

Meeting Minutes

In attendance:

Members:

Jessica Huntoon	Chair, Parent
Dr. Patricia Costis	Gifted Resource Teacher
Karla Stead	Sr. Coordinator, Office of Academic Rigor
Vicky Greco	Parent, Nominating Chair
Christina Ohlrogge	Parent
Tom Ambler	Community
Katie Humphrey-Morgan	Gifted Resource Teacher
Maury Howard	Parent
Hollis Simodynys	Parent
Abbie Watson	Principal, Academy for Discovery at Lakewood
Varnesha Ricks	Parent
Dr. Jennifer Martin	Parent

Guests:

Susan King	Gifted Resource Teacher
Andrew Sytsma	Gifted Resource Teacher
Stephanie Kiefer	Gifted Resource Teacher
Dwight (Last name?)	

Mrs. Huntoon called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

Introductions: Members and guests introduced themselves 6:04 to 6:09.

Review of meeting minutes: Mr. Ambler moved to approve the minutes at 6:10. Jessica Huntoon seconded. All were in favor.

Public Comment: Mrs. Huntoon noted the public comment portion of this GEAC meeting at 6:10, wherein stakeholders may speak to the GEAC on the topic of their choice. Stakeholders may also choose to complete a form to submit questions, concerns, and comments in writing. Mrs. Huntoon shared that teachers are excited to get back into buildings.

Mrs. Humphrey-Morgan noted that Congresswoman Elaine Luria would be virtually meeting with Crossroads Elementary 6th graders on April 15th to meet with students who are doing the stock market game, Capitol Hill Challenge.

Dr. Costis: A 2013 graduate of Maury High School, a former Norstar Student Suzy Kellogg, oversaw the design and construction of the Mars Rover—specifically, one of the smaller arms. They have asked her to speak to the Norstar group.

Senior Coordinator’s Report

At 6:14, Mrs. Stead started her update. Everyone is excited to get back to some in-person learning.

Young Scholars: The young scholar application process is underway. Interviews are on the 19th and 20th of March. These were not possible last year due to the pandemic. This is an important part of the process since the application doesn’t tell the whole story

Summer programming: Summer programming is underway. Camp Einstein looks like it will be face-to-face but stay tuned—things change all the time. Camp Einstein and Junior University will be held jointly at Crossroads. Dues to the CARES fund and COVID relief, Camp Einstein will be free to Norfolk Public Schools students. It will cost \$275 to private school students and students out of district and includes transportation, breakfast, and lunch.

Focus group process is underway. A big part of what the GEAC Advisory Committee does is the local plan. Every five years, we update it based on feedback from constituents. It will be very open-ended; you don't need to be an expert, we just want your perceptions. We will take results from the survey and focus groups to think about the local plan and what we want.

Norstar Updates: Dr. Costis noted that they are vetting applicants for next year's Norstar. Blasting away on exciting projects. Competition deadlines are coming up, and these are changing constantly. American Rocketry Association is trying to push the deadline out as far as we can in the hopes we can do some of that in person. Some kids are doing that, some are in the Great Computer Challenge which is coming up. Looking forward to the day we can all come back face-to-face.

COGAT Screener: Mrs. Stead explained that the universal screener is pushed back so that more students can participate while they are in person in schools. Students are only in school two days a week but will be able to offer it to more students. Parents will have to opt in and the COGAT is an in-person test. The COGAT is a universal screener for all first graders. This will start April 12th. We did do in-person referral testing in February for about 185 students grades 2-11 at Lake Taylor High School and Norview High School. Thanks to GRTs!

Budget: The superintendent released the proposed budget to the school board last week. With trepidation, they have asked for an additional 5 Gifted Resource Teachers (GRTs). If you have an opportunity to speak at the next budget meeting, please advocate for that plan. This is a move toward the long-term plan to get a GRT in every elementary school in the short term, and ideally in every school within 5 years. That will be part of the local plan.

Survey: Time was provided to complete the survey for the local plan. A focus group was also held on March 23rd. The survey should only be completed once by each stakeholder.

Focus Groups: The purpose of the focus groups is to discover themes related to the current Norfolk Public Schools gifted local plan. Participants were put into separate rooms with GRTs to facilitate and take notes that participants were given access to later. The local plan includes 11 different segments of gifted services—everything from identification to the policies of the Gifted Education Advisory Committee. The identification part is the “who,” and the next part is what the identification process should look like. And then the final part will garner feedback on professional development and evaluation services. What should we be looking at (SOL scores, exit interviews, etc.)? There are no right or wrong answers—just trying to get feedback and look for patterns. Participants were afforded time for questions before being put into two breakout rooms.

The meeting adjourned at 6:37.