This plan outlines a program for gifted students in Language Arts and Mathematics for the Orinda Union School District. Reference has been made to the District Mission Statement, the OUSD Strategic Plan, specifically the Curriculum Action Plan, and the California Department of Education Gifted and Talented Education standards for providing programs and services in gifted and talented education.

**OUSD MISSION STATEMENT**

"Building on a tradition of educational excellence and strong community support, we will inspire and challenge each student through strong academics and continuously improving programs that will develop the character and abilities needed to shape an ever-changing world."

**OUSD Curriculum Action Plan**

1. Review instructional practices that are used by exemplary school districts throughout the nation, and supported by research
2. Select the best instructional practices and programs
3. Communicate best instructional practices to staff, parents and the community
4. Implement best instructional practices and programs to improve student learning,
5. Evaluate effectiveness of best instructional practices

**California Department of Education**

**Gifted and Talented Education Program Goal**

"To identify gifted and talented students, including those from diverse racial, socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, and provide high-quality differentiated opportunities for learning that meets students’ particular abilities and talents."

The CDE GATE criteria and the GATE recommended state standards may be viewed at [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov) Specialized Program section.

**Budget**

The proposed GATE budget is based on a statewide average multiplied by the district’s total average daily attendance in the prior year as reported on J-18. With the state budget crisis, GATE funds are no longer categorically restricted and may be used for general fund expenses.
OUSD Gifted & Talented Education Program Structure

The OUSD GATE program serves students in grades 4-8.

**Grades 4-5:** Throughout the school year, teachers provide differentiated instruction designed to meet the unique needs, talents, and abilities, of individual students within and across subject areas in the regular classroom.

The processes for differentiation create multiple paths to learning that may include:

- varying questioning levels (Bloom’s Taxonomy)
- flexible grouping.
- strategies for engaging higher-level thought
- critical thinking and proof of reasoning
- open-ended assignments
- variance in pacing, and
- independent practice

**Grades 6-8:** GATE curricular components are planned and organized as integrated differentiated learning experiences within the regular school day and may be augmented or supplemented with other differentiated activities related to the core curriculum, including independent study, acceleration, postsecondary education and enrichment.

Teachers in all subject areas differentiate the curriculum to provide the appropriate learning experience for each student. Some of the specific ways in which the needs of GATE students at OIS are met are as follows:

- **Core:** Teachers incorporate strategies from Columbia’s Teachers College Reading and Writing Project to individualize instruction in language arts using the workshop approach to teaching reading and writing. Students read just-right books at their assessed levels, confer with teachers regularly about their reading and writing, and are placed in book clubs according to their abilities.

- **Math:** Students are placed in math classes according to their level, which is determined by performance in class and on school and district assessments. Honors and higher level courses (ie Geometry) are offered to students who excel in mathematics. Teachers further differentiate their instruction by providing opportunities within the classroom for critical thinking and mathematical reasoning, using strategies such as mental math, grouping, and techniques to maximize engagement. If appropriate, students are able to take math classes independently or at Miramonte High School.
• **Science**: The inquiry-based, hands-on approach to teaching science is designed to address the needs of students working at an accelerated pace or who are able to develop advanced hypotheses. Teachers design curricula and receive professional development support from the Science Education for Public Understanding Program (SEPUP) through the Lawrence Hall of Science. The program focuses on project-based learning and issues-oriented science.

• **Electives**: Elective offerings support GATE students who are highly creative and talented in the performing and visual arts. Courses include band, chorus, drama, public speaking and debate, woodshop, art, computer graphics, web design, and more.

• In addition to the curricular areas, GATE students are provided with extra-curricular opportunities to further enhance their educational experience. These include MATHCOUNTS, Competitive Debate, Bulldog Theater Company, Bulldog Sports, Journalism, Robotics, and others.

**GATE Identification and Eligibility**

California Department of Education GATE identification process “includes information from a variety of sources and provides a comprehensive look at the student.”

Students currently qualify for GATE in our district in several ways. STAR scores for students beginning with 3rd grade are the primary identifiers. Scale scores of 475 and above in both mathematics and language arts on the California Standards Test are required for eligibility.

Students not identified through the STAR can become eligible through the GSST process. A parent or teacher can recommend that a very high achieving student be evaluated through this process. The evaluating team members include the student’s parents, teachers familiar with the students' work, support staff such as coaches or psychologist, and the school administrator. Information provided to the team includes the GATE checklist, student work samples and anecdotal information from the teachers and parent. Students are required to show giftedness in both math and language arts.

**Demonstrating accountability**

Gifted students’ cumulative folders will contain evidence of the areas of the student’s giftedness. Included will be the STAR scores, GATE checklist (if eligible through GSST), samples of student work exemplifying the student’s giftedness and services provided by the school.

GATE program evaluation occurs through the state application process.