senior Director, Kimberly Newton	(209) 492-4132	newton.k@monet.k12.ca.us
GATE Staff Secretary-Tamara Wharton	(209) 492-4132	wharton.t@monet.k12.ca.us
Lakewood Principal-Denise Powell Feeder schools: Everett, Lakewood, Wilson, Wright	(209) 574-8154	powell.d@monet.k12.ca.us
Martone Principal- MaryBeth OberKamper Feeder schools: Bret Harte, Burbank, Fairview, Franklin, Kirshen, Marshall, Martone, Rob. Rd., Shackelford, Tuolumne	(209) 574-8174	oberkamper.m@monet.k12.ca.us
Sonoma Principal-Darin Willett Feeder schools: Beard, El Vista, Enslin, Fremont, Garrison, Muir, Rose, Sonoma	(209) 574-8434	willett.d@monet.k12.ca.us