

SPAN meeting – Jan. 15, 2019

We will be hosting two **Coffee Chats** again at the Prior Lake Lunds/Byerley's Caribou Coffee. Anyone with any questions/needs support is encouraged to attend. First one is Jan. 24 from 9:30 – 11 AM and second chat is Jan. 31, 6:30 – 8 PM. This is a change from our originally schedule. We will schedule additional Coffee Chats in March.

Next meeting is Thursday, Feb. 7 at 7:00 PM in WW Media Center. Topic is a panel of parents of high-ability kids who can answer questions about their experiences raising gifted/talented children and moving through the school system.

Upcoming Events:

Review of topics for the **MN MCGT mini-conference** at Edina Education Center on **Feb. 2, 2019** 9am-noon. Encourage people to go if there are topics of interest to you; topics include: addressing writing struggles, fun in parenting and a panel of experts on gifted. This tends to be a good meeting. There is no childcare this year. Check out the website to learn more: <https://mcgt.net/2019-mcgt-mini-conference>.

MCGT-sponsored CHAT night: **Summer Opportunities for Gifted Learners will take place** on Wednesday, **January 16, 2019** from 6:30 – 8:00 PM at Lake Nokomis- Keewaydin Campus 5209 30th Ave. South Minneapolis, MN 55417

Our chapter, in collaboration with other chapters, are **sponsoring a presentation by Andrew Mahoney** entitled **Motivation and Achievement**. It will take place Monday, **February 25, 2019**, 7:00 - 8:30 PM at Sabes Jewish Community Center, 4330 S Cedar Lake Rd, Minneapolis, MN 55416.

Announcements:

The SPAN board is looking for people with younger children to take leadership positions. Many Board members have older children who will be graduating soon and they will be stepping down from their Board positions.

Main Presentation:

Melissa Knettel, Assistant Director of Student Support Services for School District 719

Started with an opening conversation regarding child's strengths and what ways your child is supported/encouraged to develop.

Ms. Knettel will be sharing her presentation for distribution to the SPAN group.

Conversation was primarily around elementary and middle school GTE support.

Elementary: Parents were asking questions about the Synergy program this year (changes addressed in slides). In the 2020-21 school year there will be 8 elementary sites; right now, we have 1.6 FTE Synergy teachers for 7 sites. There were various questions regarding the district's decision on this and commitment to the program. How MN school districts support their gifted & talented learners varies

widely because how districts use the few earmarked dollars for gifted and talented that they receive is not mandated by the state (beyond identification of gifted learners).

Middle school: concern was about avoiding duplication of material/lessons from elementary school and to continue to keep students, especially those coming out of SAGE, challenged. It was also asked what professional development is being offered to teachers of advanced classes; attending the Hormel Institute (focus on gifted) and Buck Institute (focus on project-based learning) were both offered to teachers this past summer. Middle schools are expanding project-based learning opportunities; goal is to have all students have at least 1 project-based experience this year. There was interest among parents to meet with middle school principals.

HS: Jared Daggit - 20% of position devoted to gifted/talented support (he also teaches advanced/AP classes). There are a lot of opportunities for students to choose their path (MN CAPS, AP courses, Advanced/Honors courses, PSEO).

If you have concerns about the education your child is receiving in the district, you should start with the principal within your building. Melissa is also available to parents, if needed.