

# Developing Minds

## District 51 Gifted and Talented News



May 2017

Heather Baskin, Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Programming

### Important Dates

**D51 GT Department Student Scholarship Application Due**

May 5, 2017

**GT Teacher/Liaison Transition Meetings**

May 9, 2017

**HS Gifted Ed Orientation**

May 10, 2017

6:00 - 7:00 pm @ PHS

**D51 GT Department Student Scholarship Awards**



HAPPY  
SUMMER

### 2016/2017 Reflection:

Sometimes it helps to take a step back and see what has been accomplished. Here are a few of this school year's highlights from your D51 gifted department working to support students, teachers, and families...

- Jump Start class for teachers new to Gifted Education
- CogAT administration across D51
- Colorado Gifted Education Review of our district by Colorado Department of Education (CDE)
- UConn National Center for Research on Gifted Education sent a team to visit our district
- Workshop day for school teams with Blanche Kapushion (leader in Colorado gifted education)
- CDE Depth and Complexity Trainings
- 9 people attended CAGT and 11 people attended NAGC conferences
- 5 D51 presenters at CAGT and NAGC
- Middle School Scholastica Tournaments
- Ed Zaccaro training in Montrose
- D51 Mini-conference (with CMU students and other districts in attendance)
- High School Gifted Education Orientation Nights
- Developing clear pathways for Talent Identification with Montrose School District
- Building community connections for supporting gifted students social emotional health
- Challenge & Early Access processes
- Applied for Colorado gifted grant
- Gifted Transition meetings (5th graders to MS and 8th graders to HS)
- 15 GT Identification Review Team meetings
- 80 school visits by coordinator and/or GT coach
- Intro to D51 Gifted, Identification, and Thinking Maps classes held throughout the year
- Writing and updating Elementary and MS GT Curriculum

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](mailto:bev.jebe@d51schools.org) or visit <http://tinyurl.com/D51GTIdeas>.

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# Did You Know....

District 51 is spreading the word that Safe2Tell Colorado is an effective, anonymous way to report self-harm, abuse, bullying, drug use, and much more. Anyone can make a Safe2Tell report:

Online ([safe2tell.org](http://safe2tell.org))

By phone (1-877-542-7233)

In the app (Apple or Google Play)



**1-877-542-SAFE**

Every report to Safe2Tell goes to 911 dispatch, school administration, and D51 security, so someone from at least one of those three areas can respond 24/7. Safe2Tell is not new, but use of Safe2Tell is gaining steam in local schools. Schools are hoping to build on that momentum by putting up more Safe2Tell posters, handing out cards and bookmarks with Safe2Tell reporting information printed on them, and asking one person at each school to serve as a Safe2Tell representative who will work with students to promote Safe2Tell. District 51 will be the first school district on the Western Slope to welcome Safe2Tell trainers to host staff trainings for counselors, administrators, school resource officers and local law enforcement.

National Suicide Prevention 800 273 8255

MindSprings Health Local Crisis Line 888-207-4004

Colorado Crisis Services Statewide Hotline 844-493-TALK (8255)



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## The Many Faces of Gifted

This month's student spotlight includes two students and some follow-up information in response. Thanks, Matthew and Ethan, for taking the time answer some questions about gifted and your perspective. Matthew Feezor is a fourth grader at Rocky Mountain Elementary. His favorite hobbies are video games, reading, and eating. He has a dog named Luna, two cats: Xavier, and Oden.

**What makes you unique?** Matthew said if he is not interrupted, he can read two Harry Potter books in one day. He likes brussel sprouts with extra pepper.

**What else would others find interesting to know about you?** Mathew is an only child. He said he is not the fastest runner and he is partially blind in his left eye.

**What do you know/remember about being identified gifted?** Matthew said that he remembered being excited and then worried that he might have extra work to complete, but he has not had any extra work.

**How do you feel about the "gifted" label?** Matthew said, "If I am labeled gifted then everyone should be labeled gifted because everyone is gifted. Everyone is gifted because everyone is special."

**The one thing you wish you could change about yourself is?** Matthew wishes that he didn't have to wear glasses and that we offered GT science programs.

**From the D51 GT office...**Matthew, the idea of everyone being gifted has been debated across our nation (and probably even globally). Michael Clay Thompson said this, "What if those who say everyone-is-gifted had argued that everyone has gifts? Well, that is different. The words gift and gifted occupy different levels of meaning. Gift is a colloquial term that we use to describe people's best qualities, whereas giftedness is a technical, professional term that educators use to describe really smart kids who require differentiated educations. When people argue that everyone is gifted in their own way, they are confounding educational and social planes of meaning, logical and emotional planes of articulation, and objective and metaphorical planes of intent. Perhaps in a social sense everyone has gifts, and perhaps many of these gifts should be valued as highly or more highly than educational giftedness. The gift of kindness, for instance, is a benediction devoutly to be wished. But having gifts in the social sense does not make you gifted in an educational sense." (<https://www.rfwp.com/pages/is-everyone-gifted-in-their-own-way>)

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## COLLEGE EDUCATION CONSULTING, LLC

### Are you willing to make a \$200,000 gamble?

The average cost of 4-year public college is \$112,000; for private college, its \$236,000. Next to buying a home, post-secondary education is the most expensive investment a family will make. Yet many students leave it up to chance in finding the right college. Luck is not a plan. Let me help you find your "Best-Fit" colleges. Local, honest, experienced.



Kirk Golba  
210-0727

1. Consider important college characteristics you want in a college
2. Understand your learning style and find colleges that embrace that
3. Prioritize and use the college characteristics as a filter when choosing your college list
4. Create a list that has two Safeties, three Targets, and two Reach colleges

*Ethan Knight is a 4th Grade student at Shelledy Elementary. All his teachers have said that in addition to being a very bright and quick learner, Ethan is one of the most caring and compassionate kids in the class. Ethan enjoys reading new books, building with Legos, playing video games, drawing, going hiking, and playing sports like basketball and soccer. He likes to travel and visit theme parks like Legoland. In school, he especially likes learning more about math, reading, science, history, and computers. Here are a few responses by Ethan.*

Gifted means above the regular level and the ability to learn faster than other students in the grade.

Being identified means that teachers know that you are gifted and what you need to extend your learning. I felt like I was really going to be challenged and I liked that. In kindergarten and 1st grade, I did not like school as much as I do now. Though, I did feel somewhat challenged. Now, I am enjoying school even more since I have been challenged. The “gifted” label makes me feel they really know who I am and what my special needs are to make school interesting to me.

The gifted program at Shelledy Elementary fits my needs very well and I feel challenged there all the time. I like being around other kids who are closer to my level in the Discovery group. I am looking forward to applying for the East Middle School Challenge Program because it would be like GT/Discovery group all day.

I found a lot of support in different people. One good support is Mr. Gregersen (Shelledy’s GT Teacher). He helps me find things that interest and challenge me. In addition to GT/Discovery group, I get to work with him one on one every Thursday. My 4th grade teacher, Mrs. Lyon, challenges me more than any other teacher I have ever had. She provides me 6th, 7th, and 8th grade math and works with me one on one and in a small group. Currently, we are doing an origami unit and working on origami eggs which is very cool. At home, my mom and dad help me with homework and have me do Khan Academy almost every day during the summer. My parents support my interests by coaching my basketball team and enrolling me in soccer.

One of the best things about me is I can learn a lot faster than a lot of other kids my age. My brain can work math problems in different ways. I work well with other kids who are at all levels of learning. I try to do my best in my work because I know I am capable of it. If something is too hard or goes wrong, I try to keep a positive attitude and ask for help.

One thing I wish I could change is my organization. My room is a war zone and it is sometimes really hard to find things I am looking for.

My wish would be for everyone to be challenged to their correct level. For some kids, the regular classroom stuff is too easy and they can get bored. I wish every GT student could have homeroom teachers like Mrs. Lyon and Mrs. Smolha every school year.

**From the D51 GT office...**Ethan, your wish to be more organized is one that others struggle with as well. Some students (along with teachers and parents) have benefited from the book *Smart but Scattered* by Guare & Dawson. They say, “The latest research in child development shows that many kids who have the brain and heart to succeed lack or lag behind in crucial ‘executive skills’--the fundamental habits of mind required for getting organized, staying focused, and controlling impulses and emotions. Easy-to-follow steps to identify strengths and weaknesses, then proven activities and techniques are used to boost specific skills, and even problem-solve daily routines. Small changes can add up to big improvements--this empowering book shows how.” If you are interested, we have copies of these books in our office lending library.

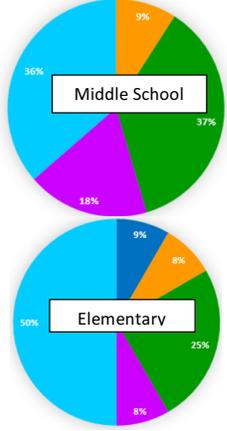
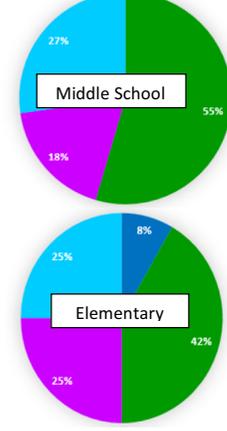
**D51 2017 CGER Improvement timeline goal:** Increase collaborative effort during ALP development, progress monitoring, and review between teachers, parents, and students (and counselors at the high school level).



**First Action Step: Collect current perceptual data on ALP collaboration and then set measurable targets.**

Perceptual Data	Prioritized Challenge from Perception Survey	Improvement Targets (to be met by Dec 2017)	Strategies/Action steps
	45.5% of HS students Agree or Strongly agree to "I had a significant role in the development of my Advanced Learning Plan "	HS student responses will increase to 55% Agree or Strongly Agree to "I had a significant role in the development of my Advanced Learning Plan "	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide HS Gifted Ed Orientation Spring 2017 at every high school. Required for current 8<sup>th</sup> graders and optional for current 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> graders. Communicate before and after orientations through MS GT Teachers, GT newsletter, emails to parents, and Remind text/email service.</li> <li>2. Develop standard process, procedures, and evaluation cycle for HS student collaboration in the development of ALPs.</li> <li>3. Provide training and resources for GT Liaisons and schools to implement process and procedures.</li> </ol>
We asked teachers, "I have information and opportunities to discuss the progress of goals on a student's Advanced Learning Plan (ALP)."	This helps us look at progress monitoring but not collaboration on writing goals of an ALP.	Need to get baseline data to see if we need to set future goals and action steps regarding teacher collaboration on writing goals of an ALP.	In our next survey we will also ask, "I am given the opportunity to provide input on student's ALPs".

	Parents of HS students responded 35% Agree or Strongly Agree "I am given the opportunity to provide input on my student's ALP".	Agree and Strongly agree will be equal or greater than 50% (on new question)	This question will be reworded on the next survey to match the purpose of the ALP at HS..."I am aware of my student's opportunity to develop and receive support for their ALP".
	There is a discrepancy between HS Administrators perception that parents had input into ALPs (80% agree/strongly agree) and HS Parents that indicated they were given the opportunity to provide input (35% agree/strongly agree).	Need to get baseline data to see if we need to set future goals and action steps regarding parent collaboration in HS.	HS Administrators were asked if parents were given opportunity to provide input on their student's ALP. This question will be reworded on the next HS Administrator survey to match the purpose of the ALP at HS..."Parents are aware of student's opportunities to develop and receive support for their ALP."
	21.2% of Administrators responded "I don't know" when asked "Teachers in my school update parents about their students' progress toward Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) goals".	These numbers will decrease by at least half and not add to the neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree responses. Administrator respond less than or equal to 10% "I don't know".	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop standard process, procedures, and evaluation cycle for collaboration of progress monitoring ALPs.</li> <li>2. Provide training and resources for GT Teachers/Liaisons and schools to implement process and procedures.</li> <li>3. Develop a communication plan that includes many different modalities of engagement for Administrators.</li> </ol>

 <p>The top pie chart, labeled 'Middle School', shows 36% (blue), 9% (orange), 37% (green), and 18% (purple). The bottom pie chart, labeled 'Elementary', shows 50% (blue), 9% (orange), 25% (green), and 8% (purple).</p>	<p>36% of MS Administrators and 50% of Elementary Administrators responded "I don't know" when asked "Students are given the opportunity to provide input on their ALP".</p>	<p>These numbers will decrease by at least half and not add to the neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree responses. MS Administrators less than or equal to 18% "I don't know", Elementary Administrators less than or equal to 25% "I don't know"</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop standard process, procedures, and evaluation cycle for student collaboration in the development, progress monitoring, and review of ALPs.</li> <li>2. Provide training and resources for GT Teachers and schools to implement process and procedures.</li> <li>3. Develop a communication plan that includes many different modalities of engagement for Administrators.</li> </ol>
 <p>The top pie chart, labeled 'Middle School', shows 27% (blue), 18% (purple), and 55% (green). The bottom pie chart, labeled 'Elementary', shows 25% (blue), 8% (orange), 25% (purple), and 42% (green).</p>	<p>27% of MS Administrators and 25% of Elementary Administrators responded "I don't know" when asked "Parents are given the opportunity to provide (at minimum) annual input on their student's ALP".</p>	<p>These numbers will decrease by at least half and not add to the neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree responses. MS Administrators less than or equal to 13% "I don't know", Elementary Administrators less than or equal to 12% "I don't know"</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop standard process, procedures, and evaluation cycle for parent collaboration in the development, progress monitoring, and review of ALPs.</li> <li>2. Provide training and resources for GT Teachers and schools to implement process and procedures.</li> <li>3. Develop a communication plan that includes many different modalities of engagement for Administrators.</li> </ol>