



CPS - G/T Parent Advisory Council 8/28/13 Meeting Summary

The Cabot Public Schools' office of G/T and AP held two Parent Advisory Council meetings on Wednesday, the 28th of August. The information below is a summary of what was discussed at those meetings.

- Aaron Randolph, Director of G/T and AP, and Bonita Cook, Administrative Assistant to the program, were in attendance at both meetings.
- Twenty-three parents/guardians attended the meetings. They represented students from Eastside, Mountain Springs, Northside, Southside, Stagecoach, both middle schools, both junior highs, and CHS.
- Parents had the opportunity to learn more about the G/T, Pre-AP, and AP program, as well as provide some feedback on their perception of the program.
- Some of the issues discussed at the meetings included: G/T identification process, State rules and regulations about G/T education, G/T services in grades K-12, Pre-AP and AP course offerings, AP Academy at CHS, Evaluation Data from 2012, AP Exam results, addition of AP Music Theory at CHS, and other items.
- The office of G/T and AP would like to present several of the questions/concerns raised by attendees and how those items were addressed:

1. Who chooses what students are tested for G/T? Any student in the district can be nominated by a parent, teacher, classmate, community member, etc. During the summer, our G/T specialists also evaluate the results of ACTAAP and ITBS scores for each school. If scores suggest a student needs G/T services, then that student will be considered for placement.

2. Parent-Teacher communication: parents were impressed with this from elementary & middle, but some feel left out of communication starting in junior high. We felt we needed someone to reach out to parents and we hope to improve this communication with parents through, Christi Waller, the GT Seminar teacher at the junior high schools. We have allocated this teacher two days per building per month in order to provide help to students and parents. We hope to see change starting this year, and we encourage our Pre-AP teachers to have websites, send emails, texts, etc. Parents also feel that G/T needs to set up shop at junior highs during PT conferences to meet and talk with parents.

3. How does GT Seminar work? Is it an option? When and how often do students attend? Do we look for them and pull them out of class? G/T Seminar at both junior highs is a seminar course taught by Christi Waller, one of our secondary G/T specialists. This course is designed to be administered on a monthly basis to all students that are enrolled in Pre-AP classes at the junior highs. Mrs. Waller splits her time between both of the junior high schools and the high school. She spends her afternoons at the junior highs teaching G/T lessons to our Pre-AP students.

Mrs. Waller pulls entire classes from our Pre-AP teachers, or groups of students from other classes that may not have any Pre-AP classes in the afternoons. We have designed the schedules so that every Pre-AP student sees Mrs. Waller on a monthly basis. Mrs. Waller is also available during certain days of the month to work with students at the junior highs on any other G/T or Pre-AP matter. Students or parents can contact her to schedule time to visit.

4. What is the G/T Identification Process in grades 2-5. The first stage of identification is gathering objective data. Through observations during G/T whole group enrichment (K-1), the G/T Specialist and classroom teacher discuss information to be placed on the *Kingore Observation Inventory* checklist. During flexible groups (K-4), information is gathered and kept in anecdotal form by the classroom teacher and G/T Specialist. Objective data, such as current standardized achievement tests, formative assessments, and norm-referenced tests are also documented.

At the conclusion of first grade, formal identification begins with a pre-referral conference in which the classroom teacher and the G/T Specialist review information gathered since kindergarten. Once student data has been reviewed, recommendations are made for additional testing and possible placement in the gifted program. Parents must give written permission before G/T testing can be administered.

Objective information collected, beginning at the end of first grade, consists of augmented state assessments, the *Otis Lennon School Abilities Test, 8th Edition*, and the *Williams Tests of Creativity, Exercise in Divergent and Thinking*. Additional data may also be collected from the *Slosson Intelligence Test, Revised* and the *Kuhlmann-Anderson Tests, 8th Edition*. Subjective information is gathered via the *Renzulli Hartman Rating Scale*, the *Kingore Observation Inventory*, by grades, and by anecdotal records kept by the G/T specialist and classroom teachers.

Once objective information is gathered from testing and subjective information has been quantified, placement meetings are held. Students are identified using a blind identification process. No single criterion or cut-off score is used to include or exclude a student. Staffing forms are completed which provide justification for placement/non-placement of students in the gifted program. Parents and teachers are notified by letter of the decisions of the placement committee. A parent/guardian must give written permission before a student may be placed in the gifted program. Instructionally useful student information obtained during the G/T identification process is disseminated to classroom teachers via grade level team meetings. A student review is completed each year which provides documentation for continuation of gifted services.

A parent or teacher may appeal the decision of the placement committee or the annual review committee. A conference will first be held at the building level by the G/T specialist and the building administrator. If a parent or teacher files a formal appeal, a district committee will hear the appeal. The district appeal committee will be comprised of at least five members consisting of, but not limited to, a classroom teacher, G/T Specialist, counselor, building administrator, and the Director of Gifted/AP Programs.

For any questions or concerns about these meetings or anything else about G/T, Pre-AP, or AP, feel free to contact a G/T specialist or Pre-AP/AP teacher in your building or the office of G/T and AP at 501-843-3363.