

## **Equity**

- There are about 20,000 identified GATE students in the District (according to 2014 -2020 data). They all have special needs that require attention. (Note of comparison: in 2019-2020, GATE identified students represent 24% of all District students, compared with 13.8% with an IEP or 19% English Learners, so it is a very large constituency).
- They include the "Gifted Plus" (the 2e or 3e who are gifted and also SpEd, low SES, ELL, Black, Latinx, LGBTQ, etc.). Many of them rely on public schools to receive both gifted identification and differentiated education because their families aren't able to access and pay for those services privately.
- So how are the District's Reopening and Distance Learning Plans specifically assisting and tracking these students?
- Ignoring GATE creates inequity, because advantaged families who have the means have choice, and are able to pay privately for assessments, gifted identification, enrichment, or tutors. They can choose to move their students out of the public schools and into charters or private schools, or they can home-school. Disadvantaged families who rely on public schools do not have the luxury of those choices. Withholding gifted education from students, or applying it unevenly, just strengthens the degree of polarization between the haves and have-nots.
- Given continued DL into next year, could the District designate GATE-certified "Master Lecturers" for core subjects that all GATE students could access online, to make GATE's differentiated instruction more accessible, and more fairly/evenly distributed across different Clusters?
- Does the Reopening Plan include a plan to collect and analyze data on the number of GATE students who decide to leave the District and track whether they leave to join private school, charter school, or do homeschooling?

## **GATE Instruction**

- Are the special needs of GATE students specifically addressed in this Reopening Plan? How?
- What is the plan to address the educational needs of GATE students (e.g., via differentiated instruction, curriculum compacting, acceleration, etc.) if DL continues or a mixed model is used?
- The District likes to claim it addresses the needs of ALL students - does ALL include the Gifted Students too? How? If not, why not?
- What reassurances are there in the Reopening Plan that GATE instruction will be continued and that GATE students won't be assumed to "do fine on their own" and therefore get ignored?
- Will both GATE Cluster and Seminar students continue to receive specialized instruction? Is that specified in the Reopening Plan? If not, why not?
- Is there anyone at the District (who is GATE certified) specifically assigned to manage and oversee DL for GATE students and support GATE teachers? If not, why not?
- Is anyone at the District checking to ensure that GATE students are still receiving appropriate differentiated instruction during DL?

- If GATE students do DL work at home and speed ahead of their classmates, how is that accomplishment being documented and is it going to be taken into account and officially credited when they return to the regular classroom?
- What will the grading look like next year under the Reopening Plan?
- How will the grading system help ensure that gifted students don't just coast to a "pass", but do continue to make a year's worth of growth?
- Will there be accommodations for GATE students who are thriving with autonomous learning and want to continue to do DL as well as those who are struggling and want to return to the classroom, or will there be a one-size-fits-all solution for all GATE students? It would be good for families to be given the choice to do what is best for their own student instead of having it mandated.
- Did the District survey all the GATE teachers for feedback on how DL worked for them and their students, or ask for their input on the Reopening and DL Plans?

### **GATE Testing & Identification**

- What is the plan for addressing disruptions to GATE testing & identification due to school closure? (Both last year and next year)
- What about the plan to switch to having 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers administer the GATE test to their own students rather than have the school psychologists do that? Is that now on hold? Which option will work best in the Fall, considering the uncertainty around schools reopening?
- Does the Reopening Plan include specific assurances that GATE testing & identification will continue next year?
- Does the Reopening Plan include steps to inform 2nd grade parents about testing/identification plans for next year, and reassure them that GATE instruction will be continuing so they will feel confident to enroll their newly-identified students in GATE?
- Already, and for unknown reasons, we lose a lot of newly-identified students who don't bother to enroll in GATE classes - why is that, who is responsible for tracking that, and what is being done to prevent those students - especially 2e students - from falling thru the cracks during these school disruptions?

### **Communication With GATE Parents**

- Are there plans to open channels of communication directly with GATE families to provide GATE-specific updates and explain District actions to address their children's needs (e.g., via emails, phone messages, notices posted on the GATE website?)
- Why did the District not try to reach out to GATE parents as a group, to ask for input on the Reopening Plan, or solicit feedback on how the school closures and distance learning affected their gifted students?
- How is the District communicating with the GATE DAC to include them in design and revision of the Reopening Plan, and help them gather ongoing feedback from GATE parents?
- Who at the District is responsible for communicating specifically with GATE parents?

### **Seminar**

- Are there clear directions for parents about how to enroll in Seminar if schools remain closed?
- What provisions are being made to allow Seminar students to virtually join Seminar classes outside their school or Cluster now that we have online learning?
- Many Seminar students don't have access to Seminar classes at their home school, so they aren't getting services they need - so now we have virtual learning, can those students access other school's Seminar classes online?
- Could the District assign GATE-certified "Master Lecturers" to provide online instruction in key courses to avoid the redundancy of multiple GATE teachers having to prepare and teach the same course at multiple sites?

### **Process Questions re Parent Engagement on Development of DL Plan and Reopening Plan**

- Why does the Reopening Plan not specifically address GATE when there are over 20,000 gifted students identified in the District?
- Why does the District's Distance Learning Plan not include anything about GATE?
- Why does the *Parents As Partners* Task Force not include any GATE parent representatives? (when both PTA and the CAC are represented)?
- Why does the Parent Brochure on the *Parents As Partners* website not mention GATE (when it does address both ELL and Special Education)?
- Why were GATE parents not surveyed to gather feedback on how their gifted students fared with school closure and DL or to ask what GATE-specific issues arose that need to be included in the Reopening and the Distance Learning Plans?
- Why was GATE not included in the Focus Groups run by the District as they were developing these Plans?
- Why were the GATE DAC leaders not informed in advance about the opportunities for parents to submit feedback (e.g., focus groups, Cluster meetings, online survey, comments on June 16 Board meeting) so that they could get that information out to their constituents?