

# QUEST ACADEMY GIFTED ADVISORY COUNCIL

## QAGAC Meeting

January 8, 2009

1. General meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. with Tom Barker making welcoming comments.
2. Council Mission Statement and Goals: item tabled; will be revisited at February meeting.
3. Subcommittee task descriptions: Committee Chairs were asked to prepare task descriptions. Tom Barker suggested verbally sharing task descriptions and include in meeting minutes for review. Task descriptions will be provided at the next council meeting.
4. Mr. Jim Malcolm motioned to create an additional subcommittee named “Gifted Taskforce Oversight Subcommittee” for following up with, and following through with task force recommendations that were approved by the School Board and are expected to take place. Motion accepted by the council.
  - a. Task force recommendations that were approved by the School Board and are expected to take place:
    - i. Quest Program was intended to have a full time Program Coordinator or Asst. Principal, media center rep, School Psychologist assigned one extra day per week for gifted needs, a specific technology program, a specific curriculum, specific training, etc.
  - b. Motion made and accepted for Jim Malcolm to chair subcommittee; subcommittee members are as follows: Genie Toner, Dana Pearce, Cindy Gustafson, Lydia Pinkowski, Kelly Brewer-Balch
    - i. In addition to the above items, the space issue within the building will be addressed by new subcommittee.
  - c. At the request of the Superintendent, Cathy Dofka, ESE Director, will now provide direct oversight of administrator for gifted, guidance counselor for gifted, and teachers of gifted.
  - d. Exclusivity of Dana Pearce as assigned 100% Assistant Principal for the Gifted Program remains to be determined, outcome to be reported by Cathy Dofka.
5. Status of donations from Dell for technology in the classrooms:
  - a. Dana Pearce reported status of technology throughout the gifted classrooms, and described donation proposal from Dell prior to the initiation of the program.
  - b. Jim Malcolm further explained that the technology for the Quest Program was intended to be above and beyond that which is available to the general classroom. Mr. Malcolm reported that Dell was to provide \$250K-300K, however they only came through with \$100K worth of donations.
  - c. Mr. Malcolm quoted the Superintendent as saying the Quest Program will get the technology they were promised, and Mr. Malcolm plans to hold him to his statement as Chair of the Oversight Subcommittee.
6. Status of use of Singapore Math in classrooms:
  - a. Consumable books and textbooks are available in every classroom, and are being used to the extend each teachers deem appropriate.
7. Status of field trips and funds to support the field trips:
  - a. One field trip taken in December to the Springstead Theater to see the “A Christmas Carol” performance, and an additional field trip is planned for the spring to see the “Cinderella” performance.
  - b. Genie Toner expressed her strong opinion that field trips for the Quest Academy students must be more robust experiences.

- i. Dana Pearce will contact Judge Scaglione regarding a field trip to the courthouse to see
  - ii. Cindy Gustafson recommended contacting Gulf Coast Academy to explore their field trip efforts. Jim Malcolm will work with Dana Peace in investigations.
  - iii. Additional ideas: Mosi, FL Aquarium, Cape Canaveral, Nature Coast.
  - iv. Cindy Gustafson offered to share with Dana Pearce a list of ideas for gifted-related field trips from someone whose job was solely to plan such trips.
8. Status of William and Mary textbooks:
  - a. No problems with obtaining textbooks, teachers were trained in October by William and Mary; Jacob's Ladder is also up and running.
9. District policy for vendor involvement for fund-raising:
  - a. District attorney explained that any vendor invited to a school function that is taking place on a school property must be vetted by district. If a vendor is being used outside of a school function (i.e. magnets), the vendor can be chosen at the of the Council.
10. DOE response regarding budgets and how funds Quest have been or will be spent.
  - a. Cindy Gustafson reported her communication with DOE contact, Brent Jones, in finance department as follows:
    - i. ESE GA (guaranteed allocation) total for Hernando ('08-'09) was \$9,617,636.
    - ii. This amount is divided by the total # of ESE students\*:
      1. 111 (K-3) = 1,188.96
      - 112 (4-8) = 1,603.20
      - 113 (9-12) = 936.01\*\*
      - Total = 3,658.17
      2. Average income generated per child is calculated as follows \$9,617,636 divided by 3,658.17 students = \$2,629.08\*\*\*
  - b. How much funding the state provides school districts for gifted services was further explained by Cindy as outlined in the January '08 OPPAGA (Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability) report. Link to the report: <http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/educ/r08-01s.html> (see pages 2-3).
  - c. With regard to tracking the additional funds, Cathy Dofka reported that since the opening of the Quest Academy, all monies spent on the gifted program have been tracked with a special funding code.
  - d. On March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009, a public workshop will be taking place to discuss providing gifted services to non-Quest Academy students.
11. Website:
  - a. Council previously determined appropriateness of creating an independent website for Quest Academy not connected to Ed-Line; Dana Pearce agreed.
  - b. Council agreed to posting QAGAC meeting agendas and meeting minutes on the website.
12. Florida Virtual School: no additional questions were brought up, item closed.
13. Open Agenda:
  - a. Social Emotional program to be available in January 2009, Dana Peace will check on status and report at February meeting.

- b. Valentine's Day Dance 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. to be held in gymnasium for all Explorer K-8, with proceeds returning only to Quest Academy. Concession stand will be opened during dance; half of concession proceeds will come back to QAGAC.
    - i. Cost recommended at \$4 per person, \$10 per family.
    - ii. DJ has been hired for \$100 for three hours.
    - iii. Core volunteer base of at least 12 people still needed, Fund Raising Committee will be sending information home with students to request parent volunteers.
  - c. Magnets – Kelly Chapman shared information regarding magnet pricing, and asked for decisions regarding size, colors, and design.
    - i. Council motioned and accepted a circular 5x5 size, with gold, green and garnet colors, "QA" in the center, with "Quest Academy" across the top "Est. 2008" across the bottom.
14. Motion made and accepted to approve December's meeting minutes.
  15. Motion made to include Mr. Gonzalez as a Council Representative; motion accepted.
  16. Next meeting date: Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009, 6:00 p.m., in the media center.
  17. Closing statements made by Tom Barker.
  18. Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

\* Under the old matrix system, there were 5 categories of ESE – 251, 252, 253, 254, & 255. Under the current non-matrix system, only the students that would have fallen under the first 3 categories are funded via the GA. Children who fall under the last two categories receive additional funding to a much greater extent.

\*\* The legislature froze funding at last year's levels for gifted high school students. Of the total number of ESE students in grades 9-12, 209.05 are gifted. These students need to be added back into the calculation to derive a more accurate average figure.

\*\*\*This amount is slightly overstated due to freezing of funds for gifted high school students @ last year's level. If you add these students back in (209.05), the average would be somewhere above \$2,486.96, but below \$2,629.08.