

- 1- Welcome to Gifted Services Parent Information Night. I just returned from Kenmore Middle School where I was helping with Governor's School auditions, a wonderful opportunity which is open to high school students. I will be posting this slide show on the Campbell website in case you want to access it later. I know there are some families who wanted to be here but were unable to attend tonight.
- 2- Just like with the students, I have posted a learning target with what I expect you to learn tonight. I can explain how students are identified and how gifted students served in APS and specifically at Campbell.
- 3- I will address the following topics: Introduction Collaborative Cluster Model, RTG Role & Responsibilities Gifted Identification, Gifted Services Implementation Parent Resources
- 4- My name is Pamela Clark. I've been a Resource Teacher for the Gifted, or RTG in Arlington for 17 years and 11 of them have been right here at Campbell. Prior to that I was at Randolph and Science Focus School. Before that I taught in Stafford, VA, Chicago Public Schools, a private school in St. Louis, Missouri, and an elementary school in Fairfax County.
- I really love working at Campbell because we have the EL Education program which values project-based and problem-based learning and puts high value on building character and doing high-quality work, meaning work that looks professional and would appeal to an audience.

- 5- If you have general questions at the end of my presentation, you can raise your virtual hand or if you have personal questions, you email me at Pamela.Clark@apsva.us and I'll get back to you later.
- 6- For Gifted Services in Arlington, we use the Collaborative Teaching Model.
- 7- Cluster grouping is also done along with this collaboration.
- 8- The Collaborative Cluster Model means working together with teachers to plan and carry out lessons so students have opportunities which incorporate higher levels of thinking. We group students so there are academic peers in their classroom, and they are placed with a teacher who understands the needs of gifted learners and is working with the RTG to meet those needs.
- 9- Virginia Department of Education regulations state that each school district must develop a plan to identify and provide services to those students who have learning needs beyond the regular instructional program. The NAGC, National Association for Gifted Children recommends that school systems provide curricular resources, training for teachers in the needs of gifted students, and specialists who can support the classroom teachers in differentiation. APS has a local plan that specifies how it will achieve those goals, and the link is on the slide.
- 10- Differentiation is like making different meals for different members of a large family, that all have different dietary interests, wants and needs. We want to make sure everyone gets what they need in school.

- 11- This means teachers need to work to know their students personally and through assessments. Then they need to create or locate assignments that they can adjust to various needs, use strategies and approaches to reach different students so they can see continuous progress.
- 12- Teachers can differentiate the content, process, product, and/or learning environment for their students. Content is WHAT they learn. Process is HOW they learn it. Product is how they SHOW they've learned it. And learning environment is about the setting, where and with whom the learning takes place.
- 13- Teachers differentiate those things based on how ready students are to learn the content, what they are interested in, and how they learn best. Our goal is to help them grow as learners, and we strive to keep them motivated and make them more efficient thinkers.
- 14- People sometimes ask, "What do you do as an RTG?"
- 15- Our jobs are pretty complex in Arlington, and it's easy to miss what we're doing because it is so much, but it's spread out over an entire school. There are multiple reading, ESOL, and Special Education Teachers in each building, but only one RTG who is charged with many tasks. So, you could say, we wear many hats:
- 16- In addition, we need to work closely with Special Education teachers and teachers of English Language Learners. There are many gifted students who are also receiving other services in our building. We work with

them to ensure we are serving those students appropriately as well.

- 17- We work hard at Campbell to identify students from different subgroups, of color and socioeconomic status. Teachers KNOW their students and are quick to notice those that need more rigor in their instructional day, offering variety, choice and challenge to all students.
- 18- Which brings us to gifted identification.
- 19- The state requires us to identify gifted students; however, Campbell teachers are working hard to meet your child's academic needs whether they are identified or not. That said, identification does help us when we are clustering students in future grades, and it raises awareness to future teachers that a child needs consistent differentiation in certain areas.
- 20- -Students referred for gifted services in academics can be identified in English, math, science, and social studies, but the committee decides which of those areas based on the data. -3rd-5th grade students may be referred for gifted services in art and music as well. Referrals for academics, art or music are typically put forward by the teacher who sees that their performance is above that of other students in their grade level. -Gifted students are not simply students who do their work well. They also often think differently about situations making connections and solving problems in ways that other students do not. -We are looking at the students to see if they have an exceptional ability to learn, can apply their

knowledge, show creative and productive thinking and have a motivation to succeed.

- 21- The process looks like this: Screening is where we look at testing information like the CogAT and Naglieri. All students in APS must have an ability test score on file to be put through the referral process. This had been hold during COVID, but APS is busy collecting that data so we have it for screening students. Teachers and parents may refer their child to be put through the process, and typically this is done around February or March. The deadline each year is April 1st. Letters are sent home to parents and they fill out a parent information form. Teachers collect products during differentiated instruction which show those students exceptional ways of thinking. The committee meets to look at all the data.
- 22- The screeners that I talked about are happening this month and next for students in grades 1st-5th who don't already have one on file. In the spring there'll be another opportunity to take them for students who join us next year, and for K students, we have an ability test called the K-Bit that can be administered to those students since there is no grade level screener for Kindergartners.
- 23- The Gifted Behaviors Commentary is a form that the teachers fill out using anecdotal evidence from the classroom and the parent information form. We look at the students in these four domains.
- 24- During the meeting we look at these four things: The screeners or ability test scores, achievement scores like the PALS, MI, DIBELS, and Growth Assessments, the gifted

behavior commentary, and we look at student work samples that show their exceptional thinking.

- 25- Identification is a piece of what we do, but the most important piece of gifted services is what teachers are doing in their classrooms to serve students on a daily basis. Remember that my role is to support teachers, not to deliver all the gifted services.
- 26- Students are receiving gifted services whenever teachers are using gifted strategies or resources with their whole class or small groups. This is often happening even when you aren't aware of it.
- 27- -In addition, we have something called the Critical and Creative Thinking Framework. I support and coach all teachers as they increase rigor and infuse critical and creative thinking for all learners through the **APS Critical and Creative Thinking Framework**.
- 28- APS Teachers learns about these different thinking strategies to get kids to think critically and creatively, so they are problem solving and thinking about lessons is different ways.
- 29- Mind-mapping, thinking about different points of view and using complex questions are just a few things we try to regularly infuse in our teaching.
- 30- - APS is rich in resources, -Things like Schoolwide Enrichment model reading and Jacob's Ladder foster higher level thinking in the way questions are presented. We have rich novels that offer wonderful opportunities for discussions, and math resources like Continental Math League problems, Groundworks, and a M cubed math units

which offer rigorous lessons. We use all these as well as other resources to challenge our students.

- 31- Here is a list of some of the advanced content curriculum you may see in your child's classroom. Cluster teachers take this training and implement with cluster groups (and with other students who demonstrate readiness for this challenge) with support from RTG.
- 32- As the RTG, I have access to resources I can use in classrooms and share with teachers. This year, a new resource we received was the instructional manual called Teaching Tenacity. It offered great lessons encouraging Growth Mindset which we infused into lessons throughout the first quarter to get off on the right foot now that we are back at school. We want all students to understand that through perseverance and a belief in their abilities they can "Grow their brains."
- 33- At Campbell, it is only natural that as the Resource Teacher for the Gifted, I do as much as I can to support the EL Education program's expeditions since they allow are students to be a part of project-based learning. The expeditions provide natural motivation with real world problems and projects. This is a picture of a field work opportunity I coordinate for the Kindergarten Expedition.
- 34- Big Ideas are a great way to encourage higher levels of thinking, so I push in K classrooms monthly to do lessons on a big idea related to the Campbell Way. Last month the lesson was on Cooperation, and students used their creativity to draw and describe their own friendly monster.
- 35- Jacob's Ladder is a reading resource which also gets at big ideas. For instance, this one helps kids think about

consequences and implications by beginning to think about the sequence of events, then cause and effect, and finally the big idea.

- 36- SEM-R, which is Schoolwide Enrichment Model-Reading has wonderful bookmarks with rich questions related to various reading strands, strategies, and big ideas. Students throughout Campbell use these as they are thinking about their reading.
- 37- We have a rich writing program at Campbell using the Teachers' College Reading and Writing Project. Our use of this resource has transformed Campbell students into amazing writers. The rubrics have a progression which allows students to always be striving to improve their writing craft with specific feedback. Using Googledocs in 4th and 5th grade makes commenting on writing very easy.
- 38- We have a variety of resources to encourage math problem solving, and we work to differentiate those activities to continually challenge students.
- 39- Mentoring Mathematical Minds, or M cubed, is a resource with engaging and challenging units that allow students to problem solve and think deeply about their learning.
- 40- Open Middle challenges have many right answers to help students learn to persevere as they guess and check to find reasonable answers. Many students learn at an early age that math is all about finding the one right answer, but we need to help them explore a variety of strategies and solutions to help them grow in their ability to think flexibly.
- 41- As I mentioned earlier, there is a critical and creative thinking framework that we use in APS. Those tools can

be used in every grade level. For instances, you can see a sample of 2nd grade student work on a PMI related to a picture book about growth mindset

42- and 5th grade work related to a growth mindset lesson where they learned about neuroplasticity in rat brains.

Another way we meet the needs of gifted students is by providing opportunities for interdisciplinary lessons. The rat brains lesson wove science and reading together.

43- Other examples were a graphing project using data about snakes and a math unit on distances traveled which also involved independent research about a country of their choice and collecting numerical data related to that country.

44- As an EL Education school, there is a lot of interdisciplinary learning. For instance, right now, the 3rd graders are reading many books about soil and writing how-to manuals so the other classes can create compost bins for their classrooms.

45- Another thing EL Education schools believe is that students should be “leaders of their own learning.” We have various activities for our older students that do just that. Community Meeting Crew and Zero the Hero are two of those opportunities.

46- Our school also supports an Odyssey of the Mind program. Teams form and meet outside of school to creatively solve a long-term problem by writing scripts, building structures, making costumes, and props, or whatever the problem may stipulate. It’s a great chance for students to spread their wings and try something that’s even more open-ended.

- 47- I hope this has given you a pretty good idea about what we do at Campbell. There are also resources for you, however.
- 48- These four websites are great resources if you are still curious about giftedness and our services.
- 49- There's even a Parent Advocacy Council you could get involved in if you are so-inclined.
- 50- Remember if you still have questions you can ask them now or email me or your child's teacher later. Thank you for coming. You can follow me on Twitter @ThinkCampbell or email me at Pamela.Clark@apsva.us.

Are there any questions?