

Parent Council Meeting Agenda: For Parents of Students Identified as GT

January 22, 2018 5:30-6:30 PM

Celebrating the diversity that is LCS



Welcome, Housekeeping, Introductions, Review of Agenda, Mission and Vision

*Time Keeper-Deb Allen

Parent Resource-Connecting for Kids

*Emotional Intensities with Gifted Children with childcare provided

*Meghan Barlow, PhD will be presenting on Emotional Intensity in Gifted Children at Westlake Library on February 27, 2018 from 6:30-8pm. Registration is required. Childcare is also available for free. <https://www.connectingforkids.org/event-2744000>

Panel Groups-Thank you to everyone who submitted questions. We will go through the submitted questions and then if time remains we can take additional questions.

Middle School Teacher Panel-Mr. Spooner, Mrs. Gray, Mrs. Andrasak, and Mrs Fields

*Mrs. Gray out ill today and unable to attend

Q1:What kinds of supports can/should parents provide for their children to be successful in the Elementary-to-Middle School transition? How can parents help students develop independence as expectations for students become much more intense?

A1: Communication is open between parents, teachers, students. Set time aside each night for homework (HW). Discuss successes and struggles. Talk about what is being taught during the day because when the students encounters active engagement at home it helps convey the idea that this is a team effort. Garfield has a school HW chart that they use via thier Library page. Planners are used at Harding. Teachers post assignments on the board and/or via Google Classroom. Progress Book-grades are posted regularly so parents can see if HW is being turned in. 6th graders might stumble along the way. It is ok-this is how they learn. Offer suggestions for organization ideas (HW folders). Please reach out if you have questions or concerns.

Q2: In ELA what amount of reading should I expect my child to be doing every night? How many different novels should we expect a student in advanced ELA read a year?

A2: 30 minutes of reading per evening is a standard assignment for 6th grade reading at Harding. 25 minutes is required at Garfield. It was conveyed that the goal is 60 minutes of HW total for all classes at Harding. Students will read approximately 1 class novel per quarter and 1 independent novel per quarter with an average of 8 novels per year. Some reading is done in class, some out of class, and some books are student choice. Projects at the end of an in class novel is common. Sometimes there is built in time during the class to work on homework, especially larger assignments. For example, a project is assigned on Monday and due following Friday. Students who use their time wisely may not have large amounts of work at home. Please communicate with your child's teacher if HW in a particular course is taking large amounts of time. Have conversations with your student about how they are using their time in class and what they are doing online when they are working on their Chromebook at home.

Q3: Does the number of GT students attending each middle school impact the course offerings? Are the same classes offered at both schools?

A3: The same advanced courses are offered at both middle schools. As a gifted service all students have access to the same services regardless of which building they attend.

Q4: What kinds of supports do MS teachers offer students to be successful in transitioning to Middle School?

A4: Before and after school support with teachers can help with transition. It may be a minor issue that they would feel more comfortable discussing privately with a teacher. The teachers communicate regularly with the other staff members to make sure that students are successful. At most elementary schools students are exposed to some departmentalization in the 5th grade, which helps students have exposure to different teachers and the process of moving between classrooms.

Q5: How can parents and teachers work together to support students struggling with study habits and/or organizational skills to be successful in advanced classes?

A5: Organizational strategies and communication with teachers. Organization is an issue for many 6th graders. If this has always been an issue please let the teachers know. They can help find time to clean out the locker and find missing assignments. Color coding is also a good organizational tool for some students. Some students are finding success with Google Calendar instead of a paper planner. At the beginning of 6th grade many students are shy and worried about talking to their new teachers.

Q6: Can a student be forced to drop an advanced class for getting Bs in the class?

A6: A student cannot be forced to drop out of class because of a B grade. Gifted services are not grade dependent.

Parent Panel

Mrs. Schwark and Mrs. McCullum

Q1: What kinds of supports can/should parents provide for their children to be successful in the Elementary-to-Middle School transition? How can parents help students develop independence as expectations for students become much more intense?

A1: Organizational support is essential to success in middle school. Some children might need a paper planner instead of a digital planner. Look into purchasing a planner that has space for your students to write HW, study time, and extra curricular practices/meetings. Take time to help set up their binders, folder, put dates in the corners of their papers to help track their work. Set goals and a timer to help with time management. An analog clock can also help students see the passage of time. Help them learn to move past a challenging problem instead of perseverating on the 1 hard one. Encourage your child to self-advocate in the classroom. Often this involves practicing at home how to talk to the teacher to help build their confidence and speaking skills.

Q2: What supports were most helpful to your child during the transition from elementary to MS? MS to HS?

A2: The anxiety of transitioning to a new building with new challenges can be helped by visiting the new building. Both MS buildings offer times for students to go to the buildings to feel comfortable. Utilize the days offered to visit, but also think about attending a play or concert at the new building. Students who are in band or participate in a sport/activity have those early practices to help with transition as well. Clubs and activities also help build a peer group and foster connections with an adult in the building. It also helps them budget their time better. Get to know parents who have children 1-3 years ahead for supports for you as a parent. This is especially valuable when transitioning to HS. Get to know the building administrators as well. Transitions bring stress. Students might keep it together at school and melt down at home. Do not take this personally. Offer to study with them (run through their vocabulary note cards with them is an easy way to help them study), read their essay, make appointments with your teenagers to engage in these activities. Celebrate minor achievements with encouragement.

Q3: What would you suggest to a parent whose child is struggling with the amount or difficulty level of homework?

A3: Help your student plan their time, chunk out large assignments, get the yucky stuff done first-not last. Many gifted students are working ahead of their peers on an academic track

that continues to increase. However their personal development does not progress at the same pace and level which may mean there are times when they will need more help and guidance than you may have anticipated. Take electronics away and when appropriate, driving privileges if needed.

Q4: As parents of HS students what advice would you give to parents who have students entering the HS in the next few years?

A4: There are study tables and many resources for help-Just ask. Read the course guide, look through the guide with your student, and work together to begin to plan out their 4 year plan. It is OK if your child doesn't want to take the highest level of a particular course offering. Look at your child's strengths and interests and respect those. Don't go it alone. Work your parent networks and find people who can help you when/if you hit bumps in the road. Some gifted students struggle to make friends and may not make many. Finding a club, sport, or other extracurricular activity that interests your student can help foster friendships.

Thank you to our panel members for their time and thoughtful responses!

Preparing For Our Final Meeting & Networking

*Social/Emotional Development was suggested

Next meeting April 30, 2018 6:00-7:00 pm