

## SEMINAR PROGRAM REVIEW TASK FORCE

### Committee on Site/Parent Communication & Student Socio-Emotional Support

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS RE: SITE/PARENT COMMUNICATION\*

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Parents generally found their communication with administrators and teachers inadequate.

In particular, parents desired more and better information with respect to:

- Level to level differences between elementary, middle, and high school Seminar programs.
- At a given level, site to site differences between Seminar program offerings.
- At a given level, site to site differences in applicant selection criteria, with an eye towards standardizing the more objective requirements and eliminating the more arbitrary ones.
- At the high school level, the relationship between GATE classes and advanced placement classes.

In addition, parents of limited English fluency found communication with their schools especially incomprehensible. Also, parents of children with both GATE identification and special education certification found communication about dual exceptionalities especially infrequent, indeed, virtually non-existent.

The most highly recommended solutions to these problems were:

- GATE Department production of a site-distributed, quarterly newsletter, translated into the district's principal non-English languages, to which sites could append information of their own.
- GATE Department sponsorship of a Seminar Program "trade show" at which exhibitors (i.e., sites) could market their programs to customers (i.e., parents) who could walk freely among the various booths shopping for the programs which best meet their children's needs.
- More energetic site promotion of the GATE Department's informational events, regular and ad hoc, including emphasis on interpreter services when offered.
- More energetic site promotion of school-based informational events, regular and ad hoc, with topics driven by parent surveys of their interests and concerns.
- More energetic site promotion of the GATE Department's website.
- GATE Department and site co-sponsorship of parent vertical team meetings by high school feeder pattern, particularly for middle and high schools to present their programs to elementary school parents.
- Participation by GATE Department psychologists in site SST, IEP, and 504 meetings for GATE-identified students.
- Funding as necessary to fully implement the recommendations.

\* These findings and recommendations are primarily from pre-Seminar Task Force surveys of parents and site staff, a pre-Seminar Task Force meeting for parents, and the first Seminar Task Force meeting at which parents, teachers, and administrators were grouped by high school feeder patterns rather than committees. The one scheduled meeting of this committee focused almost exclusively on socio-emotional issues. Unfortunately, few committee members responded to staff efforts to hold a second, ad hoc meeting on site/parent communication issues. The few who did could not agree on a meeting date.