

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

November 26, 2018 5:30-6:30 PM

Celebrating the diversity that is LCS



Welcome, Introductions, Housekeeping, Review of Mission and Vision

Dr. Palumbo

Follow up from September meeting

Mrs. Spitzer

Parent support network-

- Parents have completed the survey and we have a list of contacts that can be shared with parents who request information/ outreach from parents.
- Self-contained information night tentatively set for late May 2019 for perspective 2nd grade families

Panel Q & A

Ms. Megan Coe- 3rd grade Cluster Teacher, Lincoln Elementary School

Ms. Lisa Andrasak- 7th/8th Advanced teacher, Garfield Middle School

*Question: My 7th grader still has difficulty organizing his time, especially on long-term projects. What can parents do to help the students learn to budget their time and complete projects in parts?*

Be aware that students do not share everything with their parents. We know developmentally kids are everywhere in 7th. Long-term projects are difficult to manage and are discussed in several stages of the long-term project. Time management is difficult to learn, and as the student matures, so does the skill. If there is a long-term project everything is listed out and students at Garfield are given a day to work on them. Know how to access Google Classroom and ProgressBook, as parents help to keep the parents informed as well as the students. Garfield uses google docs for homework that updated every day. Know the tools available and reach out to teachers. Will share this strategy with Harding as they use planners.

*Question: What are some of the unique challenges of gifted children with regard to social issues in adolescence? What does the school - teachers, administrators, etc. - do to support students socially?*

Not all gifted students have all the qualities that we think they should have. The self-contained program is great for students since they are with like-minded peers. However, some students are hesitant to make friends with non-gifted students. This could be due to the fact that some groups have been together since third grade. Teachers have noticed new students are not well accepted

into the gifted group. Classroom teachers often create groups, instead of students choosing the groups. Opportunities to mingle with students is helpful with programs like Second Step-Character development- to get to know other students. Gifted students hate to be wrong, so teaching students to take risks is something teachers work on with students. Gifted students have strong opinions especially when they have known each other for so long by 8th grade and get very competitive. They point out each other's errors and we point out empathy to these students.

We see this even in the younger grades. Teachers at the elementary are using Second Step to help with the social-emotional side of all students, but not just the gifted population. Students learn about empathy and reading emotions. It's important to find outlets and some schools are using Yoga and meditation within the class and in the building. Buildings have worked with students to learn a growth mindset.

*Question: What can we support students who are gifted in one or more domains, but have challenges in another?*

We see students in one area is a strength and there are a few students who feel that they are "bad" in the other area. We help students take on a growth mindset. Students also shut down when it gets hard and we teach them to be flexible. We encourage parents to send an email or text to the teacher when students struggle at home so we can talk about it both at school and at home. Teachers also give students the opportunity to retake tests to show that its okay if they make mistakes and we want them to grow. Parents can Google the "Power of Yet" to study the growth mindset.

*Question: What can we address the wider range of learning styles for all, rather than just "gifted" and "all other?"*

We're working hard at the MS and HS to offer advanced courses and students who aren't gifted have the opportunity to take these courses. We offer Advanced classes to foster academics at more levels. Branch out and look for extracurricular options to push gifted students out of their comfort zones. Often times academics is their comfort zone, so encouraging students to take risks in other areas that they aren't as good at like sports or clubs helps students learn that progress and effort are sometimes more important than the finished product.

*Question: How does cluster grouping work in the classroom?*

Students who have a particular identification are grouped together in the elementary grades with a teacher who has had ongoing professional development in gifted education. Teachers use a lot of small group activities in all areas to meet the needs of all students in the room. Grade level mini-lessons are offered and then small groups happen for students to work at their level. Students work on projects to stretch their learning. This shakes up the groups and gives all students a chance to stretch their learning and offer enrichment and go deeper into the content.

*Question: How will WEP goals be addressed and reported throughout the year?*

Goals are aligned with the area of gifted identification. 6th,7th, and 8th grade science goals build upon each other. Advanced science goes deeper, but is not accelerated. Quarterly projects are given as part of the middle school science WEP goal. Progress is reported quarterly on the report card. For advanced math (Algebra and Geometry) teachers have students take ownership of their learning. Teachers spend time in class talking about struggling, and possible solutions to have students learn to help themselves whether it is coming in for extra help, reading explanations online, or getting peer assistance.

*Question: How successful is the transition to accelerated math for these students?*

Students in the 5th grade self-contained program at Grant are using the same Discovery TechBook that the 6/7A classes are using at the middle school, and therefore the transition to middle school accelerated classes from the self-contained classroom is easier. Students who are not currently accelerated in elementary math, are given 80 minutes of math at both Garfield and Harding in the accelerated math courses to help with the transition. While the pace and workload may be more at the middle schools, the extra time in class helps to make up for the year and a half content that is covered in the course.

*Question: 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?*

Teachers spend much time in class, especially in the first few weeks, to answer student concerns. Teachers help students problem solve new situations. Organizational tips and set up of materials are supported for students. Parents can help by making tools students' and parents' best friend. This is great for homework and missed assignments. Homework docs are helpful and know how to use google classroom. Emailing teachers to help teachers keep track of students and what they've turned in.

There is academic support time in school to help students with homework and after-school homework clubs. Parents can help to track what students are doing with classwork and assignments. Teachers scaffold support with students from 6th to 8th and helping students take responsibility for their work. Google classroom isn't used as much for grading but used a lot for a reference for a homework page. Progressbook is better for seeing if the teacher graded it. Students need to check turned in, to show that it was turned in on time in google classroom. There is nothing on google that allows the teachers to know that student didn't turn something in. Sending teachers an email that they have it to turn in late helps to keep students and teachers organized. All students who have Google classroom also have Google calendar that links to the calendar so students and parents can see the assignments. This is automatically linked, parents/students just need to click on the calendar icon on Google to see the assignments which are color-coded by the classes that use Google Classroom.

*Question: What do high school services look like?*

Services are in the form of advanced and AP courses at the high school. Students do not need to be gifted to take these courses, but if they take a course that matches their identification area, they will have a WEP Goal for that course. Students can take more courses than just what their identification area is, however, they will only have a goal for the identification area. Ex. A student is identified in reading and is taking AP English and AP Physics. The student will only have a WEP goal for AP English. Students are recommended for most advanced and AP courses at the high school if they have fulfilled the prerequisite courses. Students in 8th grade will take the APUSH exam in order to place into AP US History as a freshman.

Reminder: there is a Connecting For Kids focusing on Gifted Students Wednesday, Nov. 28th at the Parma-Snow Road Library

Next Meeting January 28, 2019- 5:30 pm (Guest Speaker on Executive Functioning Skills/Strategies)