



# News

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** June 10, 2022

**CONTACT:** Amanda Nieto

**PHONE:** 909-447-2407

## **Baldwin Park Unified GATE Students Display Creativity, Knowledge**

**BALDWIN PARK** – Baldwin Park Unified Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) elementary school students dressed as historical figures from the past and present – such as Cesar Chavez and Malala Yousafzai – during end-of-the-year events that showcased the in-depth extracurricular instruction the District’s GATE program provides to its advanced students.

Encouraged to take a deeper look into the creative process of great minds who have made an impact on society, GATE students held European-style salons in costume, mingling together and sharing stories, to cap a school year in which their thirst for knowledge allowed them to expand their academic boundaries.

GATE students celebrated their accomplishments and received awards during end-of-year showcases, held May 5 for middle school students and May 23 for elementary students.

“Our GATE program is designed to stimulate a student’s curiosity and look beyond their daily school assignments, with the goal of inspiring them to be voracious learners,” BPUSD GATE coordinator Jennie Wideman said. “We take a holistic approach to GATE, assessing interest and looking beyond test scores to create a program that is equitable and enjoyable.”

More than 800 students from grades three to eight make up Baldwin Park Unified’s GATE program, which emphasizes scholarly behaviors such as knowledgeability, inquiry, intellectual risk-taking, and being open-minded. GATE students embrace open-mindedness and risk-taking while learning to become principled, organized communicators with goals for the future.

During the 2021-22 school year, third- through fifth-grade GATE students studied the scholarly behaviors of historical figures through the Sparks of Genius program, which promoted collaboration and critical and creative thinking, culminating with their end-of-year salons.

Sixth-grade GATE students created their own science fiction and fantasy graphic novels, learning how to draw their own illustrations and tell a story. GATE students in grades seven and eight researched and created school websites concentrating on a specific theme, exploring sub-topics with articles, graphics, slideshows and videos.

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Jones Middle School students dedicated their [website](#) to mythology, with histories and photos of Aztec, Egyptian, Greek, Japanese and Norse cultures. BP STEM Academy's [website](#) details how GATE complements STEM subjects. Sierra Vista Middle School's [website](#) explores the future of technology, while Olive Middle School's [website](#) frames its school history through the lens of "Star Wars" characters and philosophies.

Baldwin Park's GATE program is open to all students from grades three to eight. Elementary school students in second and fifth grade are nominated by their teachers, while upper grade level students can nominate themselves. All students must meet with a panel of District GATE evaluators to determine eligibility for the program. Baldwin Park Unified also welcomes GATE students from outside the District.

Parent participation is also encouraged in the program. Parent GATE workshops are conducted throughout the school year, with parents briefed on what their children are learning, how to support them at home, and how to promote scholarly behaviors.

"We are incredibly proud of our GATE program, which does more than just acknowledge a student's gifts, but serves as a foundation for lifelong learning and a pathway to higher education," Superintendent Dr. Froilan Mendoza said. "We are blessed to have passionate and innovative educators like Jennie Wideman and our outstanding team of GATE mentors."

## PHOTOS

**BPUSD\_Foster\_GATE\_1:** Foster Elementary students in the District's Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program dress as historical figures for an end-of-the-year showcase.

**BPUSD\_Geddes\_GATE\_2:** Geddes Elementary GATE students are recognized for their hard work and creativity during the GATE Elementary Showcase on May 23.

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