



Report on the Status of Gifted Education In Cheltenham Township 7/06

Advancements

Areas to Improve

<p>1. Acceleration beyond grade level is occurring at elementary and middle schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The process and requirements for acceleration remains opaque, creating a persistent sense of inequity. B. Rubrics for inclusion or exclusion from acceleration must be published. C. Syllabi must be published D. Travel and scheduling accommodations for acceleration
<p>2. Parallel curriculum is being provided to teachers by the challenge officers. It appears to be in use at most schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Cedarbrook still lacks enriched curriculum for science and social studies B. Elementary math no longer differentiates between proficient vs. non-proficient vs. accelerated C. Enrichment courses are still limited by numbers of available desks vs. number of qualified students
<p>3. The menu of Advanced Placement courses has been expanded at the High School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Lack of diversity in these classes needs to be addressed by identifying and supporting children in lower grades.
<p>4. A communication structure between school and families has been put in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Program still has the appearance to be based around special activities, such as field trips. B. Cedarbrook has the only effective two way communication process. Other schools only offer one way communication. C. Communication from E.P. is fraught with typographical errors.
<p>5. Racial & ethnic diversity has grown in the population of students receiving enriched curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Gifted identification remains non-proportional based on race, sex & population.

6. Pilot programs in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Communication on how it working is poor. B. Evidence regarding efficacy is not presented in a scholarly fashion. C. C. Participation remains elusive.
7. Credit for outside learning is being accepted.	Process for applying for and acceptance is opaque.
8. Homogenous E. P. reading groups.	Curriculum not above grade level.
9.	Learning gap between Elkins Park & Cedarbrook persists.
10.	It's still not cool to be smart. Students are "dumbing" themselves down.
11.	Compacted curriculum is not available.
12.	<p>4th grade math issues persist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. It is uncertain what will be tested for acceptance into 5th grade accelerated math. B. Some teachers teach to the test, others do not. C. Uncertain how Everyday Math will impact on accelerated learners.
13.	Challenge program appears to be centered on extra curricular activities vs. classroom based integration (EP & CB).
14.	Clustering is sporadic and discouraged in group projects.



CAGE Recommendations for 2006 - 2007 (alphabetical order):

Acceleration:

1. Examine ways that schedules can be modified for more ease in single subject acceleration.
2. Identify more children who would benefit from single subject acceleration, so that moving a teacher from the HS to CB or CB to EP or EP to the elementary schools would be viewed as less resource intensive.
3. Provide syllabi for all courses via the roadmap to graduation, so families can determine in advance of the school year where a student might benefit from acceleration.
4. Make testing out of content areas a routine evaluation, i.e. routinely provide end of year or end of semester exams for identified learners.
5. Provide qualified counseling services to children to support acceleration.
6. Create a system where true compaction of courses is possible.

Achievement Gap:

1. Adopt a district wide, early identification tool for all children in the second grade, e.g. Otis Lennon (harcourtassessment.com)
2. Communicate characteristics of gifted children and mechanisms for identification to all district families.
3. Communicate scoring and testing process for all enrichment courses before tests are administered.
4. Communicate the rubric for inclusion and exclusion in enrichment courses to all families.
5. Set minimum test scores for enrichment courses before tests are administered.
6. Broaden population eligible to test for enrichment courses.
7. Ensure that 4th grade testing is kept uniform over all four schools.
8. Non-validated tests eliminated as gatekeepers. (i.e. PSSA's design vs. use for student evaluation see <http://www.eplc.org/allwein52003.html>)
9. keep the standards for honors based and enriched curriculum consistent with national standards
10. Open classes to number of qualified students vs. number of available chairs.

Cedarbrook:

1. Provide pre-Advanced Placement classes in science and social studies.
2. Address the 6th to 7th grade study and learning gap at Elkins Park.
3. Make honors preparatory classes available before high school.
4. Align middle school academic standards with high school standards.
5. Teach test preparation classes on the cognitive level of students. Exempt students who are already proficient or above in standardized testing.

Publicity:

1. Improve in school promotion of academic achievements of all children.
2. Improve community public relations to draw in more support to gifted education and promote student self-image.
3. Communicate nature and goals of pilot programs, i.e. pilot does not mean secret.

Compliance with Chapter 16

1. Bring G.I.E.P. process into compliance with Chapter 16.
 - a. Include "needs" section as defined by PDE
2. Create a system of accountability between GIEP and classroom work.

Gifted Summit:

1. Follow up with priorities defined in gifted summit
2. Communicate with participants and families at large about results from summit and plans to move forward.