

SALTA

Gifted & Talented

Program Handbook

2025-2026

Canyons School District

Instructional Supports Department

801-826-5044

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SALTA Mission and Vision

In Canyons School District, the term SALTA is derived from the Latin word "leap" and stands for Supporting Advanced Learners Toward Achievement. It is crucial for all students to have their cognitive limits tested and to be encouraged to explore new ways of thinking. Gifted students tend to have unique perspectives and interests that differ from their peers. They often come into school already possessing a high level of mastery in basic grade-level skills.

Per Utah Code R277-707-2, Canyons School District defines "accelerated" students as those who exhibit exceptional academic performance or potential and require a unique and challenging learning experience. This can include Advanced Placement Courses (AP), Gifted and Talented Programs, International Baccalaureate Programs (IB), and Concurrent Enrollment.

Mission Statement

Advanced learners will engage in complex and rigorous content through deep learning experiences that promote effective communication, collaboration and teamwork, analytical and critical thinking, problem-solving and innovation, and metacognitive strategies.

We will achieve our mission by building and sustaining instructional capacity that emphasizes:

Increase Equity with Identification and Outreach	<u>Lead with Effective and Actionable Practice (LEAP) (NAGC, 2023).</u>
Alignment of Portrait of a Canyons Scholar and Utah's PCBL Framework.	Promote Effective Communication Between All Stakeholders.

1. Increase Equity with Identification & Outreach

This key area aligns with our mission statement by ensuring that advanced learners from diverse backgrounds are identified and given equitable opportunities to participate in the SALTA program. By focusing on fair and inclusive identification methods and reaching out to underrepresented students, we fulfill our commitment to providing deep learning experiences for all, as stated in the mission. By fostering an environment where all students can engage in complex content, we promote both equity and deep learning experiences.

2. Lead with Effective and Actionable Practice (LEAP) NAGC, 2023.

Embracing the LEAP framework from NAGC (National Association for Gifted Children) in 2023 supports our mission by emphasizing the implementation of evidence-based practices that cater to the needs of advanced learners. Adopting effective strategies and practices ensures that students engage in deep learning experiences and develop analytical, critical thinking, problem-solving, and metacognitive skills, as outlined in the mission statement.

3. Alignment of Portrait of a Canyons Scholar and Utah's PCBL Framework.

This key area is directly connected to our mission statement through the alignment of the desired outcomes for our advanced learners. By ensuring that our program aligns with both the "Portrait of a Canyons Scholar" and Utah's "Personalized Competency-Based Learning (PCBL) Framework," we create a cohesive educational journey that promotes deep learning experiences, critical thinking, problem-solving, and metacognitive strategies, in line with our mission.

4. Promote Effective Communication Between All Stakeholders

Effective communication is critical to achieving our mission. By facilitating open and transparent communication among students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders, we create an environment conducive to collaboration, teamwork, and shared understanding. This collaborative approach enhances the overall learning experience for advanced learners and supports the development of effective communication skills, as specified in our mission statement.

Vision

"Canyons [SALTA] Scholars are driven by curiosity and diligently seek opportunities to learn by becoming resilient learners, collaborators, impactful citizens, critical thinkers, and innovators" (Portrait of a Canyons Scholar).

In addition, SALTA students are "empowered daily to make important decisions about their learning experiences, how they will create and apply knowledge, and how they will demonstrate their learning" ([Utah's PCBL Framework, 2023](#), [Utah Code 53F-5-501](#)).

The following elements of the SALTA vision also emphasize the development of advanced learners who embody the qualities outlined in the mission statement.:

- Assessment is a meaningful, positive, and empowering learning experience for students that yields timely, relevant, and actionable evidence at all stages of the learning process.
- Students receive timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.
- Students progress based on evidence of mastery of concepts.
- Students learn actively using different pathways and varied pacing.
- Strategies to ensure equity for all students are embedded in the culture, structure, and pedagogy of SALTA classrooms.
- Rigorous, common expectations for learning (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) are explicit, transparent, measurable, and transferable.

Definitions of Gifted and Talented

Gifted and Talented refers to students with exceptional abilities or potential in one or more areas, such as academic achievement, creative thinking, leadership, or artistic talent.

Gifted and Talented students require specialized programming beyond traditional honors classes. This may include individualized instruction, accelerated learning opportunities, and enrichment/extension activities, allowing them to explore their interest and develop their exceptional abilities to the fullest extent possible. The four main categories concerning the traits of giftedness include not only cognitive traits but also creative, affective, and behavioral traits.

High-Achieving refers to students who consistently perform at or above grade level and demonstrate a strong commitment to their academic studies.

High-achieving students who may also benefit from honors courses may require a different level of specialized programming than gifted and talented students. They may benefit from enrichment opportunities but may not need individualized or targeted instruction on social learning as gifted and talented students do. High-achieving students are motivated, compliant, and typically have high executive functioning skills.

Other Important Facts About Gifted and Talented Learners

- Top 3% of the population regarding cognitive ability (not necessarily academic achievement).
- Typically have faster processing speeds and more sophisticated neural pathways, yet delayed prefrontal cortex development may result in some

asynchronous development.

- While many may be academically and cognitively more advanced than their peers, their social and emotional development may be behind them.
- Understanding that gifted students are only sometimes gifted in all areas is critical.
- Gifted and talented students may be multilingual learners or twice-exceptional.

Definitions of Instructional Strategies Within the SALTA Program

Extension:

Extension means providing additional time or opportunities for students to learn material beyond the standard curriculum. Extension activities can benefit high-achieving and gifted students by providing them with more challenging material that allows them to transfer their understanding of a subject to a novel situation. For example, an extension activity could be participating in a debate competition.

Acceleration:

Acceleration means "matching the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum with the readiness and motivation of the student" (Assouline et al., 2015). This instructional approach allows students to move through content more quickly so that the instructional pace matches the student's learning rate.

This can involve skipping grades, taking courses at a higher level, or completing coursework more quickly. Acceleration can be particularly beneficial for high-achieving and gifted students who may become bored or disengaged (underachievement) if they need to be challenged more in their studies. Learning progressions can be used to provide pathways for acceleration (Kettler, 2016). For example, acceleration for a third-grader might include moving onto fourth-grade level math standards.

Enrichment:

Enrichment means providing students with additional learning opportunities that go deeper with ideas and concepts introduced in the standard curriculum. This can include activities such as field trips, guest speakers, or project-based learning that allows students to apply their learning in new and meaningful ways. Enrichment activities can benefit high-achieving and gifted students by allowing them to explore their interests with a higher depth of knowledge.

Characteristics of Gifted Learners

Gifted students learn and process information differently than their age-level peers and show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels given opportunities to develop their talents. Gifted learners exist from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. Though no single profile encompasses all gifted learners, they often exhibit common traits, including:

- **High intellectual ability:** often quickly grasping and processing complex information across various subjects.
- **Intense curiosity:** ask probing questions and seek an in-depth understanding of topics that interest them.
- **Rapid learning pace:** requires less repetition or practice to master skills. They often demonstrate advanced comprehension and can synthesize information effectively.
- **Exceptional memory and retention:** a remarkable ability to recall details, make connections, and integrate knowledge across different domains.
- **Advanced problem-solving skills:** approach challenges from multiple perspectives, think abstractly, and generate innovative solutions.
- **High levels of creativity:** often exhibit imaginative thinking, originality, and the ability to generate unique ideas and perspectives.
- **Intense focus and concentration:** display a strong ability to concentrate for extended periods, especially when engaged in topics or activities that captivate their interest and stimulate their intellect.
- **Perfectionism and high standards:** hold themselves to high standards and may exhibit perfectionistic tendencies. They may be highly self-critical and strive for excellence in their work.
- **Advanced language skills:** demonstrate an expansive vocabulary, sophisticated communication skills, and articulate expression of their thoughts and ideas.
- **Strong intrinsic motivation:** often internally driven and motivated to pursue their passions and interests. They may exhibit a deep sense of purpose and derive satisfaction from intellectual challenges and academic pursuits.

[\(NAGC's Common Characteristics of Individuals, Recognizing Gifted Students: A Practical Guide for Teachers, Manifestation of Characteristics of Gifted Learners\)](#)

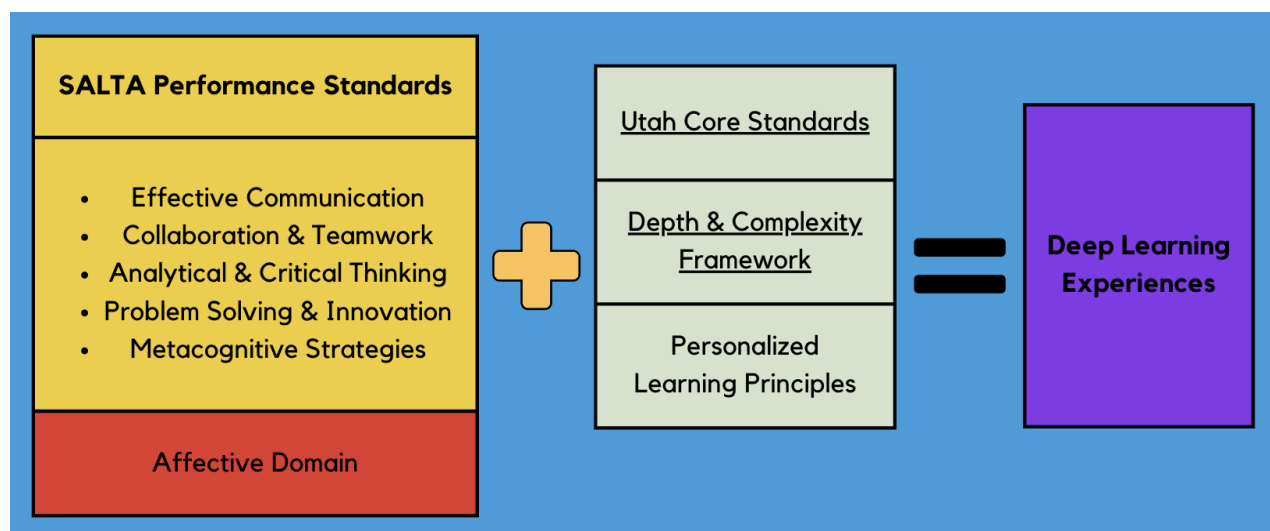
Gifted learners may experience asynchronous development, meaning their cognitive, emotional, and physical development may occur at different rates. For instance, while a gifted child's intellectual abilities may be advanced, their fine motor or social skills may lag. This can lead to difficulties fitting in with peers of the same age, resulting in underachievement, overexcitability, and perfectionism. To support these students, tailored instruction that meets their academic and socioemotional needs is necessary.

This includes teaching emotional regulation, providing opportunities for metacognitive moments, problem-solving, and encouraging positive self-talk. By nurturing their potential, we can help gifted students achieve their full capabilities.

SALTA Instructional Framework

Canyons School District seeks to provide advanced learners with a personalized learning experience that matches their unique learning characteristics. These characteristics include handling advanced content and pace, exploring subjects in-depth, asking and grappling with complex questions, responding creatively, and demonstrating leadership abilities.

Instruction for gifted students is designed to challenge academically advanced learners and promote critical thinking, reasoning, creativity, research, communication, and interpersonal skills. Through these programs, students can contribute to the strength and vitality of our schools, district, and community.



The SALTA program is designed to help students achieve grade-level standards through deep learning experiences focusing on their strengths. Combining the core curriculum with elective options allows students to develop a deeper understanding of fundamental skills and apply them in various contexts. The program emphasizes mastery of grade-level standards and encourages students to transfer their knowledge across different disciplines.

Utah Core Standards

All deep learning experiences offered in the SALTA program are guided by current [Utah Core Standards](#). By understanding and unpacking these standards, teachers can utilize learning progressions to provide pathways to accelerate core standards, personalize learning, allow opportunities for students to cultivate their talents, and “think like an expert” within a content area (Beasley et al., 2017; Renzulli et al., 2000; Stambaugh & Mofield, 2022; VanTassel-Baska & Baska, 2021).

It is recommended that educators of gifted students utilize learning progressions rather than a fixed scope and sequence based upon a singular grade-level curriculum program to ensure learning experiences are appropriately challenging and foster a deep conceptual understanding of advanced concepts.

Depth & Complexity Framework,

The [Depth and Complexity Framework](#), created by Dr. Sandra Kaplan, Bette Gould, and Sheila Madsen at the University of Southern California, aims to enhance higher-order thinking skills when individuals encounter new problems, uncertainties, questions, or dilemmas.

This framework was developed to prompt students to think like experts and professionals in a field. It includes critical and creative thinking skills, depth and complexity icons, content imperatives, disciplinary thinking, and universal concepts and generalizations.

Examples from LEAP Guidebook for Curriculum Design for Teachers of Gifted and High-Potential Students (2023):

Depth: Language of the discipline, details, patterns, rules, trends, unanswered questions, ethics, and big ideas.

Complexity: Change over time, connections with other disciplines, multiple points of view.

Content Imperatives: Parallels, origins, contributions, paradoxes, and convergence.

These thinking tools can be combined to escalate the rigor level further. For example,

Basic Question: What *patterns* do you notice in the graph about endangered species?

Revised Question Combining Depth and Complexity Icons: How might this

pattern of endangered species change over time if the trend continues? What would the implications be on other systems (systems explored as big ideas?

When teaching for thinking, the focus should be on more than how many answers students know but on what they do when unfamiliar with a topic. The objective is not only to reproduce knowledge but also to generate knowledge and improve cognitive abilities. (Best Practices in Gifted Education: An Evidence-Based Guide, 2007)

The Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix provides a supporting framework for Depth, Complexity, and Higher Order Thinking Skills. This framework is embedded throughout the SALTA program by grade level and content area.

Personalized Learning Principles

Personalized learning is an instructional approach that recognizes the individuality of each learner and seeks to provide customized educational experiences to optimize their growth. It emphasizes flexibility, student agency, and a deep understanding of each student's strengths, interests, and learning styles. By tailoring instruction to meet the specific needs of gifted students, personalized learning promotes engagement, intellectual challenge, and self-directed learning.

See *Utah's PCBL Framework (2022)*.

Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs): By assessing each student's strengths, interests, and learning preferences, we create individual learning profiles for every student through various assessments and observations. Students learn valuable goal-setting skills by developing plans tailored to their learning needs.

Vertical Differentiation: We cater to our gifted and talented students' unique needs by adapting the content's pace, depth, and complexity to provide suitable challenges. Our range of learning options keeps students engaged, including independent projects, group work, and creative assignments.

Flexible Pathways: Students can choose topics, assignments, and project formats that align with their interests and allow for individual exploration and expression of core standards.

Supportive Scaffolding and Extension: We aim to assist students in mastering complex concepts and skills by providing additional resources, guidance, and support as needed. Furthermore, we offer extension activities that facilitate critical thinking, creativity, and application of knowledge to deepen understanding.

Technology Integration: We use various educational tools and resources such as online platforms, adaptive learning systems, and virtual resources to provide differentiated content, self-paced learning opportunities, and collaborative

tools for communication and sharing.

Collaboration and Peer Interaction: We foster collaboration among our gifted and talented students. We encourage peer mentoring, group projects, and discussions that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and social-emotional development. We value collaboration, empathy, and respect for diverse perspectives.

Ongoing Assessment and Reflection: We continuously monitor student progress through formative and summative assessments aligned with learning goals. We regularly review data and make adjustments based on student performance and feedback. We use reflective practices to evaluate the effectiveness of personalized learning strategies and make necessary improvements.

Professional Development and Collaboration: We are committed to professional development to enhance our understanding of gifted education, personalized learning strategies, and the use of technology in the classroom. We collaborate with other educators, attend conferences, and participate in professional networks to share best practices and innovative approaches.

Curriculum Compacting

"Curriculum for the gifted should be differentiated at all levels of design, including the goals of the lessons, the outcomes required of students, the activities and projects in which students engage, the strategies educators employ, the materials used, and the assessments to measure progress." -Joyce VanTassel-Baska et al.

Curriculum compacting is a personalization and differentiation that involves identifying gifted students' prior mastery of content and skills, allowing them to skip redundant material and focus on more challenging concepts. Pre-assessment informs the teacher of the student's knowledge and skill level with upcoming learning targets. Students and teachers collaborate, take responsibility for their learning and become expert learners. Teachers will modify content, process, and products in response to student readiness, interest, and learning profiles.

Steps for Teachers:

1. **Pre-Assessment:** Administer a pre-assessment to identify students' mastered content and advanced skills.
2. **Analyze Results:** Review the pre-assessment to identify areas of proficiency and readiness for compacting.
3. **Collaborative Goal-Setting:** Meet with identified students to co-create personalized learning plans based on their interests and strengths.

4. **Flexibility in Learning:** Provide students various options for task complexity, working arrangements, and learning expression.
5. **Enrichment Activities:** Offer challenging and engaging activities related to students' compacted topics or skills.
6. **Flexible Grouping:** Encourage collaboration among gifted peers through flexible grouping strategies.
7. **Ongoing Monitoring:** Continuously assess progress and adjust compacting plans as needed.
8. **Adaptation and Differentiation:** Modify content, process, and products based on student readiness, interest, and learning profiles.

Example: "You Do, Y'all Do, We Do": Reverse the traditional gradual release model to promote active student engagement and ownership. Start with "you do," where students take the lead in exploring and investigating. Follow with "y'all do," where students collaborate and share ideas. Finally, conclude with "we do," where the teacher provides additional guidance and support.

9. **Continuous Improvement:** Evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum compacting to refine the strategy for future use.

Curriculum Resources

SALTA teachers may begin with the same grade-level curriculum and instructional guides as all CSD teachers. At the elementary level, these include:

- **English-Language Arts:**
 - Grades 1-5: Wonders 2023 by McGraw Hill
 - Grades 1-3: 95% Core Phonics by (accelerated by one grade-level)
 - SALTA ELA Curriculum Units
- **Math:**
 - Grades 1-5: enVision 2020 by Savvas Learning Company
 - Grade 1-5: STEMScopes Math
- **Science:**
 - Grades 3-5: Inspire Science by McGraw Hill

However, the scope and sequence will vary, as it should be guided by learning progressions. Curriculum compacting is a technique for differentiating instruction that allows teachers to adjust the curriculum for students who have already mastered the material to be learned, replacing content students know with new content, enrichment options, or other activities.

Researchers recommend that teachers first determine the expected goals of the unit or lesson regarding the content, skills, or standards students must learn before assessing students to determine which ones have already mastered most or all of the specified learning outcomes.

English/Language Arts	Math	Other
Junior Great Books (1-5) Tween Tribune (1-8) Wonderopolis (1-5) Read Works (1-8) NewsELA (1-8) Epic! Books (1-5) CommonLit (3-8) Sora (1-5) Wonders Trade Book Library (1-5) 95% Core (accelerated one grade level) (1-3) Approved Novels for SALTA (1-5)	Math Exemplars (1-5) YouCubed (1-5) Illustrative Math (1-5) Inside Mathematics (1-5) Open Middle (1-5) 3-Act Tasks (1-5) Slow Reveal Graphs (3-5) Building Fact Fluency Kit (1-5) Beast Academy (1-5) Real-World Math Projects for Gifted Learners (4-5) Math Bafflers	Greek & Latins Roots Byrdseed.tv Hour of Code ScratchJr Perplexors Gizmos

District-Supported Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs):

SALTA instructors are not required to offer any or all of these opportunities to their students each year. As each class is different, teachers need the flexibility to adjust their pacing depending on their students' needs.

Canyons School District's Instructional Supports Department will support teachers who wish to provide their students with extended learning opportunities.

- Science Fair (4-5)
- Debate (Speech and Public Forum (4-8)
- StoryFest (1-5)
- Project-Based Learning (PBL) (1-8)
- Makerspace (1-8)
- Future Problem Solving (1-8)
- Curiosity Projects
- Future Problem Solving
- Mathletes

SALTA Performance Standards

Effective Communication	• Active Listening • Non-Verbal Cues • Deeper Questioning • Clarity and Precision • Positive Feedback Culture • Objective Summarizing
Collaboration and Teamwork	• Clarity of Roles • Empathy • Promotive Interaction • Positive Interdependence • Individual and Group Accountability • Conflict Management
Analytical and Critical Thinking	• Productive Curiosity • Objective Research Skills • Identify Bias, Including Personal Bias • Evaluate Multiple Points of View • Infer and Draw Conclusions • Determine Relevance
Problem Solving and Innovation	• Define a Problem • Determine the Root Cause(s) of a Problem • Select a Solution with Criteria • Implement a Solution • Evaluate the Outcome
Metacognitive Strategies	• Maintain a Growth Mindset • Self-Correct and Adjust Learning Approach in Response to Self-Assessment and Self-Monitoring • Reflect on Previous Learning • Strategically Plan for New Learning • Embrace Productive Conflict of Thought • Be Critically Aware of One's Thinking and Learning

Students participate in regular reflection and goal-setting surrounding these domains

as part of their Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs).

Affective Domain

Gifted students learn and process information differently than their age-level peers. Unique learning characteristics of gifted learners include the capacity to handle content at an advanced level and pace, the ability to explore areas in significant depth, the tendency to ask and grapple with difficult questions, the potential to respond creatively, and the desire to use leadership abilities to make a difference in the world.

[National Association for Gifted Children--Traits of Giftedness](#)

Additional differences that gifted and talented students may exhibit are also in the areas of "asynchrony, overexcitabilities, perfectionism, twice-exceptionality, and underachievement." (NAGC, 2020).

Asynchrony occurs when certain brain skills and even regions develop at varying rates. "This means that a student may be very advanced in one area (e.g., math reasoning) and still struggling in another (e.g., fine motor). These students may have cognitive processes that are more typical of older students (e.g., reading comprehension) and other processes that are more typical of younger students (e.g., emotional regulation). For twice-exceptional (2e) students [students who have been identified as gifted and having a disability], these idiosyncratic differences are even more pronounced." (Fishman-Weaver, 2020). Learn more here: [An Introduction to Asynchrony](#)

Nurturing the complex needs of gifted students requires careful instruction that appropriately challenges, adequately supports, and honors the uniquely individualized profiles of students who may differ from their peers. For example, a second-grade gifted student may be able to read a high school-level text yet still struggle with turn-taking and sharing. It is easy to see how this student may struggle socially: the kids with her emotional maturity do not share her academic interest, and the students with her academic interests are in a different social-emotional place than hers.

Given the asynchronous development of gifted students, an understanding of emotional regulation and the important link between feeling and learning is essential for effective instruction. If left unaddressed, high academic achievement can overshadow social-emotional needs resulting in a retroactive response long after the intervention may have been needed. (Fishman-Weaver, 2018).

Furthermore, although gifted students may have the capacity for higher-order metacognitive processing, if these skills are not nurtured, they may lose them. Maximizing metacognitive moments, fostering problem-solving, and positive self-talk

are especially important interventions for gifted students who struggle with perfectionism or underachievement.

[Learn more about meeting SALTA students' socioemotional needs.](#)

Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs)

An Individualized Learning Plan, or ILP, is a written record of gifted and talented programming for each Canyons School District magnet program student. The ILP is meant to follow students throughout their school years and is used to plan and make educational decisions.

The ILP is a record of SALTA programming services. It is meant to connect the student performance profile created at the time of identification for SALTA magnet services and the student's progress in the program. ILPs aid the teacher in providing a challenging learning environment that focuses on high achievement and is responsive to individual student needs.

Each student will work toward goals in three areas: English/Language Arts, Math, and SALTA Performance Standard.

At the beginning of each school year, the student's current teacher will determine English/Language Arts and Math goals based on the beginning of the year benchmark data. During fall conferences, the teacher and the student's family will support the student in creating their own goal based on the SALTA Performance Standards and help them develop a plan to monitor their progress toward their goal. The student will continually track their progress and make adjustments throughout the year. The students will present their journey toward their SALTA Performance goal at the spring conference to their families and current teacher.

Supports for Twice-Exceptional Students

Coming Soon

SALTA Eligibility Information

The SALTA magnet school program is designed to serve students in grades 1-8 who demonstrate an ability that is significantly above the typical ability of students in the same age group in:

- general intellectual ability
- specific academic fields, including
 - language arts
 - mathematics
 - science
- creative thinking

Summary of Utah Code: R277-707 Enhancement for Accelerated Students Program

LEAS shall establish a method for identifying a gifted and talented student to receive extended or accelerated opportunities for the student to achieve growth annually at the highest level possible whose academic achievement is accelerated based on multiple assessment instruments. These instruments shall not solely depend on English vocabulary or comprehension skills and shall account for disabilities, potential language barriers, culturally diverse perspectives, and multilingual learners.

Canyons School District Eligibility Instruments

Canyons School District uses the following measures to assess eligibility for the SALTA magnet program:

Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT), Form 7

Additional assessment data may include:

Acadience

Unit-1

Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS) Home and School Rating Scales

Utah RISE Assessment

Interested families fill out a SALTA Request for Testing Form between September and October on the [Canyons District SALTA website](#). SALTA Testing takes place every school year in November at each elementary school site. All parents/guardians of students tested for SALTA will receive a letter in the mail and an email in late December or early January, including their child's assessment results. Students who qualify will be invited to the next year's SALTA magnet program.

A student's eligibility is assessed with the CoGAT, a Cognitive Ability Test that measures reasoning skills in three domains of verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal questions (aptitude).

Additionally, all 3rd-grade students currently enrolled in the SALTA Magnet Program are formally evaluated for advancement in the program for 4th grade. Testing for 3rd-grade SALTA students will be scheduled during regular school hours and will take place in their classroom. 5th-grade students, however, are not reevaluated for placement in the SALTA program at Midvale Middle School.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why was 95% used as a cutoff score on the CogAT?

Across the nation and in the research literature, giftedness is frequently described as standard deviations above the mean. Nationally, two standard deviations above the mean are used as a cut-score for acceptance into gifted programs. To maximize the inclusion of students with needs that cannot be met in the regular classroom, the 1.5 standard deviation cut-score was used. This equates to an approximate percentile rank 95, which varies by grade level according to the standard measurement error.

Why don't you have a waiting list?

All students who met the established criteria were offered placement into the SALTA magnet program. The cut scores were determined to establish the bottom scores or minimum threshold needed to be successful in the rigorous magnet program. Each year, full-time employee allocation is recalculated based on how many students have accepted placement.

Placing students who did not meet the criteria on a waiting list could set students up for failure. We cannot ethically make a management decision (i.e., a waiting list for student enrollment purposes) that could potentially harm students.

Do you have a maximum number of students in each class?

The SALTA program works to cap class sizes at 28 students per class.

Can a student who qualifies for SALTA have siblings permit into the same school?

SALTA schools do their best to accommodate requests for sibling permits for families. These decisions are made case-by-case and determined at the school level.

When can my child re-test?

Students who tested in Fall for SALTA magnet services will have the opportunity to be assessed for magnet services the following year. However, students who retest are charged a small fee, except for third-graders already enrolled in the program.

Why does my student's profile have incomplete data?

If your student's profile is missing data, they did not complete enough questions in a subsection to receive a score.

What if SALTA is not the best fit for my child?

Families may choose to unenroll students from the program for any reason. Suppose a student is struggling in SALTA with either academics or behavior. In that case, the School Student Support Teams (SSTs) will meet with the student's families alongside the district SALTA specialist to determine an appropriate intervention plan and method for collecting data. Suppose it is determined that the supports offered to the students are still inadequate for their success or hinder other students' access to gifted services. In that case, the team may request the family unenroll the student from the program.

What will "advanced services" look like at my neighborhood school?

Canyons School District is committed to continuous improvement and providing more opportunities for differentiation and enrichment at each of our neighborhood schools. Teachers will be taught to watch for the characteristics of advanced students, and schools will make adjustments to meet the needs of students on a case-by-case basis. Our elementary instructional guides also contain recommendations for learning extensions with each unit in both Math and ELA. Numerous extended learning opportunities (StoryFest, Debate, Science Fair, etc.) are also available at each school in the district.

Can my child participate in both SALTA and Dual Language Immersion (DLI)?

A problem arises when a student accepts placement in SALTA and is on the waiting list for the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program. Students that have tested, and accepted placement in SALTA, will have their names removed from the DLI waiting list. SALTA and DLI programs have coordinated Accept/Decline dates. Once a student has accepted SALTA, the student is removed from the DLI waiting list.

What is the process if my child opts out of SALTA initially and wants to enter the program?

If a student has qualified but opted out of SALTA and now wants to enter the program in 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade, the child will need to retest during the regular fall testing period. If the student qualifies, they may re-enter SALTA.

If the child was identified as a 3rd through 7th-grade student, retesting is unnecessary

regardless of when testing was administered. The student may re-enter SALTA based on space availability.

Can I transfer my child to a different SALTA school site?

Should an elementary SALTA student wish to transfer between SALTA magnet schools, a *Request to Transfer Form* must be completed. Upon review with the Canyons School District Instructional Supports Department and SALTA principals, a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis. Decisions are final.

SALTA Magnet Appeal Process

Rationale: Canyons School District is committed to finding students who qualify for the gifted and talented SALTA magnet program.

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) developed the 2019 *Pre-K-Grade 12 Gifted Education Programming Standards* with input from various stakeholders and a review of current research and best practice. The standards continue focusing on diversity and collaboration – two powerful principles guiding high-quality programs and services. The standards use student outcomes for goals rather than teacher practices, keeping them in line with the thinking in education standards generally. Because these standards are grounded in theory, research, and practice paradigms, they provide an important base for all efforts on behalf of gifted learners at all stages of development

Standard 2.2.1. Educators establish comprehensive, cohesive, ongoing policies and procedures for identifying and serving students with gifts and talents. These policies include referral, informed consent, the assessment process, review of all assessment information, student retention, student reassessment, student exiting, and appeals procedures for both entry and exit from gifted programming and services.

- The Utah State Office of Education Gifted and Talented support program recommends that school districts have an appeal process.
- Canyons School District is committed to providing Customer Service to all clientele.
- Canyons School District uses assessments developed to identify gifted students. However, many reasons and circumstances arise in which testing results may not be valid, including language, missing accommodations, family circumstances, illness, previous exposure to school and educational settings, disability, etc. An appeals process helps to ensure that individual circumstances and needs are considered.

Grade Acceleration Policy

The SALTA magnet program is designed to serve students who demonstrate high cognitive and academic ability compared to others of their age, experience, and/or environment. SALTA magnet program students require learning experiences beyond what is typically provided in the regular classroom.

In the SALTA magnet program, the pace of the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of advanced learners, emphasizing depth and complexity, application of learning concepts, and higher-order thinking skills.

As such, the Canyons School District Instructional Supports Department does not recommend that students grade-accelerate within the SALTA magnet program. There may be rare cases in which a student is profoundly gifted and may require grade acceleration to meet their needs. In this case, please see Canyons School District Policy Manual - Policy 600.13 Student Retention and Acceleration for guidance.