



Welcome to the MES Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Program

Curriculum Chat
August 7, 2025

Agenda:

- Welcome & Introductions
- The Purpose of the GATE program
- Schedule
- GATE Standards
- Learning Units
- Q & A

GATE Team



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What does a gifted child look like?

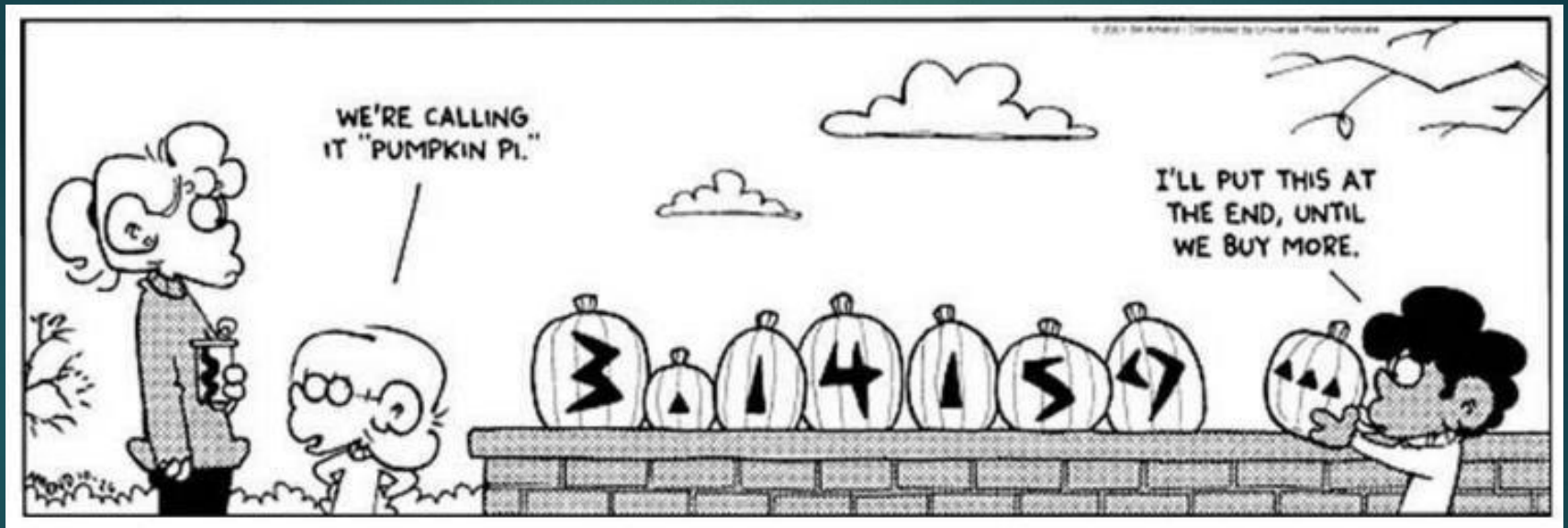
What makes a child gifted
and talented may not always
be good grades in school,
but a different way of
looking at the world and
learning.

-Chuck Grassley

snapchamp

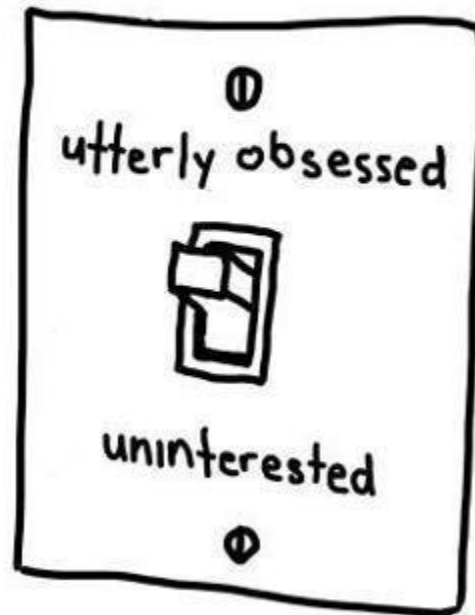


For example, this!

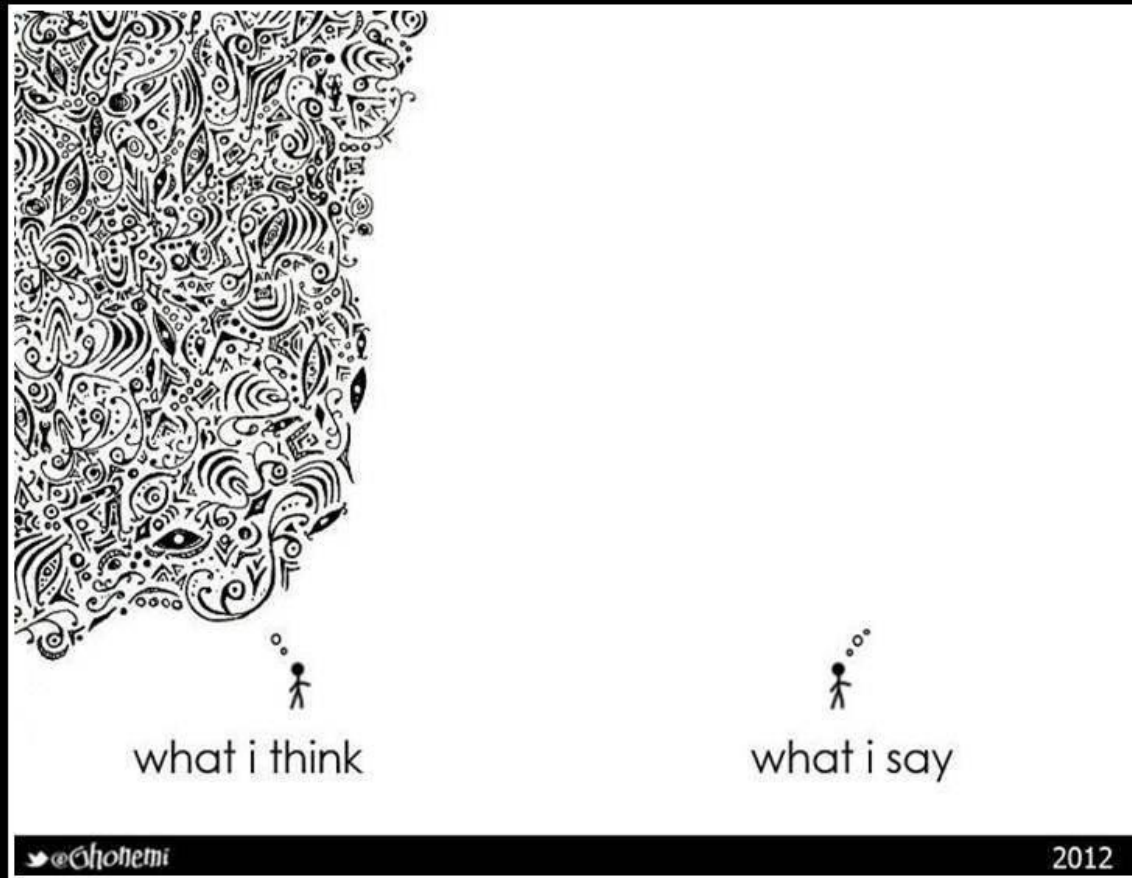


This, too...

how my brain works.



And this!



I may choose not to speak.
But that doesn't mean I can't think of anything to say.

So, what is the purpose of
a gifted program?

Gifted Kids

don't need

MORE

work,

they need **MORE**

MEANINGFUL

work.

– Miss Giraffe

APS Gifted Department's Mission & Vision

Our Vision

Gifted and Talented Education in Atlanta Public Schools will architect globally competitive, critical, and creative thinkers of the 21st Century.

Our Mission

Through advocacy and innovation, the unique needs of gifted and talented students will be recognized, valued, and nurtured so their inspired minds are equipped to change the world.

APS Gifted Program Standards:

1. Advanced Communication Skills
2. Creativity
3. Creative Problem Solving
4. Global Citizenship
5. Higher Order Thinking Skills
6. Leadership
7. Advanced Research Skills
8. Social Emotional Learning

MES Gifted Model

1st – 5th

Resource Model

Each grade level has an assigned day of the week during which identified students attend gifted classes. They attend lunch, recess, and specials with their homeroom classes. Each GATE student will have two GATE teachers during the year.

Teams for grades 3-5 are:

Ms. Hood & Mr. Hatcher

Ms. Duncan & Ms. Patel

Teams for grades 1 & 2 are:

Ms. Hood & Ms. Patel - 1st

Ms. Duncan & Mr. Hatcher - 2nd

2025 - 2026 Schedule

- ▶ **1st Grade:** Wednesday & Friday
- ▶ **2nd Grade:** Wednesday & Friday
- ▶ **3rd Grade:** Monday
- ▶ **4th Grade:** Thursday
- ▶ **5th Grade:** Tuesday

Ms. Hood's Units

1st Grade - Symbols Around the World

In this mini unit, Students will explore different countries and learn what makes each one special. They will use science to explore weather and landforms in different countries. Students will access technology to hear new languages and take virtual tours. Throughout the unit, students will build famous structures using various materials.

1st Grade - Ocean Commotion

In this mini unit, students discover how animals live and grow in their underwater homes and how their special adaptations help them survive in different ocean zones. We'll also learn why it's important to keep our oceans clean and safe, and how students can help protect sea life.

3rd Grade - National Parks Road Trip

This unit will allow students to learn all about America's beautiful National Parks. In Science, students will discover the animals, plants, and natural forces that make each park unique. In Math, students will plan and budget for a trip to visit five parks for a family of four. Students will also make a model of their favorite National Park!

4th Grade- History Mystery

In this unit, students will tackle a new historical puzzle—like "What really happened to the Mary Celeste Ship?" or "What happened on the Lost Colony of Roanoke?" Students will examine clues from maps, artifacts, documents, and photos. Students will use science to test ideas, technology to research and create, engineering to build models and so much more!

5th Grade - The Science Behind Forensic Science

In this unit, students will become junior detectives, exploring the world of forensic science and how it's used to solve mysteries. Through hands-on lessons, they'll learn to collect and analyze evidence, applying critical thinking and science skills to solve cases.

Ms. Patel's Units

1st Grade- Storybook STEAM

1st grade students will read stories and then put their critical thinking to use to engage in a book-inspired STEAM activity using the engineering-design process.

3rd Grade - National Parks

3rd grade students will use advanced research skills to explore many of our country's national parks. 3rd graders will budget for and plan a trip to visit 3 parks with their family, and make a 3D model of a selected or created national park.

4th Grade - Super Sleuth Mysteries

4th graders will investigate the components of the mystery genre. We will build inference skills as we study the clues of different mysteries in both text and podcast form. To end our unit, students will try their hand at writing their own mystery.

5th Grade- Inventors

Fifth grade students will be engaged a comprehensive unit that incorporates a historical fiction novel about Benjamin Franklin, learning about famous inventions and inventors, and embarking upon the invention process for themselves- developing their own business plan and pitching their idea to our mock Shark Tank judges.

Mr. Hatcher's Units

2nd Grade - Building Big

Through the engineering process of design, build, & test, students will gain an understanding of how monumental structures are constructed, how they fail, and how architecture informs society and culture.

3rd Grade - The Green City

Students will gain an understanding of how energy systems work. What is energy? How is it produced? How does energy consumption inform who we are as a society? These are just a few of the questions we will explore as we design and build “The Green City” in our classroom!

4th Grade - Water, Water, Everywhere

Students will go to the depths of the oceans, measure glaciers at the poles, find the longest rivers as they explore the amazing properties of water and take a deep dive looking at water as a natural resource on the planet.

5th Grade - Mission to Mars

Space...the final frontier. Fifth grade students will embark on a journey to Mars. How will we survive when we arrive? How is this trip similar to human discovery throughout human history? The journey begins...

Ms. Duncan's Units

2nd Grade - Mission: Make Work Easier!

Students will become young engineers, exploring how simple machines like levers and pulleys make work easier. Through hands-on experiments, they'll investigate force and motion while designing clever contraptions and solving real-world problems.

3rd Grade - Think Big, Live Small: The Tiny Home Challenge

Students will learn about housing challenges communities face as they dive into the eco-friendly and budget-friendly benefits of tiny home living. They will act as designers and consultants as they interview "clients," and use math skills like measurement and geometry to design a tiny home floor plan and model that fits their client's needs and budget before presenting their final project.

4th Grade - Economics & You

Fourth grade students will explore real-world applications of economic concepts in relevant and meaningful ways. Through a hands-on simulation, they will practice earning, investing, paying bills, and budgeting as an adult, hopefully preparing them to better survive their financial future!

5th Grade - Forensic Science: Solving Mysteries with Science

In this unit, students will become junior detectives, exploring the world of forensic science and how it's used to solve mysteries. Through hands-on lessons, they'll learn to collect and analyze evidence, applying critical thinking and science skills to solve cases.

What about grades?



- Students do not receive traditional grades in GATE. However, GATE teachers use a variety of tools to assess how well a student meets expectations toward overall progress.
- GATE progress reports are sent home twice a year, after each major unit of study.
- Progress reports address gifted standards and include narrative comments about the student.
- Students are expected to maintain satisfactory performance in regular education and gifted classes. Unsatisfactory performance in either may result in probation.

Sample Gifted Progress Report



School: Morningside Elementary

Unit Title: _____

Grade: _____

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Student Name: _____

Standard	Performance Level E, P, D, NI or N/A	Comments
Advanced Communication Skills (ACS): Learners will express ideas clearly and effectively using advanced communication skills for a variety of purposes.		
Advanced Research Skills (ARS): Learners will select and explore a topic, research using a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the information.		
Creativity (CRT): Learners will produce ideas & solutions using creative thinking skills.		
Creative Problem Solving (CPS): Learners will insightfully evaluate a variety of problems and arrive at innovative and reasonable conclusions.		
Global Citizenship (GCZ): Learners will develop an awareness of global cultures, connections & issues in order to become actively engaged citizens of the world, with respect for differing values.		
Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS): Learners will analytically critique a system or set of complex ideas, utilizing logic and reasoning skills in novel ways, to create and/or modify knowledge.		
Leadership (LEAD): Students will develop an awareness of leadership skills, analyze and evaluate components of leadership, and demonstrate an effective leadership style.		
Social Emotional Learning (SEL): Learners will develop an understanding of their unique social emotional needs as a gifted learner and develop their coping and social interaction skills.		
Overall Performance		

E – Exemplary: Skills taught, assessed, and exceeded; Student engages with the standard independently all of the time

P – Proficient: Skills taught, assessed, and mastered; Student engages with the standard independently most of the time

D – Developing: Skills taught, assessed, not yet mastered. Student engages with standard consistently with teacher support.

NI – Needs Improvement: Skills taught, assessed, not yet mastered; Student does not engage with standard even with teacher support.

N/A – Not Applicable: Skills not introduced or assessed at this time.

Feedback Descriptors by Standard

Advanced Communication Skills (ACS)

- **E – Exemplary:** Consistently expresses ideas clearly and effectively in both written and oral forms for diverse purposes, often exceeding expectations.
- **P – Proficient:** Expresses ideas clearly and effectively for most purposes with minimal guidance.
- **D – Developing:** Communicates ideas with some clarity and effectiveness but needs guidance for various purposes.
- **NI – Needs Improvement:** Struggles to express ideas clearly and effectively, even with support.
- **N/A – Not Applicable:** Skills are scheduled for future lessons and assessments.

Creativity (CRT)

- **E – Exemplary:** Regularly generates innovative ideas and solutions, demonstrating exceptional creative thinking.
- **P – Proficient:** Generates creative ideas and solutions regularly, showing strong creative thinking skills.
- **D – Developing:** Generates ideas and solutions but requires support to develop creative thinking fully.
- **NI – Needs Improvement:** Has difficulty generating ideas and solutions, needing significant guidance.
- **N/A – Not Applicable:** Skills are scheduled for future lessons and assessments.

Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

- **E – Exemplary:** Analyzes and critiques complex ideas with deep logic and reasoning, often creating new knowledge.
- **P – Proficient:** Analyzes and critiques complex ideas using logic and reasoning, demonstrating solid critical thinking.
- **D – Developing:** Analyzes and critiques ideas with guidance, showing development of critical thinking skills.
- **NI – Needs Improvement:** Struggles with analyzing and critiquing ideas, showing limited critical thinking.
- **N/A – Not Applicable:** Skills are scheduled for future lessons and assessments.

Leadership (LEAD)

- **E – Exemplary:** Exhibits strong leadership qualities, effectively leading groups and projects, and inspiring peers.
- **P – Proficient:** Demonstrates effective leadership skills, leading and participating in group activities.
- **D – Developing:** Participates in leadership activities with support, showing emerging leadership skills.
- **NI – Needs Improvement:** Shows limited participation in leadership activities, needing significant support.
- **N/A – Not Applicable:** Skills are scheduled for future lessons and assessments.

Global Citizenship (GCZ)

- **E – Exemplary:** Shows profound awareness of global cultures and issues, actively engaging in discussions and actions that promote global citizenship.
- **P – Proficient:** Displays awareness of global cultures and issues, engaging respectfully in related activities.
- **D – Developing:** Developing awareness of global cultures and issues, engaging with guidance.
- **NI – Needs Improvement:** Limited awareness of global cultures and issues, requiring significant guidance.
- **N/A – Not Applicable:** Skills are scheduled for future lessons and assessments.

Advanced Research Skills (ARS)

- **E – Exemplary:** Selects and explores topics with depth, utilizing a variety of sources, and critically evaluating information.
- **P – Proficient:** Conducts thorough research using various sources, analyzing and evaluating information effectively.
- **D – Developing:** Conducts research with support, beginning to analyze and evaluate information.
- **NI – Needs Improvement:** Struggles with research, needing significant support to analyze and evaluate information.
- **N/A – Not Applicable:** Skills are scheduled for future lessons and assessments.

Creative Problem Solving (CPS)

- **E – Exemplary:** Demonstrates insightful evaluation of problems and consistently arrives at innovative, reasonable solutions.
- **P – Proficient:** Evaluates problems and arrives at innovative, reasonable conclusions with minimal support.
- **D – Developing:** Evaluates problems with guidance, working towards innovative solutions.
- **NI – Needs Improvement:** Has difficulty evaluating problems and arriving at solutions, needing significant guidance.
- **N/A – Not Applicable:** Skills are scheduled for future lessons and assessments.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- **E – Exemplary:** Exhibits strong understanding and management of their social and emotional needs, often helping peers develop these skills as well.
- **P – Proficient:** Understands and manages social and emotional needs, actively working on coping and interaction skills.
- **D – Developing:** Developing understanding and management of social and emotional needs, needing support to improve coping and interaction skills.
- **NI – Needs Improvement:** Struggles with understanding and managing social and emotional needs, needing significant support to improve coping and interaction skills.
- **N/A – Not Applicable:** Skills are scheduled for future lessons and assessments.

Student Contract



Student: _____

Grade: _____

My Advanced Learning Contract

Date: _____

What I Will Do

1. Stay Engaged

- I will try my best in all my activities.
- I will ask for help if I need something.

2. Use My Time Well

- I will finish my work on time.
- I will keep my things organized.

3. Always Try:

- I will work hard, even if it's a little tricky.
- I will do my best in all my work.

What My Teacher Will Do:

1. Help Me Learn

- My teacher will give me special activities to help me learn at my level.
- I will get fun and challenging work to help me grow.

2. Support Me

- My teacher will help me when I need it and give me feedback.
- We will check in to see how I'm doing.

3. Talk with Me

- My teacher will talk with me and my parents about how I'm doing.
- We will meet to see if any changes are needed

What That Means to Me

I understand this plan and will try my best to follow it.

Student Signature: _____

Communication

- Email is best for quick Q and A:
 - anika.patel@atlanta.k12.ga.us
 - eshood@atlanta.k12.ga.us
 - krduncan@atlanta.k12.ga.us
 - rhatcher@atlanta.k12.ga.us
- MES website, GATE page, Google Classroom and teacher pages have information
- APS website: departments > gifted and talented

MES Opportunities

- STEAM Carnival (APS Office of Gifted and Talented)
- Chess Club
- ROBO-MES, First Lego League, Drones for the Good
- Science Olympiad
- Reading Bowl
- Xanadu Summer Camp

Check These Out!

- Hoagies Gifted Education Page

www.hoagiesgifted.org

- NAGC website www.nagc.org

- GAGC website www.gagc.org

- SENG website www.sengifted.org

- MindWare Games and Toys www.mindware.com



Thanks so much for joining us!