

The Community Advisory Committee for Gifted and Talented Education
cordially invites you to attend our bimonthly meeting featuring

Ed Zaccaro

Topic: Math for gifted learners

Tuesday, January 29, 2008, 6:30 p.m.

Location: I.U.S.D. Administration Center, 5050 Barranca Parkway, Irvine

COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

Gifted Education is alive and well in Orange County. On October 15th, while teachers were involved with in-services, over one-hundred students participated in the Community-Advisory-Committee's GATE Day. Even with the wet weather, the students were able to stay dry and engaged with unique enrichment activities such as chess, Lego, math, musical theater, and mock trial. Huge thanks go to Wendy Pokorski for her tireless efforts in planning and running the day from start to finish. Additional thanks to Eastshore's staff for allowing us to use their site, and to the parents who volunteered to help make the day run smoothly: Jean Rodrigues, Julie Thai, Josephine Lin, Hara Stern, Lorene Hirata, and Claire Liu.

Money raised from GATE Day was used to provide teacher Mini-Grants to help purchase materials that benefit instruction. CAC-GATE was able to support nine teachers with approximately \$700.00 each to help meet the needs of their gifted learners.

On October 25th, OCC-GATE (Orange County Council) hosted an administrator's workshop entitled *What is Happening in the World of Gifted Education?* Professor Karen B. Rogers, Gifted Education Research, Resource & Information Centre at The University of New South Wales in Australia was the featured presenter. Dr. Rogers' information from the latest research on best classroom practices for gifted learners covered topics such as; Teacher Effectiveness, Delivery of Instruction, Content of Curriculum, and Structure of Classroom Management. If you're interested in more information on this workshop, Dr. Rogers' PowerPoint is available at (http://www.iusd.org/parent_resources/gate).

Also during October, the OCC-GATE annual fall conference was held at UCI on October 27th. Several Irvine teachers and parents were able to benefit from Dr. Karen Rogers, Dr. Sandra Kaplan, and numerous local educators willing to share their expertise on a variety of topics related to gifted education.

Terry Freedlander, Larry Kaplan, and Wendy Bokota, serving as Irvine's CAC-GATE executive board, sponsored a memorable experience for teachers in the afternoon and parents in the evening on October 30th with Dr. Susannah Richards from Eastern Connecticut State University. Dr. Richards shared her passion and knowledge regarding challenging gifted readers. Her high-level energy was constant as she shared her love

for reading. It was difficult not to want to rush out and purchase several novels after spending time with Dr. Richards.

With scheduled lives, it's difficult to add more to your plate and spend more time away from home for an evening. However, here are three reasons why you won't want to miss the next CAC-GATE meetings and become more involved with CAC-GATE:

1) Parents of gifted children need opportunities to share parenting experiences with one another. Meeting throughout the year with other parents who share similar experiences, frustrations, and goals helps you to better understand your child and the educational system.

2) Being involved helps ensure that provisions for gifted children are kept firmly in place. It's important for you to stay involved in your child's education and to stay informed about gifted education in general.

3) The CAC-GATE executive Board has planned and sponsored outstanding opportunities for you to learn from experts about gifted education. Past presenters have shared their knowledge on brain research, gifted underachievement, college admission, and reading for gifted learners.

Our next CAC-GATE meeting will feature Edward Zaccaro, author of the Challenge Math series; voted as a "Must-Have Math Books for Hip and Happening Teachers," by Amazon. In order to offset the belief that math is often taught as "all scales and no music," Edward Zaccaro's approach helps students to find the joy in learning mathematical concepts.

We hope you're able to attend this meeting. It will provide you with the opportunity to meet with other parents of gifted children, stay informed and involved with your child's education, and learn from Edward Zaccaro about math for gifted learners.

If there's a topic you would like to see addressed at a future CAC-GATE meeting, please email Terry Freedlander, Chair of CAC-GATE, (tfreedlander@gmail.com) or me (bandrews@iusd.org). Our goal is to help IUSD's GATE community stay in touch with the gifted world.

Sincerely,



Beth L. Andrews

GATE at Santiago Hills

Inside E-1...Mr. Manchester's Method
Tara Shankar, Lauren Song, Sabrina Yen



MAJESTIC MATH

"Aho! We've got a problem to solve,
 $(5x)\emptyset + [(x\emptyset - 10) + (0.58 + 0.18)] = x^4 + 0.1424 + (62x) - (x\emptyset +).$ "

"Yes, sir! First, we must follow PEMDAS and simplify the parentheses..."

Processing math inside 4th grade minds is pretty easy for Mr. Manchester! This year, his students are going above and beyond with Hands-On-Equations, a fun and challenging method of algebra instruction. Hands-On-Equations incorporates the use of pawns and dice to help students manipulate a higher level of algebraic equations. Because this approach to mastering algebra is open-ended, the students can go to any luminary level with exponents and parentheses. The students enjoyed the task of setting up the equations in a "war-like" way.

"Push the blue pawns out!"
"We need more blue soldiers on this side!"
"Solve the like terms to win the war."

When his students finished the problems, they knew that Mr. Manchester would have a couple of terribly tricky bonus problems on the board to challenge those ready to excel. Even though most of these 4th graders started from scratch, they now understand the process of exponential and parenthetical equations. Mr. Manchester feels that they're secure and "completely get it." He knows that learning algebra with more depth will help students in upcoming years, so he was especially pleased to observe that this is the subject the students improved the most.

BOOK BEGINNINGS

A book cover is lifted, and lo and behold, a story written by Mr. Manchester's fourth grade students. To challenge his students in writing, one of the assignments is "Book Beginnings." Students work with peers to create a book. Each person writes a chapter beginning with one of the book beginnings that were handed out to them. During the process of writing the book, the students use teamwork and cooperation skills as they work with their peers in producing excellence with their writing. Working together, students benefit from hearing from others' perspectives and a wider range of talented imagination. After these books are completed, they are published and kept in the class library. The fourth graders love to read each other's work. This helps develop friendships while simultaneously improving writing skills.

COMPUTER CLUB

Technology is Mr. Manchester's forte. The computer club provides an environment with technology where there are no limits to what the kids can do. With their access to a domain name, students type in their html on Notepad and transfer it to the Internet using Filezilla. From there, they begin the process of creating their own websites using CSS, html, or another source. "The classes are open-ended", says Mr. Manchester. "The kids can go as far as they like. The children's websites are very creative, as you will see if you go to the class website" Some students have links on their web pages leading to other informative, interesting websites. This level requires complete understanding of html and its process, which the class has already mastered. Learning how to be savvy with technology is a necessity for America's future.

5th Grade GATE-Cluster with Mrs. West

Emilie Gao and Joshua Kim

Fifth grade GATE-cluster teacher Mrs. West gathered \$695 to purchase a series of digital cameras for her GATE program. With these cameras, Mrs. West created a program called Digi-Cam Lab. This program teaches students how to take creative pictures and make power points using the pictures they took. The next step is for the Digi-Camera students to demonstrate the methods used and teach the rest of the class how to include pictures to enhance various projects.

Continuing on the technology strand, Mrs. West is incorporating the Jeopardy game concept with her GATE students to help them to create their own Jeopardy games. The entire class will benefit from the computerized, student-created Jeopardy games as a way to foster learning in the different subject areas with greater depth.

To enhance vocabulary, GATE students complete the more advanced section E of the *Wordly Wise* workbooks. This section entails the "think-outside-the-box" problems with vocabulary and reading comprehension.

For independent reading, students are broadening their spectrum of reading genre through selecting five books from at least five different genres. These genres are: mystery, historical fiction, science fiction, non-fiction, and fantasy.

Writing is a subject where GATE students have the opportunity to differentiate through the production of explorer reports to hone their research skills. With a variety of writing levels, each student is able to take his/her writing level to new heights through understanding and expanding of ideas. Using resources helps to provide evidence and validate ideas.

Students are also writing Indian tribal members letters from the perspective of a 21st century fifth grader. Through the process of writing the letters, students' knowledge about the explorers and Indian tribes will expand.

Each student in Mrs. West's class is encouraged to participate in the District's Astounding Inventions competition. Students are excited to create their own inventions, and possibly become the next Whiz Kid!

Mrs. Morikawa's 5th Grade APAAS Class

Nina Jang, Philine Qian, and Shirin Sadjadpour

We're 6th grade students reporting from Mrs. Andrew's APAAS class. Earlier this week, we sat down to discuss some important topics with 5th grade APAAS teacher Mrs. Morikawa to learn more about her curriculum, and how she is teaching her advanced students.

Mrs. Minna Morikawa is an extremely intelligent person and an excellent teacher, so when we asked her which lesson she had recently taught for her high-ability students, she replied easily, "The Great Debate." In this debate, students must prove that either Columbus found America, or that he didn't. When we asked how this debate was designed especially for advanced students, she explained that it helped them gain "multiple perspectives," which means thinking from a different point of view and then analyzing it. The debate also encouraged students to take risks and feel good about themselves.

Crunching on a half-empty pack of almonds, Mrs. Morikawa sits in her chair, legs crossed. We notice highly leveled books and supplies, showing the fact that her students are ready to be challenged with more. Getting comfy and moving around in our seats, we finally ask our former 5th grade teacher, "Do you have a lesson or unit planned for the near future that you will be teaching for high-ability learners?"

Smiling to this question, she chuckles and answered with an obvious, "Yes. Chit-Chats."

We fondly remembered doing Chit-Chats last year. Mrs. Morikawa continued on, "The students are given a quote to create a presentation of any sort (power point, poster, etc.) related to the theme. The point is to try to make a connection, then take it into any direction."

We left her room animatedly discussing our memories of the wonderful experiences we had when we were in 5th grade last year.

Mrs. Andrews 6th Grade APAAS

Tiffany Zhang, Charlton Huang, and Sagarika Kayal

There are many activities planned for Mrs. Andrews 6th Grade APAAS class. Here are just a couple:

COUNTRY REPORTS

The idea of Country reports is simple: pick a country, become an expert, present a lesson, and create an evaluation for the students to see how well you taught (and how well they learned). The students decided when they would present their country and how they would deliver the lesson. Some possible choices were: PowerPoint, poster, video, theatrical, etc; it didn't matter how the information was presented as long as it was informative and you weren't just blabbing away. The final part of the lesson was to provide a follow-up assessment on our country, like a mini quiz. The purpose of the quiz was to see if...

- 1) the rest of the class (and the teacher) had listened attentively,
- 2) the student taught their lesson well
- 3) their teaching styles were successful or not.

To date, the class has been exposed to nine reports, all of which have been interesting. We look forward to each student's country report and learning about a variety of interesting places to visit.

TLAD (THINK LIKE A DISCIPLINARIAN)

TLAD, which stands for Think like a Disciplinarian, goes beyond reading comprehension; it's a way for us to analyze and interpret literature at a higher level of sophistication. As 6th graders, we are no longer learning to read; instead, we are reading to learn and can now engage with literature in *multifaceted* ways.

Mrs. Andrews discovered TLAD from a 10th grade Honors teacher. Yes, you read that right, 10th Grade Honors. Mrs. Andrews explained to us that we were going to give it a try, and see if it worked with 6th grade students. During the first week of November, we began TLAD, and Mrs. Andrews was immediately impressed with how we handled the new approach.

The way TLAD works is it's kind of like a book club where each student selects a book to read, but we also had to decide which discipline (such as sociologist, psychologist, historian, philosopher, etc.) we were going to use for our perspective as we read the novel. Over a two-week span, we read the novel, recorded our findings, and wrote essential questions based on our findings. Every day, we met together with a group of others who picked the same books to discuss our findings and essential questions.

It was interesting to hear how others interpreted or viewed specific parts of the novel depending on the "eyes" of their particular discipline. Though it required a lot of effort, and it wasn't always fun to write down our findings as a disciplinarian, we were able to read the book from a whole new perspective and learn from other viewpoints. TLAD challenged us to explore advanced concepts through a sophisticated approach. Mrs. Andrews was amazed with how well we handled the new program and the level of thinking that took place.

If reading is about mind JOURNEYS, teaching reading is about outfitting the travelers, modeling how to use the map, demonstrating how to use the key and legend until, ultimately, its the child and the map together and they are off on their own. Mind Journeys," Mosaic of Thought, Susan Zimmermann and Ellin Oliver Keene, p. 28"

Fourth Grade APAAS News at Eastshore

The students in Mrs. Naramore's class are busy experiencing history in a variety of ways. They have just finished learning about the Baroque Period by drawing self portraits in the style of Rembrandt and doing scientific drawings of plants to emulate the work of Linnaeus. Students performed pieces of music written by the Baroque composers and studied the music of Vivaldi and Handel. The students wrote Haiku poems and studied the poetry of Basho and Issa.

Performing historical presentations is keeping the students engaged in history. To culminate their law simulations, the students are busy preparing to act out the trial of Senora Peralta, a Californio woman who lost her ranch when the U.S. acquired California. The students were not given a script; the class attorneys created their own questions for their witnesses and for cross examination, as well as creating opening and closing remarks. Puppets of people from California's history are coming alive as students present their puppet show reports on the biographies that they read. Excitement is building as the class prepares for our class history play, California Missions and More, which will be performed after winter break. History is alive in Mrs. Naramore's class.

Fifth Grade APAAS News at Eastshore

The student operated businesses in Penguin Land (Rhoadsville, USA) are thriving, and many entrepreneurs are enjoying great successes. These businesses are the unique creations of the students in our class. After developing their concept, students may save enough Rhoads dollars to apply for a business application. They present their concept and share a sample of their products or services to the Rhoadsville City Council. Upon approval by the council, they will receive their business license to sell their wares. This year's businesses include everything from holiday pencil boxes, stress balls, animal pillows, designer book marks, animal desk top organizers, and much more. This experience in time management and creativity teaches our fifth graders lessons in economics, marketing, and conservation of resources.

Fifth graders are learning a variety of writing strategies to improve their writing skills. They are incorporating enticing leads to their stories, using stronger verbs, creating multi-sensory details, sharpening their focus, using precise language and vocabulary, and composing unique titles to preserve the mystery. In addition, students have opportunities to log onto MyAccess.com at school and at home to write more and get immediate feedback on their writing skills. This has lead our writers to refine their writing, while spending more time focusing on the revision of their work. We've seen great improvement in writing!

Math word problems are always a challenge, but with the introduc-

tion of Singapore Math strategies, we hope give our students one more tool to help them. This The 8-step model drawing is a powerful problem-solving tool that opens new pathways to learning mathematics. We are just starting Singapore Math, but we hope to be experts by the end of the year!

Sixth Grade APAAS at Eastshore

In Miss Rollins' class, solving word problems will never be looked at the same way again!! The students have begun to practice Singapore math techniques when tackling multi-step and algebraic word problems. It requires them to focus more on "mapping out" the equation using diagrams and labeled pictures, rather than straight computation. A few students were already familiar with this style, and thus, became the teachers during several lessons. The Singapore math really stretches the brain out, making students really dissect a problem to discover the solution. One of the more unique aspects of this method is that no two students need to have identical diagrams to decipher an answer. The students are really engaged in learning a "new twist" to cracking difficult word problems and have commented on how "kid friendly" this new way of thinking is. For Miss Rollins' class, math has truly become "picture perfect"!!

Turtle Rock GATE/APAAS News

Turtle Rock GATE and APAAS students have been very busy and challenged this first trimester as they participate in many exciting and enriching activities.


In fourth grade, students are adapting well to the larger classes and longer school day. Learning the routine of the upper grade schedule has been a new challenge for each of them. Within their classrooms, in their GATE clusters, 4th graders can be seen huddling around their Wordly Wise books and quizzing each other on new vocabulary words. Wordly Wise is an intensive vocabulary enrichment program where students study vocabulary definitions, word derivations and context clues. Additionally, the APAAS students are studiously preparing for their Word Masters competition where they compete with students across the nation in the difficult gold division. The Continental Mathematics League contest is eagerly anticipated so students can flex their mathematical muscle in this national competition. Fourth graders are busily preparing their native Californian scrapbooks where they have chosen a California tribe to represent in scrapbook form. Higher level thinking is required as students must become one of the tribe members and write about ceremonies, customs, traditions, and daily life. GATE students also study our world each month by completing an Earth Watch current event where they analyze a news story, examine all sides of an issue, and form an educated opinion. We are proud of our fourth grade GATE and APAAS students!

Our fifth grade GATE students, under the care of their dedicated teachers, continue with a variety of differentiated curriculum. For mathematics, the teachers use enrichment strategies and worksheets in order to make the curriculum more challenging. Social studies current events are researched and analyzed by having the GATE students complete "World Watch" articles that examine what is happening in the real world so that they can relate that to the history they are studying in class. For language arts the students continue with Wordly Wise, create "Literature Logs" to correlate their writing to the literature they are reading, participate in "Literature Circles" which enable the students to discuss current reading books and genres, and sharpen their writing skills in "Writer's Workshop". Another important aspect of this program is teaching the students how to better develop their study and time management skills through long and short-term assignments. The teachers take a lot of pride in their GATE program and are always researching new and innovative ways to meet the needs of this incredible group of talented students.

Sixth grade GATE students, most benefiting from being in their 3rd year of the GATE or APAAS program, have hit the ground running this year. In addition to some of the core programs which have been in place since fourth grade (Wordly Wise, Writer's Workshop, Word Masters), students are engaged in a broad range of activities which provide them with in-depth learning experiences and motivate them toward higher-level thinking. Among these enrichment activities are Problem of the Week, Continental Math, and The Stock Market Game. The Problem of the Week integrates complex thinking and application skills into mathematical word problems. Continental Math League provides a series of competitions throughout the year for students to participate and be ranked nationally. Finally, The Stock Market Game is used to educate students in the financial markets and give them experience analyzing stocks and strategizing in collaborative groups with their hypothetical investments. These activities represent a small sample of the challenging experiences we have planned for our GATE/APAAS students this year. We look forward to seeing them achieve amazing success!

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JANUARY, 2008

CAC-GATE Chairpersons' Message

By Terry Freedlander

As 2008 approaches, the GATE Community Advisory Committee looks to provide resources and support to our parent community in a more effective way. With great speakers in the area of gifted education, the next GATE CAC Parent meeting is on January 29 at 6:30 at IUSD Offices, at 5050 Barranca Parkway in Irvine. These speakers are carefully screened and chosen to help provide parents of gifted students with perspective and insights on various issues. The IUSD GATE website is another source for significant information on programs for gifted and talented students, along with an array of websites with content directed at the gifted and talented child. In addition, the presentations from speakers from prior GATE CAC meetings are available. These are all available through the website, http://iusd.org/parent_resources/gate/.

My personal goal for GATE CAC is to bring more relevance and information to the parent community. We will work to communicate more effectively to allow for greater attendance at the quarterly CAC-GATE meetings. We will also be reaching out at the school level to develop school contacts to GATE CAC. This is one area that has been lacking attention, and will be a focus for GATE CAC to encourage development of school contacts for GATE CAC. If you are interested in getting involved with sharing relevant information about speakers, conferences and the like to your GATE parents, please contact me at tfreedlander@gmail.com. We need your support in this important area.

Lastly, as we close out 2007, we must give thanks to the "glue" that makes GATE CAC so successful—Wendy Pokorski and Beth Andrews provide their leadership and counsel to enrich the GATE Program for IUSD.

CALENDAR FOR 2007-2008

January 26	Astounding Inventions of the Future – Irvine Valley College (Grades K-8)
January 26	SAT and subject tests – register by December 26, 2007
January 29	Community Advisory Committee (CAC-GATE) Meeting – Administration Center, 5050 Barranca, Irvine, 6:30 p.m. – Guest Speaker – Ed Zaccaro
February 28	APAAS Parent Orientation – Oak Creek Elementary 6 – 7 p.m.
February 15-17	CAG (California Association for Gifted) 46th Annual Conference , Anaheim
May 3	SAT and subject tests – register by April 1, 2008
March 5	District Science Fair – Irvine High School (Grades 6-12)
April 24	Community Advisory Committee (CAC-GATE) Meeting – Administration Center, 5050 Barranca, Irvine, 6:30 p.m. – Guest Speaker – Dr. Jim Delisle
April 29	Honors Vocal and Instrumental Concerts – 7:00 pm – Calvary Chapel, Santa Ana
June 7	SAT and subject tests – register by May 6, 2008
Jun. 30-Jul. 25	Summer School – Grades K-8

All Dates Are Not Confirmed and Subject to Change

MARK YOUR CALENDAR APAAS Orientation Night

Date: February 28, 2008
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Place: Oak Creek Elementary