Advisory Council Meeting Summary

GATE Coordinator Introduction

My name is Cherryne Luesang and I am the GATE coordinator for Beverly Hills Unified School District. I have held various roles in education since 1997 with the last 8 years here in BHUSD as an assistant principal and teacher. I have worked in 2 BHUSD schools, Beverly Vista and Horace Mann. I am excited to have the opportunity to work with such a talented and passionate group of educators and students as the GATE Coordinator. I am doubly excited to be supported by you, the parents.

For ongoing information check my webpage. Under the Departments Tab at the top of the BHUSD webpage, click on Educational Services. Next click on the “Staff” link to find my name. You can also find a variety of GATE information on the GATE link on the Educational Services page. You may also email me at cluesang@bhusd.org.

Planet Bravo Classes

Danny Pezzota the founder of Planet Bravo began his career as a teacher in Beverly Hills and developed his company to meet the technology needs of students and schools. He provides full day instruction in app development for our GATE students. The students use free downloadable programs to create games. The Planet Bravo class occurs 2 times a year on a rotation basis. This is a pull out class – the students are pulled out from class for the day. The Planet Bravo class just finished a 4 week rotation at El Rodeo. Planet Bravo began their rotation through the Horace Mann classes on October 1. Please see the Planer Bravo Documents for more information.
The STAR program offers classes to our GATE students each Wednesday morning from 8:30am to 9:20am. There are a total of 4 different classes which meet for 6 weeks at each school. The classes will rotate through the schools so that by the end of the year, each school will have offered each class. Please see the STAR class information document for class descriptions. Although the STAR program offers a variety of after school classes and enrichment opportunities inside and outside of the school day, these classes are designed for gifted students. The STAR teachers are professionals in their field which provides a more expert or “master class” experience for the students. The STAR program is working to adjust the curriculum to meet the specific learning levels of our student population upon daily assessment and feedback.

During our discussion of the Makers Studio class, parents were encouraged to search the following topics to gain a better understanding of the class:
“Audrey’s Rube-Goldberg Monster Trap”
“Steam Machine Santa Monica”
“National Maker Faire”

I am working with BHUSD teachers and with outside GATE certification providers to increase the number of GATE certified teachers as well as to provide continuing professional development for our teachers who are already GATE certified. The district goal is to support ongoing classroom teacher efforts to meet the specific needs of GATE identified students.

In speaking with teachers, many continue to use the knowledge gained from previous GATE professional development to differentiate instructional practices and activities to meet the specific needs and interests of GATE students within the regular class.

Regarding Science Olympiad: GATE parents are encouraged by 2 BV parents to participate in the Science Olympiad at your school sites.

Here are some of the questions asked during the meeting.

Q: What can GATE parents do to support kids in the GATE curriculum?
A: Instead of giving you my opinion, I will research articles from educational experts and periodically post them on my webpage.

Q: Can coding instruction be brought into the regular school day?
A: BHUSD will investigate that option and other innovative classes to meet student interests.

Q: Is there a connection between the STAR classes and the Science Olympiad?
A: Not at this point, but whatever knowledge the children bring to each of their classes is celebrated by the teachers.