

## **Hollinger GATE Performance Impact Analysis**

### **I. Proposed Action**

Expand the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program at Hollinger by changing the GATE Self-Contained Two-Way Dual Language (TWDL) program to a GATE TWDL Cluster Program. This will increase GATE access for students, especially those who have been underrepresented in GATE programs. Moving in this direction will also allow a unified K-8 GATE TWDL program at Hollinger.

### **II. Issues**

Initially, TUSD's GATE expansion efforts focused on the self-contained GATE model, in which GATE educational services are provided only to students who are determined to be gifted by administering the COGAT test ("qualified students"). This has limited the number of students at Hollinger who can receive GATE instruction and tended to reduce access to the targeted classes, who were underrepresented among GATE-qualified students.

Hollinger has been impacted by districtwide enrollment loss. TWDL & TWDL GATE classes have consistently been below consensus. For certain grade levels, the combination of these two classes will assist in retention of teachers and ultimately, recruitment and retention of students who will receive a learning experience aligned with their needs.

To function as a true PLC, the Hollinger teaching staff needs common planning and collaboration time to share and learn from one another on how to most effectively impact all learners.

### **III. Objectives**

There are three main objectives for the proposed changes:

Objective 1: Increase the number of students receiving advanced learning experiences and instruction based on Gifted methodology and practices.

Objective 2: Recruit and attract quality teachers who will provide learning aligned to students' needs, TWDL & GATE programmatic objectives.

Objective 3: Foster a more collaborative PLC environment for teachers to learn from one another.

Rationale:

To expand opportunities for all students who will have an opportunity to learn according to advanced strategies that can meet their individual needs.

Furthermore, the overall advanced learning and GATE opportunities should be as inclusive as possible to align with Hollinger and TUSD's mission, vision and goals. Recent research has also demonstrated that a GATE cluster model benefits more students in learning more effectively. In fact, there are several studies which demonstrate that cluster grouping of gifted students allows them to learn together while avoiding permanent grouping arrangement for children of other ability levels. (*Improving Performance for Gifted Students in a Cluster Grouping Model*; Brulles, D., Saunders, R., Cohn, Sanford; <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ910197.pdf>)

Providing all students, including gifted students, with highly qualified teachers is the key to effective learning. Therefore, implementing a cluster model also benefits teachers as they are able to share teaching strategies and learn from one another in ways that benefit all students. This is because teacher collaboration taking place within a true RTI driven system is helped by having a simpler and more effective clustered model for GATE students.

When teachers are able to share teaching and learning strategies with one another, a more authentic and effective PLC culture will be realized. This is because a clustered GATE program will make teacher sharing of students a necessity. This leads to a cross-pollination of best practices being shared by teachers working with GATE students in a more inclusive environment alongside other advanced learning programs, such as Hollinger's Two-Way Dual Language program.

#### **IV. USP Program Background**

Expanding access to, and participation in, all forms of advanced learning experiences by the two target classes of students was one of the major elements of the USP's focus on enhancing academic outcomes for target-class students (Section V.A of the USP). Pursuant to the USP, TUSD developed (and the Court approved) the ALE Policy Manual, which provides a blueprint and catalog of the district's ongoing efforts to promote and increase participation in its ALE opportunities. The provision, and expansion, of GATE-method education at the elementary and junior high-class levels is a significant component of the ALE Policy Manual.

Initially, TUSD's GATE expansion efforts focused on the self-contained GATE model, in which GATE educational services are provided only to students who are determined to be gifted by administering the COGAT test ("qualified students"). This limited the number of students who could receive GATE and tended to reduce access to the targeted classes, who were underrepresented among GATE-qualified students. Thus, the focus for early expansion efforts was on (a) outreach to target-class families to persuade them to have their students tested, and (b) alternative testing for target-class students who did not qualify under COGAT but might actually be gifted by other measures. This did lead to some growth of the program, and some improvement in the demographics of students who received

GATE services. Indeed, the proportion of students receiving GATE services has, for at least the last decade, been significantly higher than most comparable school districts in the state.

However, during the mid-teens, two factors combined to change the approach. First, research began to show that using the cluster GATE model, in which gifted teaching methods are used in classrooms with clusters of GATE-qualified and other students together, appeared to provide significant academic benefits for both groups of students. Second, at the same time, TUSD's fierce efforts in both recruiting and growing its own teachers who were certified as GATE teachers resulted in a significant increase in the number of TUSD teachers who could teach using gifted methods. These two factors offered an opportunity to expand the number of students – and particularly the number of African American and Latinx students – who could enroll in classrooms using gifted teaching methods. TUSD thus changed the focus of its GATE expansion to the cluster model. The change was presented to, and approved by, the District Court. Over the last few years of court supervision, as a result of the expansion of the cluster GATE program, the number of African American and Latinx students who were enrolled in classrooms using GATE methods of instruction increased dramatically and was one of the significant success stories to which the Court pointed in terminating supervision.

**V. Impact Analysis: Impact on Protected Classes (AA, LatinX, including EL students).**

**A. Impact on Effectiveness of USP Program or Activity**

The proposed change from self-contained GATE to cluster GATE at Hollinger is consistent with the change in overall focus of the district's continuing equity efforts under the USP and the ALE Policy Manual. Adding a GATE Cluster site will increase the overall numbers of students who receive GATE instruction. This will also serve the Hollinger community by leaning into the uniqueness of Hollinger's ability to provide a small, personalized middle school experience (grades 6-8) and an overall more personalized learning experience for elementary students (K-5).

**B. Impact on Other District Programs or Obligations under the USP**

1. Compliance – *No impact*
2. Student Assignment – *Will likely increase enrollment due to expanded access*
3. Transportation – *No impact due to incentive transportation already being available in these areas*
4. Admin/Certified staff– *No impact since there are already GATE training and recruitment structures for these teachers in place*

5. Quality of Education – *No impact on other areas of Section V since these areas already support ALE recruitment by outreach, etc.*
6. Discipline – *No impact*
7. Family and Community Engagement – *No impact*
8. Extracurricular Activities – *No impact*
9. Facilities and Technology – *No impact*
10. Accountability and Transparency – *No impact*

### C. Data Sources

The data below shows how many students, by ethnicity, have participated in both GATE TWDL and TWDL over the years at Hollinger. The GATE Cluster model will provide the opportunity for TWDL students to also engage with and benefit from a TWDL GATE teacher. Since students participating in TWDL has historically been greater than or equal to the number of GATE TWDL students, the number of students who could participate in GATE Cluster and benefit from GATE strategies could potentially double.

School	enrollment_year	Program Model	Hisp	AfAn	White	NaAm	Multi	AsAm	Totals
Hollinger	2023	TWDL	111	0	2	0	0	0	113
Hollinger	2023	TWDL-GATE	117	0	9	2	1	0	129
Hollinger	2022	TWDL	143	0	5	2	0	0	150
Hollinger	2022	TWDL-GATE	139	0	11	2	0	0	152
Hollinger	2021	TWDL	197	0	5	3	1	0	206
Hollinger	2021	TWDL-GATE	153	0	11	4	2	0	170
Hollinger	2020	TWDL	175	0	2	3	0	0	180
Hollinger	2020	TWDL-GATE	152	0	13	5	2	0	172
Hollinger	2019	TWDL	175	0	2	5	1	0	183
Hollinger	2019	TWDL-GATE	155	0	15	5	3	2	180
Hollinger	2018	TWDL	134	0	3	3	0	0	140
Hollinger	2018	TWDL-GATE	124	0	13	2	3	3	145

### D. Assumptions

- Will contribute to increased teacher collaboration leading to the sharing of learning strategies being delivered to all students.
- Increase the number of Latinx and African American students who are enrolled in classrooms using GATE methods of instruction.
- Enhance the attraction and recruitment efforts of teachers for Hollinger K-8.
- Increased access to GATE strategies will serve to break down barriers, expose students to increased levels of inquiry, and increase students' confidence to participate in advanced learning experiences (ALE) at the high school level.

## **E. Research Based Sources**

Research shows the gifted cluster model benefits all students by offering tailored instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners, promoting collaboration and diverse perspectives within the classroom, fostering academic growth for all students through exposure to challenging material and enriched learning experiences, and creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment that accommodates a wide range of abilities and interests.

- [Improving Performance for Gifted Students in a Cluster Grouping Model](#)
- [Cluster Grouping for the Gifted and Talented: It Works!](#)
- [Promoting Student Achievement and Exemplary Classroom Practices through Cluster Grouping: A Research-Based Alternative to Heterogeneous Elementary Classrooms.](#)

## **VI. Conclusion**

The proposed action aims to expand the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program at Hollinger by transitioning the GATE Self-Contained Two-Way Dual Language (TWDL) program to a GATE TWDL Cluster Program. This strategic shift is intended to increase GATE access for students, particularly those who have been underrepresented in GATE programs. Also, it will help establish a unified K-8 GATE TWDL program at Hollinger. Initially, TUSD's GATE expansion efforts focused on the self-contained GATE model, limiting GATE educational services to "qualified students" determined through the COGAT test. This approach has restricted the number of students at Hollinger who can receive GATE instruction, leading to reduced access for underrepresented students. The districtwide enrollment loss has also impacted TWDL & TWDL GATE classes, affecting teacher retention and student recruitment.

The combination of TWDL & TWDL GATE classes for certain grade levels will assist in the retention of teachers and ultimately contribute to the recruitment and retention of students who will receive a learning experience aligned with their needs. This is crucial for maintaining a conducive learning environment and ensuring student success. Transitioning to a unified K-8 GATE TWDL program at Hollinger will provide a comprehensive educational approach that caters to the diverse needs of students. This will create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, fostering the development and growth of all learners.

To function as a true Professional Learning Community (PLC), the Hollinger teaching staff requires common planning and collaboration time. This will enable them to share and learn from one another, enhancing their ability to effectively impact all learners and create a positive educational experience. The challenges faced by GATE expansion efforts have highlighted the need for a more inclusive

and accessible approach to gifted education. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensure that all students can benefit from GATE programs and receive the support they need to thrive academically.

Accessible GATE programs play a crucial role in providing equitable educational opportunities for all students. By expanding access to GATE programming, Hollinger can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, fostering the development and growth of all learners. The transition to a GATE TWDL Cluster Program will open new opportunities for students who have been underrepresented in GATE programs. This shift will contribute to a more diverse and enriched educational experience, ensuring that all students have the chance to excel and thrive in an inclusive learning environment.

Date: April 30, 2024

Prepared by: Mark Alvarez, Assistant Superintendent; Christopher Jackson, Hollinger Principal; Sky Saczko, Director of Advanced Learning Experiences.

Reviewed and Approved: Dr. Trujillo 5/19/24