

GEAC Minutes
April 7, 2010

Notes taken by Mary Wictor for Lisa Gilbert, Secretary

Meeting called to order at 6:35pm by Debbie Napolitan, President, in LWSD Resource Center.

Present – Debbie Napolitan/Pres., Jodi Gaertner/Pres.-Elect, Mary Wictor/co-VP Outreach, Liesl Bohan/Fundraising, Dj Evans/co-Fundraising, Joanne Hall/Parent Ed & Dan Phelan/Quest. Six others were in attendance including Mary Anne Daves/Franklin, Annette Wolf/Alcott, Lisa Oratz/Alcott&alumni, Bill Wescott/Redmond EI, Ellen Zhong/RJH7&Mann.

Note: Attendance affected by concurrent Juanita High School night on new Cambridge program.
<http://www.lwsd.org/News/News-and-Announcements/Pages/JHS-Cambridge-Advanced-International-Cert.aspx>

Special Guest: Amy Holliday, former LWSD Quest student, now interning with Brooke Thacker/EPO Quest.

Director's Report – presented by Dan Phelan

Q: “Briefly, what is the Cambridge program and ‘Cambridge-lite’?”

A: The program name and base comes from the University of Cambridge in England to prepare students for qualifying final exams. There are about 80 across the world. In Fall 2010 at JHS in LWSD, there will be (30) thirty 9th graders starting in Language Arts, Humanities, Math, Science, World Language, and 1 Elective for a total of 6 periods per day. Pre-requisites: students must be ready for Spanish II and Advanced Algebra in 9th grade. Placement by 1) choice living in JHS area, 2) choice within LWSD, 3) anyone outside of LWSD if not filled. Program in grades 9th & 10th might be what people are calling “-lite” (perhaps by International Baccalaureate “IB-folks”). Grades 11th & 12th will offer options for Fine Arts and Technology, and allow partial Cambridge participation to allow mixing with other offered Advanced Placement (AP) classes.

Budget Update

- Awaiting Olympia—affect on LWSD could cause cuts varying from \$0 to \$15 million
- All Parents: once rescheduled, please support budget input meetings by attending or sending online feedback about what programs you feel should be most highly valued

Legislature still in session with deadline Thu 4/8/2010 midnight... but they can choose to “stop the clock” and continue with discussions. LWSD budget decisions and staffing will all be based upon the size of cuts (which could be none to huge).

Q: “What is the ‘worst case’ scenario possible?”

A: As WA State funding for top 2% presently provides funding for EPO Quest and Testing...

- Enrichment Pull-Out (EPO) Quest would be eliminated due to lack of funding
- No testing of new kids for Quest (there are presently waitlists at all grades)
- Still operate Full-Time Quest but
 - May need to charge for transportation
 - Fewer Quest teachers might be used to teach all Quest classes
- Increased class sizes everywhere
- Could affect AP program offerings and classes as well

Q: “What is the ‘plan’ for Quest growth?”

A: There are no plans to grow Quest much larger. The Junior High program may have space issues soon based on planning—presently fine for 2010, but 2011 there will NOT be enough room. If move is made to 4 year high schools, Quest in 9th grade (KaJH) will be dropped.

Reconfiguration of the School District is due/needed sometime. Move to K-5 Elementaries, Middle School (6-8), and 4-year (9-12) High Schools is still under review even though capital level was not passed in the last election (2/2010). Once the school board decides, it will take a minimum of 2 years to implement any reconfiguration. If decided soon, the earliest is two (2) years for any changes. By 2012 planning presently shows that LWSD will be short of space for 1,600 students. Building or expanding schools is needed to be able to shift populations.

Testing Update

- Most all student testing for Quest is completed
- Advanced Placement (AP) testing in High Schools will be starting (≈3100 kids)

Questionnaire for all Quest parents

- Awaiting budget impacts and decisions
- Need to buy software to run the survey
- \$ necessary to have technology/means to run surveys will not likely be cut

Math

Q: “What Quest classes are currently piloting the two K-5 math curriculum adoptions?”

A: Dan did not know what Quest teachers nor grades are participating this spring. Parent feedback says at least Alcott 1/2, Redmond EI 1/2, & Thoreau 1/2 Quest classes are using both programs being considered; students are helping evaluate, enjoying giving feedback, & “voting.” Note: Whichever program is adopted will be placed throughout all classes and applicable grades in LWSD with planning and budget to support this change for the next full decade (10 years). Quest would use the new adoption for 1st-4th grades, while the existing adoption of Connect Math Program (CMP) still serves 5th grade (6th grade level), 6th grade (7th grade level/pre-algebra).

Q: “Can Quest teachers, and anyone needing to differentiate more, supplement the new math curriculum being considered for adoption?” It was noted that a 1st grader pretested out of 3rd grade assessment.

A: Teachers can indeed supplement the curriculum but must ensure the kids learn the content. The new adoption this next fall is intended to replace some older programs and should. Supplementation is needed to allow for differentiation and acceleration as appropriate/needed.

Note: Math Power Standards/curriculum requirements are published on www.lwsd.org website.

Each Spring, every Junior High school in LWSD offers a 6th grade Math Placement Test opportunity to any/all interested students. Though the test used and process varies by Junior High, passing this test with a sufficient score allows the student to go directly into Algebra for 7th grade. Math acceleration is available to all interested/qualified students starting in Junior High and is not part of the Junior High Quest program which incorporated LA/SS and Science only.

INVESTIGATING: Online Algebra for 6th Grade Quest students

Dan Phelan has asked GEAC to try to provide annually \$7,500 so that Full-Time 6th grade Quest students might have the possibility to do Algebra via online program. Dan is even

considering giving all present Full-Time Quest 5th graders this year the same entrance test used for Algebra to help determine readiness.

Issues needing to be addressed:

- Teacher certification/education needed at 6th grade for formal teaching of Algebra
- Can 6th graders be given “credit” for online courses typically offered only in Jr. High?

Proposed Math Path plan:

6 th grade	Algebra
7 th grade	Geometry
8 th grade	Advanced Algebra
9 th grade	Math Analysis (trigonometry plus pre-calculus)
10 th grade	Calculus A/B (can be AP class)
11 th grade	Calculus B/C (can be AP class)

Three Quarters of college Calc would have been covered in 2 years → independent study/other?
12th grade AP Statistics, AP Computer Programming, Comp Economics, etc.

College math typically focuses on area of study, e.g., Calculus for Engineers.

Research shows there is no detrimental impact to mixing high achievers with other grades/ages, and that research also shows that students learn more in heterogeneous (multi-age, differing abilities) classroom—they get further and continue to engage more in subject matter.

Dan’s goal: Acceleration is not just one year placement ahead. It should be taking the lid off where you can go, and allowing faster paced learning and achievement.

Q: “If LWSD is reconfigured to have middle schools, then can’t Algebra be taught outside the Quest program via the Middle School Algebra teacher rather than certifying Quest teachers and/or using an online program.”

A: Dan stated he had not thought of this before, and that many issues still needed investigation.

District Requests of GEAC

- ❖ Support LWSF luncheon: Wednesday, April 28, 2010 11:00am-12:30pm at JHS
- ❖ Please again have a GEAC/Quest table for this 5th annual offering
- ❖ Suggested donations are \$150 with LWSF goal to raise \$1500 per table
- ❖ Dan will join the Quest table but needs to share with another table too (2 desserts!)
- ❖ GEAC to find 8-12 people to support this key event for all 24,000 students in LWSD

→ Continue to give Quest teachers (FT and EPO) \$ each August for Fall for their classrooms.

Thanks to Dan who left at 7:10pm at the conclusion of his Director’s report and open Q/A. Cindy Lundvall, former Director, had also poked her head in to say, “Hello!”

Q: “Foreign Language instruction and content is appropriate for brain development much earlier than Junior High. How could this be offered in LWSD & Quest?”

A: Best approach is to work with your school, principal, and PTSA. Many private schools and some public schools have foreign language offerings (Chinese, Japanese, German, Spanish, etc.) Presently, there are no EALRs for foreign language.

Discussion ensued and it was noted that “really bright kids do well... and non-Quest kids can do amazing things!” Supplement a child’s school education with enrichment like chess, math club,

robotics, dance, drama, music and sports. Social/Emotional components are also key to development. Extra curricular activities can provide challenge and enrichment to learning and character.

Fundraising, Grants, & Membership

April 2010 Issue 3 Newsletter is done and will be distributed electronically by the LWSD Quest office via Quest teachers to families. This final newsletter of 2010-2011 covers results of the 5th annual grants for Quest teachers, upcoming parent education, and opportunities for students.

Membership in GEAC is up to 20% presently, which is a 6% increase! Fundraising will continue to focus on drives to increase membership—Newsletters, keep in touch with parents quarterly, provide a service, communicate what GEAC does.

Ideas discussed:

- Facebook page (would need way to control comments)
- Blog-type information for communications—ways to connect, carools, per school gatherings, ideas, resources and opportunities, etc.
- Review weblinks to ensure giving good access to information and opportunities
- Ensure matching forms are easy to access and up-to-date
- Can there be \$ denoted for different types of funds (technology, etc) to try to tap folks and resources presently not contributing through existing membership drives?
- Fund-A-Need might be useful for 6th grade online Algebra proposal or other new ideas
- Add a Twice-Exceptional Liaison position within GEAC (Jodi interested)
- Consider having more or at least annual offering of “welcome” for new parents/students—perhaps offer elementary version and Jr. High versions 1 week before school begins in the fall?
- “Gifted” lady at state level is interested in building strong parent groups (per Joanne)
- Transition to Quest: was run in the fall by Quest Teacher Kathy Hiles and Psychologist/Counselor Sandy Malone-Long. Similar needed for Spring when qualified tested are offered and accept placement in Quest for Fall.

New ideas offered were fantastic as were new faces, information and concerns. GEAC should work to look into suggestions, define constraints, and determine what can be done and by whom, including new volunteers—which are always needed.

Action Items

1. Dan has okayed this last bulleted idea for Spring Transition to Quest presentation(s): GEAC can fund, estimated \$150 for speakers/teacher/staff to present. Need to set up date and confirm names of presenters. Target: Elementary and Jr High parents/kids.
2. Existing Board Members and school reps need to write up briefly responsibilities (e.g., VP Advocacy can be joining gifted associations and reading newsletters—and sharing information. All jobs are voluntary and actions are determined by interest, time, skill.)
3. School Representatives are really needed for EACH Quest site (10 total!) Co-volunteers are highly recommended to cover multiple grade and classes.
4. Nominations and needed: new board is elected at May 2010 meeting to run June meeting.

Please consider what you would like to do or continue with for 2010-2011. Ask other to join us!

March 3, 2010 minutes were approved.

Meeting, April 7, 2010, Adjourned 8:45pm.