



Parent Newsletter

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 3

SPRING 2020



Investing in Our Teachers

Gifted/Talented Program's Commitment to Qualified GATE Teachers

Did you ever wonder what type of training your child's teacher receives to support your gifted learner? We are often asked this question by parents along with questions such as, "Are teachers required to have special training or a certification to teach gifted students?" and "How often are teachers trained in gifted teaching practices?" This article strives to answer these questions, and we hope it empowers you to reach out to your child's school and ask them specifically what types of training their teachers are receiving.

Gifted/Talented Programs works hard to offer numerous trainings throughout the year so that L.A. Unified teachers are the most highly trained GATE teachers in the county. At the beginning of each school year, Gifted/Talented Programs publishes its teacher and administrator professional development calendar for the year. Teachers and administrators can choose from over 65 different topics focused on gifted/talented learners. Topics include basic training for new teachers on differentiated instruction and specific topics such as arts and the gifted learner or using iPads to differentiate learning. The trainings are offered in a variety of formats including in-person, online and school site training. Each year, new trainings are added so that the content is current and based on the latest research. In addition, Gifted/Talented Programs offers an annual symposium and conference where teachers and administrators hear the top speakers on gifted education from all over the country and attend breakout sessions based on their unique interests.

District policy recommends that every teacher of gifted students participates in 16 hours of training each year. Teachers in a Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS) demonstration site are required to participate in at least 16 hours of GATE-specific training annually. Principals review teachers' training hours and use this information to assign them to instruct the classes with gifted learners for the following year.

It is important to note that most teachers receive their training during their own time and are not paid. They take classes from home and attend classes during their vacations and on weekends. How many teachers actually do this? Last year 11,425 L.A. Unified teachers participated in our GATE training!

Family Tips

Free ideas to access
from home

The Los Angeles Public Library offers many online resources that can be accessed using your library card. We have included three of our favorites below.

Overdrive/Libby
<https://lapl.overdrive.com/>
offers online access to e-books, audiobooks, magazines, and videos. You check out items using your library account and can view them on devices such as tablets and phones.

Mango languages
<https://lapl.org/collections-resources/online-learning> offers lessons based on real conversational situations in more than 70 languages.

Tutor.com <https://lapl.org/collections-resources/online-learning> provides one-on-one tutoring with expert tutors from 11:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. every day. Assistance is available in English and Spanish in 25 academic subjects.

Supporting College and Career Readiness with Naviance

L.A. Unified has many wonderful resources to help students prepare for college. One that you may not have heard of is Naviance. Naviance is a web-based college and career readiness tool. Students are able to explore careers, colleges, and scholarships all on one website. Naviance College, Career, and Life Readiness Curriculum help students discover their individual strengths and learning styles. Students can then create personalized plans to connect their academic planning to colleges and careers.

The program is divided into five sections. The “Home Page” allows students to receive and send emails to their counselors and set up to-do lists and tasks. The “Career” section allows them to review their survey and assessment results and research careers and pathways. Students can find a college suited to their profile in the “College” section. Here they will be able to prepare and monitor their college application, request letters of recommendation, transcripts, and view test scores. The “About Me” section is where students create a resume, make journal entries, and store shared documents. The final section, “My Planner,” is designed to help students create personal and academic goals, monitor to-do lists, and set reminders for tasks that need to be completed.

Naviance is available to all L.A. Unified students, grades 6-12. Each school supports student use at their own site. Parents can view Naviance by having their child log in to the program. Our website contains a flyer with more information for your child, which can be found on the [Parent Newsletter](#) page. You can also contact your child’s counselor for specific questions.



School Spotlight

Dearborn Elementary Charter Academy
(Local District Northwest)

Dearborn Elementary Charter Academy in Northridge has been a Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS) site with committed teachers, parents and principal since 2005. Their differentiated program for gifted learners is inspired in part by their long partnership with Dr. Sandra Kaplan from the USC, Rossier School of Education. Their school is part of her current research with their recent participation in two different grants which aim to improve literacy and to identify students as gifted earlier in their educational journey. This year, Dearborn launched “Genius Hour,” while collaborating in a book study with teachers and principals from five other schools. Genius Hour offers an opportunity for students to create passion projects while experiencing personalized learning that supports creativity, communication, collaboration, novelty and technological skills that tackle real world problems. This experience encourages students to think like entrepreneurs, future world changers, inventors and innovators. One example of a passion project showcases first graders’ thinking like a rodentologist and video-conferencing with a Berkeley Squirrel expert. Students made connections to primatologist, Dr. Jane Goodall, to extend their thinking.



(If your school has something to share for the “School Spotlight” section, please email Susanna Furfari, District Coordinator, at susanna.furfari@lausd.net.)