



HCL Parent Advisory Meeting - Minutes

January 9, 2020

9:45 – 11 a.m.

Welcome, Introductions, & Purpose of Parent Advisory

The Bellingham Public Schools Highly Capable Learners team members Jessica Sankey, director of wellness, Keith Schacht, director of student services and Jenny Lawrence, teacher on special assignment introduced themselves and welcomed the thirteen group members in attendance.

Jenny Lawrence announced there is an opportunity to meet with Austina DeBonte at the What Parents & Educators Need to Know About Smart Kids meeting located at the Lynden High School library on Jan. 7 at 6:30 p.m. An informational handout was provided for meeting participants.

Reviewed agenda.

- Provide a presentation of data related to achievement and growth for HCL identified students.
- Part two of the presentation on anxiety from Dr. Sara White, HCL parent and psychologist, Sendan Center.
- Split meeting members into groups and collect input on the four identified HCL goal areas.

Jessica took a moment to talk about Lynn Heimsoth. Keith described the Mobile Response Team (MRT) who provide support to students, teachers and staff during a difficult time. Jessica stated she is grateful for the support of the community and Our Treehouse. Parents of Sunnyland were appreciative of the support.

Meeting members introduced themselves and stated the age of their child(ren), school they attend, their 2020 goal for HCL and shared something fun that happened over the winter break.

- Members would like more information on what they can do as a parent to help their HCL student(s).

Updates on Highly Capable in Bellingham Public Schools

- All Student Learning Plans (SLP's) are complete. SLP's were set up for students, parents and teachers to determine and set goals for the student. SLP's are created for identified students grades 3 through the 8. Goal setting for high school students are provided in the High School and Beyond Plan. Staff are in the process of uploading the SLP's into Skyward. The SLP's will not be mailed to families, instead, in order to streamline the communication process, parents will receive an email at the start of the second semester with a link to Skyward that will provide access to the student(s) SLP.
 - Jenny will be available after the meeting for questions.
- CogAT testing for students referred for highly capable will be January 13 – February 7. (Post meeting note: due to weather cancellations, the date was extended to February 14.) The testing will include universal screening for all 2nd graders. A multidisciplinary team (MDT) comprised of the HCL team, teachers and a psychologist will review student portfolios (student test scores, parent and teacher referral information and additional assessment data) to determine HCL eligibility.

Presentation of Data Related to Achievement and Growth for HCL Identified Students

Jessica Sankey provided a PowerPoint presentation.



HCL graphs
1-7-20.pdf

Summary of the PowerPoint presentation of data related to achievement and growth for HCL identified students.

- Between 5-8 percent of HCL students represented as a district with the highest percentage represented at Fairhaven Middle school and the lowest represented at Options High School.
- The data presented HCL participation by gender with 56% male and 43% female. HCL participation by income included 88% not considered low income and 11% low income.
- The data presented HCL participation by race/ethnicity. High representation among white students. The numbers are smaller in other demographics.
- The percentage of HCL quantitative students by proficiency and by growth levels on state math assessment presented in comparison with all students. The state math assessment is given annually in the spring. According to the data, students who qualify HCL are more likely to score a level 4 in their grade level. The growth levels from year to year is an aggregate read showing growth over the year with the same test. However, the data does not show growth if your HCL child who scores a level 4 and then, the next year takes the same test and again scores the same level.
- Data shows higher growth levels of HCL verbal students on state ELA assessment than the math assessment.

- When reviewing the HCL quantitative student proficiency and growth levels on state math assessment by grade level the 7th grade shows higher growth than other grades.
- Brian Rick, director of research and assessment is collecting additional data.

Part 2: Presentation by Dr. Sara White – Introduction to Anxiety

Dr. Sara White, HCL parent and psychologist, continued her PowerPoint presentation from Nov. 26 HCL Parent Advisory meeting on the introduction to anxiety and described what it is and how it may present.



BSDAnxietyPresentation1-7-2020.pdf

Dr. White stated anxiety sometimes looks like nothing is wrong. Just because there is not a witness, doesn't mean there is not a problem.

Dr. White explains treatment is having the child exposed to the hard things that makes them anxious without the avoidant behavior. The more times the child is put in an uncomfortable situation, then the shorter duration of the intense anxiety feeling. The goal in treatment is to help kids feel comfortable sitting in their anxiety.

What can schools do to help?

- Provide family resources.
- Assist with appropriate adaptations or modifications to assignments or school days. Provide access to <http://www.worrywisekids.org/node/40>
- Dr. White states it is important for schools to look at discipline policies and procedures that help support anxious kids in their environment rather than making them feel more anxious.
- Provide a place where the student can go to calm down.
- Create school-wide strategies to recognize anxiety as anxiety and not other behavioral problems.

What can we do to help?

- Be brave. Dr. White noted we all experience anxiety and she encourages parents to talk about it out loud so kids can see the modeling of it.
- Help child face fears.

Dr. Sara White will continue her presentation on anxiety at a future HCL Parent Advisory meeting later this school year.

Input Gathering on Four Identified Goal Areas

Due to time, the input gathering part of the agenda did not take place.

Good of the Order

Please contact Jessica Sankey at jessica.sankey@bellingshamschools.org to schedule a time to meet individually.

The next HCL Parent Advisory meeting will be in the evening from 6:30-7:45 p.m. located at Whatcom Middle School. Parents are welcome to bring their school-aged child(ren) to participate in planned enrichment activities.

Meeting adjourned at 11 a.m.

Next HCL Parent Advisory Meetings:

- March 17, 2020 from 6:30-7:45 p.m. at Whatcom Middle School
- May 19, 2020, TBD