



# Parent Newsletter

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## Odyssey of the Mind

Teaching divergent thinking and celebrating creativity

Odyssey of the Mind is an international creative problem-solving program that engages students in their learning by allowing their knowledge and ideas to come to life in an exciting, productive environment. The program is designed to encourage and develop divergent or “out of the box” thinking while embedding differentiated instruction and addressing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Common Core Standards, and 21st Century Skills. This program supports students who are identified gifted/talented in the Creative Ability category and can serve as an excellent screening tool for students who may be potentially gifted/talented.

After months of working in teams at their own pace to solve challenging problems that range from building mechanical devices to presenting their own interpretation of literary classics, students bring their solutions to competition on the local, state, and world level. Thousands of teams from throughout the United States and approximately 25 other countries participate in the program.

Gifted/Talented Programs is proud to pilot the Odyssey of the Mind program at six LAUSD schools: Liechty Middle School, City Terrace Elementary School, San Jose Street Elementary School, Vintage Elementary Math/Science/Technology Magnet, Open Charter Magnet, and Amestoy Elementary School. Gifted/Talented Programs supports the schools’ participation in the pilot with their membership fees, multiple coach trainings, as well as materials and resources. On March 2, 2019, the schools participating in the pilot will join the other Los Angeles Basin Odyssey teams at the Regional Tournament, which takes place at Westlake High School. We wish all L.A. Unified teams good luck on their first Odyssey endeavor!

## Family Day Out

Free ideas for family time

Visit the [Cabrillo Marine Aquarium](#). Located adjacent to Cabrillo Beach Coastal Park and the Port of Los Angeles, the historic Frank Gehry-designed aquarium displays the largest collection of Southern California marine life in the world.

Tue - Fri: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sat - Sun: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Experience [Grand Park’s Winter Glow](#) from December 1-25, 2018. This immersive, nighttime art experience will take over Grand Park in celebration of the holidays. Families will make new memories strolling together through this 12-acre art, projection and light display, exhibit, and installation.

Participate in [Dance Sundays with Debbie Allen and Friends](#) at the Wallis Annenberg Center for Performing Arts. January 13 is Salsa Sunday from 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. This family-friendly Salsa dancing class is taught by Debbie Allen and Lyrik Cruz from the Debbie Allen Dance Academy. February 10th from 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. is Break the Floor: Hip Hop. An introduction to Hip-Hop class with a fun and energetic routine.

## Spring 2019 GATE/SAS Parent Workshops

We invite all parents/guardians to join us at our annual Spring GATE/SAS Parent Workshops, which are held in each of the six Local Districts. The workshops start at 5:15 p.m. with an overview of the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test, Eighth Edition (OLSAT-8) that is given to all second grade students in the District. Following the OLSAT-8 session, from 6:15 p.m. - 7:15 p.m., guest speaker Dr. Nicole A. Tetreault will share her presentation, *Unraveling Many Misunderstood Aspects of Giftedness Related to Perfectionism, Procrastination, and Self-Esteem*. Dr. Nicole Tetreault is a neuroscientist, writer, and speaker who specializes in neurodevelopment and neurodegenerative disorders. She received her Ph.D. from California Institute of Technology (Caltech). She is dedicated to translating the promise of neuroscience and positive psychology for individuals to live the best quality of life. Most recently, she has focused her efforts on studying the gifted experience, which encompasses the brain and body connection, by investigating the latest neuroscience and physiology research. Dr. Tetreault is both a passionate intellectual and a devoted caregiver looking to help people understand the uniqueness of the gifted experience.

### Workshop Dates and Times

*Local District Northeast:* February 4, 2019 at Grant High School

*Local District Northwest:* February 7, 2019 at Nobel Middle School

*Local District South:* February 11, 2019 at White Middle School

*Local District East:* February 21, 2019 at Stevenson Middle School

*Local District West:* February 25, 2019 at Loyola Village Elementary School

*Local District Central:* February 28, 2019 at Sotomayor High School



Dr. Nicole Tetreault

## School Spotlight

### Franklin Avenue Elementary School (Local District Central)

Franklin Avenue Elementary School in Los Feliz is a Schools for Advanced Studies (SAS) demonstration site. With over 80 of its 515 students identified gifted. Franklin ES has an active and supportive parent group that collaborates with teachers to help enrich the intellectual growth of students. Three years ago, Franklin began its partnership with the California Science Center, which conducts two science enrichment units (one each semester) to identified gifted students after school. The purpose of the partnership is to bring an accelerated, four-week science strand that responds to student interest. In 2016-17, students engaged in Aerospace and DNA/Chromatography, and last year students engaged in Engineering and Biology. This academic year, students will focus on chemistry, testing chemical and physical reactions, states of matter, and acids and bases. Lessons are designed to enhance the Next Generation Science Standards curriculum in a novel way; develop student content knowledge and process skills through hands-on investigations; and foster a lasting love for science.

(If your school has something to share for the "School Spotlight" section, please email Susanna Furfari, District Coordinator, at [susanna.furfari@lausd.net](mailto:susanna.furfari@lausd.net).)



### Important Dates

- ♦ **Dec. 17-Jan 5 :**  
Winter Recess
- ♦ **January 21:** Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
- ♦ **February 4-28:**  
GATE/SAS Parent Meetings in each Local District ([Dates and Times](#) on our website)
- ♦ **February 18:**  
Presidents' Day Holiday
- ♦ **March 9:** 10th Annual GATE/SAS Parent Conference at RFK Community Schools - no pre-registration required