

SPAN meeting minutes October 8, 2019

A. SPAN--Prior Lake/Savage chapter of MN Council for the Gifted and Talented (MCGT).

--mission to support and advocate for high-ability students, their parents, and their educators

--will host 4 formal meetings + 3 informal coffee chats this year (see mcgt.net/priorlake for complete meeting schedule)

--upcoming meetings focusing on gifted services in the district (December 12), college planning (January 21), and what gifted high school kids and their parents wish they would have known when in elementary/middle school (February 6)

2019-2020 Board Members

Apryl Henry, President; leaving Board at end of this school year

Open Vice President

Anne Fry, Treasurer & Webmaster; leaving Board at end of this school year

Linda Becker, Secretary

Heather Banas, Elementary/Middle Representative

Stephanie Benson, Elementary Representative

Rachel Carlson, Elementary/Middle Representative

Becky Smith, Elementary/Middle Representative

Stacey Sorensen, Elementary/Middle Representative

B. SPAN need for leadership: VP position currently open; president, secretary, and treasurer stepping down at the end of the school year (due to kids getting older).

--For SPAN to continue, need parents of younger gifted kids to join Board either as representatives or in leadership positions; outgoing Board members happy to guide/help next year

C. Treasurer's report:

Treasurer's Report

October 8, 2019

Starting Balance (February 19, 2019)	\$2016.45
Income:	
Membership Dues	\$52.00
Expenses:	
MCGT/MEGT memberships	\$120.00
Gift for outgoing V.P.	\$55.04
Current Balance:	\$1893.41

D. Upcoming events:

1. **Young Scientist Roundtable** is a program designed for all students in grades K-12 and their families. The title of the October roundtable is **Riding a Laser Beam to Alpha Centauri**. Speaker Dr. James Leger (U of MN College of Science & Engineering's Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering) will describe

SPAN meeting minutes October 8, 2019

nanostructures that act as optical cloaks (similar to Harry Potter's invisibility cloak), huge telescopes that may someday be held together in space using laser beams, and futuristic ideas in optics. M Oct. 14 7pm Wayzata High School. Free and open to the public.

2. Parents of gifted kids' book club

From the MCGT Choices chapter:

Parents Read, Too!

Let's face it; many of our kids didn't fall too far from the tree, and we enjoy feeding our minds as much as they do. Here is an opportunity for the adults to gather and exchange thoughts without trying to solve the problems of our world.

We'll meet one Saturday morning each quarter this school year to discuss a non-fiction book about learning. We've chosen books with elements we might apply to ourselves as well as to our own families. With any luck, we will both agree and disagree with the authors and each other, and all come away with some food for thought.

October 26, 2019 from 10:00-11:30 – Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World. Written by David Epstein (The Sports Gene). Epstein argues for breadth over depth in a changing world, and against early specialization.

January 25, 2020 from 10:00-11:30 - Unschooled: Raising Curious, Well-Educated Children Outside the Conventional Classroom. Written by Kerry McDonald.. While McDonald is a proponent of homeschooling, this book takes a view that education is much bigger than where you attend school, and provokes thought about shifting learning models from the Industrial Age to the Imagination Age.

April 25, 2020 from 10:00-11:30 – The Yes Brain: How to Cultivate Courage, Curiosity, and Resilience in Your Child. Written by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D. The team that brought us The Whole-Brain Child and No-Drama Discipline provides strategies to work towards balance, resilience, insight, and empathy.

Come to one or come to all, and try to read at least a good chunk of the book before we meet.

Edina Community Center, MCGT Office, Room 315. Bring your own coffee; we'll provide a snack.

RSVPs are requested but not required to Homeschool@MCGT.net.

3. Annual MCGT conference Sa. Nov. 2 "On Behalf of Gifted Kids"

The Minnesota Council for the Gifted and Talented (MCGT), is pleased to announce that our annual conference, "On Behalf of Gifted Kids" will be held on November 2, 2019 at Robbinsdale Middle School.

This conference is for everyone who lives and/or works with gifted children. Alonzo Kelly will be giving the keynote address, *The Impact of Organizational Culture on Identity*, and we have a number of expert local speakers presenting on a variety of topics in break-out sessions throughout the day. Teachers earn CEUs, and parents connect, network, and learn positive advocacy skills.

Our concurrent children's (K-7th grade) program makes the day a family event. Kids meet with experts and expert educators for a fun and challenge-filled day. This is a

SPAN meeting minutes October 8, 2019

great opportunity for kids to meet and learn with like-minded peers from all over the state. Parents and kids meet for lunch, and the day is topped off with a book swap. High school students are invited to sign up as volunteers—a fun and rewarding way to earn those service hours!

We work to make our conference accessible. Please contact our office at info@mcgt.net for scholarship information for families who need financial assistance. See www.mcgt.net for registration and more information.

- E. **Advocacy**—MCGT-sponsored CHAT (Connect, Help, Advocate, Talk) Night
--Carol Malueg, facilitator, former MCGT president, gifted advocate/consultant
*Carol mentioned that Alonzo Kelly will be the keynote speaker at the MCGT conference.

*Attendees each filled out 3 notecards...one with an area for which they personally (for their child) would like to advocate; one with a specific self-advocacy skill that they want their child to develop; and one for a resource they have found useful for advocacy. Carol's resource is the book, "A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children."

*Most of the rest of the meeting was spent discussing the areas in which parents were interested advocating.

*elementary school—want rigor; how do parents know what is going on in their child's classroom?

*ask child

*Seesaw/newsletter

*volunteering in the school/classroom

*volunteer at school events

*when emailing with concerns, you will more likely get responses if:

*tone is not adversarial

*questions are numbered (and number no more than 3)

*start with a compliment/something you appreciate in the classroom

*be brief/to the point

*state what you heard from child but want to hear from teacher; be open-ended (what happened?)

*request a call when the teacher has a chance...then keep time short; state in email that you need no more than 10 minutes (and then set a timer when the call comes)

*be a seat at the table...get involved in committees (like curriculum committee)

*know options if concerned about curriculum/pace/repetition: part-day homeschooling, subject acceleration, full grade acceleration, online curriculum done at school building

*Relationships Matter; get to know principals, teachers, etc by being present in the building (PTC, volunteering, etc.); these relationships can make communicating concerns more easily acknowledged

*advocate for cluster grouping (NOT TRACKING) of high-ability kids in a classroom; advocate for flexible grouping for different subjects (different teachers teacher different ability levels in various subjects)

SPAN meeting minutes October 8, 2019

- *middle school—concerns about curriculum/rigor
 - *subject acceleration (precedent with science and math in the district)
 - *replacement curriculum (can do online)
 - *CHOICES chapter at MCGT...started as homeschool chapter but has expanded to include all different kinds of options that parents choose for the education of their children; has meetings, resources, etc.

- *2E (Twice exceptional) kids---those who are gifted and have another exceptionality (on autism spectrum, ADHS, learning disability, anxiety, etc.)
 - *support online—SENG (www.sengifted.org) –Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted (many articles, support groups); online conferences (Bright and Quirky, 2 Days of 2E, etc.)
 - *publications— book *Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnoses of Gifted Children and Adults* by James Webb and others

- * SENG support group for parents of gifted kids starting in Lakeville; flyer attached

Meeting ended at 8:35pm.