



As your parent representatives on the District Gifted Committee we wanted you to know we are excited for the new gifted services our district is getting ready to implement. Whether your exceptional student is gifted or academically talented, this progressive model appears to have the flexibility built in to offer our children at all levels the appropriate challenges they need to succeed in school. We appreciate the efforts of the administrators and teachers on the committee who worked with the best interests of our children in mind.

All BPS101 parents should have received a Messenger email explaining the new gifted services in our district. Letters to parents of students in grades 2-4 who will be tested for gifted or academically talented services have gone out this first week in April. If you have a child whom you feel has been overlooked, you can fill out a request to have your child tested (ask for a parent inventory) and sign a permission slip for testing in your elementary school office. You need to do this right away as testing begins next week.

Dr. Jan Wright asked us to share the following update with you on the gifted services as well as the new gifted specialists that have been selected:

Redesign of Elementary Gifted Services

In the weeks before spring break, the elementary principals and Jan Wright interviewed eight candidates for the position of gifted specialist. The following qualifications were used to select the teachers:

- Has a passion for gifted and high ability students
 - understands gifted learners
 - ability to plan creative and innovative lessons
 - ability to build upon already well developed differentiation strategies
 - ability to use formative assessment to make decisions about instruction
- Has an enthusiasm for collaborative partnerships
 - enjoys the communication/planning process from working on a team
 - excellent interpersonal and communication skills
 - understands adult learners
- Has an aptitude for organization and preparation
 - creative scheduler
 - effective time manager but shows flexibility



- o reliable and follows through on responsibilities
- o enjoys a challenge and solving problems

The responsibilities of the gifted specialist will be to:

- develop and identify resources to meet student and teacher needs
- co-team/co-teach for various lessons
- coach the teacher through differentiation and other instructional strategies
- meet periodically with other gifted specialists to plan and troubleshoot

The following teachers were chosen as the gifted specialists:

- Pam Ciway – Louise White and Alice Gustafson
- Jennifer Conant – Hoover-Wood and HC Storm
- Kim Anderson – JB Nelson and Grace McWayne

Jennifer Conant will continue to be the gifted coordinator.

With the hiring of the gifted teachers completed, the next step in the process will be to identify the students. This starts with identifying the top 10% of students in grades 2, 3, and 4 in reading and math on the fall MAP. These students will be further tested with the CogAT and open-ended critical thinking tasks in reading, math, and special sense. Parents of students involved in testing will be notified the week of April 4 and asked to complete a signed permission form and parent information form. The new gifted teachers will be conducting this testing in their assigned buildings from April 11 – 21. Students will be tested in three one-hour sessions during that two-week period. Gifted teachers will then score the assessments, gather the data, and determine the appropriate services for each child: assigned to cluster classroom, accelerated math, and/or enrichment reading services.

During the month of May, gifted teachers and Jan Wright will meet with grade level teams in each building to share the data and begin preliminary plans for the grouping and instruction of these students. Parents will be notified of the services that will be provided via letter in early June.