

## Gate Meeting Minutes: September 16, 2019

Began 6:15

Adjourned 8:00

### **Survey Results:**

Jennifer Almer will no longer be working as a half-time GATE Coordinator, but will have approximately 30 hours to work on GATE activities. She will be allocated a .2 (180 hours) to continue District work and 30 of those are for GATE. The survey was to identify the areas of importance for parents as we work within those hours.

The survey results were share with the group. The top six items were the following:

1. After School Events
2. Professional Development
3. Individualized Student Support
4. Demonstration lessons
5. Family Education
6. Student Group Talks

Parent expressed deep disappointment and anger that the program was being hit so hard. She said that she had assurances that the GATE program was fine and would be spared any cuts. She also expressed that the program needs strong oversight and someone to be at the schools to make sure that everything is happening. She felt betrayed by the district.

Many parents expressed support for Jennifer Almer who expressed that her desire to work with students daily was the motivation for taking the Curriculum Specialist position.

Sharon Cuseo explained the course of events. It began with the Board's decision to evaluate every employee position that becomes vacant. Any position that is not legally mandated would be frozen. A curriculum specialist position became open at Miller Elementary School and Jennifer Almer was selected for the position. That created a vacancy and her district position was frozen. She will be paid extra to continue a very limited amount of activities for the GATE program.

Some of the items that were discussed as part of addressing the top 6 survey results at the meeting were the following:

- Maintain regular meeting dates.
- Continue to hold monthly meetings for parents
- Work with Curriculum Specialists to give talks to GATE students. These talks would include what it means to be gifted and the social-emotional challenges they may face. District staff will work with middle school coordinators to continue the talks as well.
- Provide Demonstration Lessons at Miller – principals would have to send their teachers to Miller and pay for substitute teachers with site funds.
- Parents can also work with their site principals if they want to help the GATE program at their schools and/or to donate funds for substitutes.
- Jennifer Almer will reach out to contacts about coming to present to parents, including Mr. T Bui and Ms. Julie Hull.
- Individualized student support will be the most difficult to maintain. Jennifer Almer said that she can respond to questions in emails.

- Professional development will happen and will focus on the teachers.
- After school/lunch events will be up to the capacity of each school site.
- Sharon Cuseo and Jen Almer will work with Stacy Cashman, Director of Student Services to work with Intervention Specialists, so that they are able to provide some support to gifted students.
- Jen Amer will facilitate the Orientation meetings.
- Sharon Cuseo will update the website with agendas, minutes and announcements of events.
- Jen Almer will have other site and district responsibilities which leaves 30 hours for GATE. However, there will be some overlap as she maximizes her time. For example, she will be able to include professional development for GATE teachers within the larger context of professional development for all.

There was also some conversation about oversight of the program in general. Jennifer Almer expressed that the responsibility belongs to site and district administrators and that it cannot fall to the GATE Coordinator. Progress has been made, but there is still a lot of work to be done in this area.

A request was made to add the names of the high school contacts for the GATE program to be added to the website. This will be done.

Ten iPads were purchased with GATE funds and will be available to school sites on a check out basis.

An additional question was asked regarding the parcel tax and the lack of specific language for the GATE program. The GATE Master Plan will be reviewed as the document for adding dollars. The Board of Education will review district recommendations based on all of the district plans.

Sharon Cuseo and Jennifer Almer will work together on a plan with these elements and present it at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be the third Monday in October.

**Program Data:** GATE Identification and performance data (SBAC and grades) was presented that showed the numbers and percentages for all schools and also for the following subgroups: gender, EL, RFEP (Reclassified English Learners who are now Fluent), 504, Socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and special education

The GATE walk- through form used last spring was submitted to the district by 11 out of 14 schools, so far. These are used at the elementary and middle school levels.