

Central Unified School District

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding GATE Identification

What is the Definition of a Gifted and Talented Student?

Gifted students are “children and youth with outstanding talent who perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. Gifted and Talented refers to a student whose intelligence score falls within the top two percent of the national average and /or the top two or three percent in areas such as specific academic, high achievement, leadership, creativity, visual and performing arts.”
(CA Dept. of Education)

How do students qualify?

Central Unified School District uses multiple measures to identify Gifted and Talented students. Some or all areas were assessed depending on the category in which a student was nominated. Nomination categories are based upon the student’s individual characteristics.

All nominees were assessed using the following measures:

- OLSAT-The Otis Lennon School Ability Test is used to identify nominees who are able to learn new material rapidly and accurately, recognize and recall what has been perceived, think logically, and understand abstract relationships. It is an intelligence test (IQ). 95th percentile or above is a score that would reflect a student with intellectual development markedly advanced in relation to their chronological peers. (Intellectual Ability Category)
- CST – California Standards Tests are used to identify students who consistently function far beyond their peers in academics. Nominees who score for two consecutive years in the top 3% of the district in a single subject area are identified as having a specific gift and talent. (Specific Academic Category) Nominees who score for two consecutive years in both Lang. Arts and Math in the top 5% of the district are identified as performing at high levels of academic achievement and are considered academically gifted and talented. (High Achievement Category) These students show high motivation on teacher behavioral scales.

Creative/Productive Nominees: Students who demonstrate characteristics of creativity and were nominated in the category of Creative/Productive, were further assessed using the following additional measures:

- **Portfolio Assessment** – A GATE identification team scored nominee portfolios and looked for evidence of:
 1. **Fluency-** ability to give many good ideas when given a task
 2. **Flexibility-** ability to use and accept many ideas to solve a problem or complete a task
 3. **Elaboration-** ability to add details to ideas to make them more complex
 4. **Originality-** ability to produce unique and original ideas and products

Scores were given from 5 members of the District GATE Identification Team.

Portfolio high score - average of 2.5 – 3.0

- **Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking** – Figural and verbal test to identify nominees who demonstrate the unusual ability to use divergent and unconventional thinking in arriving at creative and unusual ideas or solutions to problems. National scores were used. High Torrance Score would indicated a gift or talent in this area. High verbal and/or non-verbal score – 116 or above

- **Renzulli/Smith Behavioral Scales-** Teacher rating scales showing evidence of student performance in the classroom in the area of creativity. A high score on the Renzulli Creativity Scale- 46-54
- **Otis Lennon Score and CST scores** were also taken into consideration

Exceptional Ability Nominees: Students who show gifted characteristics in spite of barriers and were nominated in the category of Exceptional Ability, were further assessed using the following additional measures:

- **Portfolio Assessment** – The District GATE Identification Team scored the nominee portfolios and looked for evidence of:
 1. **Rapid Learning-** ability to acquire English or other languages or other concepts rapidly
 2. **Leadership** – ability to take leadership roles at home or in the classroom
 3. **Academic Ability** – demonstrates academic promise, and with the right conditions would achieve at a high level on traditional measures
 4. **Discrepancy** – demonstrates severe differences in their strengths and weaknesses. Talent or gift is masked by a barrier or disability.

Scores were given from 5 members of the District GATE Identification Team. Portfolio high score - average of 2.5 – 3.0

- **Renzulli/Smith Behavioral Scale-** Nominees had to score **high** on at least two of the Learning, Motivational, and/or Creative scales.
- **Otis Lennon Scores and CST scores** were also considered.

When can a child be retested?

The Otis Lennon Test may be given every two years. If a child is nominated again this year, he/she will need to qualify using other measures such as CST scores or portfolio assessment.

Does a student have to be re-identified each year?

No. Once he/she has been identified GATE in our district, he/she automatically qualifies for GATE each year in our district. At the middle schools and high schools, students must qualify for accelerated/advanced courses through their academic performance. GATE designation does not guarantee automatic placement.

What is the appeal process for Non-Qualified Students?

Students, parents, teachers and/or administrators may submit a written statement of appeal directed to the Central Unified Instructional Services Department/ GATE Identification Team. This team is comprised of the GATE school psychologist, district GATE coordinator, GATE certified teachers, and a site GATE coordinator. Appeals must be made within ten days of receiving the non-qualification letter. Every effort will be made to meet with the interested parties within two weeks of the appeal. The District GATE Identification Team will review the data and use its professional judgment to determine if the student meets the district criteria for Gifted and Talented Education.

PLEASE BE REMINDED THAT EVEN IF A CHILD DOES NOT QUALIFY FOR GATE, HE/SHE WILL RECEIVE APPROPRIATE AND CHALLENGING INSTRUCTION IN THE CLASSROOM WITH OUR DISTRICT'S EMPHASIS ON DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION.