

A Glossary: Common Terms Related to Gifted Education

Developed by the California Association for the Gifted (CAG)

This glossary has been designed to present the commonly accepted meaning of each term and an interpretation of its importance to gifted education.

Ability Grouping

A classroom strategy for grouping students by need, interest, or ability. Groups can be formed and reformed to meet varied instructional purposes. Ability grouping is not synonymous with “tracking.”

CAG advocates the flexible ability grouping of gifted students. They need to be in groups with other gifted students for an integral part of their school day. Ability grouping may take many forms such as cluster grouping, part-time grouping, special day classes, and special schools.

(See also Heterogeneous/Homogeneous Grouping, Flexible Grouping, and Tracking.)

Academic Excellence

The expectation that each student work at an appropriately high level to meet or exceed academic standards as defined by the state, district, and/or school. Learning and performing for each student should be at a challenge level commensurate with each student’s skills and developed abilities.

CAG supports the idea that the standards of excellence and appropriate challenge for gifted learners should be defined by their abilities and needs, as well as the expectations held for them by experts in various fields, educators, parents, and the community.

Accelerated Learning

A strategy for pacing students through the curriculum at a rate commensurate with their advanced ability. The pace should allow them to go as far and as fast as their interests and abilities permit.

CAG supports the use of acceleration as an effective method to meet the needs of gifted learners. Early entrance, advancement by whole grade or in specific areas of content strength, and compacting the curriculum are among a variety of methods that allow for acceleration of curriculum for gifted students.

Accountability

Demonstration that students, teachers, administrators, and other personnel in schools, districts, and states are meeting their educational responsibilities. This includes meeting agreed to standards of student performance, curricular and program goals, fiscal expenditures, and other stated educational goals and objectives.

CAG supports a reasonable approach to accountability to ensure that all students are taught effectively and that the needs of gifted students are met. It is important that appropriate and meaningful standards and goals are set if accountability is to be effective. Neither assessments nor standards should be punitive or limiting.

Advanced Placement (AP)

A national program that permits high schools to offer courses that meet criteria established by higher education institutions. Secondary students may gain college credit and/or advanced college placement by successfully passing a nationally given and scored Advanced Placement examination.

CAG supports Advanced Placement opportunities as one method to meet the needs of gifted and other able learners. AP should never be the only provision made for gifted learners in secondary gifted programs.

Affective Learning

Outcomes of teaching that incorporate the development of social and emotional skills into the curriculum. The study of values, attitudes, and knowledge and appreciation of self and others are included.

CAG supports the development of the whole child. In addition to academic opportunities, guidance services need to be provided for gifted students to meet their social and emotional needs.

Asynchrony

A term for the uneven rates of cognitive, emotional, and physical development often found in gifted children. As advanced cognitive abilities and heightened intensity combine, inner experiences and awareness are created within the gifted student that are qualitatively different from the norm. Developmental differences increase as the level of asynchrony increases.

CAG recognizes that as asynchrony increases higher intellectual capacity renders gifted students vulnerable and advocates for modifications in parenting, teaching, and counseling in order for gifted students to develop optimally.

At-Risk

A designation for students who show indications that they may underachieve or drop out of school. Unmet economic, physical, emotional, linguistic, and/or academic needs may inhibit a student's ability to learn, value education, and/or attend school.

CAG recognizes that gifted students may also be at-risk students and require services as a result. CAG advocates that educators and counselors be trained to recognize at-risk behaviors in gifted students and provide appropriate services. (See also Underachieving.)

Alternative Assessment

A process of evaluating student learning using portfolios, student products, performances, and in-class observations to replace or supplement the commonly used written assignments or tests.

Alternative assessment allows students to be evaluated with regard to their individuality and creativity.

CAG supports alternative assessment practices for gifted students as an effective way to gain accurate information regarding the level of their knowledge and skills. (See also Authentic Assessment and Portfolio Assessment).

Authentic Assessment

A process of evaluating student learning using portfolios, student products, performances and in-class observations to replace or supplement the commonly used written assignments or tests.

Authentic assessment allows students to be evaluated with regard to their individuality and creativity using assessment tasks that more closely replicate real world issues or problems..

CAG supports authentic assessment practices for gifted students as an effective way to gain accurate information regarding the level of their knowledge and skills. (See also Portfolio Assessment, one method of authentic assessment.)

Block Grant Funding

The legislative provision for combining funds for numerous approved educational programs together as one funding source. Such co-mingling of program funds allows the administration of the district or state to decide the amount of funds to be spent on any given program included in the block according to its perceived priority of need.

CAG does not approve of the practice of block grant funding as it is most commonly used, because such a provision does not ensure the allocation of appropriate funding for any of the programs within the block. Historically, when the funding for gifted education programs have

been placed within block grants, these programs are given very low priority and often are minimally funded if at all.

Bloom's Taxonomy

A term that refers to the first of two handbooks written as a set of standard classifications of the goals of American educational system. The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives Handbook I: Cognitive Domain was written by a committee of college and university examiners chaired by Benjamin S. Bloom. The term cognitive is used to include activities such as remembering and recalling knowledge, thinking, problem solving, and creating. The taxonomy identifies six levels of goals or outcomes in the cognitive area and presents them in a hierarchical order; from lowest to highest they are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Use of the cognitive taxonomy can help teachers gain perspective on the emphasis given to the levels of outcomes in their curriculum planning and encourage more use of the higher levels, especially appropriate for gifted students. The second handbook, written by Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, classifies educational goals in the affective domain that emphasizes feeling tones and emotions, and varies from simple attention to qualities of character and conscience.

CAG supports the use of Bloom's Taxonomy as a tool to provide more effective and appropriate curricular planning for gifted students

Categorical Program

Special-purpose programs funded with grants from the state and/or federal government. Funds from the grant must be spent for the purposes (specific goals) defined in statutes by the state and/or federal government.

CAG supports the practice of funding categorical programs. Gifted students are among the groups for whom special programs have been established at both the state and federal level.

Categorical programs also serve low-income families, students who are disabled, and those who

are limited English speaking. Some gifted students may be served by one or more of these categorical programs as well as the gifted program.

Cluster Grouping

A method for organizing a heterogeneous classroom by assigning a group of students with similar needs, interests, and/or abilities to the same classroom to provide more effective learning.

CAG supports cluster grouping for gifted students in a heterogeneous classroom. Cluster grouping allows gifted students to work during the academic day with other gifted students who share similar needs, interests, and abilities as an integral part of their learning. CAG recommends a minimum of five to seven gifted students in a cluster.

Cognitive Learning

The act or process of knowing that includes awareness, remembering and recalling knowledge, thinking, problem solving, creating, and judging that can be expressed or acquired by linear or spatial means. Linear cognition may include analysis, synthesis, and/or critical thinking; spatial cognition may include patterns, gestalts, and/or visual thinking. Cognitive learning is the focus of schooling in general and, at high levels, of most gifted programs.

CAG supports the attainment of cognitive learning and advocates for a balance with the more emotional and social aspects of affective learning in all educational experiences to ensure well-rounded and caring students.

Collaborative Learning

A teaching strategy whereby a group of students is expected to share expertise and effort in order to create a common project or product.

CAG supports collaborative learning as a way to improve and extend gifted students' understandings and skills. Collaborative learning permits gifted students to share responses with other students of like abilities and/or interests. (See also Cooperative Learning.)

Compacting

A system in which students are given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and concepts required in the regular curriculum rather than forcing them to repeat already learned material. By demonstrating the level of proficiency in the basic curriculum the student can then be allowed to use instructional time to engage in more appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

CAG supports the use of compacting as an important way to match the learning needs of gifted students with the content and skills offered in the classroom. Gifted learners must continue to be given stimulating educational experiences appropriate to their levels of ability if they are to realize their potential.

Competency Testing

Evaluation procedures that measure a student's acquisition of the knowledge and/or skills that have been identified as necessary to the understanding of a lesson, unit, or area of study.

Competencies are the standards or goals that have been established by a teacher, school, district, or state that identify the requisite abilities or information a student must have to accomplish a task or master a discipline.

CAG supports competency testing both prior to and following teaching and as a check for understanding. Such assessments allow appropriate curricular modification, grouping, and school placement for learning.

Complexity

The quality or process of thinking that combines many ideas or parts to develop complicated and interrelated wholes. A common characteristic of gifted students is to seek complexity in their

thinking and to understand complex concepts and generalizations at a more sophisticated level. Making connections with other ideas, showing the relationship between concepts, and introducing understandings from perspectives other than the student's own can meet this need. Such experiences require students to find multiple solutions across the disciplines, over time, and from different perspectives.

CAG supports the use of complexity as one method for differentiating the curriculum. Its use can be best addressed by the use of universal themes and interdisciplinary instruction as a part of the educational experience.

Constructivism

A theory of learning based on the premise that all learners understand or construct their worlds by synthesizing new experiences with what they already know and have previously experienced. Abstract concepts are best learned by students through exploration, reasoning, and discussion. In this way, students create as well as consume knowledge. A teacher using the theory of constructivism poses meaningful, open-ended questions; uses rich, primary-source materials; and demands quality evidence of student learning. In a constructivist classroom, students are encouraged to explore, collaborate, problem solve, and learn autonomously with work that is personally relevant.

CAG supports the basic premise of constructivism; however, the principles of constructivism should not be misused to lower standards or eliminate ability grouping and the pursuit of individual learning.

Content/Process/Product

Elements of curriculum, wherein content is the knowledge or skills to be learned, process is the way content is learned, and product is the outcome of learning such as written reports, illustrations, performances, or debates.

CAG supports the concept that gifted students need differentiated content, process, and products. For optimum learning for gifted students, the content must be extended in depth and complexity, the processes should be appropriately paced and emphasize creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking, and the product should be flexible and include variety and choice.

Cooperative Learning

A learning strategy that combines teamwork with individual and group accountability. A common task and/or project is assigned to a group of students who have varying ability levels. The purpose of such grouping is to prepare students to live in a democratic society; to help them understand group membership and group dynamics; and to allow them to practice both leadership and follower skills. On occasion, students who have similar ability levels are grouped together to work cooperatively.

CAG supports cooperative learning in some circumstances, but cautions against misuse of the process. One such misuse occurs when gifted students are assigned to help others learn rather than being allowed to advance at their own faster pace. Another misuse occurs when the gifted student in a heterogeneous group becomes responsible for the completion and quality of the project. (See also Collaborative Learning.)

Coordinated Compliance Review (CCR)

A review conducted by the California Department of Education of the planning, implementation, and assessment procedures used in district programs to determine their effectiveness and ensure that the legislated requirements are being met. For gifted and talented education (GATE) programs this includes the standards adopted by the state Board of Education. For example: (1) the program must have equitable access and opportunity for participation regardless of socioeconomic, linguistic or cultural background, and/or disabilities; (2) districts must provide all gifted students a comprehensive continuum of services and program options responsive to

their needs, interests, and abilities, based on philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support; (3) the curriculum provided must be differentiated and include instructional models and strategies that are aligned with and meet or exceed the state academic content standards and requirements of the state curriculum frameworks.

CAG supports the use of the Coordinated Compliance Review in the area of gifted education to aid districts in assessing their strengths and weaknesses in meeting the needs of gifted students and as a tool to improve the quality of service provided to them.

Core Curriculum

The content or subject areas specified by the California State Department of Education as basic for all students: reading, writing, mathematics, history/social studies, and science. The core curriculum is sequentially based. The state frameworks provide guidance to local districts in deciding the common knowledge and skills to be learned by all students of a particular grade.

CAG believes that the core curriculum must be modified to meet the educational needs of gifted students. A challenging curriculum for gifted students often may require going beyond grade level expectations. Research shows that appropriately differentiated opportunities for gifted students can enhance the educational experience for all students.

Creativity

The process of combining what exists into something new. The something new could be a procedure, an idea, or a product. By federal and state definition, creativity is a component of giftedness.

CAG supports fostering creativity as a part of all curricula for gifted students. Creativity needs to be nurtured in students to develop the abilities necessary to affect our society with new ideas and solutions to problems.

Criterion-Referenced Assessment

An assessment strategy that measures student performance related to the body of knowledge or skills on which the student is being evaluated rather than to the performance of other students. For example, a student can be said to have mastered 85% of the math skills designated for students in that subject area. The focus is on the domain of content being represented by the test.

CAG supports the use of criterion-referenced assessment for gifted students and believes such assessment to be important to developing effective GATE programs. Instructional planning for gifted students is better served by evidence about a particular student's level of knowledge and skill than by evidence about how students compare to one another.

Critical Thinking

The use of analytical thinking for purposes of decision-making. This includes the development of specific attitudes and skills such as analyzing arguments and points of view, understanding different perspectives, and reaching sound conclusions.

CAG supports curriculum for gifted students that includes opportunities to practice critical thinking in conjunction with subject matter acquisition and content mastery. (See also Content/Process/Product.)

Curriculum Compacting

A strategy used to give students validation for what they already know. It allows students who demonstrate mastery to omit portions of assigned curriculum, or to move more quickly through curriculum than would be typical. Students are thus able to “buy time” which can be used to accelerate content or to pursue enrichment activities while the unit is being taught to other students.

CAG supports the use of curriculum compacting as one means of providing appropriate learning experiences for advanced students. It is important, however, that the “time bought” be used by students to pursue their studies in greater depth and complexity, and to further their own

educational goals. Students should not be expected to use the extra time to serve as teachers' helpers, to tutor less advanced classmates, or to relearn work already mastered.

Depth

A process of thought that seeks to understand concepts and generalizations through the analysis of the rules and principles that support the larger idea. A common need of gifted students is to be able to explore a subject at a higher level of understanding by finding the principles and facts that make up its generalizations and concepts. Meeting this need for depth in thinking allows gifted learners to discover details and identify patterns and trends that lead to the formulation of unanswered questions and the understanding of overarching ideas.

CAG supports the use of depth as one method of differentiating the curriculum for gifted learners.

Differentiation

The modification of the curriculum to meet the unique needs of learners. It may include modifications in complexity, depth, pacing, and selecting among, rather than covering all, of the curriculum areas. The modification is dependent on the individual needs of the students.

CAG advocates for differentiation for all students in need of curriculum modification. There should be multiple paths for success in all classrooms. The major purpose of differentiation in the gifted program is to challenge the gifted student. Educational practices such as authentic assessment, collaborative learning, ungraded curriculum, and thematic interdisciplinary curriculum are not differentiated within themselves, but they can facilitate differentiation for gifted students.

Direct Instruction

An educational model wherein the teacher provides concepts or demonstrates skills that the students are expected to learn. The lecture method and individual or small group tutorials are examples of direct instruction.

CAG supports a variety of learning experiences, both teacher-directed and student-directed. All students have the right to be challenged to learn at the level where growth proceeds most effectively for them. Direct instruction for the gifted learner should be carefully planned to avoid repetition of course content that has already been mastered and to be paced commensurate with the learner's need.

Elitism

Often believed to be the selection and treatment of people as superior in some way and therefore favored. This connotation engenders negative feelings toward those selected. However, when defined as the selection and treatment of people who show evidence of unusual ability (e.g., athletic prowess, musical talent, or academic aptitude) and who with additional opportunities could become truly outstanding, elitism becomes a positive term.

CAG supports challenging programs for gifted students and believes that this should not be equated with negative views of elitism. CAG rejects the idea that providing differentiated learning experiences for gifted students is discriminatory, or that such experiences are a means of separating gifted students from, and/or valuing gifted students above, other types of students. Good gifted programs help students not only fulfill their academic potential, but also help them appreciate the contributions and diversity of others. The nurture of talents and abilities benefit all of society.

Enrichment

Activities that supplement the core curriculum. Such activities are generally not specified in the curriculum and are selected by the teacher and/or students in a given classroom.

CAG supports enrichment opportunities such as field trips, special speakers or demonstrations, special projects, and community involvement for all students. Enrichment materials such as computers, reference materials, literature books, and arts materials should be provided for all students. Such activities or material acquisitions do not constitute a gifted program or a differentiated curriculum. Enrichment opportunities for gifted students should involve them in interaction with new ideas and topics not ordinarily included in the core curriculum. The interaction should lead to a deeper understanding of the regular curriculum, with new knowledge emerging from the students' own creative efforts. (See also Core Curriculum.)

Equity

Equal, fair, and impartial learning opportunities and access to good teaching for all students.

Equal opportunities do not mean the same opportunities. In order to meet educational needs at all levels of development, these opportunities should begin at the student's level of development and encourage and enable all students to develop to their fullest potential.

CAG supports the concept that equity should allow for learning experiences especially designed to meet the needs of gifted students as well as other students with unique learning abilities.

Challenging programs must be provided for all students. Equity in the quality of education each student receives does not mean the outcome or standard for each student will be or should be the same.

Flexible grouping

A variety of grouping patterns that allows students to work in many configurations, sometimes alone, sometimes in pairs, sometimes in small or large groups. The choice the teacher makes for

organizing the type of grouping to be used may be based on the task, the need or level of the student, or the outcome desired. A student may work most effectively in different levels of grouping in different subjects; for example in a high group for math but a lower group in reading depending on the academic needs.

CAG supports flexible grouping as one method of structuring for effective instruction in a differentiated classroom.

Frameworks

The organization of a body of knowledge basic to the understanding of disciplines into levels of study that identify what the student should know and be able to do at each grade level.

California has established curriculum frameworks to guide teachers in the instruction of students to ensure coverage of all concepts and materials required in the core curriculum.

CAG supports the use of curriculum frameworks as guides for teachers, but recommends that appropriate modification of level and pacing be used for gifted students when assessment shows that they have mastered sections of knowledge and skill prior to the designated expectation.

Gifted and Talented Students

A label given to identify students who because of their unique and advanced abilities need special educational services to ensure their academic, social, and emotional growth and development. The only reason to identify gifted students is to provide appropriate placement and curriculum modifications.

As defined by California Education Code 52201: “Gifted and talented child, means a child enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school of this state who is identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability as defined pursuant to Section 52202.”

Section 52202 states: “For the purposes of this chapter, the demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability shall be defined by each school district governing board in accordance with regulations established by the State Board of Education. Each district shall use one or more of the following categories in defining such capability: intellectual, creative, specific academic, or leadership ability; performing and visual arts talent; or any other criteria which meets the standards set forth by the State Board of Education (pursuant to Section 52203). Each governing board shall also consider identifying as gifted or talented any student who has transferred from a district in which he or she was identified as a gifted and talented child.” Thus, each district establishes its own identification standards to meet the needs of its student population.

Federal legislation refers to gifted and talented when used in respect to students, children, or youth as “those who give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities” (P.L. 103-382, Title XIV, P. 388).

A range of giftedness is recognized including moderately, highly, and profoundly gifted students. *CAG advocates an inclusive definition of giftedness. However, all identification standards must include multiple and varied criteria and provide equity to members of underrepresented populations. Student products, standardized test results, student performance, and observational scales are some of the methods used in identification. Factors that may adversely affect student performance, such as economic hardship or linguistic difference, must also be considered. Students must be encouraged and allowed to demonstrate a wide variety of abilities and talents that traditionally are not measured by standardized tests.*

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)

A California state categorical program that permits but does not require services to gifted students. Funding is allowed to districts that apply to “provide a comprehensive continuum of services and program options responsive to the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students and is based on philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support” (ED 52205d and 52206a).

CAG strongly supports gifted and talented education as a major part of the mission of the organization and works directly with the state to provide services to educators, administrators, parents, and counselors who seek to implement GATE programs.

Grading

The evaluation of student work by teachers that is usually recorded in letter grades, numbers, percentages, or teacher comments and evaluations.

CAG supports grading practices for gifted students that are founded on appropriate assessment techniques and reflect student achievement in a differentiated curriculum. Comparing gifted students’ work to the norm of their age or grade peers is limiting to their educational development. Grading practices should be referenced to content and performance standards.

Graphic Organizer

A visual format for the organization and representation of information and ideas. Flow charts, concept maps, and webs are examples of graphic organizers.

CAG supports the use of graphic organizers as effective tools to assist in the teaching and learning process

Heterogeneous and Homogeneous Grouping

Two strategies for grouping students in the classroom to facilitate learning. Heterogeneous grouping refers to grouping students by age with no regard to demonstrated ability or level of

knowledge. Homogeneous grouping refers to grouping by the demonstrated need, ability, or interest of the students.

CAG advocates for flexible grouping of students for at least some part of the educational day in an appropriate setting, based on a commonality of the students' intellectual, academic, and/or affective needs. There should be defined educational experiences related to the criteria used for grouping.

Honors Class

A secondary level course specifically designed to be advanced in content, process, and product. Traditionally, students who meet prerequisite criteria are accepted into these courses.

CAG supports honors classes as one way to provide a more challenging and differentiated curriculum. Honors classes should be available for, but not limited to, identified gifted students. Honors classes should not be the only provision made for gifted students in secondary gifted programs.

Independent Study or Self-Directed Study

A strategy to allow students to follow individual or self-selected areas of interest and specific aptitude by designing and implementing their own study plans. Close monitoring by teachers is an essential component of independent study.

CAG supports independent study as an appropriate programmatic provision for gifted learners at any level. Independent study necessitates instruction and supervision as integral features of the program. Research and study skills must be taught for successful use of this strategy.

Individual Educational Plan (IEP)

A document that details customized goals, structures, environments, and activities that meet the educational needs of a particular special-needs student. The IEP is typically created by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, in conjunction with parents and the student, and is based on

assessments, observations, performance benchmarks, social adjustment, and level of progress.

The IEP is mandated for special education students but can also be used successfully with gifted students.

CAG supports the use of an IEP with gifted students as a means of ensuring that programming is customized to meet a student's individual needs. While an IEP may be used to structure the independent work of a student who is included in the regular education classroom and to identify outside resources and services, differentiated curriculum must still be provided in the classroom.

Individualization

A strategy that provides a specific program to meet the particular needs, interests, and/or abilities of an individual student for some part of his or her educational experience. It does not mean, however, that every child is working in isolation on a different level or a different subject at all times. It does mean that students are working with appropriate materials on levels of learning commensurate with their assessed ability, needs, and/or interests.

CAG supports individualization that is differentiated and results in challenging activities or assignments that are interactive and open-ended in content, process, and/or product.

Individualization can facilitate the education of gifted learners by utilizing mentorships, internships, independent research, and early college entrance programs among other learning strategies.

Intelligence

The aggregate of an individual's cognitive, affective, physical, and intuitive brain functioning. It is enhanced or inhibited by the interaction between the genetic pattern of individuals and the opportunities provided by the environment for individuals throughout their life spans. High levels of intelligence may be expressed in a variety of ways such as academic aptitude, insight,

and innovation, creative behavior, leadership, personal or interpersonal skills, visual and performing arts, or any combination of such abilities.

CAG advocates for increased opportunities for appropriate challenges for each individual, beginning with infancy and continuing throughout life, so that high levels of intelligence can have the possibility to be developed and maintained.

Intelligence Quotient (IQ)

The result of a measure of ability or aptitude at a given point in time, comparing children of the same chronological age. Standardized tests resulting in an IQ (e.g., Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)) must be administered by trained psychometrists to preserve the tests' validity and reliability. The IQ is computed by dividing the mental age (given by the result of an intelligence test) by the chronological age times 100. An average IQ at any age is 100. The beginning of the upper 2% on the Stanford- Binet Intelligence Scale is an IQ of 132. Originally the IQ was considered to be the sole way of measuring student intelligence. Current thinking now accepts the intelligence test with the resulting IQ as one of the many ways to measure a student's academic ability.

CAG continues to support the use of IQ tests as one effective method of identification when used with other measures or observations due to the high correlation between most schooling tasks and the cognitive tasks measured by IQ tests.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum

A method for structuring the curriculum to study a topic or concept by gathering and relating information and ideas from multiple subject areas.

CAG supports interdisciplinary learning as one method to differentiate the core curriculum.

Making connections or new relationships among disciplines enhances student understanding of the complexity of the content under study.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

A rigorous international pre-university course of study comprised of a comprehensive classics curriculum (languages, sciences, mathematics, and humanities) that emphasizes critical thinking, intercultural understanding and exposure to a variety of points of view. The Diploma program is designed for highly motivated secondary school students aged 16 to 19. Its graduates fulfill education requirements of various nations and have access to the world's leading universities. Only schools approved by the IB organization may offer the program. IB programs are also offered for students of ages 11 to 16 years (Middle Year Program) and students of ages 3 to 12 years (Primary Years Program).

CAG supports the International Baccalaureate program as one way of challenging highly motivated, academically gifted students in a program utilizing world-class standards. . IB should never be the only provision made for gifted learners in secondary gifted programs

Interventions

Modifying curriculum, varying assignments, or providing special services to students who are not meeting expectations.

CAG supports the practice of intervening cognitively, affectively, or physically to help students better meet their learning needs.

Learning Styles

A theory regarding the learning mode and/or learning environment most favored by individual students. For example, students may be primarily auditory learners rather than visual or kinesthetic learners. Some students are more successful in a structured environment, while others work best in an independent learning situation.

CAG supports the concept that students should have access to multiple and varied modalities, resources, and environments.

Magnet School or Magnet Program

A public school program that offers particular programs or services at selected individual school sites. Some magnet programs focus on specific learning areas such as math, science, or performing arts. Others are designed to serve a specific student population such as highly gifted or gifted and high ability students. Since space is usually limited, special entrance requirements may apply.

CAG supports a wide variety of alternative programs so that parents and students can select the most appropriate learning environment for a given child.

Mandated Program

A program required by law. In California, special education programs are mandated; gifted programs are not.

CAG supports, on-going advocacy as necessary in each district to initiate and to maintain gifted programs.

Mentor

A member of the community who is matched with a student to provide expertise and/or advice in a field of study. Mentors may also serve as role models.

CAG supports mentor programs as one way to meet the needs of gifted students.

Multiple Intelligences

The theory that intelligence can be expressed in a variety of ways and is not limited to the rational linear mode first suggested by Guilford in his Structure of Intelligence model. The current theory, commonly associated with Howard Gardner, identifies at least eight intelligences: linguistic, musical, spatial, logical-mathematical, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and natural.

CAG advocates the continued exploration and research of intelligence in all its forms of expression to promote better understanding of human potential and the development of giftedness.

Nomination

A process for referring students for assessment to participate in a specialized or categorical program such as the gifted program. The nomination process is the first step toward identifying students for the gifted program.

CAG supports a broad-based process that requests nominations from administrators, teachers, parents, and others in the community as well as self-referral to ensure the effectiveness of the identification process..

Non-Traditional Identification

Alternative methods of identification that use instruments and procedures to assess students and provide types of information unavailable through the more traditional norm-referenced and standardized tests.

CAG supports the use of non-traditional identification procedures. The diversity of students now in our schools necessitates a more varied approach to the assessment and interpretation of abilities. Traditionally, students have been identified as gifted on the basis of their general intellectual abilities (IQ) and/or specific academic aptitudes. (See also Alternative Assessment; Authentic Assessment.)

Norm-Referenced Assessment or Standardized Tests

Tests used to determine an individual's status with respect to the performance of other individuals on the same test. Tests are standardized by the use of a "norm" group. Such a group is comprised of a large number of individuals who take a particular test and whose scores then form the basis for establishing the average score and standard deviation of that test. Such a

standardized test is considered to be highly reliable when used with similar populations of individuals. The norms may be set with national, state, or local populations. In addition to being sure the norm group is similar to the population that is being tested, it is necessary to match the intent of the test with the purpose for which that test is being used. Lack of attention to these issues is considered to be the greatest misuse of standardized tests. Examples of standardized tests are the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC), and the California Achievement Test.

CAG supports the use of standardized tests as the means to collect one type of data for purposes of identification of gifted students. While standardized tests are often used in the screening and identification of gifted students, CAG cautions against this being the only type of assessment used. A wide range of data must be collected to gain an accurate view of a student's abilities and talents. (See Criterion-Referenced Assessment; Portfolio Assessment)

Novelty

The state or process of being new, unusual, or unique. A common characteristic of gifted students is the need to incorporate original interpretations of existing information by utilizing their personal views and interests. Meeting this need allows gifted students to construct unique and individualized meaning of the structure or concept allowing innovations and re-creations of old systems and ideas.

CAG supports the use of novelty to allow gifted students to express their understanding of subject matter creatively and with a higher level of learning.

Open-Ended Question

Questions used to provide opportunities for more than one solution or answer. Student response is judged by the logic used to explain or defend the solution or answer. Students must be able to

recognize tasks without a label, draw upon prior knowledge, generate relevant approaches on their own, and articulate their reasoning.

CAG supports the use of open-ended questions and assignments that allow gifted students to demonstrate creativity, divergent thinking, and respond at a more challenging level..

Outcome-Based Education (OBE)

A theory of structured learning in which decisions about curriculum and instruction are based on desired competencies students should demonstrate at the end of their formal education. The outcomes may include not only grades or scores on reports or tests, but student demonstrated performance of real-life abilities such as planning and design, creation and production, leadership, and organization.

CAG supports the basic premise of OBE so long as high standards are maintained, gifted learners are permitted to go beyond grade level expectations, and the required demonstrations are of significant learning. Curriculum must not be limited to prescribed outcomes.

Parallel Curriculum

A curriculum planning model that incorporates four parallel or concurrent tracks of development: the Core or Basic Curriculum – outlines the knowledge base or basic skills of the discipline; the Curriculum of Connections – extends the information from the core to allow interactions in various settings, circumstances, and time elements; the Curriculum of Practice – gives opportunities for students to function as professionals in a discipline; and the Curriculum of Identity – creates experiences in which students can increase their awareness of self and their connections with the discipline under study and they increase their expertise in the field.

CAG supports the use of the Parallel Curriculum as one strategy for planning to meet the needs of gifted students. The Parallel Curriculum promises to ensure that there is depth, novelty, and complexity within the curriculum that is essential to the education of gifted students.

Part-time grouping

An administrative structure that permits districts or schools to group students during a part of the school day according to abilities, needs, or interests. This provision makes classroom instruction more appropriate for the student and therefore more effective. A typical part-time grouping at the middle school level might place gifted students together for math and language arts, but have them participate in heterogeneous grouping for the rest of the school day. Elementary schools may group students by ability for reading.

CAG recognizes the use of part-time grouping as a way of organizing the classroom or structuring special programs to provide appropriate learning for gifted students. However, part-time grouping should not be used as the entire program for gifted learners nor as the only opportunity gifted students have to meet their need.

Peer Grouping

A grouping practice that indicates voluntary or assigned matching of students by shared characteristics such as age, ability, need, and/or interest to make teaching and learning more effective.

CAG supports the use of intellectual peer grouping and cross-age grouping as important practices for gifted students. Grade level or age peers are not necessarily intellectual peers as age is not a criterion for effective academic grouping. CAG also recognizes that gifted students must be with intellectual peers for at least part of each school day.

Portfolio Assessment

A collection of student products used to measure student progress and achievement and to determine or evaluate the appropriateness of placement in a program. This practice allows students to demonstrate a wide variety of abilities and talents that traditionally are not measured well by standardized tests. Selection of material for a portfolio is usually based on set criteria.

CAG supports portfolio assessment as an effective way to provide a profile of the gifted learner. It allows a broader and higher range of knowledge and skill to be demonstrated and more closely parallels what professionals do to exhibit the quality of their work. (See also Alternative Assessment; Authentic Assessment.)

Problem-Based Curriculum

An instructional model that enables learners to solve meaningful problems using knowledge and skills across the disciplines. It enables gifted students to practice critical and creative thinking while researching information and organizing ideas to solve real-world problems.

CAG supports the use of problem-based curriculum that involves the application of strategies and the acquisition of information that stimulates the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students.

Rubric

A guide or scale for scoring products or outcomes during the assessment process. Each interval along this assessment scale represents a specific level of learning from minimal to exemplary. The levels of learning are accompanied by specific descriptors of the type and quality of work expected in attaining the level of learning described.

CAG supports the use of rubrics to provide gifted students and their teachers with a clear understanding of what is considered outstanding work. The highest levels of a rubric or scoring guide can be used to set goals for and define the level of performance of gifted students in a given area.

Scaffolding

An instructional strategy that provides carefully structured and sequenced support for learning new and increasingly more difficult tasks. This approach places the teacher in a collaborative,

interactive role with students. Emphasis is on teacher modeling, extending, rephrasing, questioning, praising, and correcting, rather than on the teacher as the evaluator.

CAG supports scaffolding as an effective instructional model for classes with gifted students. It allows and encourages a shared exchange of ideas between teacher and students as students take on increasing responsibility for their own learning. This method encourages higher order reasoning as well as basic skills learning.

School Improvement Program (SIP)

A K-12 categorical program funded by the State of California. Funds are used for staff and curriculum development purposes, improvement in school climate and culture, management and leadership training, and direct classroom support.

CAG supports the use of SIP funds for the benefit of all students, including GATE students.

School provisions for serving gifted students must be reflected in all school-improvement plans.

School of Choice

A legal provision that allows opportunities for parents and students to select a school of attendance. California law permits all parents to choose which public schools they wish their children to attend given certain parameters including: space must be available (neighborhood children have priority), transportation must be provided by parents, and equal access must be assured.

CAG supports specialized opportunities for both inter- and intra-district student transfers to public educational institutions such as magnets, residential schools (e.g., Governor's Schools), or special schools (e.g., the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts).

Site-Based Management (In California, Site-Based Coordinated Program (SBCP))

A current school restructuring model, also known as school-based management, that gives local autonomy to schools for planning and decision making. A team of educators and community

members assume responsibility and accountability for all education programs in the school, striving to assist all students to reach their fullest potential. Under SBCP, categorical funds MUST be used to supplement, not supplant services to special needs students.

CAG supports site-based management when the school's approved instructional plan reflects differentiated curricular opportunities and delivery of services for gifted students. Under SBCP, categorical funds may be commingled to serve a greater number of students. Needs of gifted students must still be addressed.

Social-Emotional Needs

The affective needs of learners that include social relations, personal adjustment, motivation, emotional expression, values, and moral reasoning. Gifted students often experience unusual sensitivity to expectations and feelings of others, heightened self-awareness, early development of idealism and a sense of justice, emotional intensity, high expectations of self and others leading to perfectionism, advanced levels of moral judgment and profound level of altruism and global concerns. These and other areas of advanced or asynchronous social and emotional development can result in at-risk behaviors such as underachievement, symptoms of depression and/or create needs that can inhibit cognitive growth and contribute to feelings of insecurity and isolation.

CAG supports integration of social-emotional studies into the curriculum to ensure balanced and healthy growth for all students, especially the gifted learner whose needs in this area may be more intense and development more advanced.

Special Day Classroom

A program structure that provides a homogeneous setting for students with common needs and/or abilities whose needs are not being met in the regular classroom. The class can include

students of multiple grades or ages. This structure is sometimes referred to as a self-contained GATE classroom.

CAG supports the special day classroom as one way to facilitate the education of gifted students. This classroom setting allows for the appropriate implementation of differentiated curricula, including multidisciplinary learning, individualization, depth and complexity in content areas, as well as pacing that is appropriate to the gifted learner. It also provides the vital interaction among intellectual peers that is necessary for gifted learners.

Standards

Common categories and definitions for standards used in California are:

Content standards refer to the specific academic knowledge, skills, and abilities that all public schools in this state are expected to teach and all pupils are expected to learn in each of the core curriculum areas at each grade level. The teacher can determine specific and/or additional content standards for each lesson or course of study, preferably with the collaboration of the students.

Performance standards communicate the ways by which the content standards can be met or the evidence that can be used to show mastery of the content or skill being learned. Opportunities need to be given for students to have choice and input into the ways in which the outcomes of learning can be communicated and assessed.

Product standards or rubrics define and detail the criteria for and the way in which the learner can meet each level of competence or mastery for the curriculum content or skills for which content standards have been established. These standards allow a more precise evaluation of the degree to which a student has met the content standards. This function is sometimes referred to as the Performance Standards.

Program standards define the goals, design, implementation, and assessment of educational programs.

CAG supports the use of content, performance, product, and program standards that incorporate modifications for gifted students including advanced levels of depth, complexity, novelty, and acceleration. The inclusion of these elements in setting standards ensures that gifted students will be provided challenging learning experiences. Schools must be prepared for gifted students to exceed grade-level content standards and have materials and lessons pre-planned and accessible to facilitate their progress.

Sunset

A legislative term indicating the stated procedure and date of review for continuation or termination of a categorical program.

CAG supports the removal of the sunset date for legislation regarding the GATE program in 1993. The legislature has the prerogative, however, to re-insert a sunset clause if it chooses.

Talent development

The deliberate and planned effort to provide children with an enriched and responsive learning environment both at home and at school. This ensures that all of their talents and abilities will have the opportunity to develop to maximum levels.

CAG supports talent development because such appropriate stimulation will allow high levels of intelligence to develop in a variety of forms and expressions and will result in increased numbers of individuals operating or performing at the level of giftedness. Caution should be taken so that underachievers or other at-risk students are not overlooked by an over emphasis on cognitive talent development without a balance of opportunities to meet their affective needs.

Thematic Curriculum

Learning experiences that focus on the study of a specific topic, such as “animals,” or global concept, such as “change.” The theme is used in an interdisciplinary manner as an organizing element to provide continuity and knowledge of interrelationships in learning.

CAG supports the use of a thematic curriculum that is defined and focused and allows for continuous in-depth, interdisciplinary learning for gifted students.

Tiered Assignments

The practice of providing different assignments that reflect the individual level of the student’s knowledge of the content or skill in the core curriculum. While all students within the classroom work toward a common goal, tiered assignments allow each student to work at a level of difficulty, complexity, or depth appropriate to his or her understanding.

CAG supports tiered assignments as a way of challenging and meeting the individual learning needs of gifted students. Tiered lessons allow students with varying levels of knowledge within a classroom to meet common goals.

Tracking

An organizational practice that forms fixed groups of students that are rigidly maintained over time.

CAG advocates that no child should be subjected to an on-going educational program that perceives and instructs him or her in only one aspect of that child’s dimensionality. This word is

NOT synonymous with all forms of grouping and should not preclude providing opportunities for special needs groups or for any learner to be grouped at some time. Its inappropriateness for gifted learners can be seen when those with specific aptitude, or who perform at high levels in only one area, are inappropriately involved in advanced learning experiences in all areas of study.

Twice Exceptional

A term that identifies students with more than one area of exceptionality such as gifted, physically disabled, hearing impaired, visually impaired, learning disabled, or behaviorally disordered. An example would be a gifted student who is also diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder, a form of learning disability.

CAG advocates serving the special needs of all gifted students. In order to provide appropriate educational experiences for students who are twice exceptional, teachers of gifted learners must receive training in the educational needs of learners with disabilities, as well as having teachers of students with disabilities educated in the needs of students who are gifted.

Underachieving

A discrepancy between recognized ability and actual academic performance. The causes of underachievement may be social, emotional, physical, and/or academic and may originate at home or at school.

CAG supports programs that serve all gifted students, not just those who are achieving.

Inappropriate curriculum often has as its consequence the underachieving gifted student. Special counseling for underachieving gifted students may constitute an appropriate learning opportunity.