

SOUTH BAY

UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

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SUPERINTENDENT

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Tuesday, September 25, 2018

TO: Pine Hill & South Bay Parents/Guardians
FROM: Gary Storts, Superintendent
RE: South Bay Union ESD's Gifted & Talented Educational Program

2018/19 and Beyond: Gifted and Talented Education

I. Importance of Gifted & Talented Education

The South Bay Union Elementary School District values an educational environment where all students are pushed to discover their educational best by (1) challenging themselves, (2) embracing the opportunity to learn from mistakes, and (3) committing to finish whatever task is at hand. High achieving students are no exception.

Gifted and Talented students are those with high abilities who need gifted education programs that will challenge them in regular classroom, as well as in enrichment and accelerated settings to enable them to make continuous progress in their school career.

One report highlighted that more than 7 in 10 teachers of high-achieving students felt that these students were not challenged or given a chance to “thrive” in their classrooms, (Loveless & Duffett, 2008). Additionally, a longitudinal study of 25 years, (Park, Lubinski, & Benbow, 2007) demonstrated that identifying “giftedness” by age 13 foreshadows future career accomplishments – particularly in literary achievements and scientific-technical innovation.

II. Identification Process

The South Bay Union Elementary School District follows 3 research-based principles when identifying gifted students:

- (1) **Giftedness is dynamic, not static:** Identification needs to occur over time, with multiple opportunities to display gifts
- (2) **Giftedness is represented through all racial, ethnic, income levels, and exceptionality groups:** Underrepresentation is wide spread
- (3) **Giftedness may be exhibited within a specific interest or category – and even a specific interest within that category:** school leaders must seek ways to gather examples across various domains and contexts

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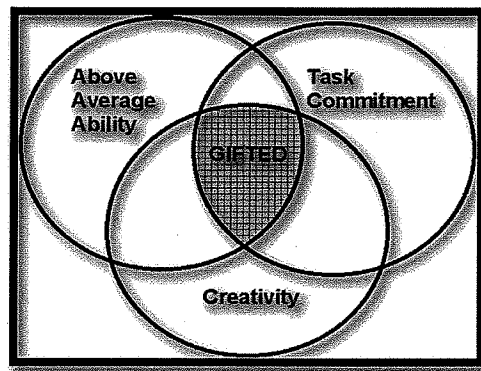
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Early identification will ensure the likely hood that gifts will be developed into talents.

South Bay Union Elementary School District uses a Gifted & Talented Education identification process pioneered by Dr. Joseph Renzulli, a nationally recognized leader in implementing the pedagogy of gifted educational teaching strategies. The American Psychological Association named Dr. Renzulli among the 25 most influential psychologist in the world. Dr. Renzulli has also received the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Award for Innovation in Education -- considered by many to be "the Nobel" for educators -- and was also a Gifted and Talented consultant on the White House Task Force on Education.

Dr. Renzulli's ground breaking work on, the *Three Ring Conception of Giftedness*, will be the method of identification that South Bay Union Elementary School District will employ. In this model of identification, giftedness consists of an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits; these clusters being (1) above average general ability, (2) high levels of task commitment, and (3) high levels of creativity. Gifted and talented children are those possessing or capable of developing this composite set of traits and then applying those attributes to any potentially valuable area of human performance. Children who manifest or are capable of developing an interaction among the three clusters require a wide variety of educational opportunities and services that are not ordinarily provided through regular instructional programs.



Three Ring Conception of Giftedness

South Bay Union ESD will apply the Three Ring Conception of Giftedness in the following manner:

(1A) General ability: (> 95 percentile ranking on either STAR READING or STAR MATH)

or

(> 88 percentile ranking on both STAR READING and STAR MATH)

- High levels of abstract thinking, verbal and numerical reasoning, spatial relations, memory, and word fluency.
- The automatization of information processing; rapid accurate, and selective retrieval of information.

(1B) Specific Ability: (Teacher/Staff or Parent Recommendation)

- The application of various combinations of the above general abilities to one or more specialized areas of knowledge or areas of human performance (e.g., the arts, leadership, administration).
- The capacity for acquiring and making appropriate use of advanced amounts of formal knowledge, tacit knowledge, technique, logistics, and strategy in the pursuit of particular problems or the manifestation of specialized areas of performance.
- The capacity to sort out relevant and irrelevant information associated with a particular problem or areas of study or performance.

(2) **Task Commitment: (Teacher Recommendation and Report Card Data)**

- The capacity for high levels of interest, enthusiasm, fascination, and involvement in a particular problem, area of study, or form of human expression.
- The capacity for perseverance, endurance, determination, hard work, and dedicated practice. Self-confidence, a strong ego and a belief in one's ability to carry out important work, freedom from inferiority feelings, drive to achieve.
- The ability to identify significant problems within specialized reason; the ability to tune in to major channels of communication and new developments within given fields.
- Setting high standards for one's work; maintaining an openness to self and external criticism; developing an aesthetic sense of taste, quality, and excellence about one's own work and the work of others.

(3) **Creativity: (Teacher and Staff Recommendation)**

- Fluency, flexibility, and originality of thought.
- Openness to experience; receptive to that which is new and different (even irrational) in thoughts, actions, and products of oneself and others.
- Curious, speculative, adventurous, and "mentally playful" willing to take risks in thought and action, even to the point of being uninhibited.
- Sensitive to detail, aesthetic characteristics of ideas and things; willing to act on and react to external stimulation and one's own ideas and feelings.

III. **What Will Gifted & Talented Education Will Look Like at Pine Hill and South Bay**

Gifted education can be delivered in a number of ways, including pull-out programs. Both Pine Hill and South Bay have a dedicated 30-minute block of time each day that is specialized and tailored to meet the needs of each individual student. Some students receive extra support in Reading or Math, other participate in Science, Technology, Engineering or Math offerings. For identified students, gifted education will take place during this time each day and will utilize the *Odyssey of the Mind* creative problem-solving program. <https://www.odysseyofthemind.com/>

South Bay Elementary identified gifted students will begin *Odyssey of the Mind* around the beginning of the 2nd trimester, while Pine Hill's gifted education will begin closer to the start of the 3rd trimester.

Principal Beall, Principal Becksted, and I will be reaching out to the families of identified students over the next couple of months to go over the gifted program in greater depth, as well as to answer any questions that you may have. Until then, please continue to encourage your child(ren) to always try their best, embrace stumbles as learning opportunities, and to always complete the task at hand. We look forward to adding an additional layer our exceptional school-and-home partnership.

Sincerely,



Gary Storts

cc: South Bay Union ESD Governing Board of Trustees
South Bay Union Elementary School District Employees