

Germantown School District (GSD)

Gifted Education/Talent Development Program Review 2011-2012

Focus Groups – Fall, 2011 – facilitated by Dr. Paula Hillmann, Gifted & Talented Specialist

Thank you for participating in this focus group session. This is part of our review of the PK-12 gifted education services in the district. Your ideas and feedback will be used in conjunction with information gathered from parents, teaching staff, and administrators earlier in our electronic survey. The GT Steering Committee will reconvene in the near future to analyze data from the survey and focus group information, and will develop recommendations for PK-12 gifted education and talent development in the GSD. A program evaluation report will be presented to the School Board on January 23, 2012. Following that report, the GSD administrative staff will work with an GT support group (yet to be created) comprised of parents, teaching staff, school specialists, and administrators to oversee the creation of a mission/vision statement and a long range action plan for K-12 gifted education and talent development in the GSD schools.

A few “Ground Rules” for our meeting:

- We will begin and end on time. We will have 10 minutes for each question, and 10 minutes at the end of the hour for clarifications and wrap-up. There are time limits for responses (about 1 minute), so that we can hear as many voices as possible. ALL response sheets are collected at the end of the focus group so that we can incorporate all ideas into the focus group report.
- We will use a “round-robin” rotation strategy – for each of the questions we will go around the table as I solicit feedback from you.
- Everyone’s ideas are important and valued.
- We will withhold judgment and evaluative comments of others’ contributions.
- We will concentrate on generating ideas that will help us move forward on behalf of students’ successful development, identifying strengths, obstacles, and positive tactics and strategies to use in improving services for students with advanced abilities.
- In the interest of our limited time and out of respect for everyone’s ideas, I will cue the participant to wrap up the thought to stick to the 1-minute rule.
- Please jot down ideas on the questions page during our meeting. Again, this page will be collected at the end of our meeting and collated with other focus group data for the steering committee’s review and analysis. We encourage you to sign your name, but that is a personal choice.
- If we have time at the end of the hour, we can re-visit topics of interest.
- The role of the facilitator is to maintain a neutral viewpoint, and to function as a “listener” and “clarifier.”