

**Goochland County Public Schools
Gifted Advisory Committee (GAC)
September 12, 2012
Minutes**

The first quarter meeting of the Gifted Advisory Committee (GAC) was held in the training room of the Goochland County Public Schools Administration Building on September 12, 2012. Chairperson Jennifer Hefner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present were Chairperson Jennifer Hefner, Sara Worley, Becky Steadman, Margaret McLemore, Robin Sundstrom, Kristie Duncan, Carolyn McCann, Glenda Hawk, Jamie-Ellen Spessard, Dianna Gordon, Dr. Stephen Geyer, Bruce Watson, Michael Newman, Cynthia Stansberry and Christina Rosenbaum.

Chairperson Hefner gave an introduction and a brief overview of the committee chairs and members. Hefner stated that a vice chair was needed. There were no nominations. Hefner stated that a secretary was needed. Sara Worley volunteered to be secretary. Margaret McLemore motioned to elect Sara Worley as secretary. Becky Steadman seconded the motion and the motion was approved by those in attendance. Hefner stated that two more members are needed to represent both Goochland High and Goochland Middle Schools. A name was given from the floor and it was agreed that they would be contacted. Hefner requested action in the minutes from the last meeting. Cynthia Stansberry motioned to approve the minutes. Robin Sundstrom seconded the motion and the minutes from the May 24, 2012 meeting were approved by those in attendance.

GAC Priorities

Chairperson Hefner reviewed the GAC priorities that were compiled last year. She questioned if there were any new ideas to be added. The consensus was that the priorities established last year are still relevant and need to be addressed.

Five Year Plan Update

Chairperson Hefner requested that Dr. Stephen Geyer give an update on the five year plan. Dr. Geyer stated that he has gone through the plan to ensure its accuracy. He went on to say that Diana Gordon, Sandra Crowder, James Hopkins Tina McCay have all reviewed the most recent draft but it needs to be vetted by GAC. A member of the Committee questioned if the five year plan was intended to reflect the current situation and be updated each year or if it is a stagnant plan that gets updated every five years? Dr. Geyer responded that there are two different plans and that he believes that this plan only gets updated every five years. He stated that he will have to speak with Sandra Crowder who will know more of the legal requirements of the plans. Chairperson Hefner requested that Dr. Geyer speak with Ms. Crowder regarding the plans.

Update on Gifted Curriculum and Communications Update

Dr. Geyer then proceeded to give an update on the gifted curriculum. He stated that RES and GES are taking part in pilot programs for instructional grouping. He stated that it is a work in progress and parents can access the full curriculum on line. He gave an overview of how the teachers have coordinated and all curriculum is now posted online. He stated that the feedback received from parents on this new tool will help to mold secondary education's format. He then showed the website where the curriculum is posted and showed an area where teachers can post all types of information that they think would be helpful to the children and parents. He stated that this is an area where gifted information could be posted which would address one of the GAC's priorities of communication. He went on to say that teachers do not have to get approval to post in this forum so it is a direct way for teachers to communicate with parents about extracurricular activities, camps, etc. He stated that the

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GCPS goal is to have the 6th through 12th grade site up and working this year. Chairperson Hefner requested that Dr. Geyer expound on the general pathways for kindergarten through eighth grade math studies. Dr. Geyer stated that is year, starting in third grade, children will be tested before each new math unit to determine placement. He went on to say that this allows the children to move fluidly between advanced and regular work depending on their individual needs. Chairperson Hefner stated that this should start in kindergarten because there are children who enter school performing on a first grade level and those children are not reaching full potential. Christy Duncan stated that this new program is working because her son is enjoying math this year for the first time because he is interested and it is keeping him engaged. Jaime-Ellen Spessard stated that she is in the process of putting together a fourth/fifth and fifth/sixth pacing guide. Chairperson Hefner questioned what should parents with gifted children in 6th through 12th grades look for their information? Dr. Geyer stated that until their site is functional, they can post to the elementary site.

Dr. Geyer proceeded to give an overview of the webinar subscription service that is available to parents. He stated that along with the webinar comes information that could be helpful and if any parents are interested, they can make an appointment to come view one of the webinars.

Parent Education and Event Suggestions

Chairperson Hefner stated that the webinar might be something that could be added as a parent education resource. Dr. Geyer stated that staff will watch some and make sure they are appropriate for full viewing. Chairperson Hefner questioned if there were any more suggestions for more parent educational events? It was decided that an open house with information on summer camps and programs should be held in early January/February and an open house with information on colleges, programs, and dual enrollment should be held in the Fall. Mr. Newman was tasked to get information from the dual enrollment schools to find out when registration starts.

Public Comment

Chairperson Hefner opened the meeting to public comment. Cynthia Stansberry expressed pleasure that there is once again some ability grouping at the elementary level. She stated that Dr. Geyer presented a plan last spring for the 2012-13 school year in which elementary students are flexibly grouped by ability or performance for Language Arts and Math. According to the NAGC, grouping allows for "more appropriate, rapid, and advanced instruction, which matches the rapidly developing skills and capabilities of gifted students." Kudos to GCPS for this step to better meet the needs of gifted students. She went on to say that GCPS should not limit ability grouping to Language Arts and Math. It should be extended to cover all core courses, to include Social Studies and Science. Children who show giftedness or ability in a subject and who are served in mixed classrooms risk becoming bored and becoming a behavior problem, becoming bored and zoning out in class, becoming lazy, angry, and/or despondent, and developing a strong dislike of school. In this era of emphasis on STEM and 21st Century skills (which involve social and cross-cultural interaction), it doesn't make sense for Science and Social Studies to be left out. In addition to ability grouping in core courses, GCPS should increase opportunities for flexible acceleration in core courses. By acceleration I mean anything that is faster paced than the general curriculum. It would include techniques such as grade promotion, testing out of content and moving ahead, telescoping, and curriculum compacting. Telescoping and compacting would be particularly effective ways to serve gifted students whose parents lack the time, resources, or ability to supplement their children in ways that are recognized by GCPS. Once again, it

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is very encouraging to see positive steps for serving gifted children at the elementary level. I look forward to the next innovation. Seeing no one else who wished to speak, Chair Hefner closed the meeting to public comment.

Subcommittee and Task Force Updates

Updates on the subcommittees and Task Forces were given.

Grants

Chairperson Hefner stated that the grants subcommittee has been folded into the grants subcommittee under the School Board.

Measurement Task Force

Cynthia Stansberry gave an explanation on the purpose of the Measurement Task Force and how data is received and evaluated. She stated that hopefully in the future, data will be available for all sorts of tests.

STEM Advisory Committee

Glenda Hawk gave an update on the STEM committee and gave an overview of the summer camp. She stated that the committee is thinking of providing even more summer camps next year. Chairperson Hefner questioned if they thought of partnering with the YMCA to provide for after camp care? Ms. Hawk indicated that they are looking into that for next year. She went on to say that the ultimate goal is to have STEM all the elementary schools and that teachers are looking for ways to incorporate engineering into all aspects of their curriculum.

Honors Committee

There was no update from the Honors committee.

Identification Committee

Jaime-Ellen Spessard stated that she and Ms. Hawk are still meeting and brain storming on the ID Committee. Chairperson Hefner requested that they keep GAC informed/updated of any new ideas.

Communications Task Force

Chairperson Hefner stated that the ideas discussed earlier in the evening will be implemented for the Communications task force.

Adjournment

Being no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.