



Gifted/Talented Programs Advanced Learning Options

Office of the Chief of Special Education, Equity and Specialized Programs



Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS)?

Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS) demonstration sites receive the SAS designation for their exemplary Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) implementation. By providing high-quality differentiated instruction with an emphasis on depth, complexity, acceleration and novelty, SAS sites offer high-level academic opportunities that meet the unique educational needs of K-12 gifted learners identified in the Intellectual Ability, High Achievement Ability, Specific Academic Ability, Creative Ability and Leadership Ability categories or verified based on test scores or critical thinking and problem-solving skills. School choice is not the primary purpose of SAS, rather, the goal of SAS is to recognize and nurture model demonstration sites at resident schools to share innovative, equitable and effective GATE practices Districtwide. Resident schools must undergo a rigorous application process every five years to obtain/maintain SAS designation. SAS sites exemplify the District's expectations for high-quality GATE implementation at all K-12 schools. SAS teachers and administrators are required to participate annually in professional development specifically tailored to address the unique academic and social-emotional needs of gifted/talented learners. Currently there are 147 SAS sites located throughout Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). (Independent charter schools, Magnet programs, and Dual Language Education programs are not eligible for the SAS designation.)

Who can apply to Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS)?

K-12 applicants must reside within the boundaries of the Los Angeles Unified School District and meet specific eligibility requirements. Applicants must meet one of three eligibility criteria:

- Student is identified as gifted by an LAUSD designated GATE psychologist in the Intellectual Ability, High Achievement Ability, Specific Academic Ability, Creative Ability or Leadership Ability category. OR
- Student received total national percentile scores of 85 or above or Standard Exceeded on a District-approved standardized achievement test in 2023, if applicable. OR
- Student is verified as meeting ALL FOUR critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Pre-K and UTK SAS classes are not available. Detailed eligibility criteria for SAS, as well as the corresponding verification processes and forms, are outlined on the eChoices website and in the Choices brochure.

What is the difference between Gifted Magnet and SAS?

The Magnet Program is a Court-Ordered voluntary integration program, coordinated by Student Integration Services, open to all LAUSD. Some of the Magnet programs available are designated as Gifted or Highly Gifted. In order to apply to one of these programs through the Choices process, students must first meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the Choices brochure. Schools for Advanced Studies, coordinated by Gifted/Talented Programs, Advanced Learning Options, are model GATE demonstration sites at resident schools. SAS is the GATE instructional program at designated resident schools. Students residing within the boundaries of a designated SAS school who meet the eligibility criteria must be placed in the site's SAS gifted/talented program (unless a parent has opted out). Students residing within LAUSD boundaries – but outside the SAS site's residential boundaries – may apply for participation through the Choices process. If spaces are available – after accommodating all students who meet eligibility criteria and who reside within the school's residential boundaries – a selection process for qualifying SAS applicants will be conducted. In order to participate in SAS, students must first meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the Choices brochure. Gifted Magnets, Highly Gifted Magnets and Schools for Advanced Studies cluster gifted/high ability students for instruction and provide differentiated instruction with an emphasis on depth, complexity, novelty and acceleration. The eligibility criteria to apply to Gifted Magnets and SAS are identical. To qualify to apply for a Highly Gifted Magnet, the applicant must meet the qualifying score on an Intellectual Ability assessment administered by an LAUSD designated GATE psychologist. Eligibility criteria for all programs, as well as the corresponding verification processes and forms, are outlined on the eChoices website and in the Choices brochure.



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How do I apply for an SAS site?

You may complete the application online at GoTo.LAUSD.net or the Choices brochure contains the application for SAS sites and is available October 2, 2023. The application and verification forms, if applicable, are due November 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Please note that if your school of residence has the SAS designation, you do not apply for SAS participation through the Choices process. Students residing within the boundaries of a designated SAS school who meet the eligibility criteria must be placed in the site's SAS gifted/talented program (unless a parent has opted out). No formal application is required for a qualified student who resides within the school's boundaries. Your child's eligibility will be verified at the SAS site through District records and articulation with the sending school. If you have questions, contact the school directly. If the SAS site is an Affiliated Charter, in a Zone of Choice (ZOC) or is an Admission Criteria School, see the corresponding FAQ for application information.

How is my child verified as eligible to apply to SAS?

For an applicant to be eligible for SAS, the student must be verified as meeting one of the criteria outlined in the Choices brochure (pages 7-8) prior to November 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

LAUSD Applicants (Currently Enrolled in an LAUSD School):

Although L.A. Unified applicants must meet the required program-specific criteria outlined in the Choices brochure, a Verification of Eligibility (SAS Kindergarten) form or Verification of Eligibility (Grades 1-12) form is NOT required for applicants (grades K-12) currently enrolled in an L.A. Unified school. Upon receipt of an application, the District will automatically verify eligibility through a District verification process in January.

Private School, Independent Charter and Non-LAUSD Applicants:

The parents/guardians of private school, independent charter, and non-LAUSD students who are applying to Schools for Advanced Studies must follow the procedures outlined on the eChoices website and in the Choices brochure and verify that the student's current school of attendance has submitted the required verification form by November 17, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.:

- Verification of Eligibility (SAS Kindergarten) (incoming kindergarten only) OR
- Verification of Eligibility (Grades 1-12)

For an applicant, previously identified as gifted/highly gifted by an LAUSD designated GATE psychologist, who is currently attending a private school, independent charter, or non-LAUSD school, the parent must submit a Verification of Eligibility form to ensure that the applicant is included in the District database.

Verification of Eligibility forms are available to download on the eChoices website (select SAS and Who is Eligible?) or by emailing a request to giftedverification@lausd.net. The Verification of Eligibility form must be submitted in addition to a Choices application. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the completed Verification of Eligibility form is submitted by the school of attendance prior to the deadline.



Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What are the criteria for an incoming kindergarten student applying to an SAS site?

All kindergarten SAS applicants must be verified by the administrator of the preschool or the universal transitional kindergarten (UTK) program as meeting the third eligibility criterion (i.e., critical thinking and problem-solving skills), as well as the SAS kindergarten-specific criteria listed on the Verification of Eligibility (SAS Kindergarten) form. For kindergarten applicants who are not enrolled in preschool or UTK, please contact Gifted/Talented Programs at (213) 241-4177 or GATE@lausd.net for information regarding verification procedures. You may also visit the Gifted/Talented Programs website at <https://www.lausd.org/gate> (select Program Options and SAS).

What are the SAS kindergarten-specific criteria listed on the Verification of Eligibility (SAS Kindergarten) form?

In addition to meeting the critical thinking and problem-solving skills criteria, an incoming kindergarten student must demonstrate at least ten of the twenty SAS kindergarten-specific criteria.

- Can work independently with evidence of goal-directed behavior
- Uses descriptive words in sentences and uses language to express emotions, ideas, and opinions (in primary language)
- Can tell or retell a story with detailed description and expression (in primary language)
- Can recognize and repeat complex patterning sequences and create own patterns
- Can follow multi-step directions with little guidance or redirection
- Identifies the letters A to Z, knows the sounds of all of the letters of the alphabet, and can write many of the letters
- Able to orally count to 100, visually identify numbers from 1 to 100, and write numbers 1 to 25
- Demonstrates innate or accelerated understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division
- Able to remember information and experiences (e.g., can recite song lyrics, recall facts, etc.) and make connections
- Able to recognize sight words and read with fluency and comprehension
- Demonstrates strong concern for others and their feelings; strong sense of justice
- Initiates play sessions, coordinates and integrates multiple complementary roles, and considers the actions of others
- Uses unconventional objects in play activities
- Interacts easily with peers; frequently sought out by peers for companionship, ideas, and decisions
- Demonstrates mature sense of humor; responds to and creates riddles and verbal associations
- Demonstrates evidence of reasoning, logical thinking, creativity, and spontaneous incorporation of academic activities into free play
- Expresses ideas, seeks information through questioning, and enjoys interacting verbally with adults and older children
- Demonstrates advanced task commitment and energy when learning
- Able to remember complex information and decode symbolic systems (e.g., maps, codes, etc.)
- Demonstrates curiosity; displays unexpected depth of knowledge in one or more areas



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What should I do if my kindergarten applicant did not participate in preschool or UTK or is homeschooled?

Please contact Gifted/Talented Programs at GATE@lausd.net or (213) 241-4177 for information regarding alternative verification procedures for applicants not enrolled in school. Information will also be available on the Gifted/Talented Programs website at <https://www.lausd.org/gate> (select Program Options and SAS).

Can I apply to more than one SAS site?

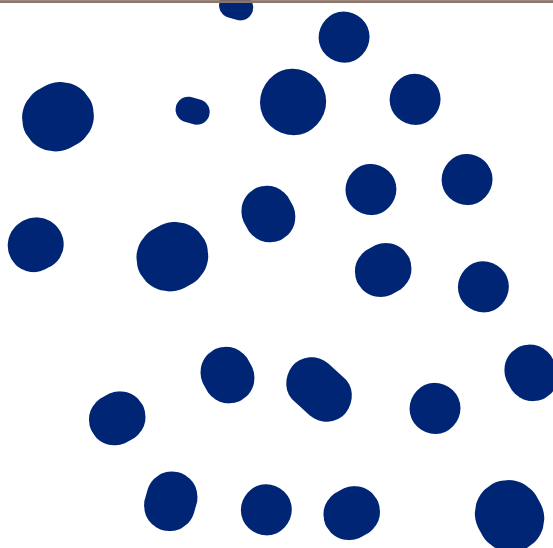
Students may apply for up to three SAS sites. If the applicant is selected to their first choice, choice two and three are not considered. If the applicant is selected into any program of their choice, the student will not be placed on any waiting list. If there is no space available in any of their choices, the student will be placed on the waiting list for their first choice only.

May I fax my application?

No. All applications are to be sent via U. S. mail or submitted online. Online submission is encouraged, if applicable, since online applicants will receive confirmation and notification letters via email. LAUSD cannot be held responsible for lost applications or verification forms.

What happens if I miss the on-time application deadline?

Parents/guardians may submit late applications beginning February 1, 2024. Late applicants will be placed on the school's waiting list after on-time applicants. If space becomes available, the school will contact you directly. The late application does not guarantee placement at the school site. The late Verification of Eligibility form, if applicable, should be submitted directly to the SAS site if/when the parent/guardian is contacted about an available seat. (Do not submit Verification of Eligibility forms for late applicants to Unified Enrollment.)





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How are students accepted into SAS?

Once eligibility is verified, applicants are randomly selected through a fair and unbiased process to attend SAS sites. The number of students selected is based on the number of available spaces at a particular school (students who reside within the school's boundaries **MUST** be accommodated first). The number of available seats varies by school and grade level. Some SAS designated sites are able to accommodate all applicants, while others have limited space available for students who reside outside the school's residential boundaries.

If spaces are available – after accommodating all students who meet eligibility criteria and who reside within the school's boundaries – a selection process for qualifying SAS applicants will be conducted in this order:

- 1) Siblings residing within LAUSD boundaries (must meet SAS eligibility criteria)
- 2) Students residing within LAUSD boundaries (must meet SAS eligibility criteria)

There is no priority point accrual process for Schools for Advanced Studies.

To ensure equity and access, each of the three SAS eligibility criteria carries equal weight in the selection process. Therefore, priority placement is not given to students identified as gifted/highly gifted or those who meet test score criteria.

Are students selected on a first-come first-served basis?

No. The selection process is random and occurs after the on-time application deadline. All eligible applicants are included in the selection process.

Is there guaranteed selection if I apply?

No. Applicants are not guaranteed selection.

How do I know if my child was selected or not?

In December, you will receive a letter confirming receipt of your child's application indicating any corrections, if applicable. In February, you will receive a letter that provides information about your child's eligibility for the selected program(s). If eligible, in March, you will be notified by online parent account or U.S. mail as to whether your child was selected or placed on the waiting list.

What is my child's status on the waiting list?

Your child's status will depend on the number of openings at the school of choice as well as the number of applicants. You may call the school to inquire about estimated capacity.



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When will my child get called from the waiting list?

Applicants on the waiting list may be contacted beginning as early as April until the fourth week of the fall semester. Applicants may also be contacted during the first two weeks of the spring semester.

Do I have to reapply every year?

Students who are currently enrolled in an SAS site do not have to reapply unless they want to change schools (this includes promotion to the next school level, such as elementary school to middle school or middle school to high school). If a student remains on a waiting list, then the student should reapply.

If a resident student is participating in SAS but moves outside of the school's residential boundaries, this student would need to apply through the Choices process for continued participation (space is not guaranteed). If a student moves outside of LAUSD boundaries, this student is no longer eligible to apply for SAS.

What if my resident school has the SAS designation?

Students residing within the boundaries of a designated SAS school who meet the eligibility criteria must be placed in the site's SAS gifted/talented program (unless a parent has opted out). All qualified students who reside within the school's boundaries must be accommodated before any SAS applicants are enrolled. No formal application is required for a qualified student who resides within the school's boundaries since SAS is the school site's GATE instructional program for its students. Student eligibility will be verified at the SAS site through District records and articulation with the sending school. If you have questions, contact the school directly.

What if the SAS site is an Affiliated Charter School?

Student selection, enrollment and placement in the SAS gifted/talented program at Affiliated Charter Schools must be conducted in accordance with the State and District legal requirements established for charter schools. If a student is selected for an SAS site through the Affiliated Charter process and meets one of the SAS eligibility criteria, this student must be accommodated in the site's SAS gifted/talented program. For Affiliated Charter SAS enrollment procedures, please refer to the [Affiliated Charter Schools](#) section of the eChoices website or the Choices brochure.

What if the SAS site is in a Zone of Choice (ZOC)?

If a parent would like their child to attend a Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS) site within their Zone of Choice (ZOC), the 5th, 6th or 8th grade student must select that site during the ZOC selection process. If a student is assigned to a designated SAS site through this ZOC process and meets one of the SAS eligibility criteria, this student must be accommodated in the site's SAS gifted/talented program.

For information about Zones of Choice, contact the ZOC office at (213) 241-0466 or at <https://www.lausd.org/zoc>.



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What if the SAS site is an Admission Criteria School?

One SAS designated site, Dr. Richard A. Vladovic Harbor Teacher Preparation Academy, is an Admission Criteria School. As such, student selection, enrollment and placement will be conducted in accordance with District Admission Criteria School policy. Refer to the [Admission Criteria Schools](#) section of the eChoices website or the Choices brochure or call the school directly.

Is there transportation for SAS?

No, transportation is not provided for SAS.

Exceptions:

- Students with disabilities enrolling in a Schools for Advanced Studies site will have access to transportation if the student's IEP requires transportation.
- Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), foster youth in out-of-home care, as defined, and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to receive transportation to and from their school of origin. Please contact Student Support Programs at (213) 241-3840 for more information and/or assistance.

