

Developing Minds

District 51 Gifted and Talented News



November 2017

Heather Baskin, Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Programming at D51

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Important Dates

Culture Fest

November 4, 11am-3pm
Mesa County Library

PSAT 8/9 can be taken by grades 3-6

Tests—Jan. 20 or Feb 10.
Registration due by
December 18

Letter from the Coordinator:

It is time again...

Sometimes you are asked how you are, but the asker really isn't ready to hear anything beyond "OK" or "Fine." Well, we are asking and want your honest opinion. How are you doing in relation to D51 gifted? Are we meeting your/your students' needs? Where can we improve? Are issues district-wide or only in a certain level? Where are we doing really well?

Last year we asked students, parents, teachers, and administrators in D51 to give us feedback, through a survey, on how we are doing. The surveys were open for a little over two weeks, starting Jan 26th and ending on Feb 10th. The questions came directly from the Colorado Department of Education Office of Gifted Education, as part of their resources for a district self-assessing. Here are just a few stats from last time...

421 Parent responses and 698 student responses
330 Teacher and Administrator responses
Our parent responses represent 93% of the schools in D51

We have used this data to identify strengths and put action steps in place to improve. This newsletter contains a lot information about how and what was done. However, it's also time again to ask, "How are we doing?"

Please take 5 minutes to complete the survey for your group below (and take another 2 minutes to share the link with someone else from that group in our district)...

Parent: <https://tinyurl.com/D51Parent>

Elementary Student: <https://tinyurl.com/D51Elemstudent>

Middle School Student: <https://tinyurl.com/D51MSstudent>

High School Student: <https://tinyurl.com/D51HSstudent>

Surveys will be open until
November 30th

Every participant will have
the chance to be entered in a
drawing for books and
games!

Did You Know?

Identified or Talent Pool? D51 GT Teachers work with and support an array of advanced learners. Some are formally identified gifted and others are supported through a talent pool. That means not every student that works with a GT teacher is identified as gifted. Colorado Department of Gifted Education defines talent pool as "...a group of students who demonstrate advanced or even exceptional ability in a particular area, but at this time do not meet the criteria for gifted identification." Talent pool support is determined at the school level, interventions are documented, and progress monitoring informs adjusted support. Not sure if your student is formally identified as gifted or in a Talent Pool? Talk to your schools' GT Teacher.

How is the Survey Data Used?

We spend quite a bit of time looking at the feedback everyone gave us and setting/completing action steps to improve. May 2017, we published the priority improvement areas for the district and action steps for improvement in our newsletter. Here are the actions steps currently done or in progress:

- * HS Gifted Ed Orientations held at every high school,
- * Standard process and procedures developed for HS student collaboration on ALPs,
- * Training and resources continually provided for GT Liaisons to support ALP development,
- * Survey questions and format evaluated and updated,
- * Individual school meetings (with GT Teacher/Liaison and administration) to review their survey data and discuss improvement goals,
- * Updates on ALP Cycle shared with administrators each month,
- * Training and resources provided through monthly learning communities and email follow up for GT Teachers to develop standard process, procedures, and evaluation cycle for collaboration, SMART goal writing, and progress monitoring of goals on ALP.

All of these action steps impact the goal on our Improvement Timeline for Programming. This goal states we will, "Increase collaborative effort during ALP development, progress monitoring, and review between teachers, parents, students, (and counselors at the high school level)." The survey data is used for setting the specific areas to target and to measure growth in these areas.

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GT Department Goals 2017-18

- ⇒ **Main Focus:** Increase collaborative effort during ALP development, progress monitoring, and review between teachers, parents, students, (and counselors at the high school level).
- ⇒ Increase identification of students in all areas of giftedness in order to address disparities in current demographic representation.
- ⇒ Implement district-wide changes in ALP structure and process to include state guidelines of SMART goal format, a minimum of quarterly progress .

Want More Information?

D51 GT Website <https://connect.d51schools.org/sites/shared/gt/Pages/default.aspx>

CDE's Gifted Parent's Corner <https://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/parents>

What do you want in the Newsletter?

Do you have a topic that you want covered in an upcoming newsletter? Is there a student you know that would like to write an article? Want to share something great happening with gifted students in our district? Want to nominate a student to be featured in our "Many Faces of Gifted" section? Do you know of a student that has written an amazing poem/story or created a fantastic piece of art that we could feature? Have a question about gifted that you would really like answered? Please let us know at bev.jebe@d51schools.org or visit <http://tinyurl.com/D51GTIdeas>.

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