

Dear Colleagues,

We hope that you had a great start to the school year. We recognize the excitement and the challenges that come with a new school year.

In this era of LCAP and ESSA, the need to provide services for gifted learners is present even if it is not explicitly highlighted in state and local policies. The University of Southern California, Rossier School of Education's Office for Professional Development Programs has developed a compliment of courses designed to target gifted education in the contemporary educational landscape. Our programs are uniquely tailored to meet the following factors: (a) the diversity (cultural, linguistic, and economic) diversity that exists in California, (b) the current climate of funding for public schools in the state of California, (c) district mandates and aspects of curriculum and instruction facing K-12 administrators and teachers, and (d) the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted and advanced learners in heterogeneous and homogeneous classrooms.

A brochure describing our certificate program accompanies this letter. In addition, two new courses have been developed based on a needs assessment of teachers and administrators.

Independent Study for Advanced Learners	Ready-to-Teach: Challenging Curriculum
Coaching teachers to facilitate students' in a step-by-step approach to conducting an Independent Study as a means to differentiate the core or basic curriculum. Selecting a topic, defining questions, and conducting research are some of the major categories for the demonstration, discussion and materials to teach teachers how to implement an Independent Study for students.	Ready-to-Teach set of lessons extends both the GATE and discipline-related standards to challenge gifted and advanced learners grades 2-6. These lessons are presented in a book titled "Responding to Giftedness Across the Grade Levels" and have been field-tested and created to challenge learning in language arts, science, and social studies. Teaching students to facilitate interdisciplinary connections, define "big ideas," and develop critical and creative skills are fundamental to these lessons. This course is conducted with on-line live sessions (synchronous) meetings.
January through March, 2018 Four Week Course Cost -- \$250.00 per person	November through January, 2017 Four Week Course Cost -- \$250.00 per person

We recognize that options exist when making decisions regarding professional development for teachers. Three major factors distinguish our programs: (a) a focus on cutting-edge research-

based strategies, (b) field-tested curriculum that teachers across the grade levels can implement in the classroom, and (c) synchronous (live) online meetings to provide teachers with content, coaching, and feedback. We are available to answer any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra Kaplan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'S'.

Sandra Kaplan, Professor of Clinical Education