

Supporting the Needs of High Ability Students in the Johnston Community School District

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# Friends of Johnston ELP Summer 2019 Newsletter



2018-2019 ELP Staff			
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Congratulations Kathy!

Thanks to everyone who joined us to honor the long and productive 34-year career of *Kathy Paul*, Johnston ELP Coordinator. We can't thank her enough for all of her contributions and wish her nothing but the best in retirement!



# From the Desk of Kathy Paul

# **ELP Coordinator**

# What do Gifted Kids Need?

It seems appropriate to end my career in public schools with thoughts directly from the population for which I am most familiar: gifted children. As part of the annual ELP survey, we ask students to respond anonymously to provide feedback to improve their programming. Below are some of their responses regarding what they need. We use this data to help all of our staff better understand the needs of the gifted. No one strategy is going to be perfect for any one gifted student; the most important thing is the ability of a teacher to provide challenge, appropriate feedback and affirmation that the child is capable of doing more than we may imagine. *-Kathy Paul* 

- Working together in a group and getting a challenge for my brain
- Being with other people like me
- Learning new things that I didn't know before
- The hard work and math
- Stretching my thinking and having challenges that make me think differently
- The way teachers teach it like in a challenging way
- Not having to sit through a math lesson if I know how to do it
- When it's not easy and it's fun
- Doing work at my level and to stretch my brain
- Working with other with my same abilities and expressing my feelings with a safe group

# SECONDARY Students Tell Us in Their Own Words that They Thrive On:

- Getting the chance to stretch my learning
- Being able to push myself in different ways both academically and mentally
- The collaborative environment
- Autodidacticism
- Having a class that fits my pacing
- Understanding and support that comes with new learning
- The ability to work with like-minded people while simultaneously being challenged in an area of my interest
- Being able to talk to people who have been in my position and know what I'm going through
- Getting really involved in high level classes.
- Having a class that fits my pacing
- Working with others who are also working hard
- The many r esources that are available

# 2015-2020 ELP Recommendations and Goals Kathy Paul, ELP Coordinator

In the spring of 2015, the school board approved year one of a five-year ELP plan. Planning and implementation for changes to programming started with the 2015-16 school year. Below is an update of progress in the categories of Choice, Curricular Support, Counseling/Social-Emotional Support, and Communication for 2018-19. The **bolded** items illustrate updates for this school year.

# CHOICE

## Completed:

- Elementary- Add literature content in 3/4/5th grade aligned to grade level standards. Reviewed curriculum options and resources.
- Elementary- Pilot A World In Motion (STEM Grant) in some buildings.
- Secondary- 9-10<sup>th</sup> grades designated advanced LA class for students to self-select is piloted.
- Secondary- Review advanced LA courses at HS & implement option for student selection. Now open access for grades 8-12.
- Secondary- 9th grade ELP class begins, plans finalized for 8th grade ELP class to begin fall 2017.
- All- Examine options for future ELP classes.

## In Progress:

 Elementary- Expand STEM pullout classes/Add STEM curriculum along with Math Olympiads. Developing enrichment programming for classroom teachers that aligns with the EM4 Math Curriculum. Piloted use of interdisciplinary materials presented at national gifted conference. Begin to develop resources for collaborating with classroom teachers to support literacy.

## **CURRICULAR SUPPORT**

## Completed:

- Elementary- Develop & teach common lessons in all elementary buildings for K-1
- Elementary- Pilot 2<sup>nd</sup> grade CogAT test (rather than screener) to all, to assist in identification & programming of ALL of our diverse learners.
- Elementary- Tabled School-Within-School program exploration due to lack of strong need and enough numbers to make it viable.
- Secondary- Meet with 8th & 9th LA teachers weekly- not able to do 2017-19 due to .5 ELP at JMS.
- Secondary- Pilot whole class language arts sections for advanced 8th grade students. Other teachers have sections of clustered students.
- Secondary- Add 8th grade humanities exploratory in journalism taught by classroom teachers. Fire Time (MTSS) provides ELP teacher to select or draft ELP students for academic or social emotional needs.
- Secondary- Support science teacher to develop 8th grade STEM+ Innovation Exploratory for 2016-17.
- Secondary- No fewer than 5 Strength Area students in an individual basecamp at Summit; ELP input when administration clusters basecamps.
- All levels- ELP staff researches best practice in identification for underrepresented populations. Pilots Teacher Inventory to locate /serve students who
  may not be identified from traditional methods. Data collected and examined regarding district population and ELP population demographics.
- All levels- ELP Coordinator heads the District Differentiation initially. Year three: leadership is spread out among the team. The team adds more
  differentiation resources for access by all staff. Plans in place for a June district workshop to assist teachers to develop differentiated
  lessons.
- All levels- Provide staff with "Monthly Differentiation Tips" & work individually or in PLC with teachers to differentiate.

## In Progress:

- Elementary- Administration consistently organizes classrooms with cluster groups of 4-8 identified ELP students based on ELP staff recommendations. ELP coordinator & Chris Bergman, Director of Teaching & Learning & Joy Wiebers, Director of Student Services & Equity, communicates expectation of clustering and the need for trained teachers.
- Elementary Continue research regarding needs of early childhood gifted.
- Secondary- JMS Explore options with social studies teachers to provide appropriate programming.
- Secondary- Students seeking more rigor in chemistry may take AP chemistry without prerequisites at the 10-12 building.
- All levels- ELP staff uses best practice in identification. Works with national level experts and AEA statistician on using z-scores to more clearly identify our highest-performing students. Continue to use pathway 2 for those who do not score well on standardized tests. Examine testing options for 2019.
- All levels- Support differentiation with classroom teachers & teacher leaders.
- All levels- Determine ELP staff needed to implement programming.

## For the Future:

- Dialogue with pre-K teachers regarding needs of gifted. Refine preschool identification information and develop resources.
- Secondary- Assist to develop AP Preparation options for any student who may not have taken an advanced LA course but would like support.

# 2015-2020 ELP Recommendations and Goals Kathy Paul, ELP Coordinator

#### COUNSELING/SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

## Completed:

- All- Present information regarding social emotional needs to some staff.
- Elementary- Develop affective needs units or embed at all buildings.

#### In Progress:

- Elementary- Collaborate among ELP staff to share successful programming using information from national and state conferences.
- Secondary- Work with counselors and staff to provide awareness of gifted children's needs.
- At JMS, all 9th Grade PEP students will be assignment to the ELP PRIDE (advisory) class. At JHS, request made for soph and junior PEP students in an ELP advisory. On hold until new advisory plan is completed.

#### For the Future:

All- Work with counselors to develop curriculum and resources for gifted children.

#### COMMUNICATION

#### Completed:

- Elementary- Write for JELP newsletter (4 times/year) & bimonthly communication to SA/PEP families.
- Elementary- Written communication to parents from ELP staff prior to meeting with students along with a written evaluation at the conclusion of the group.
- Elementary-Written communication from ELP staff or classroom teacher regarding flexible math groups. Notify parents when their child is participating and provide a brief summary of the work.
- Elementary- Support classroom teachers by encouraging communication to parents of Talent Pool students who may need differentiation.
- Elementary- Lessons created for ELP teacher to introduce ELP in each classroom to help all students understand programming.
- Secondary- Pullout offerings at Summit in Humanities and STEM, as well as regular ELP collaboration with teachers.
- Secondary- Summit ELP teacher creates and disseminates ELP offerings & information.
- Secondary- Send notice in fall to parents regarding services and conferences.
- Secondary- First Lego League at Summit: Grow beyond 2 teams with promotion to girls in Community Education. Now open access as TSA or HyperStream (STEM grant programs) through other avenues.
- Secondary- "Moodle" online course supplement used in all 8-12<sup>th</sup> grade ELP classes to provide information.
- Secondary- Introduce program to all LA classes with identified students at any level.
- Secondary- Add early December meeting for all 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade parents/students interested in more information about future class options.
- Secondary- Collaborate with Summit Instructional Leadership Teams & administration to determine how to best meet needs of LA students.
- All- JCSD website houses beginning of year ELP informational PowerPoint and all JELP meeting program information.
- All- ELP teachers collaborate as elementary and secondary staff 5x yearly on Wednesdays during professional development, elementary meet as team weekly.
- All- Classroom teachers will be notified of students who are in a "talent pool" of potential ability to serve through classroom enrichment.
- All- JCSD web site information on ELP is restructured.

## In Progress:

- Elementary- Work with preschool staff to develop incoming Kindergarten survey for parents, which will help with clustering process for administration.
- Secondary- Communicate at Summit 3x yearly with all ELP parents (SA & up) about ELP services & how they meet students at all levels; classroom teachers communicate with Talent Pool students periodically in the same manner.
- Secondary- Provide video clip to supplement communication regarding ELP classes at JMS/HS.
- Secondary- Communicate clearly defined advanced course descriptions at time of registration with access available for any student. Guidelines
  available to assist in making choices.

# **News from Johnston Elementary Schools**

Submitted by Mitzi Hetherton, Nikki Paradise-Williams, Kristen Hartman, Kate Florer

# MATH OLYMPIAD

Several students from Johnston were among the nearly 160,000 students worldwide to participate this year in the Math Olympiad program. They participated in a series of five monthly contests of 5 problems each, from November to March, and weekly practice sessions under the supervision and coaching of the elementary ELP teachers. The students learned to solve unusual and difficult problems and to think creatively.

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Beaver Creek		
Place	Student	
1st	Audrey Dummermuth	
2nd	Alan Qi & Zoe Zhang (tie)	
3rd	Chloe Liang	
4th	Nathan Jenkins	
5th	Akul Gonchigar & David Shi (tie)	
6th	James Foo	
7th	Alex Cantor	
8th	Ella Prince	

Beaver Creek also finished in the top 10% of all competing teams!

Lawson			
Place	Student		
1st	Nate Schwartz		
2nd	Travis Lin		
3rd	Teddy Hershberger & Jayce Stocker (tie)		
4th	Luke Fonkhamdeng & Ben Campbell (tie)		
5th	Liam Donoho & Camille Vocelka (tie)		
6th	Noah Small & Gwen Pavlovec (tie)		

# Fifth Graders Compete in Middle School Competition!

These 5th graders also took the middle school Math Olympiad tests!

Harrison Burkhardt

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Alan Qi		
Henry Zou		
Luka Felbapov		
James Foo		
Zoe Zhang		

Horizon			
Place	Student		
1st	Harrison Burkhardt		
2nd	Alex Adair & Luka Felbapov (tie)		
3rd	Charlie Adair & Henry Zou (tie)		
4th	Kaitlyn Rosenboom		
5th	Jeffrey Becker, Alex Emehiser& Kaleb Kasman (tie)		
6th	Caleb Okesson		

Wallace			
Place	Student		
1st	Derek Brown		
2nd	Evan Behrens & Macie Brown (tie)		
3rd	Adi Israel & Emilia Kongshaug (tie)		
4th	Leah Furguson		
5th	Syan Aggarwal, Khyli Blair, Aiden Lahart & Braylon Theulen (tie)		

Timber Ridge			
Place	Student		
1st	Matthew Urness		
2nd	Tay Ohr-Rottler & Jacob Rowland (tie)		
3rd	Matthew Kathman		
4th	Kavidh Talluri		
5th	Jayden Palmer & Ellie Tesar (tied)		
6th	Andrew Johannsen, Lauren Tesar & Allena Wiltfang (tie)		



# **News from Johnston Elementary Schools**

# Submitted by Mitzi Hetherton, Nikki Paradise-Williams, Kristen Hartman, Kate Florer

## STOCK MARKET GAME

What would you do if you were given \$100,000? Would you spend it all at once? Would you think about putting some of it in the bank? Some 4th and 5th graders at Lawson, and Horizon have been learning how to invest money so it might grow over time. Through *The Stock Market Game (SMG)*, students have been gaining a fundamental understanding of investing.

SMG Winners		
Wallace	Emilia Kongshaug (1st in region!)	
Lawson	Camille Vocelka	
Horizon	Alex Adair, Colton Pierce & Jedd Scott	



## Lure of the Labyrinth

Some 5th graders at Horizon have been exploring the online game *Lure of the Labyrinth*. It requires analytical and problem-solving skills to think more like mathematicians. The students have enjoyed it because it is exciting, challenging and fun to play. For more info, please visit:

# https://labyrinth.thinkport.org



# **ELP Around the District**

## **1st Grade**

- Read and discussed the series My Father's Dragon
- Math students learned about and practiced their deductive thinking skills with the help of Dudley the Detective

## 2nd Grade

- Fractions and visual/spatial thinking
- Read and discussed *Frindle, Lady Lollipop and Punished.* Students also practiced identifying and analyzing similes and metaphors in their reading. They worked on using the form of these figurative expressions to create their own comparisons. Students also practiced using the context of a word to determine its meaning. We read *Baloney (Henry P.)* by Jon Scieszka, which contains unfamiliar words

## **3rd Grade**

- Read and discussed Island of the Aunts and The Report Card
- Finished up unit on probability. Explored Cubelets. Extended their knowledge of the order of operations by learning about exponents

# 4th Grade

• Algebra and fractions

## **5th Grade**

- Fairy Tale on Trial
- Caffeine Investigation (math)

The elementary ELP team has reviewed approximately **700** students across the district to be considered to receive various levels of ELP service. The team reviewed standardized assessments, teacher

recommendations, current classroom levels and parent comments for the survey. We would like to thank teachers, students, and parents for their input, flexibility, and understanding during this in-depth and lengthy identification process.



# **Elementary School Fun**

Submitted by Mitzi Hetherton, Nikki Paradise-Williams, Kristen Hartman, Kate Florer





ATH & SCIENC







# **News from Summit Middle School**

Submitted by Colleen Ites, ELP Teacher

# 6TH GRADE

ELP Humanities students in Mrs. Barlow's and Ms. Ites's Summit Strong sections spent two quarters digging deep into the concept of categorization and how power and equity connect to the human construct of categorization. As a culminating event students created reflections on their journey in this process. Those reflections were shared with parents, teachers, fellow students, and members of our greater Johnston community at a showcase after school. Students work individually and in groups to fulfill their reflections and truly express their journey into this



ELP STEM students in Ms. Ites's Summit Strong sections developed used iterative engineering design methods to improve upon an existing product. Those students then had to choose if they were going to attempt to sell that product directly (similar to Shark Tank) or write a letter to a manufacturer offering their improved design for the product (similar to a request for grant proposal). Students had to create and continually improve upon drawings of their idea (in either CAD or on paper), complete a prior art search to write a sample patent filing and to know what previous patents they were involving in their product, and then create a digital or physical prototype of their product.









# **News from Summit Middle School**

Submitted by Colleen Ites, ELP Teacher

# 7TH GRADE

STEM students in Forensic Science completed personal research opportunities into various fields of forensics. Whole-class we discussed archaeological forensics and phrenology, fingerprinting techniques, the basics of DNA analysis and genetics, epigenetics, virology and zootropic diseases, prion diseases and blood spatter analysis. In small groups students learned to fingerprint each other, determined the best methods for analyzing and preventing the spread of a \*Human Wasting Disease (\*zombie-virus) that jumped from CWD in ruminant across the US, and a victimology utilizing blood spatter. In this process students had to determine the importance of each piece of evidence in a scientific analysis, how to use evidence to lead them to conclusions, and how to avoid confirmation bias in a case. Students especially had fun determining if Ms. Ites and her brother were prime suspects in a hotel theft and learning how to put trigonometry into 'real life' practice through their blood spatter analysis.







Humanities students examined how to impact a variety of audiences in order to affect change for the greater good through personal passion projects. Students integrated rigorous research skills utilizing Boolean searches, database analysis, GoogleScholar and GoogleBooks searches, and organizing research through the use of NoodleTools created a campaign to brought their passion project to life.

# **EXTRA EXTRA!**



At the JCSD Teacher Appreciation Event, Ms. Ites and Mrs. Barlow were acknowledged for their for work with Summit Middle School ELP Humanities curriculum toward enriching the 21st

Century Skill of Community and Global Mindedness in students.

Several students participated in the 2019 National History Day Regional Competition at GrandView University in April. Students completed individual performances, group websites, individual exhibits, and historical papers as a way to show how their topics represented both triumph and tragedy in history.

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Ms. Ites visited many 6th grade classrooms to help students make connections to the Japanese Samauri simulation to Japanese history. As students reflect on the themes found in social studies this year, Ms. Ites brought in traditional Japanese obi (sashes) that, similar to tapestries in the Middle Ages of Europe, have designs that tell the story of their owners (their income, status, and the event the obi was made for). She also demonstrated how different obi knots (misubi) tell you the cultural status of the wearer. Ms. Ites brought in different types of tea for students to smell and understand their meanings in Japanese culture. Students were also able to study an anti-Western World War II nobori (20+ foot long banner flag) that used symbolism to show when it was made and how Japanese culture emulated samurai, with the banner being carried on Boy's Day during World War II as propaganda to encourage youth to fight America. Finally, classes had a discussion how Japanese culture still permeates today, including the Toyota car symbol (closely represents the samauri mon from Toyota-shi), the name Obi-Wan Kenobi (it means sword-belt wearer), the rise of minimalist culture (often attributed to Japanese "ma"), and how Japanese character language tells you about a city's location (Kyoto: Eastern Imperial city later moved to Edo and became Toyko[-to]: Emperor's city to the east).

# **High School News**

# Submitted by Sue Cline

The school year has ended, with lots of success and learning taking place for JHS ELP students. Wrapping up the year is an interesting process for ELP class. Students all hand in their projects, demonstrating the work that has consumed them for sometimes an entire year. This year's AP self-study projects involved American Government and Politics, Microeconomics, and Chinese. Many students explored career or college interests. A short film was developed using digital animation and computer programmers worked on game design and PCBs. Students learned new skills like knitting and baking. It was a definitely a full year, and we ended the semester with an alternative history activity. During our semester test period, each student presented an alternate outcome for significant historical events, and the class members discussed the likelihood of various scenarios resulting from each new event chain. Class members' suggestions ranged from Asian history to American, involving events as far back as 300 BCE in Sri Lanka and as recent as 2001 in New York. It was fascinating as their instructor to watch them use creative and critical thinking to posit completely different outcomes. Great work by all!

# A special Shout Out to AP World History

Many APoW students are in ELP as well, and we had a particularly exciting end of the year this year. Since students take their final exam in May before the AP Exam itself, we end the year with a historical guessing game. Each student comes to the final exam dressed in a home-made costume, and the class members play "20 Questions" to figure out each historical character. All of us learn a lot, since the most fun is had when costumes are interesting, information shared is accurate, and we guessers still can't figure out who the character is. Andrew W. and Siri M. managed to stump all but one class member in 4<sup>th</sup> hour, and Chase M. and Mason T. did the same in 7<sup>th</sup> hour.



# **Graduation Highlights**

Each year, the department staff of JHS have the honor of designating a student for special



recognition. Each department uses a different approach, usually involving how many electives the student took within the department, and often also considering the students' career plans. Multi-member departments vote, but as the only ELP teacher in the building, Mrs. Cline uses a "points" approach. She assigns a point to each time a student enrolls in ELP class and each time a student participates in one of the activities sponsored by the ELP department (Mock Trial, Academic Decathlon, NHD, Knowledge Bowl). Additional points are earned each time the student advances in one of the competitions. Marianne Aldrich, winner of this year's ELP award, is pictured with Mrs. Cline.

4th hour AP World History



7th hour AP World History

Department Awards			
Art & Design	Mackenzie Stanley	Business	Abby Thilges; Luke Kinney
ELP	Marianne Aldrich	English	Arundhati Soni
FCS	Caroline Ginsberg	French	Ella Knott; Lauren Gabby
Industrial Tech	Dena Davis; Weston England	Instrumental Music	Dana Thacker
Math	Chris Yao	Newspaper	Andrew Maresca
Science	Angela Cai	Social Studies	Obsee Abbajabal
Spanish	Aline Teixeira	Vocal Music	Kelsey Hostetler
Yearbook	Hannah Tanner		

# **Top 3% and 15%**

Submitted by Sue Cline

Top 3% of Graduating Class		
Obsee Abbajabal	Angela Cai	Carsyn Calkins
Grace Campidilli	Lilly Coleman	Weston England
Lauren Fergus	Alexa Franke	Jordan Gould
Logan Haller	Mitchell Hermon	Kelsey Hostetler
Josey Hovey	Amie Kielty	Ashley McGovern
Nicholas Pittman	Katherine Salmon	Lal Siama
Arundhati Soni	Parul Srivastava	Kadefa Suliic
Aline Milach-Teixeira	Macy Thompson	Allie Tubbs
Sophia Van Zee	Sierra Wicks	Christopher Yao
Letian Zhang		



Top 15% of Graduating Class			
Elizabeth Abdallah	Kiernan Adair	Morgan Alaimo	Jailyn Alderman
Kiersten Bahr	Megan Ballard	Emma Blind	Abigail Boeschen
Karli Bohali	Christopher Boyle	Mikayla Bump	Katherine Chapman
Evan Christianson	Julia Davis	Anjali Dhawan	Alexandra Dieger
Grace Doan	Katie Frazier	Daniel Fu	Lauren Gabby
Macie Gray	Elisabeth Giles	Gabrielle Gilliam	Katherine Hapgood
Mesa Hassel	Joshua Hendrickson	William Henrichsen	Ching Hsu
Kayla Jemes	Mara Jendro	Hannah Jensen	Milind Jetty
Gurleen Kaur	Cara Kempadoo	Kara Krahn	Samuel Lorenz
Rylee Matthews	Katherine Michalski	Makenna Mumm	Caridad Naanep
Nathan Newcomb	Sean O'Brien	Tyler Overton	Ellie Patterson
Joseph Paul	Nathan Petrak	Jens Rasmussen	Julia Richards
Colin Rodine	Hailey Russell	Grace Saliers	Megan Solberg
Dana Thacker	Lydia Thomasee	Amber Troutman	Carolyne Waldron
Makayla Wilcox	Sloane Wilhelm	Sydni Wilkinson	Katelyn Winkler

Congratulations