



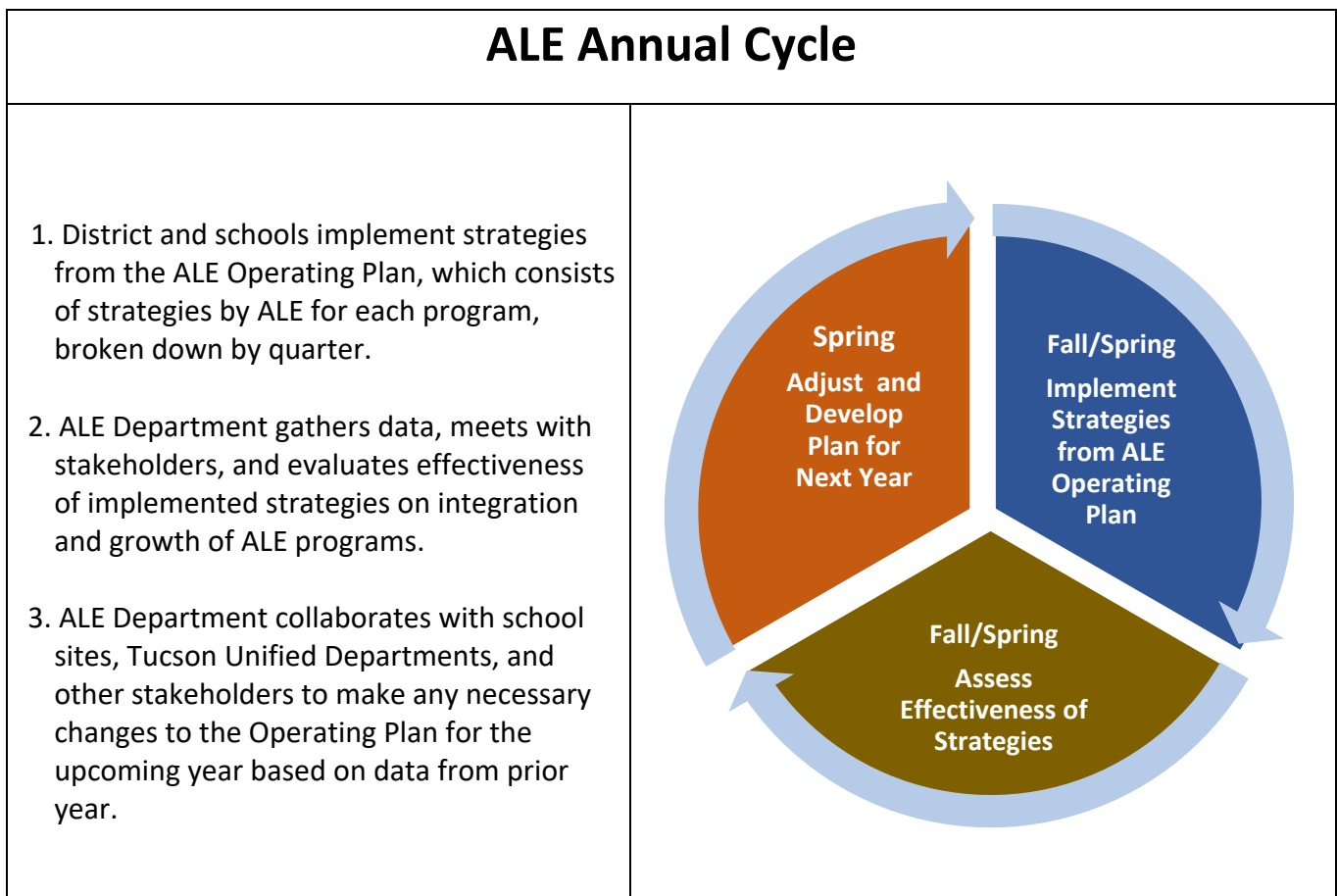
## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Definitions of Programs in Tucson Unified.....	2
Overview of Programs.....	4
Description of ALE Programs.....	5
Gifted and Talented Education (GATE).....	7
Self-Contained GATE.....	7
Pullout GATE.....	9
Resource GATE.....	9
GATE Cluster Programs.....	10
Open Access GATE.....	11
Kindergarten Services.....	11
Student Access, Recruitment, and Support Strategies.....	12
Certificated Staff.....	17
Collaboration and Support.....	19
Advanced Academic Courses (AAC).....	23
Honors, Advanced, and Accelerated Courses.....	23
Middle School Classes for High School Credit.....	24
Advanced Placement.....	24
Dual Credit.....	25
International Baccalaureate.....	27
Student Access, Recruitment, and Support Strategies.....	28
Certificated Staff.....	33
Collaboration and Support.....	33
University High School.....	34
Student Access, Recruitment, and Support Strategies.....	36
Certificated Staff.....	41
Collaboration and Support.....	41
Departmental Collaboration.....	43
Appendix A. Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID).....	46
Appendix B. UHS Admissions Policy.....	49
Appendix C. Parent Complaint Resolution Process.....	59

## Introduction

The Tucson Unified School District is committed to improving the academic achievement and college preparedness of all students in the District, and the Advanced Learning Experiences (ALE) Department furthers these goals. Tucson Unified provides a range of ALE opportunities in an equitable fashion with access for all students, from kindergarten through high school.

This regularly updated document provides an overview of the many ALE programs offered and information about various aspects of the options available.



### Definitions of Programs in Tucson Unified

Advanced Learning Experiences (ALEs)	ALEs include the GATE program (Gifted and Talented Education), Advanced Academic Courses (AAC), and University High School.
Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)	GATE offers many services for students in elementary through high school. GATE classes are taught by gifted endorsed teachers or teachers actively pursuing their gifted endorsement, use gifted-education strategies, and provide enrolled students with an enriched and accelerated academic curriculum. The District offers several different types of GATE services, including a dual language self-contained option.
Advanced Academic Courses (AAC)	AACs provide several options for students in grades 6-12 to take rigorous academic courses, including advanced, honors, and accelerated courses offered for grades 6-10, Advanced Placement, dual credit, and International Baccalaureate.
Advanced Placement (AP)	AP courses enable high school students to take a variety of introductory college-level classes. AP classes are open to all interested students and have no entrance requirements. Students may earn college credit for taking an AP class and successfully completing the AP exam for that course, thus saving tuition costs and time. AP classes also give students a head start on their college journey.
Dual Credit	Dual credit courses allow high school juniors or seniors to enroll in a college-level course and receive academic credit for both high school and college. Open to all students, these courses provide an opportunity for students to prepare for college and careers. Students have access to college-certified teachers and college-level professors, develop important time management and study skills, improve their chances of being admitted to college, and receive college credit upon successful completion of the course. The District's current partner institutions are Pima Community College and the University of Arizona.

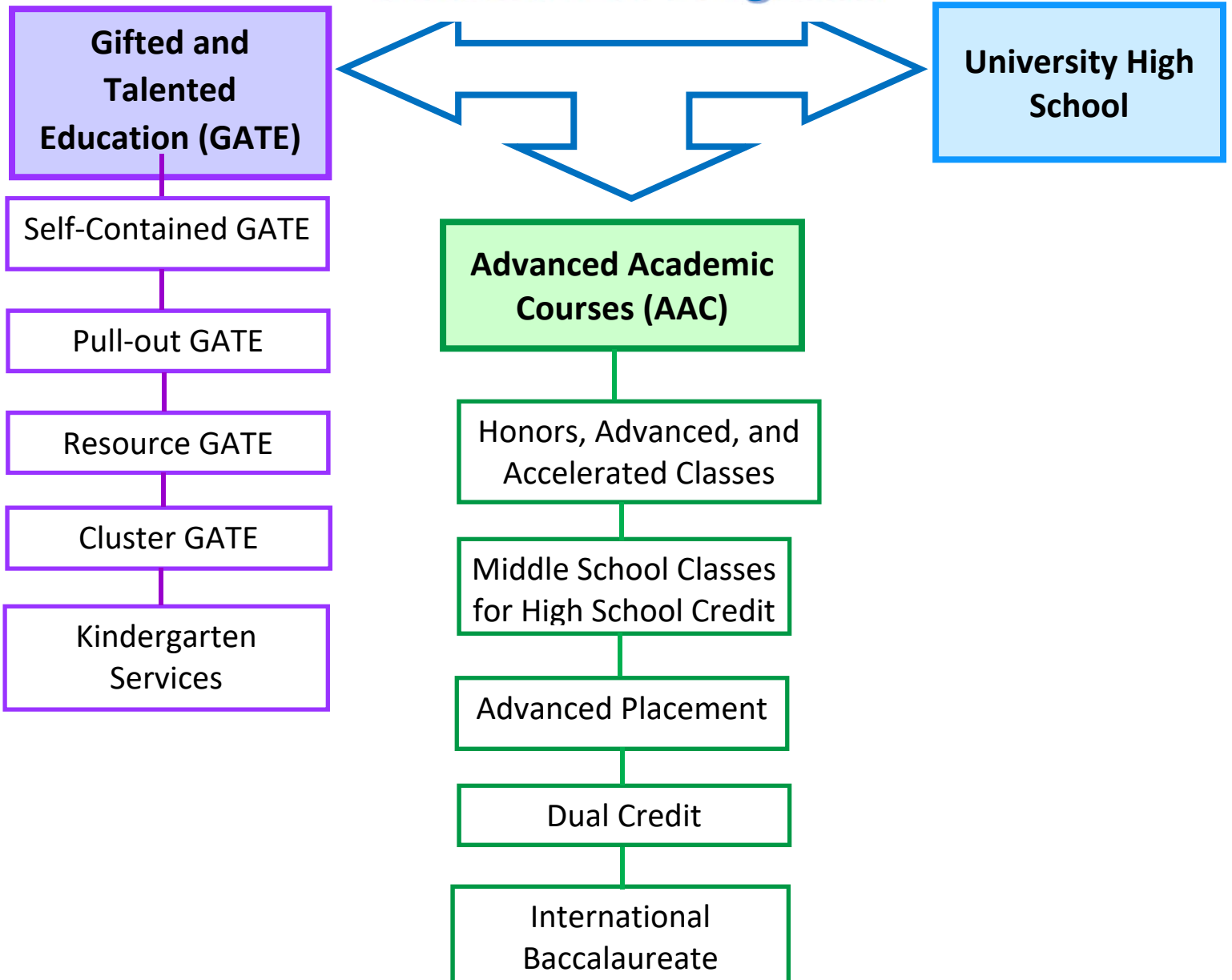
<p>International Baccalaureate (IB) @ Cholla High School</p>	<p>IB offers high-quality and challenging educational opportunities worldwide. The District offers this program at Cholla High School as an alternative to AP coursework. IB coursework is highly rigorous with a focus towards college readiness and beyond and is centered on the well-being of the whole student, encouraging students to be both local and global citizens. Freshmen and sophomores may enroll in IB Prep courses to prepare for the IB Diploma and Certificate programmes with students enrolling in the IB Diploma Programme (DP) classes beginning their junior year. Within the IB Diploma Programme, students can enroll as an IB Diploma student or an IB Certificate student.</p>
<p>University High School (UHS)</p>	<p>UHS is one of the top-ranked college preparatory high schools in Arizona and the country (as rated by US News and World Report). The school offers a rigorous four-year academic curriculum along with many support programs to ensure that all students graduate and are accepted to the college or university of their choice. UHS is an “exam school,” in that students must apply and take an admissions exam to be considered for placement.</p>
<p>Dual Language</p>	<p>The District has adopted the Two-Way Dual Language (TWDL) model for all dual language schools and programs. The TWDL model aims to ensure that all students become bilingual and biliterate in Spanish and English. Instruction in core curriculum is provided by a bilingual education endorsed teacher, and all subjects are taught in English or Spanish. The self-contained GATE program includes a dual language option that is currently housed at Hollinger K-8 School.</p>
<p>Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)</p>	<p>AVID is a college and career readiness system. Students can enroll in an AVID Elective class and learn study skills and organizational techniques and receive academic support. Although not an ALE, the AVID model offers support for students enrolled or planning to enroll in ALEs.</p>
<p>Open Access</p>	<p>ALE open-access programs or courses are available to any interested student without any entrance requirements except for content prerequisites (Algebra 1 required before Algebra 2 can be taken). Most ALEs in Tucson Unified are open access. No high schools or middle schools apply contrary eligibility requirements.</p>



# ADVANCED

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

## Overview of Programs



## Description of ALE Programs

This policy manual describes the wide array of ALE opportunities available in the District for students and their families. The vast majority of the District's ALEs are open access, meaning all interested students may enroll. Specific ALEs—self-contained GATE, pullout GATE, and University High School— require testing and/or academic qualifications to enroll. The District is committed to excellence and equality in each ALE, striving to provide equitable access to programs taught by appropriately credentialed teachers.

The District follows quarterly and annual processes for expanding ALE programs to an appropriate level on a continuing basis. What constitutes an appropriate number of AP, Dual Credit, or other ALE courses will be determined on a yearly basis by the nuanced judgment of experienced educators following an established process. Specifically, the ALE Director, working with others within the District:

- Develops an annual implementation plan for all ALE areas;
- Reviews all master schedules to identify current and potential ALEs and works with schools that may need help growing and scheduling specific ALEs;
- Meets with Regional Assistant Superintendents and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction to review ALE implementation;
- Attends school counselor meetings to review ALE implementation, access to ALEs, and course offerings at each campus;
- Meets with all grade 6-12 principals to review ALE offerings for the current year and plan expansion of courses for the following year, as recommended;
- Develops proposals for AVID expansion;
- Reviews 40th-day ALE data for growth, regression, stagnation and planning;
- Gathers, reviews, and finalizes new course offerings for ALEs for the following year, working with schools that need additional help with scheduling ALEs;

- Works with The College Board and other organizations to provide training to teachers, administrators and counselors;
- Prepares and attends ALE data review meetings with all principals;
- Meets with UHS administrative team to review school data to look for ways to expand course offerings;
- Works with AVID on contract requests;
- Updates Intergovernmental Agreement with Pima Community College to offer Dual Credit classes, updating the agreement each year with course offerings;
- Reviews newly proposed courses and meets with schools as needed;
- Reviews and completes budgets and orders for the fiscal year of ALEs; and
- Works with principals to fill vacant ALE teaching positions and interviews candidates as needed.
- Compiles a comprehensive list of AACs offered by each school and, together with school administration at each campus, reviews the list for accuracy and develops a campus-based plan for adding AACs, as appropriate, to widen students' exposure to an even more rigorous program.
- Works with the Desegregation Research Project Manager annually review the enrollment trends in all AACs. They share this information with school administrators with a specific focus on the number of course offerings, student enrollment patterns, and integration of the courses.

What type and how many GATE, Dual Credit, AP, or other specific ALEs may be offered in the future cannot be answered out of the context of a particular budget year and without knowing which certified teachers will be available to teach at each school. What may constrain the District financially or personnel-wise one year may not constrain it in another year, and vice-versa.

The District's ALE offerings are robust, and they continue to grow. The District's ALEs also provide equal and equitable access to all District students, including African American and Latino students. Based on the current state of the District's ALE offerings and the criteria noted above, and in the reasoned judgment of



experienced educators, there is not a current need to prioritize significant ALE growth in any specific ALE area, though the District does intend to continue to expand its ALE programs based on the criteria above.

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION (GATE)**

GATE services provide enrolled students with an enriched and accelerated academic curriculum using gifted strategies. All GATE classes are taught by a gifted education endorsed teacher<sup>1</sup>. The District offers several different types of GATE services: self-contained (including dual language), pull-out, resource, cluster, and kindergarten services, including pre-GATE kindergarten, K-1 GATE Talent Development /Enrichment, and kindergarten pre-GATE cluster services. Several of these programs are open access. Please see the Open Access GATE section, below.

GATE programs provide students with gifted instruction focusing on critical thinking, creative thinking and problem solving, creating a rigorous and more in-depth exploration of content standards. Teachers utilize project/problem-based learning and high levels of questioning and inquiry while creating a student-centered learning environment.

### **GATE PROGRAMS**

#### **A. Self-Contained GATE**

Qualifying students attend this program full time, five days per week at a school that accommodates them using a feeder pattern based on neighborhood schools.

The District offers nine GATE self-contained programs, including Kellond Elementary, Lineweaver Elementary, White Elementary, Wheeler Elementary, Roberts-Naylor K-8, Doolen Middle, Pistor Middle, and Vail Middle. The District provides a dual language K-8 GATE self-contained program at Hollinger Elementary.

More than 1,000 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students currently are enrolled in the GATE self-contained program. The GATE department supports this program with regular professional development, mentoring, classroom visits, and endorsement information; provides program marketing; works with schools to recruit and retain

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<sup>1</sup> This includes full endorsement, provisional endorsement, and working towards endorsement.

teachers and students; places students in the self-contained program; and maintains records regarding student enrollment.

The District will pilot an opt-out program for all self-contained qualifying GATE students at White Elementary School and Pistor Middle School for the 2020-21 school year. Students who are already enrolled at these two schools will automatically be placed in the GATE self-contained classroom at their site. These students will receive placement statement information when they enroll and will be given an opportunity to opt-out through a mailer. Families will be invited to talk with a parent from the gifted program at the school in which the student is enrolled.

Because the total number of GATE-qualified students across the entire District that did not enter a GATE program in SY 2018-19 was only 64, including only 5 African American students, the District does not anticipate a need to develop or implement a phased-in plan or waiting list for automatically enrolling these students.

Additionally, in SY2020-21 the District will continue to use the decreased Raven assessment stanine cut score of an NCE 258 to identify qualifying students for self-contained GATE.

### **1. Dual Language Self-Contained GATE**

Qualified self-contained students can enroll in the dual language self-contained GATE program At Hollinger Elementary<sup>2</sup>. The curricula follow the TWDL language immersion model, which begins with a 90 percent (Spanish)/10 percent (English) model in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and continues to 50 percent Spanish/50 percent English instruction by 5<sup>th</sup> grade. For entry into the program in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade or higher, GATE self-contained students must complete a Spanish assessment.

The District offers this program to all qualifying students and uses marketing on the GATE website and a direct invitation to all qualifying students, with the goal of increasing enrollment. Dual language GATE may expand to other sites should the program need enrollment space. Based on current and anticipated enrollment trends, Hollinger has enough capacity to meet the anticipated TWDL GATE demand for the near-term future. The

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<sup>2</sup> This program is the District's sole dual language ALE.

District will continue to evaluate the needs and availability of this ALE on a regular basis as described above.

The District assessed the average travel time for students enrolled in Hollinger's TWDL GATE program in SY 2019-20. Of the 157 TWDL GATE students at Hollinger, the estimated mean travel time is 25 minutes. Of the 22 ELL students who qualified for GATE services, there were 12 EL students who qualified for GATE services who lived more than 30 minutes away from Hollinger, and two of these students lived more than 60 minutes away from Hollinger. The District has not identified any mitigating measures or transportation plans to alleviate the travel burden for these students.

### **B. Pull-out GATE**

The pull-out GATE program is a district-wide enrichment program in which qualifying GATE students in grades 1-5 attend class for 90 minutes one day per week with an assigned GATE itinerant teacher. The pull-out program teaches students critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving strategies that are built into hands-on, high-engagement quarterly units. Students are pulled out of their regular classroom for the 90-minute period by a gifted endorsed teacher who teaches students in a small group setting. Quarterly enrichment units focus on project-based and service learning and provide students with an authentic, real-world opportunity for exploration and investigation with an interdisciplinary focus.

Similar to the opt-out program described above for self-contained GATE at White Elementary School and Pistor Middle School, the District will pilot an opt-out program for qualifying GATE students at schools with pullout programs for the 2020-21 school year. Students who are already enrolled at these school will automatically be placed in the pullout GATE program. These students will receive placement statement information when they enroll and will be given an opportunity to opt-out through a mailer. Families will be invited to talk with a parent from the gifted program at the school in which the student is enrolled.

### **C. Resource GATE**

The District offers resource GATE classes at grades 6-10. GATE instruction is provided in enrichment or content area classes for qualifying students as well as for students enrolled in those classes through open access. The service model may vary

depending on site schedules and programs. The GATE department works with all middle and high schools to provide information and support for one or more GATE resource classes per site. The department also provides professional development, endorsement information, and information about instructional strategies for the class.

#### **D. GATE Cluster Programs**

Fourteen District schools<sup>3</sup> currently offer GATE cluster classrooms for elementary students. More than 1,500 students receive GATE instruction through this model. Taught by gifted endorsed teachers and/or teachers pursuing their gifted endorsement, and using gifted strategies, these classrooms include both GATE-qualified students and regular education students “clustered” together.

The GATE department works closely with site principals to ensure an equitable distribution of regular education students placed in GATE classrooms, reviewing the demographics of its cluster programs each year. For example, in 2018-19, Howell had a somewhat higher percentage of African American students enrolled in its cluster GATE program than other schools: 36 out of 52 African American students at Howell were in GATE classrooms. The District examined whether there was a best practice that resulted in this higher percentage, and it determined that Howell’s approach did not appear to differ from general practice at other schools in the District. The numbers are small enough that simple random variation may have contributed, along with other factors such the number of seats available for regular students compared with enrollment, parent choice, other programs competing for students’ time, individual factors which go into class composition, and efforts to ensure a good fit for the program.

Each GATE cluster school has at least one GATE teacher per grade level, with kindergarten optional. The GATE department supports cluster programs with regular professional development, mentoring, classroom visits, and resources. It also provides program marketing and works with sites to recruit teachers.

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<sup>3</sup> Blenman Elementary, Cavett Elementary, CE Rose K-8, Dunham Elementary, Drachman Montessori K-8 Magnet, Fruchthendler Elementary, Grijalva Elementary, Howell Elementary, Maldonado Elementary, Myers/Ganoung Elementary, Robins K-8, Sewell Elementary, Steele Elementary, and Wright Elementary.

### **1. Kindergarten GATE Cluster Services**

A kindergarten pre-GATE cluster classroom is available at certain GATE cluster schools (Blenman, Drachman, Fruchthendler, Maldonado, Myers-Ganoung, Sewell, and Wright). These sites include a kindergarten classroom that has a gifted endorsed teacher for an open-access program that allows any enrolled students to benefit from instruction from a GATE endorsed teacher in a full day, Monday through Friday program.

## **E. Open Access GATE**

- 1. Tully Elementary:** Tully GATE Magnet is a school-wide GATE model that offers gifted services in all classrooms and is an open-access program. Tully GATE Magnet has an open feeder pattern, which means that students can attend the school from any neighborhood in the District if there is space. Students do not need to qualify to attend the school and can be registered through open enrollment.
- 2. Roberts-Naylor K-8:** Roberts-Naylor has an open-access GATE strand with GATE content classes for grades 6, 7, and 8. This program will be expanding to include GATE content classes in science, language arts, and social studies. Students from Tully can attend Roberts-Naylor's open-access GATE middle school program with free transportation.
- 3. Resource GATE Classes:** These classes, offered at the middle and high school levels, are open access. Please see the section on Resource GATE, above.
- 4. Kindergarten Services:** Both K-1 GATE Enrichment and pre-GATE kindergarten cluster services are open access. Please see the section on Kindergarten Services, below.

## **F. Kindergarten Services**

### **1. Pre-GATE Kindergarten**

To provide alternative avenues for entry into self-contained GATE programs, the District offers a pre-GATE kindergarten program at five of its self-

contained GATE schools, with the goal of expanding to all six elementary schools by 2020-21.

Students take a kindergarten screener in the fall to access this program and again in the spring to measure cognitive and academic growth. During the school year, teachers use the nationally researched Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) program, which provides a focus on critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem solving. During the fourth quarter, GATE staff meets with pre-GATE teachers to review student portfolios and the spring screener, both of which provide evidence of a student's cognitive and academic growth and progress during the school year. Upon successful completion of the school year, students are offered placement in 1<sup>st</sup> grade self-contained or pull-out GATE.

## **2. K-1 GATE Talent Development/Enrichment**

GATE pull-out teachers provide all elementary sites with GATE “push-in” services in their kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes. Using 30- to 45-minute push-in lessons in regular education classes, the teachers focus on critical and creative thinking so that all students have access to higher-level thinking enrichment activities in their early years. Using the nationally researched Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) program, they provide K-1 early learners lessons in a whole class setting.

## **3. Kindergarten Pre-GATE Cluster Services**

For information about this open-access opportunity, please see the section on Kindergarten GATE Cluster Services, above.

# **STUDENT ACCESS, RECRUITMENT, AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES**

## **A. Student Access**

Many GATE programs are provided as open access to students.<sup>4</sup> Access to self-contained (grades 1-8) and pull-out GATE (grades 1-5) programs is based on qualifying scores using the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and the Raven's Progressive Matrices assessment, which is used as a multiple measure. The AZELLA (Arizona English Language Learner Assessment) is used as a multiple measure for

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<sup>4</sup> Resource GATE courses, cluster programs, Tully Elementary, Roberts Naylor K-8, K-1 Enrichment.

ELL students. The pre-GATE kindergarten program uses an entrance screener and an exit process.

All students, including ELL students, are universally tested for GATE eligibility in grades one and five. Additionally, all students, including ELL students, benefit from the other universal testing policies aimed at identifying and expanding qualified students for ALE, including pre-kindergarten emergent and kindergarten testing and high school PSAT.

Access to Cluster GATE services is available to an increasing population of students who did not qualify for self-contained or pull-out GATE services. Each school works to place a diverse group of students in designated GATE classrooms, classrooms with demographics that usually mirror the overall school population. Some factors that affect the placement of students include available space for non-qualifying students, the number of students of each demographic at a particular school, and other programs that compete for students' time (such as Dual Language programs). There is no known best practice for increasing the number of students from any particular demographic that affects the composition of Cluster classrooms at each school. In any given year, one school may have a higher or lower number or percentage of students from one demographic based on the factors listed above.

The District continues to expand the availability of GATE services, including Cluster and Self-Contained, based on a regular analysis of course offerings at each school. The ALE Director reviews course offerings at each school to look for ways to expand AACs. The ALE Director compiles a comprehensive list of AACs offered by each school and, together with school administration at each campus, reviews the list for accuracy and develops a campus-based plan for adding AACs, as appropriate, to widen students' exposure to an even more rigorous program.

The ALE Director and Desegregation Research Project Manager annually review the enrollment trends in all AACs. They share this information with school administrators with a specific focus on the number of course offerings, student enrollment patterns, and integration of the courses.

Based on school data, student interest, and teacher availability, schools include AACs in their respective master schedules. The ALE Director then works with the appropriate departments to provide support for those courses.

Limited financial resources do not do not impede immediate growth for Self-Contained or Cluster-GATE programs. Because a review and analysis of program implementation and availability is done each year, the District must complete an analysis each year regarding whether financial resources may impede levels of growth for any participate ALE program. The District cannot forecast several years into the future whether financial or other resources will impede potential growth for these ALEs.<sup>5</sup>

The District currently provides GATE services to all students to who qualify. The District has already reduced the cut score for qualifying, as suggested in recent recommendations of the Special Master and orders of the Court, and has easily accommodated the increase in students as a result. Thus, there is no potential for major expansion of the number of students qualifying for GATE service, and no current plans to change the qualifying score again in such a way that would produce a measurable impact on district resources.

Moreover, the number of students who qualify for GATE services but do not take advantage of them is small enough that even if every qualified student elected to receive GATE services, either through self-contained or pullout GATE, the District has the current ability to serve them.

What type and how many GATE classes or other specific ALEs may be offered in the future cannot be answered out of the context of a particular budget year and without knowing which certified teachers will be available to teach. What may constrain the District financially or personnel-wise one year may not constrain it in another year, and vice-versa. The District can, however, prioritize funding for growing its self-contained and cluster GATE programs, with a focus on increasing the participation of students whose socioeconomic status and actual performance suggest that these students can benefit more than others from GATE services and

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<sup>5</sup> The Court asuggested that the District consider Erickson ES or Magee as priorities when expanding Self-Contained and Cluster GATE. [ECF 2474, p. 9.] The District has previously considered Erickson as a potential location to expand the Cluster GATE program. At the time, the District chose not to implement the program at Erickson in part because of the need for additional qualified staff. The District will again consider whether Cluster GATE can be expanded to Erickson in the near future.

Because Cluster GATE is a K-5 program and Magee is a middle school, Magee would not be an option for expanding Cluster GATE. However, Magee already offers several other ALE options, including Algebra 1, Honors classes in ELA, Science and Social Studies, Accelerated Math, CRC Language Arts, and AVID.



instruction. State statutes require school districts to provide GATE instruction to a small number of students. The District goes well above and beyond what is required in general and specifically to provide GATE instruction to students who otherwise would not receive such services, and its experienced educators follow extensive processes to determine the best way to do so.

### **1. Assessment**

The GATE department organizes and facilitates district-wide testing for more than 10,000 students in K-6<sup>th</sup> grade each year. The GATE department then collaborates with the Assessment and Evaluation (A&E) Department to scan all test booklets and score testing.

GATE testing occurs in the fall semester, with makeup testing beginning in January. Placements are mailed out at the beginning of the second semester. This process continues throughout the school year and summer until all seats are filled. The GATE program works closely with all self-contained and cluster schools to send updated class lists on an ongoing basis.

After scoring, GATE department staff notifies all families through mail of their child's test scores and qualifying status. Placement statements are mailed to all qualifying students.

### **2. Collaboration**

A&E and GATE staff work together closely throughout the school year to ensure accuracy and efficiency in completing the scoring process. The GATE program also works with the Exceptional Education and A&E departments to ensure students who have an IEP or 504 plan receive appropriate accommodations when needed and to ensure GATE teachers collaborate with the site special education teachers as needed to review special accommodations.

The GATE department works closely with other districts to support out-of-district transfers of incoming students. The GATE program follows Arizona Department of Education (ADE) requirements for reciprocity and meets with districts in the region to ensure this process runs smoothly.

## **B. Student Recruitment**

To recruit a diverse group of students to its many GATE programs, the GATE department hosts parent events, including Family Enrichment Night, Parent Information Sessions, district-wide GATE open houses (one for elementary self-contained sites and one for middle school self-contained sites), and site-based open houses at every GATE self-contained school. Peer-to-peer programs are provided for families during these events and through the GATE website.

The District markets GATE cluster schools through display boards, rack cards, and flyers that are distributed at individual sites and at GATE events. GATE cluster sites also attend District GATE events to increase visibility and understanding of the GATE cluster program. Placement statements now list GATE cluster schools as an option.

Tully's open-access program reaches out to families through marketing flyers, targeted postcards, and an informational table at events. The GATE department includes flyers about Tully's program in all mailers after testing, thus marketing the program to families district-wide. Roberts Naylor's open-access GATE middle school program benefits from promotion to Tully's families and to families interested in non-qualifying options for middle school GATE.

In addition to flyers, the District utilizes two strategies targeted specifically to recruit ELL students: (1) A Spanish-speaking GATE itinerant teacher attends all open houses and community outreach events; and (2) the GATE Department displays relevant presentation boards with visual presentations and Spanish content to attract Spanish-speaking students and families. The District also heavily recruits ELL students to the District's TWDL programs, and the Language Academy works to help them qualify.

In implementing these recruiting strategies, the District will inform potential students and their families of one or more of the following policies that assist ELL students once they enter ALEs in order to address the unique circumstances faced by ELL students in the process of learning English: the District's Language Acquisition Department (LAD) provides K-3 English development tutoring for GATE students, including ELL GATE students, in need of extra support; the District provides structured English immersion through the four-hour model, individual

language learner programs, and an Arizona Department of Education grouping exception for gifted education.

In addition to academic support services targeted directly at helping ELL students, the District utilizes student services departments and bilingual teachers and tutors to help ELL students benefit from academic support services available to all ALE students.

School sites and counselors promote middle and high school GATE resource classes to students and families.

The GATE department lists pull-out GATE as an option on the placement statement for all self-contained and pull-out qualifying students and provides more information about this program at ongoing events and open houses.

### **C. Student Academic Support**

Schools sites provide targeted support (tutoring) to students as needed. A variety of tutoring services are available to elementary students, including those who participate in GATE programs or classes. Programmatic resources, such as 21st Century and Title I programs, provide tutoring as well as a variety of site-based programs and tutoring by individual teachers.

Additionally, the Federal Court overseeing the desegregation case has approved a team approach for tutoring where non-certified staff, directly supervised by certified teachers, provide additional tutoring help to students in need, with teachers teaching AP and ALE courses being available to their students and playing a pivotal role in facilitating the disseminations of tutoring services.

## **CERTIFICATED STAFF**

### **A. Teacher Recruitment**

The GATE department provides for greater student access by recruiting and supporting teachers in becoming gifted endorsed. GATE staff attends all job fairs for marketing and recruitment purposes and hires itinerant teachers and testing specialists. The GATE department collaborates with all self-contained and cluster sites to recruit gifted endorsed teachers, serves as a liaison for this hiring process,

and assists with selecting GATE resource teachers for middle and high school, following up with gifted endorsed teachers at these sites who might want to teach these classes.

### **B. Professional Development**

The GATE department provides district-wide professional development to any interested teachers throughout the District, with priority given to all currently assigned GATE teachers and prospective GATE teachers who are actively pursuing their gifted endorsement. To support these efforts, GATE staff creates, plans, and teaches select classes focused on aspects of gifted instruction that are aligned to the national gifted standards, Tucson Unified's GATE standards, and Tucson Unified's GATE mission. These include topics such as critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and other targeted areas in gifted instruction, including differentiation, cultural responsiveness, student-centered learning environments, project/problem-based learning, and support for the social and emotional needs of gifted students. Topics also are aligned to the District's approved GATE scope and sequence. In addition, the GATE department hires consultants to lead professional development and works with these consultants to recommend and select relevant topics and review materials before presentations, based on teacher needs.

GATE staff attends all professional development sessions, maintains records of all teachers in attendance through True North Logic, maintains records of teacher hours for the gifted endorsement, and logs all professional development hours after each training. GATE staff also provides professional development for teachers through participation at state and regional gifted conferences and trainings. Additionally, the GATE department provides resources for teachers across the District through SharePoint.

### **C. Gifted Endorsement Support**

The GATE department maintains endorsement support plans for all GATE teachers who are working on obtaining a permanent gifted endorsement; keeps records and works with teachers to submit information to Human Resources verifying hours for the provisional and permanent gifted endorsement; provides verification for teachers who are moving from the provisional to the permanent endorsement; keeps records of teaching certificates and maintains lists of all endorsed teachers; and provides information to teachers about how to receive their endorsement.

#### **D. Teacher Stipends**

The GATE department provides teacher stipends to improve recruitment and retention of gifted teachers in all District GATE programs. For the 2019-20 school year, full-time permanently gifted endorsed GATE teachers (and provisionally in some programs) will receive a stipend. In addition to maintaining a gifted endorsement, GATE teachers are expected to continue attending GATE professional development opportunities to receive the stipend. The current stipend is \$1,500 for teachers providing full-time servicing in GATE itinerant and self-contained programs.<sup>6</sup> Permanently gifted endorsed GATE cluster teachers receive a \$750 stipend, while middle school and high school GATE resource teachers with a permanent gifted endorsement receive a \$500 stipend.

### **COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT**

#### **A. GATE Program**

- 1. District-wide:** The GATE department plans, facilitates, and/or attends ongoing District outreach and events for parents, staff, and teachers. These include fall and spring Family Enrichment Night, a Teacher Information Session, Family Resource classes, site outreach events, cafecitos,<sup>7</sup> and other similar events. GATE staff maintains an events calendar, works with teachers to staff events, and prepares outreach materials for these events.
- 2. Site Specific:** GATE staff participates in individual school events such as Literacy Night, school carnivals, and Meet & Greet events, where GATE teachers share information and speak to parents and families. GATE itinerant teachers collaborate with school staff to lead cafecitos, targeting specific sites with low GATE enrollment and/or sites that have greater numbers of underrepresented students. The GATE staff also collaborates closely with GATE self-contained, cluster, and open-access schools and meets regularly with principals, school leaders, and school counselors to ensure that all students are receiving ongoing support at each site.

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<sup>6</sup> The middle school self-contained teachers' stipend varies depending on the number of GATE classes taught.

<sup>7</sup> Small informal gathering at a family's neighborhood site involving coffee/tea with a focus on making a personal connection.

**3. Parental:** The GATE department supports parents with parent meetings, including open-access parent information sessions in which families can learn more about gifted services, and maintains a parent handbook and GATE website to provide additional ongoing information and support for parents and families. GATE staff also meets with parents at the fall and spring open houses and ongoing District events and provides site support through GATE itinerant teachers. GATE staff responds to parent phone calls and in-person visits throughout the school year, assisting parents with questions about GATE program options, test scores, and other general questions.

## **B. Departmental**

To provide information and support to all Tucson Unified families, the GATE department collaborates with many District departments, including Communications, Magnet, Family and Community Engagement, Mexican American Student Services, African American Student Services, and Language Acquisition.

- 1. Communications Department:** Working with the Communications Department, GATE staff reviews and revises the District's GATE website, updating it regularly with outreach information, events, and testing information. The communications department develops, updates, and circulates printed material such as flyers and rack cards. Staff also develops promotional videos and posts them to the District and department websites.
- 2. Magnet Department:** The GATE and Magnet departments work together to support Tully's GATE Magnet program. The Magnet Coordinator who oversees Tully's program has attended GATE professional development, and the GATE and Magnet departments have reviewed procedures for Tully's walkthroughs, classroom visits, and focus areas to include greater collaboration between departments. GATE and Magnet also have collaborated with the Communications Department on marketing and recruitment materials.

**3. Family and Community Engagement Department (FACE):**

Together with FACE, the GATE department leads District outreach events for parents and families to share information about GATE services and gifted instruction. GATE staff leads bilingual GATE workshops for families at all four Family Resource Centers across the District in both fall and spring. In these workshops, parents participate in activities and have an opportunity to speak with GATE staff. GATE staff also plans and leads a fall and spring Family Enrichment Night, open to all families across the District. FACE invites other departments to share information, and translators attend.

**4. African American and Mexican American Student Services Departments:**

The GATE department collaborates with both Mexican American Student Services (MASSD) and African American Student Services (AASSD) throughout the school year to support prospective and current GATE students and their families. MASSD supports GATE at events such as the district-wide self-contained open house, where families receive information about GATE services and can speak to a program specialist from MASSD. MASSD and GATE staff collaborate to plan targeted outreach events and workshops in which GATE staff present information to parents at the MASSD sponsored event. In addition, MASSD provides in-person recruitment as requested by the GATE department.

GATE staff also provides family outreach at AASSD-sponsored events, such as the African American Parent Conference and the Annual Student Recognition event. AASSD supports the GATE department by calling African American families regarding their GATE services to answer questions and to encourage new families to accept services.

**5. Language Acquisition/Dual Language Department:**

The GATE department works with the Language Acquisition Department throughout the school year to create guidelines for the dual language GATE program at Hollinger and promote a shared vision to attract families and ensure efficient procedures for testing and enrollment. This partnership assists in the recruitment and retention of students

into this program as well as strategies for greater student outreach and support.

GATE staff works closely with Hollinger's principal to recruit additional students by increasing marketing and by hosting district-wide events at the school to showcase the GATE dual language program.

**C. Central Resources**

The GATE department maintains literacy kits and a GATE library with books, games, and other resources for check out. Literacy kits are available for check out by any GATE teacher across the District. GATE staff schedules kit check-out and collaborates with site teachers and the warehouse for kit distribution.



## **ADVANCED ACADEMIC COURSES (AAC)**

Advanced Academic Courses in Tucson Unified include honors, advanced and accelerated courses (both middle school and high school); middle school courses for high school credit; Advanced Placement; dual credit; and International Baccalaureate, all of which are gateways to college readiness and academic success. These courses provide an enriched and/or accelerated academic curriculum for any interested student and are designed to engage students in problem solving, academic discourse, and critical analysis.

### **COURSE OPTIONS**

#### **A. Honors, Advanced, and Accelerated Courses**

Students in grades 6-10 take these courses, which provide an expanded and more rigorous program of study. These advanced courses often help students prepare to take additional advanced courses, such as AP courses. Sites offer these classes as open-access courses to any students who would like to enroll. In middle school, accelerated math classes have the pace of curriculum increased to prepare students for taking high school algebra earlier than 9<sup>th</sup> grade. All schools serving students in grades 6-8 offer, at minimum, one honors, advanced, or accelerated class. Each school serving students in grades 6-8 also offers, at a minimum, one honors or accelerated CRC course.

These courses have been at times referred to as “Pre-AP” courses in the USP and by the Court, and the District in referring to these orders. Since the adoption of the USP, the College Board has begun using the “Pre-AP” term for a specific set of courses with curriculum established and licensed by the College Board, offered at the middle and high school level, and mapped to specific AP courses. The College Board develops the curriculum for these courses, and schools and districts must obtain permission to refer to these courses as “Pre-AP” courses, as College Board is the entity with intellectual property protection and control of AP courses and their content. The District has not licensed the rights to utilize these courses of curriculum, and does not offer “Pre-AP” courses of this type. Its courses designated as honors, advanced or accelerated courses are not specifically mapped to any AP course curriculum, and are not intended as a prerequisite or other “pipeline” or path to taking an AP course. The District has no current plans to offer “Pre-AP”

courses in this sense, or to map its curricula for honors, advanced or accelerated courses to specific AP courses.

### **B. Middle School Classes for High School Credit**

Middle and K-8 schools offer courses for high school credit for their students. These courses provide high school-level coursework, allowing students to begin an advanced track of study in that content area so they can further explore the subject when they transition to high school. For example, high school math programs often offer more rigorous coursework beyond the regular four years of math normally available on a regular schedule. Students who take Algebra for high school credit as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader can take a fifth year of advanced math during their senior year.

All schools serving grades 6-8 offer the opportunity for students to take high school algebra in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Schools can choose to offer other high school credit classes in addition to Algebra 1. K-8 or middle school campuses offer high school credit classes directly with appropriately certificated teachers or through District-provided transportation to either a District high school or another K-8 or middle school that offers the middle school course for high school credit. Schools may also choose to use the District's online learning platform, Edgenuity, to provide students with access to middle school courses for high school credit. Schools can implement Edgenuity directly with a teacher or through the District's online learning system.

### **C. Advanced Placement (AP)**

Advanced Placement is a program created by the College Board that offers college-level curricula and end-of-course examinations to high school students. Colleges and universities may grant placement and course credit to students who obtain sufficient scores on the AP exams, allowing students to forgo the normal costs and time associated with completing those classes when they enroll in a post-secondary institution. Each year, the District provides a venue for the exams to be taken and offers a select number of scholarships to students in need to defray the fees charged by College Board for students to take the tests.

AP courses in Tucson Unified are open access, meaning they are available to all students who would like to enroll in them. These courses are offered at all District comprehensive high schools, typically beginning in the student's sophomore year.

As discussed below in connection with UHS, the ALE Department, the Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction (CRPI) department, and UHS created an AP Culturally Relevant Course (CRC), the first of its kind in the United States. Like all AP courses, successful completion of the course may result either in meeting college degree requirements, or even credit towards a degree, depending on the policy of the college or university in questions.

The District is working to expand the CRC AP class to the other high schools in the District following the process described above for reviewing, analyzing, and planning the implementation and expansion of ALE courses. Though this is a high priority for the District, the District cannot commit to a specific timetable for the offering of this class across all high schools.

In SY2020-21, the District is piloting a new AP course that will also count as a Dual Credit course in that those students who pass the class with a C or better will also get college credit from Pima Community College without regard to whether they later pass the AP test. This course will be implemented in two high schools, and the District will review and analyze the results during and following the school year and determine whether and how to expand these courses to additional schools in the District.

#### **D. Dual Credit**

Dual credit courses provide the opportunity for a high school student to enroll in a college course and receive simultaneous academic credit from both the college and the high school. Dual credit programs can support the transition from high school to college and improve students' college attendance and graduation rates. The District works to provide a minimum of two dual credit classes at each comprehensive high school, with the courses offered as open-access courses to any students who wish to enroll.

The District offers many high school courses in which students receive both high school and college credit. Students have access to college-certified professors, develop important time management and study skills, and increase their opportunity for college admittance. The District's current partner institutions are

Pima Community College and the University of Arizona, although the credits earned can transfer to many other colleges or universities.

Upon successful completion of the course, students receive college credit. Unlike Advanced Placement, students are not required to pass an end-of-course examination to receive the credit; however, teachers may administer a final exam, similar to any other course. Upon successful completion of the course as determined by Tucson Unified and the partner institution, students receive both high school and college credit.

The Higher Learning Commission requires all dual credit teachers to have a master's degree in the content area or a minimum of a master's degree in another area and 18 graduate-level course hours in the content area.

In SY2020-21, the District is piloting a new AP course that will also count as a Dual Credit course in that those students who pass the class with a C or better will also get college credit from Pima Community College without regard to whether they later pass the AP test. This course will be implemented in two high schools, and the District will review and analyze the results during and following the school year and determine whether and how to expand these courses to additional schools in the District.

### **1. Santa Rita High School Program for College and Career Readiness**

While all other District high schools offer various AP courses, Santa Rita High School offers a structured Program for College and Career Readiness. This comprehensive program gives dedicated students the opportunity to finish their high school careers with an associate degree or equivalent in addition to their high school diploma. In many instances, high schools offer both AP and dual credit courses. However, in certain circumstances based on a carefully considered analysis and an appropriate approval process following the judgment of experienced educators, a school may choose to focus on dual credit classes for their students, rather than AP courses. In SY2019-2020, Santa Rita offered one AP course with one section. In SY2020-21, Santa Rita is offering 2 AP courses with 3 sections. Parents receive information on the differences between the two programs annually.

## E. International Baccalaureate (IB)

The International Baccalaureate offers high-quality and challenging educational programs for a worldwide community of schools. The District offers this program at Cholla High School as an alternative to AP coursework; IB coursework remains highly rigorous with a focus towards college readiness and beyond.

The IB Programme:

- is recognized as a leader in global education.
- focuses on the well-being of the whole student and encourages students to be local, regional, and global citizens.
- holds both students and schools to rigorous academic standards; the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) monitors curriculum and assessment to ensure that each program meets the same global expectations.

Students enroll in IB Diploma Programme (DP) classes beginning in their junior year. Freshmen and sophomores may enroll in IB Prep courses to prepare for the IB Diploma and Certificate programmes. Within the IB Diploma Programme, students can enroll as a Diploma student or a Certificate student, along with taking languages and fine arts.

- a. Diploma Programme:** This program requires students to take six different IB course sequences, including English, World Language, History, Experimental Science, Math, and an IB elective as well as two semesters of Theory of Knowledge. Candidates write an extended essay of roughly 4,000 words as part of a guided research class. Candidates complete Creativity/Action/Service (CAS) activities and a project between their junior and senior years.
- b. Certificate Student:** Students pick one or several courses from the six course sequences but don't take Theory of Knowledge, write the extended essay, or complete CAS activities or the final Diploma project. Within each IB class, Certificate and Diploma students do the same level of work.
- c. Languages and Fine Arts**  
The IB Programme gives special emphasis to learning languages and participation in a fine art. The IB Learner Profile encourages students to

become responsible members of their community while emphasizing open-mindedness, balance, and inquiry. IB Diploma students must take each of the following: IB English, IB Language (Arabic, German or Spanish), IB History, IB Science (Biology, Chemistry, or Environmental Science), IB Math, and IB Fine Art (Art, Dance, Music, or Theatre).

IB certificate students can enroll in any of the above classes but are not required to take all six.

**d. AP Offerings**

Cholla offers an AP World History to sophomores to prepare them for IB History of the Americas. IB juniors receive the opportunity to test within AP Spanish and AP Spanish Literature.

**e. Student Assessment**

Students complete IB assessments throughout their two-year course of study. These assessments consist of internally and externally marked variations to demonstrate a student's knowledge of the curriculum. Given the IB DP Programme's student-centered inquiry, many assessments are presentations, portfolios, and research topics of a student's choice. Students complete examinations at the end of the two-year course. Based on the overall computation of assessment scores, colleges and universities may grant credit for IB course completion. Students must complete all IB assessments to earn a score. Students awarded the IB Diploma tend to receive an overall amount of college credit.

**STUDENT ACCESS, RECRUITMENT, AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES**

**A. Student Access**

**1. Open Access**

All the AACs detailed above are open access, with any students of the appropriate grade level and pre-requisites able to enroll. The ALE department continually works to improve access by finding ways to remove barriers and expand programs.

Annually, the ALE Director reviews course offerings at each school to look for ways to expand AACs. The ALE Director compiles a comprehensive list of

AACs offered by each school and, together with school administration at each campus, reviews the list for accuracy and develops a campus-based plan for adding AACs, as appropriate, to widen students' exposure to an even more rigorous program.

The ALE Director and Desegregation Research Project Manager annually review the enrollment trends in all AACs. They share this information with school administrators with a specific focus on the number of course offerings, student enrollment patterns, and integration of the courses.

Based on school data, student interest, and teacher availability, schools include AACs in their respective master schedules. The ALE Director then works with the appropriate departments to provide support for those courses.

To grow the number of AACs and the teachers for them, the ALE department collaborates with the College Board to provide the annual Advanced Placement Desert Summer Institute. The institute provides training for teachers who want to teach an AP course, and the ALE department pays for teachers' registration fee. If teachers are unable to attend the institute, the ALE department pays the registration fee and travel accommodations for teachers to attend the same institute in Phoenix.

## **B. Student Recruitment**

- 1. AACs:** Leadership teams, including counselors and administrators at each site, recruit students for AACs using a variety of factors. All AACs are open access and any families wishing to have their students enrolled may do so if the students have any required prerequisites for the course.
- 2. AP:** Each year students in grades 9, 10, and 11 take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) from the College Board. Students can create their own College Board accounts and see where they scored well and in which areas they can improve. Every January, the College Board provides training to counselors and administrators regarding the PSAT AP Potential Report. This report shows school officials the names of all students who show potential to do well in Advanced Placement and IB courses. After the report is compiled, the ALE department provides the list and email message to the District's Communications Department. The ALE office sends an automated message to the families of all students who

show potential to do well in AACs. With this information, schools work directly with the District's ALE Director to consider how to reduce barriers and increase interest and opportunities to participate in AP courses. The African American and Mexican American Student Services departments also use the list to contact African American and Mexican American students who show potential to do well in AP courses, encouraging them to enroll to help improve their educational opportunities.

3. **IB:** Additionally, at Cholla's IB programme, student recruitment into the Diploma programme occurs through all English 10 classes. Student leaders and the IB Coordinator review the benefits with potential students through a presentation. Despite the District's successful IB program and diligent recruiting efforts, its re-evaluation of Cholla's integration potential remains low for the same reasons explained in the District's prior evaluation. Even with targeted outreach and recruitment and incentive transportation aimed at enrolling students from east-side demographic White neighborhoods, there is a low likelihood that sufficient numbers of these students and their families would be willing to travel to Cholla to participate in the IB program.

### **C. Student Academic Support**

In addition to the supports for access and recruitment detailed above, the ALE department supports student success in ALE programs through Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and a variety of other strategies through collaboration with schools and other relevant departments.

#### **1. AAC (all)**

##### ***AVID***

AVID is an internationally recognized college and career readiness system designed to increase the number of students who enroll and succeed in higher education and in their lives beyond high school. It focuses on average students who are low-income, are underrepresented, and/or would be the first generation in their families to attend college. AVID-trained educators teach students academic and social skills to help them develop the habits and behaviors needed to succeed amid a rigorous curriculum. The AVID College Readiness System is also a catalyst for developing a school culture that closes



the achievement, expectation, and opportunity gaps many students face. AVID includes support for students both through an elective class and through assisting sites to create a school-wide AVID implementation plan to improve the academic culture and practices across the school site. This program directly supports student success in rigorous AP, IB, and dual credit classes. AVID is currently in place at fifteen District schools using the AVID elective model and/or the school-wide model.<sup>8</sup>

It is the policy of the District to expand AVID district-wide over time, as circumstances and resources permit. The District has expanded the AVID program substantially over the last several years and hired an AVID Coordinator to assist in the expansion. Expanding AVID to new schools is a complex process that takes time and financial resources to implement. Ideally, all District schools would benefit from either the school-wide model or the elective model. As the District continues to increase the number of qualified staff, it will continue to expand AVID.

Although the Court requested that the District include a timeline for AVID expansion, based on the judgment of experienced educators, the District believes that the detailed decisions on when and where to expand AVID should be made on a yearly basis as described above in relation to analyzing the potential expansion of ALEs. Inserting a timeline that extends several years would be arbitrary and misleading to the school community.

## **2. AP**

### ***AP Summer Boot Camp***

The ALE department works with high schools to offer an Advanced Placement Summer Boot Camp. Each summer, students can enroll in the two-week boot camp to prepare for the rigors of taking AP and dual credit courses. The camp is available to students at high schools throughout the District. Cholla and University high schools offer separate summer programs aligned to their unique programs that provide similar supports for their IB and AP students.

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<sup>8</sup> AVID Elective model: Doolen Middle, Magee Middle, Pistor Middle, Secrist Middle, Valencia Middle, Palo Verde High, Pueblo High, Rincon High, Sahuaro High, Tucson High; AVID Elective and School-Wide model: Booth-Fickett Middle, Utterback Middle, Catalina High, Cholla High; School-Wide AVID: Wright Elementary.

### ***AP Mentoring and Tutoring***

The ALE Director also meets with the designated AP mentor from each high school to provide training and support. The mentors provide direct support to students. Each mentor submits a Teacher Mentor Plan and communication log to the ALE department. These forms document the mentor's work in helping students succeed in AP classes. AP mentors also help recruit students for AP Summer Boot Camp.

AP Tutoring in math and/or English language arts (ELA) skills is provided by AP teachers and is determined by each school site, based on student needs. AP teachers also provide special test-prep sessions provided before AP exams at the end of the year.

### **3. IB**

#### ***Tutoring, Test Prep, and Mentoring***

All teachers have tutoring hours throughout the school year to academically support students amid the rigors of IB curriculum. Teachers also provide test-prep study sessions starting in March for the IB exams taking place in May. Additionally, teacher advisors track overall student progress throughout the program, providing individual mentoring support.

#### ***Extended Essay Support***

Cholla High School supports IB students with the extended essays they must write as part of the program. An Extended Essay Coordinator helps both diploma and certified students with their research and resources for their extended essays. A Content Advisor provides students feedback on writing.

#### ***Community Service Support***

All IB students complete community service projects as part of the IB curriculum, and Cholla's Creativity Action and Service Coordinator helps connect students to service opportunities while helping them log their experiences. They also conduct end-of-program interviews with students.

#### ***IB Summer Boot Camp***

IB Summer Boot Camp runs throughout June for current and incoming juniors who receive support with research and writing their extended essays as well as with their history research projects.

## **CERTIFICATED STAFF**

- 1. AP/Honors:** To grow the number of AP and Honors courses and the teachers available for them, the ALE department collaborates with College Board to provide the Advanced Placement Desert Summer Institute each year. Please see the section on Open Access, above.
- 2. Dual Credit:** The Higher Learning Commission requires dual credit teachers to have a master's degree, as noted above in the section on dual credit.
- 3. IB:** Teachers are recruited for Cholla through the normal process, but existing teachers receive extensive training for the rigors of IB curriculum deployment. In addition to site professional development sessions, teachers receive IB-required training with the AZ Association for IB schools (AZIBS), which partners IB teachers with others across the state to build connections and support continued excellence.

## **COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT**

The ALE Director supports programs and schools across the District as outlined in the Operations Plan and summarized in the above sections. Other departments throughout the District support ALE programs, as outlined in the Department Collaboration section, below.

## UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

University High School is one of the top-ranked college preparatory high schools in Arizona and has been ranked among the top high schools nationally for more than twenty years. The school offers a rigorous academic AP curriculum along with many support programs so students can successfully complete its course of study. In addition to academics, students at UHS also compete on athletic teams and participate in award-winning performing arts programs. UHS has a four-year graduation rate of 98 percent, and almost all students go on to a four-year college or university.

### COURSE OF STUDY

#### A. Advanced Placement

UHS follows a four-year scope and sequence, primarily based on AP classes. Students are required to take the following classes over each of their four years:

Freshman Year: AP Human Geography, AP Environmental Science Honors English 9, Math, World Language, and an elective of their choosing<sup>9</sup>

Sophomore Year: AP World History or AP European History, Chemistry or AP Chemistry, Honors English 10, Math, World Language, Health, and Economics

Junior Year: AP United States History, AP Physics 1, AP English Language and Composition: Culturally Relevant Mexican American and African American Perspective, Math, and two electives

Senior Year: AP Government and Politics, AP English Literature, Math, and three electives

Optional Electives: AP Computer Science Principals, AP Computer Science A, AP Art History, AP Psychology, AP Micro Economics, AP Macro Economics, AP Biology, AP Physics C, Physical Education, Health, Yoga, Studio Art, Band, Jazz

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<sup>9</sup> AP Human Geography and AP Environmental Science both use TUSD curricular social justice standards and use a multicultural perspective.

Band, Orchestra, Theater, Dance, Choir, Yearbook, or Dual Enrollment  
Engineering

UHS students take AP exams at the end of school year. Based on these test scores, colleges and universities may grant credit for successful AP course completion.

Annually, the ALE Director reviews course offerings at UHS to look for ways to expand AP course offerings, if needed. Furthermore, the ALE Director reviews enrollment data and meets with UHS administrators to review progress and determine next steps toward integrating AP classes.

### **B. New AP Culturally Relevant Course**

Working with the College Board and the ALE and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction (CRPI) department, UHS created an AP Culturally Relevant Course entitled AP Language and Composition: Culturally Relevant Mexican American and African American Perspective. This course is the required English course for all juniors. The overarching theme of this class is “The American Experience,” with sub-themes that dive into the complex experiences of Mexican Americans and African Americans as told through nonfiction texts.

This class is the first of its kind in the United States. The course guides students in becoming curious, critical, and responsive readers of diverse texts and in becoming flexible, reflective writers of texts addressed to diverse audiences for diverse purposes. In addition to the academic standards supported by the College Board, this course supports students in learning about social justice standards, including Identity, Diversity, Justice, and Action.

The District will work to expand the CRC AP class to the other high schools in the District following the process described above for reviewing, analyzing, and planning the implementation and expansion of ALE courses. As explained above, the type and number of specific ALE courses that may be offered years into the future cannot be answered out of the context of a particular budget year and without knowing which certified teachers will be available to teach, among numerous other factors. What may constrain the District financially, personnel-wise, or even space- or schedule-wise one year may not constrain it in another year.

While the District is able to give high school credit for the successful completion of this course, whether and what a college institution will accept for credit is decided by each college institution. Some colleges and universities award credit for a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam, while some require a score of 4 or 5. Some institutions give actual college credits, while others merely allow students with successful AP exam scores to bypass the related prerequisites. The District has no reason to expect that colleges and universities will treat the new CRC AP course any different from every other existing AP course. Nevertheless, whether and what type of credit is given is up to the receiving institution, which makes this determination based on its own academic standards. The District has created two AP classes that will also count as Dual Credit courses at Pima Community College. The District will review and analyze the results of these courses to determine whether and how to expand them to other high schools.

## **STUDENT ACCESS, RECRUITMENT, AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES**

### **A. Student Access**

#### **1. Admissions**

Students must meet admission requirements to enroll in the school. New students are accepted for grades 9, 10, and 11.

Students who want to attend UHS as freshman and sophomores must take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), a nationally normed assessment, and provide the appropriate report cards. The District administers the test to all enrolled 7<sup>th</sup> graders in the spring of each year. The District also provides testing to students not enrolled in Tucson Unified schools through an application process. Students who meet the test and GPA requirements are automatically admitted. Students who are within range are assessed using the ACT Tessera, a social and emotional learning assessment system developed to measure social and emotional skills that are associated with success in school, career, and life. As of SY 2020-21, the revised norming rubric, retesting option for borderline test scores, and the CogAT test preparation sessions are UHS policies, not pilot strategies.

8<sup>th</sup> grade testing: Students who did not test in 7<sup>th</sup> grade can take a makeup test in December. Seventh grade students who score a six stanine are invited to retest in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Testing Support: District students are offered test-preparation classes by UHS teachers. These classes provide students with successful test-taking strategies, such as helping students become familiar with the CogAT testing structure and types of questions in the assessment.

For detailed information about the admissions requirements, please see the UHS admissions policy (Appendix B).

## **B. Student Recruitment**

Because the UHS admissions process automatically occurs for enrolled District students, a large focus of UHS recruitment efforts is on encouraging students to accept placement, thereby eliminating opportunity gaps for students. Among the key strategies that the school has implemented are:

- 1. Zip Code Parties:** Current UHS families host parties based on zip codes around Southern Arizona to welcome all incoming students. Current UHS families make connections with new parents and students to provide family mentoring and parent-to-parent support. UHS recruits diverse families to act as hosts so that incoming students and families can connect with them.
- 2. Individualized Recruitment:** When a student does not accept enrollment, UHS conducts personalized follow-up calls to invite students to attend BOOST in case they would reconsider placement. BOOST is a freshman summer bridge program that not only prepares students for UHS but also acts as a team-building and friend-making two-week event. UHS follows up with students who attend BOOST but do not enroll during their freshman year to see if they want to attend UHS as sophomores. MASSD and AASSD also call families of students who qualified for UHS to personally encourage them to attend the school.
- 3. Communication:** District principals and counselors receive annual training to ensure they understand UHS and its value to students and to ensure they share correct information across the Tucson Unified community. The UHS Recruitment and Retention Coordinator meets twice each year with every 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grader in the District to make sure

they understand UHS admission requirements and have the support they need to get into UHS.

### **1. Family Communication**

Throughout the year, UHS holds parent and family meetings to ensure the community understands the benefits and achievements of UHS. Families learn about the differences between other high schools and UHS while listening to information and experiences of UHS students on campus.

- 4. Freshman Acceptance Gala:** For those students who do accept enrollment at UHS, the school hosts an annual formal welcome night. Students are encouraged to dress up and bring their entire family to walk a red carpet, where photographers take pictures of students and their families with their acceptance certificates. The gala includes performances, testimonies from students, and an inspirational video about UHS. After the formal event, families enter the gym to meet with more than 100 different academic departments, clubs, fine arts programs, and athletic teams.
- 5. Department Support and Collaboration:** Please see the section on Collaboration and Support, below.

## **C. Student Academic Support**

UHS provides numerous supports to students, including the following practices:

- 1. Penguin 2 Penguin:** All freshmen are provided a Big Penguin (an upperclassman mentor), to ensure all students have a connection on campus and have an easier time acclimating to campus. The Big Penguin acts as a liaison for the freshman and connects them with student supports, including where to go for tutoring, how to sign up for clubs and sports, how to advocate with teachers, and even how to use a locker.
- 2. Future Focused Meetings:** All freshmen and sophomore students have monthly “future focused meetings” structured through English class. Each group has a monthly class before school. The Recruitment Coordinator and



College and Career Readiness Coordinator as well as administration meet with these cohorts to help them build capacity on campus and learn skills to be successful. The staff members involved in these classes receive training in culturally relevant pedagogy to ensure students' needs are met.

- 3. Academic Support Courses:** UHS offers three courses – Math Center, Writing Center, and Science Center – to provide targeted interventions for students who need assistance in these subject areas. These courses address specific skills needed to successfully complete these core academic areas. These Centers allow for as little as a three-week transition from an elective course into a Center with benchmarks in place that signify when the student can return to an elective course once they've mastered the desired skill. This ability to return to an elective after mastering the desired skill, along with the option to attend one of these Centers on an alternating schedule with a student's elective, is designed in part to encourage students to utilize this resource without the fear of completely missing out on the elective of their choice. African American and Latino students participate in and pass AP courses at the same rate as White students at UHS, and they utilize this and other supports at the same rate. UHS has not seen a need to create policies to increase utilization of the Centers by African American and Latino students.
- 4. Social:** UHS holds a freshman-only dance in the first week of school to help students make friends. UHS also holds freshmen-only study sessions and study parties where teachers, counselors, and upperclassmen mentor freshmen on how to study in a fun environment. These activities help create an inclusive culture that supports students as they come into the school.
- 5. Penguin Parent-to-Parent Support:** Every quarter, UHS holds a parent meeting for parents of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. These meetings give parents the opportunity to offer support, share information about resources and school events, and discuss other pertinent topics.

The UHS Parent Association also meets with new UHS parents to welcome families, offer support, and provide parent-to-parent mentoring. The association provides information on the UHS curriculum and offers supportive conversations with new African American and Hispanic families.

- 6. Summer Programs:** UHS provides the following summer programs, meant to improve academic achievement for students each year. UHS provides free transportation, breakfast, and lunch.

**BOOST:** An annual freshman orientation and induction program, provides incoming freshmen targeted interventions and reduces or eliminates any potential academic skill gaps.

**BOUNCE:** UHS offers BOUNCE, a math and science summer support program, to UHS students entering their sophomore year. UHS bases invitations on students' performance in their freshman math and biology classes. Teachers provide students with essential information to prepare them for taking AP or Honors Chemistry in the fall of their sophomore year.

**BLAST:** UHS hosts BLAST, a summer program for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, during the first two weeks of June for ten days from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. daily. Current UHS parents from diverse backgrounds run two additional sessions for the parents of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. They share parenting advice and recommendations for middle school parents to prepare their children for UHS. Parents also share their own personal experiences about UHS.

- 7. Additional Support Services:** UHS provides additional services aimed at improving the academic success and successful completion of AP courses by African American and Latino students, including engaging students with the African American and Mexican American Student Support Specialists, and utilizing a student engagement coordinator to facilitate engagement opportunities and supports specifically for students who identify as African American or Hispanic. These engagement opportunities and supports include staff mentors for students, weekly grade checks, and specific notification of internships, job shadowing, college and university tours and campus visits, academic and club participation, scholarships, community services, and peer or teacher tutoring. UHS also allows all students access to a laptop to take home for school use. African American and Latino students have been extremely successful academically at UHS, and the supports described above continue to be sufficient to meet their academic support needs.

**8. Department Support and Collaboration:** Please see the section on Collaboration and Support, below.

### **CERTIFICATED STAFF**

UHS has a rigorous screening process for hiring teachers. The school prefers that all teachers have at least a master's degree in either their content area or education. Prospective teachers evaluate a piece of student work using a rubric. During the interview, they speak to the strengths and weaknesses of the student work and how they would provide feedback and guidance in the form of one-on-one support as well as an entire class lesson. All teachers provide a lesson plan and either teach a small class or walk the committee through the lesson plan.

It is expected that all UHS teachers make themselves available to sponsor student clubs, periodically attend extracurricular events, and participate in summer and after-school programming. Teachers attend or teach regular College Board trainings and apply to be a reader for the College Board when eligible.

### **COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT**

UHS collaborates with district-level departments to engage in student recruitment efforts and staff and student supports. The ALE department supports UHS teachers with summer AP trainings as part of the Desert Summer Institute. Other specific departments support UHS in additional ways.

- 1. Communications Department:** UHS works with the Communications Department to provide current information about UHS, including UHS information nights, testing, test prep, celebrations, and other marketing opportunities. Broadcasting and promoting UHS to the wider community helps qualifying students understand the benefits of enrollment.
- 2. Family and Community Engagement Department (FACE):** FACE and the Communications departments assist in promoting UHS meetings and events through social media, family outreach, and District events.

**3. African American (AASSD) and Mexican American (MASSD) Student Services Departments:**

AASSD and MASSD both help UHS recruit potential students and support enrolled students.

*Recruitment:* Both departments reach out to students who qualify for UHS enrollment by calling or making home visits to individual families to provide program details, answer questions, and encourage acceptance of placement invitations.

*Support to Enrolled Students:* These departments provide extra academic support strategies, mentor students, and communicate with families. They regularly attend multi-tier system of supports (MTSS) meetings and work with teachers and students to resolve academic concerns and support better communication.

**4. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction (CRIPI) Department:** UHS and CRIPI have worked together, along with the College Board, to create a new AP culturally relevant class for juniors. The two departments will continue to work together as the course is implemented for the 2019-20 school year.

## **Departmental Collaboration**

In addition to the direct support provided by the ALE department, other District departments support student success in ALE programs in coordination with the ALE Director. These include the Family and Community Engagement Department, Mexican American Student Services Department, African American Student Services Department, School Community Services, Communications, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction, Interscholastics, the District Leadership regional offices, and other departments as needed. This collaboration involves quarterly meetings to ensure all supporting departments act in concert in their support of ALE programs and enrolled students.

### **1. Family and Community Engagement Department**

FACE partners with GATE to provide parent workshops at the District's four Family Resource Centers as part of the "Tell Me More" series. GATE staff provides evening workshops throughout the year to help parents, guardians, and other adult caregivers understand the GATE programs, what their children might experience in GATE classes, and how they can help support their children's learning at home.

In addition to GATE workshops, FACE supports GATE staff in advertising, planning, and facilitating GATE's Family Enrichment Night. Through its Family Resource Centers, FACE promotes these events, and others like them, to families across the District. FACE also provides transportation and childcare services for families attending these recruitment events.

FACE collaborates with UHS and the student support services departments to support student applications and acceptances of placement to UHS.

### **2. Student Services Departments**

MASSD and AASSD provide additional marketing and recruitment support for ALE programs. They host quarterly events, student recognition programs, community events, and Parent University. These events include an ALE information table staffed by ALE department members who can answer questions from family members about GATE and other ALE programs, including UHS. The student services departments provide follow-up phone calls to families who have not yet accepted GATE or UHS placement and host a forum for the ALE department to share information with parents and students at quarterly parent information meetings.

In SY2018-19, MASSD piloted a new ALE coordinator position. This student specialist specifically addressed family information needs, student recruitment, and ALE student support; attended ALE professional development; and worked closely with ALE department staff to be able to provide families with direct knowledge and support about ALE programs. This position will continue in SY2019-20, and AASSD will add a staff member filling the same position within that department.

Additional supports include a Parent Institute, with a facilitated workshop for parents about ALE programs, provided in both English and Spanish to families with students already enrolled or just interested in ALEs. Family members may also join the MASSD or AASSD Parent Advisory Council, groups of K-12 parents who advise the District on a variety of topics, including access to ALEs.

Members from both MASSD and AASSD attend resource fairs, county-created family engagement events, church and civic organization events, city-sponsored events, the Pima County Coalition for Prevention, Head Start preschool programs, El Rio and Old Pueblo Neighborhood Center, and Davis Monthan Air Force Base events. During these events, their staffs review ALE opportunities with families, including enrollment, recruitment, and student support.

MASSD and AASSD also collaborate with the ALE department on professional development opportunities to ensure sessions include essential equity practices and include a diversity focus.

### **3. Interscholastic Department**

The District's Interscholastic Department supports all student athletes, including those enrolled in ALE classes. Additional collaborations with this department include AVID Tutor training, which is provided from the ALE department to Interscholastic tutors who work with middle and high school students. The Interscholastic Department also is exploring a new dual credit class for high school students that would assist with qualifications in becoming an official for sports programs.

### **4. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction Department**

The CRPI department collaborates on professional development opportunities for ALE staff to ensure access to culturally relevant pedagogy. Collaboration from this

department resulted in the creation of a new AP course for juniors beginning in SY19-20 at UHS called AP English Language and Composition: Culturally Relevant African American and Mexican American Perspectives. As described above, the ALE department, UHS, the College Board, and the CRPI department developed this first-of-its-kind course in the nation.

### **5. Communications Department**

The Communications Department partners with all levels of the ALE department to assist with outreach and education about program offerings, admissions, and available supports. This includes revising and updating websites, creating and printing materials, creating promotional videos, facilitating use of social media, and assisting with marketing plans and recruitment.

## **Appendix A.**

### **Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)**

The Tucson Unified School District recognizes students may need supports to prepare them for Advanced Learning Experiences. AVID is a school-wide college and career readiness system that prepares students to take rigorous coursework. The District has AVID programs at fifteen schools using the AVID elective model and/or the school-wide model, with plans to expand to more schools as possible.

AVID strives to increase the number of underserved students who enroll and succeed in higher education and in their lives beyond high school with school-wide support and the AVID Elective. The AVID Elective class specifically targets students who are underrepresented in college enrollment as well as those from low socioeconomic backgrounds and students who would be the first in their family to attend college.

#### ***AVID Structure***

AVID aligns a school campus with the most current research-based college and career readiness practices. At the elementary level, AVID instructional practices are used school-wide. At the secondary level, AVID instructional practices also are used school-wide, and the AVID Elective class adds an extra layer of support for students through instruction in college readiness skills and access to AVID tutors who provide academic support to all AVID students. AVID professional learning and resources help teachers improve student performance by embedding best teaching practices, encouraging self-advocacy, providing support, and building relationships that encourage high levels of student engagement.

#### ***Site Implementation Plans***

Site teams meet monthly throughout the school year to develop and implement site implementation plans for creating or enhancing a school-wide college-going culture that supports high expectations and high levels of achievement for all students. The District AVID Coordinator attends AVID site team meetings and works with sites to monitor and adjust site plans based on progress towards goals and certification metrics. In conjunction with site teams, the District AVID Coordinator helps prepare teams attending the AVID Summer Institute to continue work on site plans moving into the next year.



The District has expanded the AVID program substantially over the last several years and hired an AVID Coordinator to assist in the expansion. Expanding AVID to new schools is a complex process that takes time and financial resources to implement. Ideally, all District schools would benefit from either the school-wide model and/or the elective model. As the District continues to increase the number of qualified staff, it will continue to expand AVID.

Although the Court requested that the District include a timeline for AVID expansion, based on the judgment of experienced educators, the District believes that the detailed decisions on when and where to expand AVID should be made on a yearly basis as described above in relation to analyzing the potential expansion of ALEs. Any plan or timeline for expansion that extends out more than the next school year would depend on so many contingencies and uncertainties (in enrollment, funding, changes and developments in other programs, school staff readiness, and the like) that it would be more likely than not to be inaccurate and not achievable, and thus misleading to the school community. Simply put, the District understands the value of the AVID program and will expand as much as is practically possible over the next several years. The District cannot commit to anything more definite. The District does not currently anticipate AVID expansion in the 2020-21 school year.

### ***Central Support***

The ALE Director meets with the District AVID Coordinator and Administrative Assistant weekly to review enrollment and other topics related to the AVID program. The District AVID Coordinator meets monthly with site AVID coordinators to provide professional development, support, and opportunities for collaboration and strategies to move AVID school-wide at each campus.

The District AVID Coordinator works with schools to recruit, hire, train, and place AVID tutors for the AVID Elective. These tutors support all students enrolled in the AVID Elective class in their coursework, including any AACs they are enrolled in.

### ***Ongoing Professional Development***

Each year, educators from AVID sites attend AVID professional development such as AVID Summer Institute (SI) and/or AVID Path trainings. The objective of these trainings is to deepen the implementation of AVID within classrooms and across

campuses to prepare all students for college readiness and success. The District AVID Coordinator supports sites to determine who should attend AVID SI or Path based on history, data, and site/District goals. The ALE Director and AVID Coordinator facilitate AVID site teams during AVID SI to help sites develop their AVID site plans. These site plans are then used throughout the school year to drive the implementation of AVID at each site and to identify district-wide trends to inform the District's AVID plan for the year.

The District AVID Coordinator provides professional development to AVID sites as needed. At the beginning of the school year, the District AVID Coordinator gathers secondary AVID Elective class and elementary AVID-implementing class schedules for each site to set a site visit and classroom observation schedule that focuses on WICOR strategies, AVID Elective curriculum, tutor performance, and site-based goals. These coaching visits to each AVID Elective classroom occur three times yearly to determine areas of need and to work with AVID Elective teachers to refine the tutorial process and AVID's non-negotiables.

District high school administrators receive AVID professional development each year through the Instructional Leadership Academy. The District AVID Coordinator is currently working with the Mexican American Student Services Department (MASSD) to develop a tutor-training curriculum that incorporates AVID strategies. MASSD staff and the Director have attended AVID trainings and visited AVID elective classrooms to gather ideas that they then have infused into their practices.

Click on the links below to learn more.

**AVID**

<http://tusd1.org/Information/Resources/Advanced-Learning-Experiences/AVID>

[www.avid.org](http://www.avid.org)

## **Appendix B. UHS Admissions Policy**

### **Section I.A. – Student Admissions**

**History** – The admissions process was first created through a University High School (UHS) Advisory Report in 1987. It was revised in 1988, 1989, and 1991 by the UHS Matrix Review Committee. In 1997, the UHS school council adopted revised admission guidelines. It was revised again in December 2009, March 2010, and April 2011. The current policy was approved by UHS School Council in August 2012.

**UHS Mission Statement** – University High School’s mission as a special function public high school is to serve students who are academically focused and intellectually gifted by providing curriculum and social support. (Originally adopted by TUSD School Board, 1987)

**UHS Vision Statement** – UHS will be the premier regional college preparatory school that serves academically focused and intellectually gifted students by providing a rigorous and challenging curriculum and by offering programs that reflect the diverse backgrounds, talents, and cultures of our students within a supportive school wide community.

**I.A.1. – Purpose of Admission Policy** – The purpose of the admission policy, including the entrance exam, is to recruit and retain a diverse and qualified student population.

**I.A.2.1. – Requirements for Admission to UHS for Freshman** – Admission to UHS for 9<sup>th</sup> grade is based on the following factors: 1) achieving 50 points or more for qualified GPA, entrance test score, and any other determined criteria (see I.A.2.5), and 2) space availability. UHS reserves the right to determine the qualifying score for admission. However, the qualifying score for admission shall never be below 50.

**I.A.2.2. – Qualifying for Admission by Meeting GPA and Entrance Test Score Criteria** – Admission to UHS is determined by a point system awarded for GPA and entrance test scores. A minimum of 50 total points is required for admission, unless

UHS determines that the minimum total should be higher than 50.

**I.A.2.3. – Grade Point Average (GPA)** – Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA average of 3.0 in the core classes – English, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science – to receive any admission points. **In calculating GPA, no additional weight is given for advanced classes, such as AP, , GATE or honors.**

The cumulative GPA is calculated from final grades for the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of 7<sup>th</sup> grade and the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. If semester or quarter grades are not available, trimester grades will be used.

Students not enrolled in TUSD schools are required to provide report cards/transcripts of grades. Schools that do not give grades must provide letter grades for the applicant to be eligible for admissions. Consideration cannot be given to non-TUSD applicants who do not submit report cards/transcripts.

**I.A.2.4. – Entrance Exam** – UHS administers one nationally-normed test to all applicants--the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Students are awarded points based upon their score. (I.A.4.1)

Students must receive a minimum qualifying composite stanine score of 7 on the CogAT entrance test to receive points.

**I.A.2.5. – Other Determined Admissions Criteria** – Students who meet the required minimum composite stanine score of a 7, and a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 but receive less than 50 points may be provided an additional evaluation to potentially qualify for admissions.

**I.A.2.6. – Applicants Who Do Not Meet the Minimum Qualifying Test Criteria** – Applicants who achieve a composite stanine score of 6 or below are not permitted to retest for Freshman admissions. Students can reapply for Sophomore admissions; please refer to section I.A.3.1 for additional information regarding the Sophomore admissions policy.

**I.A.3.1. – Requirements for Admission to UHS for Sophomores** – Sophomore admissions will only occur if there are seats available for students. When seats are limited, UHS may only admit students based on sophomore priority (I.A.3.2).

Admission to UHS for 10<sup>th</sup> grade is based on the following factors: 1) space availability, and 2) achieving 50 points or more for qualified GPA and entrance test score. Students will be tested before the end of their Freshman year to be considered for Sophomore admissions. UHS reserves the right to determine the qualifying score for admission. However, the qualifying score for admission shall never be below 50. Students seeking Sophomore admission shall be responsible for actively seeking testing information, because Freshman students are tested as an entire cohort.

**I.A.3.2. – Sophomore Priority** – Students who received a 7 or more on the entrance test scores for freshman admissions but failed to qualify for admissions on the basis of GPA will be given priority for admission as sophomores if they have raised their GPA to the level required to qualify. Students will be rank ordered based on total admission points and offers made until all seats are filled based on Residency Priority. (I.A.4.2)

**I.A.3.3. – Notification of Test Results** – Students who qualify for UHS admissions will not receive qualifying scores. Students who do not qualify will be given test results as they become available.

**I.A.3.4. – Qualifying for Admission by Meeting GPA and Entrance Test Score Criteria** – Admission is based on meeting the test criteria and meeting a calculated GPA criteria based on 1st and 2nd semester grades in 9th grade for a total of 50 admissions points or more.

**I.A.3.5. – Grade Point Average (GPA)** – Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA average of 3.0 in the core classes – English, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science – to receive any admission points. In calculating GPA, no additional weight is given for advanced classes such as Advanced Placement, Pre-Advanced Placement, GATE or Honors.

The cumulative GPA is calculated from final grades for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

Students not enrolled in TUSD schools are required to provide transcripts of grades. If semester or quarter grades are not available, trimester grades will be used. Schools that do not give grades must provide letter grades for the applicant to be

eligible for admissions. Consideration cannot be given to non-TUSD applicants who do not submit transcripts.

**I.A.3.6. – Entrance Exam** – UHS administers one nationally-normed test to all applicants--the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). Students are awarded points based upon their score. (I.A.4.1)

**I.A.4.1. – Awarding of Points** – Points are awarded for GPA and test scores according to the following admissions matrix. Fifty points and above qualifies a student for admission to UHS.

#### Grade Point Average (GPA) Scores and Points Awarded

<b>GPA</b>	<b>Points</b>
4.00	36
3.99-3.86	34
3.85-3.72	32
3.71-3.58	30
3.57-3.44	28
3.43-3.30	26
3.29-3.15	24
3.14-3.00	22
2.99-0.00	0

#### Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Results and Points Awarded

<b>Stanine Score</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>
9	29
8	26
7	23
0-6	0

**I.A.4.2. – Residency** – Any student residing with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) within the state of Arizona may apply for admission to UHS. However, students who meet the qualifying criteria will be admitted according to the following residency priorities: a) Students living within the geographic boundaries of TUSD b) Students living within the neighboring Altar Valley and Continental School Districts, because they do not have high schools c) Students living in Pima and Pinal Counties d) All student residency is determined at the time of application.

**I.A.4.3 – Space Availability** – If UHS is unable to accommodate all qualified freshman due to space availability or resource constraints, students will be admitted by rank order within successive residency priorities until all available slots are filled. Students who qualify for admission at 10<sup>th</sup> grade will be admitted by residency priority and rank order of total points unless qualified for priority under I.A.3.2.

**I.A.4.4. – Open Enrollment/School Choice** – Admission to UHS is based solely on meeting the qualifying criteria. Students cannot enroll in UHS through the open enrollment/school choice process.

**I.A.4.5. – Early Admissions** – Students who are in grades 7 and below cannot apply for the incoming freshman class. UHS does not offer an acceleration of curriculum for the purpose of early graduation but offers a challenging four-year college preparatory curriculum.

**I.A.5.1. – Requirements for Admission to UHS as Juniors** – A UHS diploma carries with it a level of expectation and signifies success in an extremely rigorous and challenging academic setting. The criteria for prospective Junior Admissions reflects the preparation of current UHS students at this level. Any admissions of Juniors are subject to space availability. There may be times when no Junior students will be admitted. If there are openings and applications are accepted, the following criteria will be piloted.

Students must:

1. Be on track to graduate with a University High School diploma.
2. Demonstrate successful performance on the State of Arizona standardized test

requirements for graduation.

3. Have a GPA of 3.0 or higher in all previous coursework.

4. Score 1170 on the PSAT or score 1670 or higher on the SAT

**I.A.5.2. – Space Availability** – Space availability will be determined by June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. If there is space available, students who qualify for Junior admissions will be admitted by residency priority as defined under I.A.4.2 and I.A.5.3.

**I.A.5.3. – Senior Admissions** – UHS does not accept applications for Senior admissions. (12/9/2014)

**I.A.6.1. – Application Process** – All students must complete an application form and return it by the published deadline in order to be considered for admission to UHS. Applications may be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to the appropriate address. A confirmation of receipt of the application will be sent via email or phone. Late applications will not be accepted once admissions process is closed.

An invitation letter and application form is sent to every enrolled 7<sup>th</sup> grade student at a TUSD school. Letters are also sent to every private and charter school listed with the Pima County Superintendent of Schools. Application forms are available at every middle school site, and electronically through both TUSD and UHS websites.

For currently enrolled TUSD students, a completed application form is all that is required. Non-TUSD enrolled students must provide additional information as detailed on the application checklist. The UHS Principal, with the advice and consent of the UHS School Council will update the checklist annually.

**I.A.6.2. – Additional Recruitment Efforts** – UHS conducts additional recruitment efforts in order to attract a broad and diverse pool of applicants. Additional recruitment efforts will be developed by the UHS Principal with the advice and consent of the UHS School Council on an annual basis. a) Targeted Student Outreach – Additional outreach, including letters to parents and home visits, to students taking advanced middle school classes in TUSD and to selected middle sites and programs.

b) Outreach to site/program administrators and staff – Each spring UHS will attend MS principal and counselor meetings to brief them on admission requirements and recruitment objectives. Site staff will be encouraged to recommend students for



admission. UHS will meet with each ethnic studies program to explain admission requirements and recruitment objectives. c) Community Outreach – UHS representative will visit parent meetings, private schools, and other venues upon request.

**I.A.6.3. – Application Records** – UHS will use existing district management systems to maintain an accurate and current list of all TUSD and non-TUSD UHS applicants.

**I.A.7.1 – Testing** – UHS administers the entrance tests for incoming freshman in the Fall semester of 7<sup>th</sup> grade while testing for 10<sup>th</sup> grade placement and above occurs at the end of the school year in June. Students must complete an application form and submit it by the posted deadline in order to be tested for admission to UHS. TUSD middle school sites will be sent a list of their enrolled applicants one week prior to the close of the application deadline in order to finalize the testing lists.

**I.A.7.1.a. – UHS 7<sup>th</sup> grade applicants enrolled at TUSD middle schools will be tested at their school site. UHS will set aside a specific time for administering the test to 7<sup>th</sup> grade applicants enrolled outside of TUSD. Applicants who miss testing will be invited to makeup testing.**

**I.A.7.1.b. – UHS will schedule a specific day and time for 8<sup>th</sup> grade makeup testing. Only students who met the application deadlines and were absent for their scheduled test, will be tested.**

**I.A.7.1.c. – UHS will schedule a specific time in early summer to administer the test to 10<sup>th</sup> grade.**

**I.A.7.1.d. – UHS will work with the middle school sites to schedule and publish testing dates by the end of May of the previous year.**

**I.A.7.2. – Testing Accommodations** – Students with special testing needs will be accommodated in accordance with federal law, state statute, and TUSD Board Policy.

**I.A.7.2.a. – Students with Disabilities** – Students with a current IEP or 504 will be accommodated according to specified testing accommodations. UHS applicants who are not enrolled in a TUSD school will need to provide a copy of their IEP or 504 to UHS in order for accommodations to be made. Accommodations cannot be made without documentation.

**I.A.7.2.b. – Students whose Primary Home Language is Other than English –**

Current published test guidelines do not allow for the translation of the CogAT test into other languages. Students must listen and understand the instructions in English to complete the test. As other language versions of the test become available, they will be adopted.

**I.A.7.3. – Test Scheduling, Processing and Scoring –** UHS will work with the District’s Accountability & Evaluation Department (A&E) to ensure that testing is conducted effectively and efficiently, and that assessment protocols and test integrity are met.

**I.A.7.3.1. –** The A&E department is responsible for coordinating, processing and scoring entrance exams. UHS does not process or score tests on site.

**I.A.7.3.2. –** The A&E department provides UHS with the final data regarding qualifying criteria and residency verification for each individual student applicant. Information on TUSD applicants comes from the district’s official student database of record, Mojave. Information on non-TUSD applicants is based on application information and will be stored by the district.

**I.A.7.3.3. –** The A&E department will provide statistical information on UHS applicants and testing as requested.

**I.A.8. – Notification of Admission –** UHS will send applicants notice of admission in accordance with this established policy. This policy will be reviewed annually by the UHS principal and School Council.

**I.A.9. – Reenrolling in UHS –** UHS maintains a 10-school day grace period for students who leave UHS during the school year. Within the first 10 school days of leaving, a student may re-enroll at UHS without re-applying for admission or a family hardship. However, after this period, the student must re-apply for admission for the following school year in accordance with these policies.

A student who has transferred to another school from UHS and wishes to return may receive special consideration for admission if the student left on their own accord due to health reasons or family hardship. A student who has been exited

from UHS may reapply for admission in accordance with this policy. A student who is re-enrolling after leaving UHS due to illness or a family hardship must be on track to graduate per UHS graduation requirements. A student who has been exited and wants to be re-admitted must apply for admission to UHS.

A student who transfers or officially withdraws at the end of a school year has 15 calendar days from the date of withdrawal to re-enroll. Failure to re-enroll will result in forfeiture of the student's admission place. **(Res 2325, 4/12/2011; Res 25-6, 8/14/2012)**

**I.A.9.1. – Leave of Absence** – A student may apply for a short-term leave of absence for medical or family emergencies. To apply, a student must complete a leave of absence request form. Students requesting absence for medical reasons must provide written documentation from the physician responsible for care. An interview with the Instructional Council will be scheduled and conditions set for re-admittance. Students must maintain their academic work. A leave of absence shall be no longer than 45 school days.

**I.A.9.2. – Family Hardship** – A student may apply for a family hardship appeal to return to University High School at the semester or before the following school year. To apply, a student must complete a family hardship request form. Students requesting a family hardship must provide written documentation for why a hardship appeal is needed. An interview with the Instructional Council will be scheduled and conditions set for re-admittance. Students must have maintained their academic work and be on track to meet University High School graduation requirements. **(Res 26-18, 12/2/2013)**

**I.A.10.1. – Mid-Year Transfers** – UHS will not accept mid-year transfers.

## **Appendix C. Parent Complaint Resolution Process**

To best serve our students and families, the Advanced Learning Experiences Department has established the following procedures to ensure complaints or concerns from our families are resolved in a fair and timely manner.

Complaints should always begin at the level in which the concern was held. They should be shared as soon as possible to allow resolution at the lowest possible administrative level, starting with the classroom teacher and then the campus administrator. Thank you for following the steps outlined below.

### *Informal Attempts*

#### **Campus Level**

Step 1: Please schedule an informal discussion with the appropriate teacher or staff member at your student's school to share your concern and what resolutions you are seeking. It is important that you begin at the level where the concern originated. This can be done in person, by phone, or through email.

Step 2: If, after meeting with your student's teacher or staff member, your concerns were not addressed satisfactorily, please schedule a discussion with a campus administrator to share your concern and what resolutions you are seeking. This can be done in person, by phone, or through email.

### *Formal Attempts*

#### **Campus Level**

Step 3: If informal attempts do not bring a resolution, the "ALE Formal Parent Complaint: Level Two" form may be filed and given to the campus principal along with a request for a meeting. This form is available through the ALE department or the ALE website, or from the school principal.

Step 4: The campus principal will hold a conference with the student and/or parent as soon as possible, but no more than five school days after receiving the written

complaint. The principal will have five school days after the conference to submit a final response in writing to the student or parent, if one is requested.

### **District Level**

Step 5: If the conference with the principal did not bring forth a resolution that both the family and principal agree upon, the parent/guardian may request a meeting with the ALE Director. This form is available through the ALE department or the ALE website, or from the school principal.

Step 6: The ALE Director or designee shall hold a conference within five school days after the meeting request was made. At the conference, the ALE Director or designee shall consider only the issues and documents presented at the site level and identified in the "ALE Formal Parent Complaint: Level Two" form. The ALE Director or designee shall have five school days following the conference to provide the student or parent a written response, if one is requested.

Step 7: If the conference with the ALE Director did not bring forth a resolution that both the family and Director agree upon, the parent/guardian may request a meeting with the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction or designee. The Assistant Superintendent or designee shall meet with the parent/guardian within five school days after the meeting request was made. At the conference, the Assistant Superintendent or designee shall consider only the issues and documents presented at the site level and identified in the "ALE Formal Parent Complaint: Level Two" form. The Assistant Superintendent or designee shall have five school days following the conference to provide the student or parent a written response, if one is requested.

### **Board Level**

Step 8: If the parent or student did not receive the relief requested at the meeting with the Assistant Superintendent or designee, the family may appeal the decision to the District's Governing Board. The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a "Level Three Complaint" form provided by the District. The "Level Three Complaint" must be filed within 10 days from when the "Level Two" decision was issued. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the student or parent of the

date, time, and place of the board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for presentation to the Governing Board.

The decision of the Governing Board at the Level Three Complaint process is final. If for any reason the Governing Board fails to reach a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the regularly scheduled board meeting, the lack of a response by the Governing Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.

## Formal Parent Complaint-Level Two Form



# Department of Advanced Learning Experiences

### Formal Parent Complaint–Level Two

Tucson Unified School District pledges to support the academic success of all students and no discrimination is permitted in the programs or activities that the District operates. If you have an issue regarding any aspect of Advanced Learning Experiences (ALE) related to a student, please complete, sign and **submit this form to your school's principal.**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_

Complaint is filed by:

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Student's parent(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Telephone(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Home/Work/Cell Home/Work/Cell

- Describe your concerns in specific terms. Include:
  - the specific incident or activity;
  - the individuals involved;
  - the dates, times, and locations involved; and
  - what forms the basis of the complaint (attach additional pages if needed).
- Describe any relevant communication that has already occurred to address the issue. Please specify the types of communication, dates of communication, and names of individuals with whom any communication has occurred.
- Please describe how you would propose to resolve this issue.
- Do you wish this complaint to be mediated by a District designee?
 

Yes     No

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

Fill this in online at:

[tusd1.org/Information/Resources/Advanced-Learning-Experiences/ALE-Formal-Parent-Complaint](http://tusd1.org/Information/Resources/Advanced-Learning-Experiences/ALE-Formal-Parent-Complaint)