Guiding Gifted Programing from a District Leadership Perspective

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Guiding Questions

1. As a district gifted coordinator, how do you define "success"?
2. How might a coordinator begin to develop quality district-wide programming?
3. What are tips for creating equitable identification practices within your school district?
4. What are effective PD practices for supporting teachers, administrators, and others in your district?
5. How do you support parents and advocate for gifted education in your district?
6. What are the 3 most important things for a coordinator to remember in creating a successful gifted program in their district?

1. AS A DISTRICT GIFTED COORDINATOR, HOW DO YOU DEFINE "SUCCESS"?

I define success as:

- Having the ability to meet the needs of all G&T students Documentation of students demonstrating academic achievement and individual growth
- Increasing enrollment of gifted students in the district

PVUSD GIFTED SERVICES

Gifted Preschool ~ Age 4+
Schoolwide Cluster Grouping Model ~ K-6
Content Replacement / Honors Math and Language Arts ~ Gr. 4+
Enrichment classes ~ 4-8
Self-contained Programs for the Highly Gifted~ gr. 1- 6
Uniquely Gifted ~ gr. 1- 8
Nonverbal Honors Core ~ MS
Digital Learning Center ~ MS
Digital Learning Center ~ HS
Honors Academies for Pre-engineering & Foreign Lang. ~ MS
Honors & Advanced Placement Classes ~ MS & HS
International Baccalaureate ~ K-12
Online Honors ~ ES/MS/HS

What does this look like?

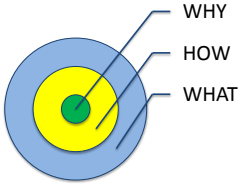
- Actively engaged students
- Students challenged in productive struggle
- Students enjoying learning!

"I cannot teach anybody anything,
I can only make them think." - Socrates

Defining…Why? How? What?
Asking Ourselves…How well are we doing?

- Why: District Gifted Mission
- How: District Gifted Vision
- What: District Gifted Goals

- How well are we doing…
  - Accomplishing our mission?
  - Staying true to our vision?
  - Meeting our goals?



HCPS Gifted Program

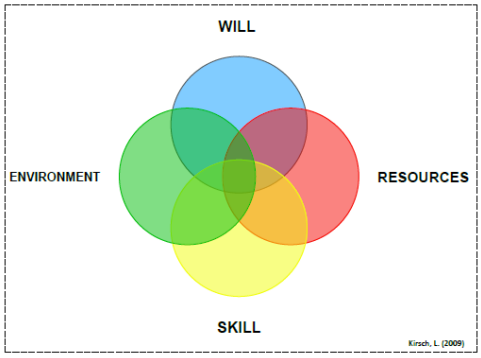
- Vision:
  - The vision of the gifted program is to provide a climate which values and nurtures the talents and potential of gifted students and prepares them to be contributing members of society and successful in their future careers.
- Mission:
  - The mission of the gifted program is to open the door to potential for gifted students.
- Goals:
  - Identify potential giftedness, especially among the underrepresented populations (Low SES / ELL)
  - Meet the learning needs of gifted students of all ages through a differentiated curriculum designed to focus on learning strengths
  - Enhance the capacity of teachers who serve gifted students through training, support, and leadership development opportunities

2. HOW MIGHT A COORDINATOR BEGIN TO DEVELOP QUALITY DISTRICT-WIDE PROGRAMMING?

Bridging the Gap

- Define what IS
  - Needs Assessment
- Determine what SHOULD BE
  - Research on Best Practices
  - State/Local Guidelines
- Develop a plan to bridge the gap
- Consider…
  - Definition / Criteria for Gifted
  - Will
  - Skills
  - Resources
  - Environment

The Role of a Leader



Begin by:

- Seeking and accepting input from stakeholders: parents, teachers, administrators & students
- Studying the NAGC Programming Standards
  - Self-evaluate according to the standards
- Establishing the need with your stakeholders.
  - Start by sharing information on gifted students and their learning needs.

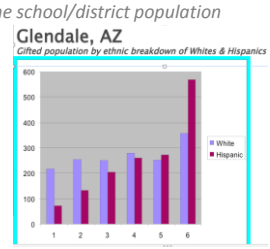
To begin developing quality district-wide programming:

- *Create an implementation timeline*.
  - Map out your objectives in a manageable timeframe.
- Steps:
  1. Analyze the current situation
  2. Create a vision as a starting point
  3. Define an action plan
- *Be patient!*
  - Working against TTWADI takes time.
    *("**T**hat's **T**he **W**ay **W**e've **A**lways **D**one **I**t!")*

3. WHAT ARE TIPS FOR CREATING EQUITABLE IDENTIFICATION PRACTICES WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT?

Creating Equitable ID Practices

Goal: The Gifted population reflects the school/district population (ethnicity, gender, grade levels…)



ID Tools:

- Use standardized ability tests
- Incorporate multiple measures
- Include ID tools that are culturally fair and linguistically unbiased

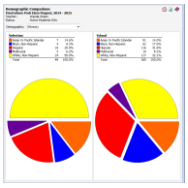
Tips for Creating Equitable ID Practices

The Nomination Process:

- Teach staff members what to look for when nominating students and then guide the process
- Use inclusive indicators to determine who to test
- Create a systematic process that ensures students in all subgroups have opportunities to test

Make Equitable Identification a Priority

- Set identification goals and monitor progress
- Provide ongoing training and tools
- Target identification efforts
- Remove barriers to identification
- Remember there is no “magic” bullet
- Consider the power of storytelling
- Recognize successes



Make a Difference…
The Parable of the Starfish

4. WHAT ARE EFFECTIVE PD PRACTICES FOR SUPPORTING TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND OTHERS IN YOUR DISTRICT?

Building Capacity via Powerful PD

- PD as a priority for all who teach gifted students
- Ongoing
- Multiple delivery models
- Responsive

Advice For Effective PD Practices

- Offer training opportunities throughout the year
- Vary the training formats
- Ensure that PD supports the program design(s)
- Align PD to school initiatives
- Offer training in gifted ed. to *all* staff members
- Target gifted students' special needs
- Target specific teacher/staff groups

Effective PD Practices in Paradise Valley

5. HOW DO YOU SUPPORT PARENTS AND ADVOCATE FOR GIFTED EDUCATION IN YOUR DISTRICT?

Parent Support & Advocacy Efforts

- Provide several parent presentations yearly
  - Evenings and lunch time offerings
  - Translation provided
  - Some presented solely in Spanish
- Involve parents on program development committees
- Share info on outside events and resources
  - State and national gifted ed. events
  - Enrichment opportunities through local venues and the Internet

Parent Support & Advocacy Efforts

- Sample Parent presentation topics:
  - Gifted 101 & gifted students' learning needs
  - Testing and identification
  - Enrichment opportunities
  - Programming options

Parents as Partners

- District-Wide Support
  - Gifted Parent Information Sessions
  - Parent University Sessions
  - Talent Search Information Meetings
  - Gifted Website
  - Ongoing Support
- School-Based Support

The Power of Quiet Leadership

6. WHAT ARE THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS FOR A COORDINATOR TO REMEMBER IN CREATING A SUCCESSFUL GIFTED PROGRAM IN THEIR OWN DISTRICT?

For a successful program, focus on results!

Focus on opportunities that meet 3 TESTS:

1. Does the opportunity fit squarely within the **mission** of your gifted program?
2. Do you have the **capability** to execute the opportunity better than anyone else?
3. Does the opportunity make sense within the **context** of the economic engine and resources of your program?

http://escholars.mysdhc.org

Success requires more than good ideas!

- Empowering others
- Planting seeds and allowing ideas to grow
- Listening, learning, recognizing and acting upon opportunities

3 tips for creating a successful gifted program:

#1 - *First* identify students with high potential. *Then* develop your services in response to their needs.

#2 – Identify the training and curriculum needed to prepare teachers to teach in your model(s). Then create an ongoing system for supporting new and continuing teachers.

#3 – Structure gifted services to be sustainable. Embed attention to gifted students' needs into all school initiatives.

FAVORITE RESOURCES

Dina's Suggested Resources for Program Development

Paradise Valley USD Gifted Services
www.pvschools.net/gifted

NAGC PreK – Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards
http://goo.gl/XNV11n

Snapshot Survey of PK – 12 Gifted Ed. Programming Effectiveness Factors
http://goo.gl/yXdI5D

www.hoagiesgifted.org

Beyond Gifted Education: Designing and Implementing Advanced Academic Programs by S. Peters, M. Matthews, M. McBee & B. McCoach

Reforming Gifted Education: How Parents and Teachers Can Match the Program to the Child, K. Rogers

The Cluster Grouping Handbook: How to Challenge Gifted Students while Increasing Achievement for All, S. Winebrenner & D. Brulles

Lauri's Favorite Resources

- *The Truth about Leadership: The no-fads, heart-of-the-matter facts you need to know* (2011, James Kouzes & Barry Posner)
- *Start with Why: How great leaders inspire everyone to take action* (2011, Simon Sinek)
- *Critical Issues & Practices in Gifted Education: What the research says* (2008, Jonathan Plucker, & Carolyn Callahan)
- *Designing Services & Programs for High-Ability Learners* (2006, Jeanne Purcell & Rebecca Eckert)
- The National Research Center on the Gifted & Talented www.nrcgt.org
- The National Association for Gifted Children www.nagc.org