

GATE Advisory Council Meeting  
Oct. 14, 2008

Handout for Parents of Gifted Children Support Group

- Runs for 8 weeks in the Fall

Introductions around room.

Reviewed Ground Rules – Expectations.

Purpose is for parents and teachers to have conversations about GATE students and how to best serve them.

Last year was about development of a new GATE plan; this year about implementation of the new GATE plan and extending the broader conversation between parents, teachers, and administrators regarding the needs of students with a GATE designation.

In response to parent interest for night meetings, two parent information nights to allow parents who work to have access to the GATE conversation will occur. The dates are posted on the GATE web page.

The District did receive a 3 year approval of the GATE plan as had been hoped.

The group reviewed GATE Plan Implementation to date and for the coming year:

- Jon Elliot and Virginia O'Rourke are assisting with parent friendly synopsis of GATE plan and resource links for the GATE webpage.
- Trying to provide more communications about GATE plan through site newsletters to parents.
- Working on standardizing forms for referral, appeal, and identification.
- Administrators are communicating with school sites to let them know that we have a new GATE plan and discussing its implementation. In general, teachers feel the plan is a good step forward and asking for resources on how best to serve GATE students.
- Sites communicating to teachers that, if think have student who is GATE, then to make a referral.
- CST STAR test is not recorded in %ile other than in CAT6. So have to convert the CST scaled scores in %ile and need standard deviation and mean for that test and doesn't come out until February.
- Want to have meaningful communication with parents of GATE students, so may need to identify and re-identify students each year. Need parent consent.
- Also need to keep record tracking system at each site.
- Some GATE referrals will require study team process.
- Want referral form on the web for parents to see how it is done, straightforward and simple.
- Site Council has \$2.75/student to support GATE at each site.
- Positive shift because putting GATE on map in Site Council, how to promote student achievement to be included in Single Plan for Student Achievement.

- Approximately \$8,000 for staff development.
  - Other monies that district contribute that relates to GATE, e.g. Mathletes is partially funded. Not part of \$2.75.
  - Professional development is including differentiating instructions for high achievers, e.g. Math Solutions, Writing Strategies (Lucy Caulkin), Anne Beninghof at high school for three days.
  - GATE Certification Program that has been made available for entire district teachers.
  - California Association for the Gifted has conference in Anaheim and administrators have announced that to staff. Nice thing about that workshop is that teachers may visit a school program on one of the days.
  - In December want to go to board about progress of GATE plan implementation.
  - Trying to increase level of communication and transparency.
  - Referral in March-April and conduct survey monkey to parents and students about program.
  - In June presentation of GATE report to Board, progress, results of survey, etc.
- 
- Parents expressed and interest in creating a parent support group like PRAISE and raising money for GATE related activities.

The following points were reported as part of a break-out session in which groups of parents, teachers, and administrators identified topics of interest for the GATE Advisory Council to discuss in the coming year:

- Supporting the social/emotional needs of gifted kids.
- General site updates about what is happening.
- Hearing from teachers about differentiated training, the successes and challenges.
- Getting a differentiated instruction speaker to see how it works.
- Supporting girls in mathematics at secondary level and examining research over time.
- Time spent at February meeting to work on evaluation survey and start process via email prior to meeting.
- May meeting to hear feedback from teachers about perception of gifted students and criteria for identifying them.
- Parent support for gifted student at elementary level, K-3, what parents can do for them because they are not identified at that time.
- Hearing from other districts comparable in size and demographics that have successful program. What are the challenges? How is it received?
- How parents can work within the system and how differentiated instruction will look different at different levels. Elementary-one teacher, middle school-cores, high school-AP and honors classes.
- How do parents in middle school and high school discuss issues with teachers because they are harder to approach at middle and high schools and parents often don't know how to approach them.