

GEAC Minutes
March 4, 2009

Notes taken by Debbie Napolitan, co-secretary

The Meeting was called to order at 6:37pm by Paul Meehan, President, at LWSD Resource Center.

Present –, Paul Meehan, Raj Paul, Mary Wictor, Gretchen Colonius, Jodi Gaertner, Pam McBain, Carolyn Benson, Debbie Napolitan, Kim Cashon-Smith, and Dr. Cindy Lundvall. Nine others were in attendance.

Director's Report – by Dr. Cindy Lundvall

- There was a works session presentation on acceleration on Monday. The school board asks for presentations in areas about six times a year. This overview of the accelerated learning programs (Elementary through AP) will be presented at the next GEAC meeting.
- The Quest program application process is under way for both the elementary and junior high programs. Out of 1525 applications received, 1275 students sat for the ITBS testing and of those 512 will move on to the CoGAT testing on March 14th -28th. Additional testing sessions were added to accommodate the number of students testing. The number of applicants has increased 25% per year over the last three years.
- Advance Placement exam testing is beginning at Lake Wash Technical College on regular school days. Exams requested are increasing by 25% per year. There has been a 32% increase in students enrolled this year over last year.
- There are around 3,000 students per class, with some students taking more than one class.
- There is an upcoming meeting with full-time Quest teachers to work on curriculum development and alignment amongst the sites. The topic is thematic curriculum, and teachers will share information amongst themselves. This is an on-going process and will continue into next year. A new progress report model, being piloted by Franklin this year, will also be discussed and considered for roll-out to all the sites
- Enrichment teachers met today and the topic was the assessment of students.
- Demand is increasing from students for more AP classes for purposes of applying to more selective universities. It is used to help distinguish a students' portfolio of work as a 4.0 GPA and high SAT scores are not enough. It is an advantage on admissions, but credit may not be given at college level depending on the university the student attends. A student taking 8 AP classes in high school is not unusual.
- Parent Question: how does AP compare to community college? Answer: AP coursework is supposed to be a college level class and is audited to a national standard. Some universities prefer AP over community college due to its standardization.

- The 6th grade full-time Quest teachers and the 7th grade Quest teachers have also met to discuss transitioning and coordination of curriculum expectations.
- Choice schools lottery placements have occurred. Out of the current 93 full-time 6th graders, 15 received spots at ICS, one at Northstar and none at Renaissance as of today. Changes will continue to occur to these numbers as students move up the waitlists.
- Parent Question about state budgeting. Answer: State budgeting situation looks worse than last meeting. It was looking like a \$5 million cut before, but now it looks like that number will double. There has been a loss of revenue from state sales tax. Cuts will be district-wide with everything being looked at and everything on the table. The school board is briefed on a regular basis, and the full impact will not be known until the budget plan is completed. The school board and Superintendent have strong commitment to our programs. The Program is well respected, growing and receiving good results as the students from Quest are doing very well at the high school level. Quest kids are prepared and motivated to do the AP work.
- Parent Question: What would happen to pull-out kids if program is cut? Answer: I have no idea. One option may be to consider not paying for specialized transportation, but keep it free for students qualifying for free or reduced price lunches.
- Question: Do you track the proportion of students who were in Quest that went on to AP? Answer: Dr. Lundvall has a statistician looking at this right now.
- There are three scenarios for the junior high programs and not enough information yet to know for next year.
- Regarding the grant asked for earlier: The request for \$500 is for three new teachers to attend the March 26th conference. This would help defray the registration fee of \$189 each plus the costs for substitute teachers.

Motion to approve minutes from prior meeting

- Minutes from the prior month's meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report

- There is approximately \$9,500 in the account, plus approximately \$2,000 in transit, so there is close to \$12,000 in funds.

Grant Update

- This is the 4th annual grant, with a total of 18 requests. The average request is around \$700, with a total of \$10,611 requested.
- First, requests were reviewed for acceptability and if they are IMC approved (this left \$8,900). After prioritizing requests, there are \$7,980 requests that we would like to approve.
- Full time equivalent teachers have increased from 17.1 FTE teachers in Quest in the first grant year to 26.6 FTE teachers.

- A motion to approve grants up to \$8,000 to be paid from available was approved.

Funding Request for Teachers to Attend Conference

A motion to approve \$500 to LWSD Quest to offset registration fees for three teachers to attend conference was approved.

Extended pull-out update

The District does not know what the budget will be. Keep writing your state legislature about need for gifted education to keep funding for gifted programs from being cut. The District will consider alternatives such as not funding transportation prior to cutting classrooms from the program.

Update on Weighted GPA

- The school board received a proposal to calculate weighted and unweighted GPAs and let students decide which is used.
- Dr. Chip Kimball, Superintendent should respond by April.
- Emails should be sent to Dr. Kimball, the school board and Dan Phelan voicing support to this proposal.
- Issue summary: A weighted GPA would have one extra point in the GPA for AP classes. State law in Washington requires a 4.0 point system for calculating GPAs, but an alternative for class ranking is allowed. This potentially affects students for purposes of scholarships and may discourage qualified students from taking AP classes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 PM.