

Purpose

The purpose of this team is to learn, discuss, and communicate around practices and systems implemented in our district, specifically those that impact our students who are identified and not yet identified as gifted.



Team Agreements

The Art of Community

1. We keep students and equity at the center of our work
2. We create a safe place to share and discuss without judgement or retaliation
3. We acknowledge that we bring our lived experiences into our conversations
4. We strive to be in community with one another with care
5. We try to stay curious about each other
6. We recognize that we need each other's help to become better listeners
7. We slow down, so we have time to think and reflect
8. We remember that conversation is a natural way we think together
9. We expect it to get messy at times
10. We will listen with intention to learn something new

Evolving Model

Intellectually Gifted

Academically Talented (M/R)

Potential to Perform (cast a wider net to serve more students)

Providing multiple pathways to identification instead of barriers

Use Universal Screeners (SBAC) as a **finding tool, not a gatekeeper**:
disaggregate by **sub population** and use **local norms** to identify potential to perform at 97% - and pursue communication about identification

Focus on **observation tools** with attention to how giftedness manifests across cultures and races + teacher and parent interviews/SIGS.

Elementary Specialists and Secondary TOSA dedicated role to oversee identification in MS/HS, serve as parent and student **advocate**, and instructional support **partner** for teachers.

Reflection on the Identification Process

“If the construct of gifted education is valid, as experts have attested for nearly 100 years, program effectiveness should cross ethnic boundaries and programs equitably, with solid student outcomes that are not predictive by diversity, culture, school location, or student poverty.” -- *Special Populations in Gifted Education*, ed. Jaime Castellano

Metaphorical Expressions

Line



Symbol



Color



Relationship in Task (Homework)

Breakout Rooms

Read pages 297 - 302 of "Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students in Gifted Education: Recruitment and Retention Issues" by Donna Y. Ford and Gilman Whiting



Discuss the following questions:

- Based on the "Recommendations for Change," which practices are in line with TTSD's improved identification and service model?
- What new ideas do the authors provide that can enhance TTSD's model for identifying and serving students from diverse populations?

Dependent/Independent Learners

The Dependent Learner	The Independent Learner
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Is dependent on the teacher to direct their learning● Easily gives up when faced with challenges● Relies on explicit cues to do rigorous thinking or apply learning to novel situations● Is unsure of how to tackle a new task● Produces only what is expected● Will sit passively and wait if stuck until the teacher intervenes● Relies on adult direction for complex problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Relies on the teacher to carry some of the cognitive load temporarily● Utilizes strategies and processes for tackling a new task● Regularly attempts new tasks, seeking appropriate support when needed● Has strategies for getting unstuck● Communicates needs of support to move forward in completing a task● Applies complex problem solving tools in academic, social, and personal situations.

How has your child or student demonstrated one or more of the qualities for dependent learning?

Student/Parent Advocacy

One of the most important things you can do to advocate for your child is to partner with your child's teacher! The NAGC website is a great resource to help you form effective partnerships. They recommend:

- 1. Talk with your child about what they are experiencing in the classroom and what they would like to see change.**
- 2. Gather information about what options are available in your school and in the district to meet your child's needs.**
- 3. Develop a description of what you would like the outcomes to be. Be specific, but also be open to options. Assume positive intent!**
- 4. Think about how you can partner with your child's teacher--can you volunteer in the classroom? Can you bring in a mentor?**

Student Parent Advocacy

1. **ALWAYS start with your child's teacher! If you go over the teacher's head to the principal, etc, before talking to the teacher, you may get off on the wrong foot with the teacher.**
2. **Email the teacher for an appointment beforehand! Don't accost the teacher during drop off, pick up, at school events, etc. Let the teacher know what you want to discuss when you set up the appointment.**
3. **Do your homework before the meeting--what is your child telling you? What is really going on in the classroom?**
4. **Reflect: understanding the teacher's philosophy. Understanding how the rate and level are being met and how the teacher is already meeting the needs of high achieving students.**

Student Parent Advocacy

5. Come into the meeting with a plan of what you want to discuss and stick to those points. Don't overwhelm the teacher with too many points.

6. Remain diplomatic and objective. Don't use trigger words such as "bored," "easy," "gifted." You don't want to put the teacher on the defensive. Rather focus on what your child wants to experience in the classroom--(i.e. feeling successful through challenging work, learning something new).

7. Listen carefully to the teacher and work with the teacher for consensus--offer to help! Ask the teacher what you can do at home to help your child? Ask the teacher what you can do to support what the teacher is doing in the classroom?

8. Clarify next steps for parent, child, and teacher. Follow up with your child's teacher and see how things are going. Continue to engage in the partnership.

Student Parent Advocacy

9. Be sure to THANK your child's teacher...Remember that the teacher has 25-30 other students and that they are doing their best to meet the needs of all of those students. Most teachers take pride in their jobs and in helping each child learn at the *appropriate rate and level!*

10. Show your child's teacher appreciation for all their hard work!

11. You can always pull in the building TAG coordinator as an additional resource. They can serve as a bridge between home and school.

Parent Tool Kit for Advocacy Questions

Non-Examples	Examples
My student needs more work.	What are other options of work that can engage my child in a productive struggle?
My student is bored.	How can my child feel engaged and that they are learning something new?
You're not challenging my student.	When have you observed my student engaged in your class? What are your observations of their needs? What are ideas for meeting those needs?
My student should be accelerated.	How can we assess my child's level to ensure he is receiving appropriate rate and level of instruction?

Student Tool Kit for Advocacy Questions

Non-examples	Examples
I am bored.	I love work that includes _____. Can we come up with a plan together that might include more of that in my work this term?
I don't want to do that work.	I'm feeling _____ about this assignment because _____. (frustrated/I've done it successfully a lot)
It's too easy.	What are ways to make this more challenging?
I already know it.	Can take a pre-assessment to show what I might have already learned before we begin the next unit?

Checklist in Developing Questions

- Is it a question or a statement?
- Is it collaborative?
- Does it help you gather more information about your student's experience?
- Does it assume positive intent?
- Is it focused on the student's needs whether academic or SEL?

Next Meeting

Tuesday, June 8, 2021, 6 - 7:30 pm

Homework

In preparation for our June session, please reflect on the following questions:

1. What new learnings have you encountered around giftedness through our work together?
2. Through your participation on this team, how do you hope to contribute to our goals for supporting gifted students in future work?
3. In what ways could you communicate the information and progress we have made with our work as a team with other families of identified and not yet identified gifted students?
4. Are there any suggestions for improving our meeting structure to enhance your contributions?