

**EDMONDS SCHOOL DISTRICT
HIGHLY CAPABLE MIDDLE SCHOOL TASK FORCE
October 8, 2009 Minutes**

Present: Tony Byrd, Mary Freitas, Kevin Allen, Elizabeth Donnelly, Jon Howeler, Mary Phan, Pidgie Hopper, Nancy Gilbertson

Absent: Kim Newman, Michelle Toshima, Kevin Judd, Ken Batali, Kristin Merrill

DISTRICT HIGHLY CAPABLE MIDDLE TASK FORCE GOAL:

- Explore options to meet the needs of gifted middle school students

Minutes – Karen Grimm is out on maternity leave and Kristen Tollefsen is the 8th grade Humanities teacher. Ruth Brick is teaching 7th grade Humanities.

Upcoming Middle School Dates –

November 3 – Grade K-7 Gifted Testing Parent Only Meeting – 6:00-7:00pm

- Terrace Park Elementary, 5409 228th St. SW, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043
- If you cannot attend, same information and grades K-5 and 6-7th referrals will be on the Edmonds District Highly Capable website.
- Referral forms available at each elementary, district offices, and online
- Online: Edmonds District, Parents and Community, Other Educational Programs and Services, Highly Capable
- For questions call Nancy Gilbertson 425-431-7157 or GilbertsonN@edmonds.wednet.edu

December 18 – Deadline for Grade 6-7 Referrals

- Must be returned to Hi-Cap Office, Nancy Gilbertson, Edmonds School District, 20420 68th Ave. West, Lynnwood, WA 98036

January 9 – Gifted/Highly Capable Testing, Brier Terrace Middle, 1:30-4:30 pm

- *Current 6th and 7th Graders* wanting to enter the gifted program in 2010-11
- Must live in the Edmonds District
- If student has already qualified as “gifted” – no further testing needed
- If already qualified gifted 6th grade student (Challenge) is not planning on attending BTM gifted program, call Nancy Gilbertson 425-431-7157 or email GilbertsonN@edmonds.wednet.edu

November 5 – IB Parent Information Night

- Qualified gifted 8th grade students
- Students (8th grade) who want to be tested to enter the IB program at EWHS

Brier Terrace Gifted Middle School Program – Kevin Allen, Principal

- Gifted program is going well, students are focused and challenged, teachers are onboard, can see some of the differences in gifted students, and trying to stay a couple of steps ahead.
- Jon Howeler, parent of gifted student will be a new member to SAT.
- BTM web site needs to have a spot where gifted parents/students can go to find out information specifically related to them.

- Gail Jefferies will be the point contact at BTM and with Nancy Gilbertson to make sure parents/students have all pertinent information regarding BTM program and give Kathy Ludgate's name as the contact person for IB information.
- District Hi-Cap website will add middle school gifted information and BTM will add a link to the Hi-Cap web site.
- PTSA is official parent group. All parents invited to attend meetings; no separate gifted parent group.
- All school parent meetings instead of separate gifted meetings – all inclusive school.
 - Possible agenda – list topics inclusive to all parents, and then if something different needs to be shared with gifted parents, have that as a separate topic on agenda. Gifted parents will then know there is additional information they need to stay for.
 - Possibly have agenda sent home/or on website prior to meetings.
 - Gifted students transportation from home school to Brier and from Brier to home school.
 - Huge state and district budget cuts have resulted in no district transportation for gifted students in after school activities who live outside the BTM boundaries with the exception to a game and back from the game to BTM. Parents are providing carpooling for gifted students who participate in after school sports practices/activities from MM, CPM, and AM this year.
- **Charlotte Akin's Training Session for BTM Gifted teachers** – Twelve Honors and Gifted program teachers attended her training. Charlotte received positive feedback from teachers – great training and a good baseline on which to build. Charlotte will be coming back to work with these teachers in January or February and will also be at WAETAG.

WAETAG – Conference

- October 23 – 6:00pm Registration opens; 7:00pm Keynote Dr. Bertie Kingore
- October 24 – 8:00am-5:00pm Dr. Bertie Kingore and Ed Zaccaro
- Seventeen people from Challenge and Middle Gifted programs will be attending.
- Hi-Cap \$\$ paying for registrations

Update State Budget – Prediction of possible two billion dollar deficit again for 2010-2011.

- For a second year school districts would be forced to make additional millions of dollars in budget cuts.
 - Operations and Maintenance Levy for \$32,000,000 is not a new levy. It is a renewal of the district's four year existing OM Levy. Levy needs 50% + 1 vote to pass.
 - Our job is to help parents, seniors, and the community understand this is a replacement levy. It is critical to pass the levy this year.

Possible Goals of Gifted Middle Task Force for 09-10 –

- Support BTM Gifted 7-8 program
- Continuum of services for gifted students from K-12
 - Prepare 6th graders for 7-8th choices
 - Prepare 8th graders for 9-12th choices
- Prepare our learners for the 21st Century
 - Tony will show a video by Wagner
 - STEM Initiative
 - Graduation – culmination in problem solving, communication, both written and oral, flexibility, creativity, initiative, and information literacy.

- How to encourage district's underserved population to test for the gifted programs
 - Achievement gap is huge – find ways to close the gap.
 - Latinos/Native Americans/Blacks have a much lower percentage of students in the gifted programs than in the district as a whole.
 - Arlie Neskahi is Native American and works with Multi-Cultural students.

Ongoing Task Force Basic Goals - Continue to remember our task force is representing the gifted programs. All of us are a voice to the community.

- Give accurate information to parents about how to access websites and who to contact to have their questions answered about any of our gifted programs.
 - Terrace Park, BTM, EW have links to the gifted programs
 - District web site – Click on Parents and Community; Other Educational Resources; Highly Capable. Information on Hi-Cap site about Challenge, Middle Gifted, IB, AP, and Running Start.
- We want to continue to grow the new 7-8 gifted program – no school or program can meet every parent/student's wants, but we can be proactive with our gifted programs. Share facts and reasons why a decision is made by the district even if we don't agree with it.
- Be positive with parents in our comments and remember that our job is to research realistic ideas/solutions that will continue to enhance all gifted students learning options.

Diversity – For Latino/Blacks/Native American K-7th graders, do a phone message that invites them to attend the Nov. 3 K-7 information night at TP. Tony will do the message in Spanish.

- Referrals are now in Spanish, Russian, Korean, Arabic, and English. Next year add Chinese.
- Tony will hold meetings at CV and CPE to update parents of underserved schools about Challenge and BTM gifted program and process.
- Besides the regular newspapers the district sends notices to, maybe we can add a Latino and Asian newspaper to the list.
- Nancy G. has been trying to have a message sent to all district K-7 students. Schools can send out messages to their students when considered necessary, but it is a little harder to send messages for all grade level district students. Some complaints have come in from parents about receiving too many “robotic” messages for a variety of reasons from the district, schools, attendance, etc. especially at secondary.

Task Force Meetings - Dec. 7 – 4:30-6:00
 Feb. 1 – 4:30-6:00
 April 19 – 4:30-6:00
 May 17 – 4:30-6:00