



2019-2020 Vista Verde
Academic Enrichment For All (AEFA)



What is AEFA?

AEFA is a PTA-sponsored enrichment program for all students at Vista Verde, not just for Gifted And Talented Education (GATE)-identified students. All events and activities offered through AEFA share the mission of challenging students to foster skill building and promote learning. AEFA activities and events are held outside of regular class time, and participation is voluntary. AEFA is a parent-initiated, parent-led/facilitated program and the success of AEFA is the collective efforts of parents, supported by teachers along with school staff and administration.

Some teachers share their most valuable time and serve as consultants/advisors/proctors. A number of teachers graciously and generously provide their classrooms for use of AEFA activities. Without their support, AEFA could not have grown to enable more students to participate. Parents step up to collaborate, coordinate, plan and implement AEFA programs. Parent volunteers make the activities in the current year's offering possible. We hope you would join in, to be a part of the parent volunteer team to make our PTA's enrichment programs thrive.

In order for AEFA to continue to offer enrichment opportunities for growing number of interested students, we welcome and need parents to volunteer in program development, leading an activity/event, coaching students and supervising group activities. Thank you to families who have contributed funds to PTA to sponsor additional educational support and enrichment programs at Vista Verde.

If you are interested in any of the AEFA programs as listed below, please send an email to the program specific contact person. AEFA events are announced in PTA's eNewsletter. AEFA Group Meeting is open to all interested parents. Please contact PTA's AEFA Chair, Grittiya Corrigan, (tiyapta@gmail.com) or Susanne Stark (starknv@gmail.com) or our AEFA Faculty Advisor, Mrs. Katherine Jacobs (katherinejacobs@iusd.org) with any questions.

Public Speaking, Chess, Spelling, Geography

VIKING VOICES (formerly known as Toastmasters) is a student-led, parent volunteers – mentored group that offers a fun, focused and supportive setting for students to practice public speaking, build confidence and improve interpersonal communication.

CHESS TOURNAMENTS - are offered to all students (**Grades K-8**) interested in playing chess to cultivate gamesmanship and chess game strategies. Please submit completed Tournament Entry Form and fee by deadline to the front office.

SPELLING BEE - A competition in which contestants are asked to spell from a broad collection of words, selected from the official Scripps National Spelling Bee Word List. Middle school finalists can represent Vista Verde at the Orange County Spelling Bee. Elementary School finalists will receive Viking Elementary Spelling Bee Certificates.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY BEE – is a competition for **Grades 4-8** students. Each contestant is asked one question from each of the eight themed rounds, and may include Cultural Geography, Economic Geography, Across-the-Country, Around-the-World, Science, Geographic Comparisons, Physical Geography.

STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Math

ASTRONOMY NIGHT STAR GAZING PARTY – for all students and families interested in viewing the galaxy using telescopes set up by members of the Orange County Astronomers.

EGG DROP COMPETITION/RUBIK'S CUBE CHALLENGE – is for all students (**Grades 1-8**). Participants will build an egg holder at home prior to event to protect a raw egg as it falls from the school's roof. We will gather to see which eggs survive the drop.

EARTH SCIENCE DAY, a new event this year organized by UC Irvine scientists, is for all students and families. Interactive exhibits will showcase how Earth's oceans, land, and atmosphere interact, and promote a sustainable use of natural resources and environmental stewardship.

MATH CLUB for Mathletes is for **Grade 4-8** students who want to be challenged in solving more advanced math problems on a regular basis. In Math Club students will take a practice Math Olympiad exam once a month to benchmark their progress/performance. Students who demonstrate strong math skills and are willing to attend practice sessions may be selected to participate in Mathcounts (Grades 6-8) and/or Math Field Day (Grades 4-6) competitions, representing Vista Verde to compete with other schools. Teams will be chosen based on performance and participation during math club meetings.

SCIENCE OLYMPIAD is geared for team competition. Teams are formed to encourage learning, teamwork, and foster problem-solving skills. Teams compete in 'events' pertaining to various scientific disciplines, including biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, earth science, geology. Competition events change every year, usually include hand-on projects such as tower building, bridges, circuits, airplanes, knowledge oriented events such as science trivia, solar system, meteorology, and logical deduction events such as disease detectives and crime busters.

- **Middle School (Grades 6-8):** Teams work from beginning of the school year until end of February to prepare for the regional competition.
- **Elementary School (Grades 4-6):** Events take advantage of the natural curiosity of each child and allow for in-depth hands-on experiences.

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)

GATE identification. Irvine Unified School District (IUSD) conducts an annual Multiple Criteria Measure screening process for all students in 3-6th grades to identify students for placement in the GATE program. The process takes place within the school day and over the course of the school year. Parents are notified of GATE placement via email by June 30th.

GATE clustered, differentiated instruction. Teachers assess each student's current knowledge and skill level, and make adjustments to instruction and curriculum to meet individual needs. GATE and Challenge students are cluster grouped within the regular classrooms and receive differentiated instructional opportunities designed with elements of depth and complexity through the use of supplemental materials, and varied learning activities. For more information: <https://iusd.org/departments/gifted-advanced-learners>

GATE Parent Resources. The **GATER blog** (<http://iusdgater.blogspot.com/>) shares information about IUSD's GATE program as well as other information and resources with parents and community members interested in the education of Gifted and Advanced Learners. The Community Advisory Committee for GATE (**CAC-GATE**) serves as an important vehicle for parent and community involvement in the educational program of gifted and advanced learners. CAC-GATE hosts general parent community meetings to promote open communication between district administrators, school staff, and parents. Meetings also provide parents with information and opportunities related to gifted education.

Vista Verde Teacher Representative for GATE: Katherine Jacobs (KatherineJacobs@iusd.org)

IUSD CAC-GATE 2019-2020 GENERAL MEETINGS (open to all IUSD parents and community members): TBA