

EXPLORATIONS

Issue 4, September 2020

Faces of GATE

When we speak of students who are gifted and talented, the most likely image that comes to mind is of well behaved kids getting good grades. But this is not the only face of GATE. There are six different types of GATE learners whose characteristics have been studied and unique needs pinpointed. But any one of these labels does not describe a single student in his/her entirety. Students may be a combination of more than one of these labels.

Not all gifted students are the same



Type I -
The Successful



Type II -
The Divergently Gifted



Type III -
The Underground



Type IV -
The Dropouts



Type V -
The Double-labelled



Type VI -
The Autonomous
Learner

Type I – Successful: This student does well in school and doesn't tend to get in trouble. As many as 90% of GATE identified students may fall into this category. They need opportunities for challenge and risk-taking, mentorships and independent learning. They need to be with intellectual peers.

Type II – Challenging/Creative (Divergently gifted): These students are creative, stand up for convictions, and question rules. They need tolerant adults, support for their creativity and strengths, and opportunities to build self-esteem.

Type III – Underground: These students may start out as type I – Successful, but later conceal or deny their abilities, looking for social accep-

tance. Adults can provide alternate ways to meet academic needs, the freedom to make choices, and to help with college/career planning.

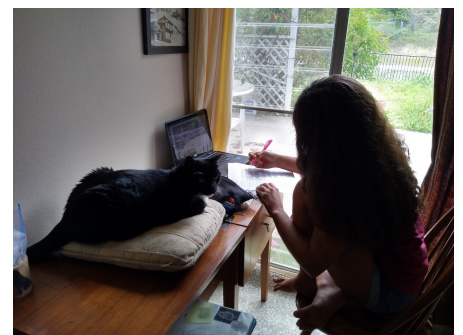
Type IV – At risk/ dropout: These students may feel angry, resentful, depressed, and/or explosive. They may need individual or family counseling, out-of-classroom learning experiences, mentorships, and a working relationship with an adult they trust.

Type V – Twice-Exceptional/ double-labeled: These students are gifted, but also have other special needs such as a learning disability, autism, ADHD, or others. These students need emphasis on and challenge in their areas of strength.

Type VI – Autonomous: These students exhibit some Type I characteristics, but perform more than the work required. They create opportunities for themselves, are self-directed and independent. They need opportunities related to their passions, mentorships, and removal of time and space restrictions for their studies.

Food for thought: School 2.0

The education system that was our solid foundation just six months ago is, unimaginably, no more. We've all been hoping that it would return soon, but soon has come and gone and here we are, in an alternate reality.



High school English class

But should we really wish for it to come back?

In his book, *The End of Average*, Todd Ross details how the school system we all grew up on

was designed in the early 1900's to provide workers to the factory system.

Ross says that according to plan, "Students were divided into groups by age (not by performance, interest, or aptitude) and these groups of students rotated through different classes, each lasting a standardized period of time. School bells were introduced to emulate factory bells, in order to mentally prepare children for their future careers."

We're trying to prepare kids today for the technological age and not for the factory. In terms of schooling, is it a good thing that Covid has forced a revolution and an opportunity to make real changes in the system? How do we get in on the conversation of what those real changes will look like?

This is a shameless plug for parents to get involved in the discussion. Please reach out to GATE-DAC and the rest of the district to give feedback, ideas, and concerns. Together, we can make real change.

GATE Challenges

Servicing GATE has always been more difficult than servicing the needs of other student groups. There are intrinsic issues that stand as hurdles: no concrete definition of what it is, testing systems that tend to filter out minority and low-income students, hints of elitism. And there are extrinsic issues that stem from the fact that not many people understand its complexities. The underlying issues are not obvious and need to be pointed out.

Overexcitabilities are a great example of GATE's complexities. The higher students are on the Bell curve, the more they exhibit certain overexcitabilities that affect not just schooling, but every other aspect of their lives. Another example is Aysnchronous growth where the mind's capabilities develop faster than communication and locomotor capabilities. There are documented needs for depth and complexity and needs to interact with like-minded individuals.

Training teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, and even students who are old enough to understand the issues goes far toward servicing GATE needs. Money set aside specifically for ser-

ving the needs is also helpful. The state of California, however, does not require GATE training in teacher credentialing programs. It does not mandate GATE testing or GATE programs in public schools. It attaches no money specifically for GATE, leaving funding decisions to individual districts.

CVUSD has chosen to keep its GATE program through repeated times of budgetary crunch. The program has gained momentum in recent years, which Covid will be hard pressed to extinguish.

All GATE facilitators in elementary and middle schools were trained and certified last year. There was an evening lecture series for parents for the first time, and ongoing enrichment activities for students at school and district levels. This year, the GATE program is looking to keep as many of last year's features as possible while adding new ones. For the first time ever, we now have facilitators in high schools.

GATE is a continual work in progress. Triumphs and setbacks rely heavily on people's understanding of what it entails. As an advisory body, one of GATE-DAC's missions is to help as many people as possible, especially those who work with students and those that make decisions that affect students, understand its many facets. We want them to understand as well, that servicing GATE is not an exclusive endeavor. It lends itself to serving all students.

Cool Links and Resources

CVUSD GATE Resources & Articles page

www.conejousd.org/Departments/Student-Services/Student-Support-Services/Gifted-and-Talented-Education-GATE/Resources-and-Articles

National Association for Gifted Children (Virtual instruction for Gifted Students article):

<https://www.nagc.org/virtual-instruction-gifted-students>

Community Exploration

What is this a picture of?

Hint: Its owner was done with it.



Answer: A shed lizard skin