

I. USP LANGUAGE

The Unitary Status Plan (USP), section V(A)(2)(b) states:

V. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

A. Access to and Support in Advanced Learning Experiences

1. Overview. The purpose of this section shall be to improve the academic achievement of African American and Latino students in the District and to ensure that African American and Latino students have equal access to the District's Advanced Learning Experiences.

October 1

b. By ~~July 1~~, 2013, the ALE Coordinator shall complete an assessment of existing ALE programs, resources, and practices in the District and by school site. This assessment shall include: (i) a review of the ALEs offered at each school; the number of students enrolled in each ALE program at each school (disaggregated by grade level, race, ethnicity, ELL status); and the resources available in each school for ALEs (e.g., part-time or full-time personnel assigned, annual budget); and (ii) a determination of what, if any, gaps in ALE access exist and what, if any, barriers there are for students at each school site to enroll in and successfully complete ALEs offered at each school site. The assessment shall include an analysis of the data and information gathered and findings, including whether African American and Latino students, including ELL students, have equitable access to ALEs, and recommendations resulting from the analysis, including recommendations regarding additional data that the District's data system should gather to track students' ALE access and participation.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USP directs TUSD to improve the academic achievement of African American and Latino students and to ensure that African American and Latino students have equal access to TUSD's Advanced Learning Experiences (ALEs). ALEs include: 1) Gifted and Talented Programs, 2) Advanced Academic Courses (AAC), which includes AP, Pre-AP (Honors, Advance, Accelerated, Dual-Credit), International Baccalaureate Program (IB), and 3) University High School (UHS). The TUSD School Board added its Dual-Language Program as an additional ALE and the data from that program is also contained in this report as an appendix.

In order to compile the following information, Martha Taylor (Director of ALE) met and interviewed ten high school principals, ten middle school principals, and fourteen K-8 principals, along with other school personnel. She also had email interviews with elementary principals who have a GATE cluster program at their schools. In addition, she met and interviewed the Coordinator of Gifted Education, Director of Language Acquisition and personnel (Dual-Language Program), the Director of African American Studies, the Director of Mexican American Student Services, and a Project Manager from Accountability and Research. She compiled data for

each site on existing ALEs, ALE personnel, and other relevant support services and received additional data from the Department of Desegregation; this information is in the appendices of this report. She also requested feedback on the final report from the Department of Desegregation and other relevant TUSD personnel.

The following information is a summary of findings including an assessment of existing ALEs, gaps in access, barriers that exist for African American and Latino students successfully enrolling and completing ALEs, and a review of whether equitable access to these programs exist for these students. This summary is followed by broad recommendations that will be fully discussed in the ALE Access and Recruitment Plan, due January 1, 2014, as required by the USP (V)(A)(2)(c).

III. DEFINITIONS

Unitary Status Plan (USP)	The USP is a federal-court mandated plan to guide TUSD in its efforts to achieve “unitary status” by eliminating the vestiges of a “dual-system” that operated until the 1950s.
Parties and Special Master	The USP stems from a federal school desegregation court case called <i>Fisher-Mendoza v. TUSD</i> . The parties to the case include TUSD, two plaintiffs groups representing African American and Latino students respectively, and the United States of America, represented by the Department of Justice. There is a court-appointed “Special Master” who oversees implementation, including monitoring and reporting, on behalf of the federal court.
Advanced Learning Experiences (ALEs)	USP Section V(A) identifies TUSD’s ALEs as the GATE Program, Advanced Academic Courses (AP, Pre-AP, Dual-Credit), International Baccalaureate program (IB), and University High School (UHS). The TUSD School Board added its Dual-Language program as an additional ALE. These are areas where there has been historically low African American and Latino student participation in comparison to the percentages of the TUSD as a whole.
Advanced Placement (AP)	AP classes are those that follow the proscribed AP curriculum from the College Board and are usually taught by a teacher who has had AP training. Students who take an AP class have the option of taking an end-of-year AP exam. If a student earns a three, four or five on this exam, most colleges and universities will award college credit for that course. Per the College Board, all AP classes are open to all students with no entrance requirements allowed.
Advanced Academic Courses (AAC)	AACs are courses labeled GATE, AP, Pre-AP/Honors/Advanced/Accelerated, dual-credit, middle school courses for high school credit and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. They offer an enriched and/or accelerated academic curriculum.
Dual-Credit	Dual-Credit courses are those that offer students both high school and college credit when they successfully complete all requirements and are taught by a college-level instructor. The District’s partner institutions are Pima Community College and the University of Arizona.
GATE	GATE classes are defined as those being taught by a GATE certified teacher or a teacher in the process of obtaining GATE certification. They provide enrolled students with an enriched and accelerated academic curriculum.
International Baccalaureate Programmes	The International Baccalaureate (IB) is comprised of three separate programs in TUSD: the Primary Years Programme (PYP) at Robison ES and Safford K-8; the Middle Years Programme (MYP) currently at Safford K-8 and projected for Cholla HMS in 2014; and the

Diploma Programme (DP) at Cholla HMS. Students who participate in the IB DP in their junior and senior years can earn the IB Diploma and university credits. Freshman and sophomore students can take advanced IB Prep courses to prepare them for the Diploma Programme.

IV. REVIEW OF ALES OFFERED AT EACH SCHOOL

- A. This report looked primarily at academic classes; fine arts, CTE and other non-academic courses are not included except in Appendices C, D, E. As the IB Diploma requires a fine arts component for which students can earn college credit, those courses are included in the comparison in Appendix C.
- B. Overall, TUSD offers its students many options regarding ALEs and AACs. However, the number of these offerings available to students in different TUSD middle and high schools varies.
- C. University High, which is an exam school (students must earn a certain score on admissions criteria in order to be invited to attend), offers only AACs, except for some electives. This data can be seen in Appendix C. Please note that this course count is not used as a comparison in the following report since it is a unique school program. In addition, any issues and recommended changes regarding equity in UHS admission procedures can be found in the recently submitted University High School Admissions Process Revision Plan.
- D. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) is offered at Cholla High, Safford Middle School, and Robison Elementary School. This internationally-recognized program has a rigorous academic curriculum that allows high school students to take multiple and varied examinations for college credit. Students who take seven IB exams and complete additional requirements are eligible for the IB Diploma. See Appendix F and G. Cholla High also offers regular education classes to its students and that data is used in the following comparison.
- E. GATE: GATE services are provided at elementary, middle and high school and are structured differently at each level. See Appendix I.
 - 1. Elementary Schools: Currently, students in K-4 can test and qualify for entry for specific GATE services including self-contained, pull-out or the GATE cluster model. GATE services are not offered at the kindergarten level. Elementary services begin at first grade and extend through fifth grade. After testing and acceptance of placement, students are offered either a self-contained option (full-time), pull-out GATE services where students are taught by an itinerant teacher once a week, or placement in a cluster-model mixed-ability classroom, where the teacher is GATE endorsed and in which there are both GATE and non-GATE students. The GATE students in the cluster model

classrooms are also provided with up to 3.0 hours of pull-out GATE instruction weekly. All schools receive an FTE allotment based on the number of students who need to be served.

2. **Middle Schools:** Three TUSD middle schools offer self-contained GATE services for 6th through 8th grades; there is a testing requirement for acceptance and participation. For other middle school GATE classes, which include enrichment and academic classes, testing is not required in order for students to participate. Decisions are made at the individual sites to determine what courses will be offered and which students will participate. These decisions are usually made on the basis of some combination of AIMS or ATI scores, GPA, and teacher recommendations. Most middle schools also allow students to participate in these classes based on parent or student request.
3. **High Schools:** At the high school level, there is no testing requirement to take a GATE class, although some high schools have their own on-site recommendations or requirements. High schools usually offer one GATE class (Humanities) at either the 9th or 10th grade levels, with a few high school offering a GATE class at the 11th or 12th grade level. This is usually the last opportunity for students to enroll in any GATE class at the high school level.

F. **Dual Language Program:** Although not identified as an ALE in the USP, the TUSD Board identified this program as an ALE. It is discussed in Appendix H.

G. AACs

- A. **High Schools:** All TUSD high schools offer some combination of AACs, although the number of courses they offer varies greatly. See Appendix C.
 1. **AP/IB Courses:** AP or IB courses are offered at every TUSD high school. The number of courses offered varies at each site.
 2. **Pre-AP/Honors/Advanced/Accelerated:** Students may elect to take an AAC without any testing requirements necessary although individual sites may have their own requirements or recommendations. The number of courses offered varies at each site.
 3. **Dual-Credit:** Most high schools offer between one and three dual-credit courses.
 4. **GATE:** Most high schools surveyed offer a GATE class at the 9th and/or 10th grade level.
- B. **Middle Schools:** All TUSD middle schools offer some combination of AACs to their students including GATE self-contained, GATE academic or enrichment classes, and/or AACs (Pre-AP/Honors/Accelerated./Advanced). *See Appendix D.*
 1. **Pre-AP/Honors/Advanced/Accelerated:** Most middle schools offer AACs to their regular education students.

2. High School Credit: All TUSD middle schools (6th-8th) offer Algebra 1 for high school credit and some offer Spanish 1 for high school credit. Most K-8 schools do not offer Algebra 1 at the 8th grade level.
3. GATE: Most middle schools offer GATE Resource or Academic classes for regular students.

C. K-8 Schools (6th, 7th, 8th grades): Overall, the number of AAc offered to middle school students in TUSD K-8 schools are less than those offered at regular middle schools. *See Appendix E.*

Out of fourteen K-8 schools:

1. Pre-AP, Honors, Advanced, Accelerated are offered at three K-8 schools.
2. High School Credit: Algebra for high school credit is offered at three K-8 schools.
3. GATE classes are offered at four K-8 schools.

D. K-5 Elementary Schools: GATE services are the ALE option available in TUSD K-5 schools.

V. STUDENT ENROLLMENT

A. The number of students enrolled in each ALE program at each school (disaggregated by grade level, race, ethnicity, ELL status). *See Appendix A.*

VI. RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR ALEs

A. Personnel and Budget

1. Because ALEs are funded out of many different budgets (M&O, GATE, Deseg, Magnet, Language Acquisition) there is no unified ALE budget available for review.

B. Supplemental Resources

1. 21st CenturyGrants: Several schools have this grant to provide before and after-school academic and enrichment classes for students. *See Appendix L.*
2. African American Studies: Academic Specialist; Multicultural Curriculum Integration Coordinator Male Leadership Academy; Student and Family Mentor Specialist; Behavior Specialist; Mentor Program Specialist; Male Leadership Academy. *See Appendix M.*
3. Mexican American Student Services: Saturday Math; Before and After-School Tutoring; Academic Mentors. *See Appendix N.*
4. SIG grants and other school-level grants: *See Appendices O and P.*
5. Support Activities (at various schools): Examples - Lunch tutoring, math club, Saturday AIMS prep, MESA, Science Olympiad, Wright Flight, Girl Scouts

6. Lappan Foundation – Rose K-8
7. Cholla HS and Safford MS were granted a \$465,000 Qatar Foundation grant, which is providing additional funding for Arabic classes in the IB programs.

VII. GAPS IN ALE ACCESS

- A. It is a requirement of the USP that a determination shall be made of what, if any, gaps in ALE access exist and what, if any, barriers there are for students at each school site to enroll in and successfully complete ALEs offered at each school site. V(A)(2)(b).
- B. Difference in AP offerings at District high schools
 1. It is a requirement of the USP to increase the number of AP course offered in the District. (V)(A)(4)(a)(ii).
 2. Currently, AP/IB offerings at TUSD high schools vary in number by site. See Appendix C.
 3. The variation in number of AP courses offered at different high schools may identify a gap in access for African American and Latino students to these college-prep courses.
- C. Differences in AACs in high schools, middle schools and K-8 schools
 1. It is a requirement of the USP that African American and Latino students have access to AACs in a fair and nondiscriminatory manner. (V)(A)(4)(a)(i).
 2. Currently, AAC offerings at TUSD high schools vary in number by site. See Appendix C, D, E.
 3. The variation in number of AP courses offered at different high schools may identify a gap in access for African American and Latino students to these college-prep courses.
- D. Differences in GATE programs in middle schools (both K-8 and 6th – 8th models)
 1. It is a requirement of the USP to increase the number and quality of GATE offerings and to provide equal access and equitable opportunities for all students. V(A)(3)(a)(ii).
 2. Currently, there may not be equal access and/or equitable opportunities for students enrolled in GATE middle school self-contained programs. See Appendix J.
 - a. An analysis of the number of students qualifying for UHS by middle school shows that the rates of qualification differ among the three middle school GATE self-contained programs.
 3. Currently, middle school students in K-8 schools are not offered a GATE Resource class.
 4. Currently, not all middle schools offer an AAC to 6th – 8th grade students.

E. Differences in GATE programs in K-5 Elementary Schools

1. There may not be equal access and/or equitable opportunities for African American and Latino students in these programs. As noted in section IV(E)(1) of this report, there is equitable funding for GATE services in the K-5 elementary schools program., but African American and Latino students are underrepresented in this program. *See Appendix K.*

VIII. BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION OF ALES

- A. It is a requirement of the USP that a determination shall be made of what, if any, gaps in ALE access exist and what, if any, barriers there are for students at each school site to enroll in and successfully complete ALEs offered at each school site. V(A)(2)(b).
- B. The barriers listed below were identified by TUSD principals as affecting African American and Latino students' ability to enroll in and successfully complete ALEs at individual school sites.
 1. Limited qualified personnel for math and GATE classes.
 2. Limited African American and Latino teacher applicants.
 3. Limited support services for AACs.
 4. Limited appropriate professional development: teacher training is needed for content-area expertise; strategies to use in AACs; identification of highly capable students; culturally responsive practices; unconscious teacher bias; teaching strategies that are inclusive of the African American and Latino experience; recognition and correction of attitudes of low expectation and the resultant lack of rigor; College Board test preparation and use of data.
 5. Limitations with K-8 model: The necessity for self-contained classes at all grade levels creates difficulty with scheduling for AACs and with teacher certification requirements.
 6. Limited transportation options: Transportation sometime limits a student's access to ALEs because of a long commute time or because it prevents students from enrolling at schools on the edges of District boundaries because of long commute time.
 7. Limited access to AACs: At some schools there is a site practice of limiting access to AACs, including AP classes, by having requirements that prevent some interested students from enrolling, contrary to the College Board's Statement of Equity that requires all AP classes be open to any interested student.
 8. Limitation on class size: small high schools sometimes cannot meet the student minimum for AACs, especially in AP classes.
 9. Limited technology: Schools vary in their access to computers, technology and access to the internet.
 10. Limited parent engagement opportunities: there should be more opportunities for parents to be informed about these opportunities and assured that their students will be supported in their choice to enroll in an AAC.

IX. EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDENTS

- A. Equitable access in TUSD ALEs for African American and Latino students can be improved by focusing on changes in the following areas:
1. AAC opportunities at District middle schools and K-8 schools.
 2. K-8 middle school grades access to Algebra.
 3. Number of AP, AACs and dual-credit courses offered at District high schools.
 4. GATE services at K-8 schools in 6th -8th grades.
 5. Site requirements for AAC participation.
 6. Professional Development for teachers
 7. Improving academic preparation for ALEs in all K-8 classes.
 8. Access to technology while at school.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. To increase ALE opportunities at District elementary and middle schools:
1. Increase AACs offered in middle schools that currently have few or none with particular attention given to K-8 schools.
 2. Implement Algebra 1 for high school credit at all District middle and K-8 schools.
 3. Review testing and admission procedures for 1-5 GATE services.
- B. To increase the number of AP, AACs and dual-credit courses offered at District high schools:
1. Reduce the disparity in number of AP courses offered at the high school level.
 2. Create and implement AP Support Program at District high schools for AP recruitment and support of African American and Latino students, including ELL students, who enroll in these classes. This plan would include positive support structures, including an AP Coordinator, for these students to successfully enroll in and complete these classes.
- C. To increase funding formulas for GATE FTEs:
1. Increase GATE funding for K-8 schools.
- D. To increase AAC participation:
1. Eliminate entrance requirements for any Pre-AP/AP class at either the middle or high school level, although district-wide recommendations can be used.
- E. To improve teacher training and preparation:
1. Provide District-wide professional development on relevant topics including teaching strategies for AACs; content area expertise; recognizing and eliminating unconscious teacher bias; recognizing and eliminating classroom culture of low expectations and the resultant lack of rigor; identification of

highly capable students; culturally responsive teaching practices; teaching strategies that are inclusive of the African American and Latino experience; College Board test preparation and use of data to support student achievement of African American and Latino students.

F. To support student academic preparation:

1. Increase number of teachers highly-qualified to teach math (Algebra 1) by providing incentives for earning highly-qualified math endorsement.
2. Increase number of GATE endorsed teachers by providing free summer training.
3. Enforce certification requirements for all teachers in self-contained gifted programs, including Gifted Dual Language program.
4. Expand the AVID program and hire an AVID Coordinator to assist the ALE Director in this expansion.
5. Work with Transportation to provide: transportation to schools with AAC options that students request; after-school activity busses for schools that provide enrichment and/or support classes for students who enroll in AACs.

G. Parent outreach and Education:

1. Provide parent outreach and education through partnerships with school and community organizations to inform parents of the benefits of ALEs and to encourage their support of students' participation.

XI. ADDITIONAL DATA NEEDED TO TRACK STUDENTS' ALE ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

- A. Most data needed to implement the listed recommendations is currently collected by TUSD. It is available and can be used to track students' access and participation in ALEs.
- B. Data that is still needed that does not pertain to students' direct access and participation in ALEs includes the following, for which easier access is needed.
 1. Funding for ALEs per school site
 2. District-wide Professional Development tracking
 3. Technological capabilities by school
 4. Certifications and other qualification data for teachers
 5. Uniform identification and marking of all ALE courses in the student management system, for the benefit of students, parents, and staff.