

NAPAGE

northalleghenypage@gmail.com
www.giftedtigers.org

An Affiliate Member of **PAGE**
(PA Assoc for Gifted Education)
www.giftedpage.org

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March 13, 2017

9:30 a.m. - Baierl Center

MEETING MINUTES

Welcome:

Jacki Herring welcomed everyone and all those who were present introduced themselves. School district representative Gwynn Maximo (Supervisor of Special Education and Pupil Services) was in also attendance. School counselors Diane Feliciani (NAI), Jen Rosato (NASH), Jeff Smalley (Marshall Middle) and Erica Zinsser (Franklin Elementary) attended as our presenters for the *Discussion and Q & A with our School Counselors* agenda item.

Business:

Gifted Advisory Committee (GAC)

The two remaining Gifted Advisory Council meetings are scheduled for March 14 and April 11. The meetings will take place from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Ponce Room at the Baierl Center. At the time of the meeting, representatives from Bradford Woods, Franklin and NASH had not yet responded for the March 14th meeting.

Upcoming Events:

- An event for mothers and their high school aged daughters is scheduled for Saturday, May 13, 2017 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the Baierl Center. Registration priority will be given to current members of NAPAGE and is limited to the first 25 mother/daughter pairs. While the event is free, the speaker, Laura Freedman, has asked that participants make a donation to Strong Women Strong Girls. The suggested donation level is \$25.00. Additional details about the event and how to register was sent via email to current NAPAGE members.

Upcoming NAPAGE Meetings:

April 10, 2017 – 1:00 p.m.

May 15, 2017 – 9:30 a.m.

Presentation: A Discussion with our School Guidance Counselors

Counselors at the elementary, middle school, intermediate and high school levels answered questions from the group. Topics discussed included:

Elementary Level

- The MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support) is rolling out at all seven elementary schools. MTSS is evidence-based and addresses academics and behavior in a systematic, cyclical problem solving process. MTSS is intended *to help all students* meet with continuous academic and behavioral success. Data collected this year will help to monitor students' growth. The data is then comparted to national percentiles. The goal is to move MTSS into the middle school level.

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- Elementary school counselors are investigating academic pressures at the elementary level. Their focus is to encourage students to have a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset. "I can train my brain. I can grow!"
- This year an elementary curriculum review is underway. A gifted curriculum review is planned for the next academic year.

Middle School Level

- Middle School Orientation for 5th graders – would it be helpful to have an orientation at the middle school closer to the start of the school year so that students can familiarize themselves with the building?
 - Presently, 5th graders participate in a "Move up" day in the spring and counselors travel to the elementary schools to answer questions the students may have. Students are encouraged to visit the building during the summer. The first two weeks of 6th grade are structured like an orientation for the students.
- Intermediate School Scheduling for 8th graders – 8th graders receive a list of recommended courses for their freshman year. They use a 'passport' to select their courses and then have individual meetings with their counselor for a review. Students have up until March 30, 2017 to make changes.

Intermediate Level

- Selection of high school courses
 - 9th and 10th graders participate in a presentation to learn about scheduling classes. There is a 'reverse verification' process using the Naviance program to verify that the student have selected their courses.

High School Level

- Changing courses
 - When a student realizes that they are struggling in a higher-level class and are considering stepping down a level, it is advised that the student do this sooner rather than later as the grade goes with the student when they go down a level.
- Scheduling classes
 - At the high school level, scheduling courses is the responsibility of the students and occurs in February. Individual meetings occur to review any conflicts.
 - Students interested in programs at A.W. Beattie may find it difficult to fit these programs into their schedules as the time conflicts with their required course work at the high school. This is preventing some students from pursuing course that may be of interest to them.
- Exams
 - There was concern that students were cheating on exams and it was not being addressed. The counselors shared that if a student is caught cheating, they will receive a failing grade on the exam.

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- Trends in college requirements
 - The counselors led a discussion around feedback from college recruiters and what factors are considered in addition to grades. Factors include:
 - When all students have high scores, then the ‘extras’ make a difference. Colleges rate the rigor of the student’s schedule in comparison to what the school offers.
 - Recruiters prefer to see students demonstrate passion in one or two activities rather than an hour or two at many different activities.
 - Students should consider a variety of AP classes rather than just those within their chosen discipline.
- Opportunities to learn about colleges at NASH
 - There is a NASH College Information Night
 - Within the Naviance software, NASH students have the opportunity to register to visit with as many as 5 college representatives in a given year. Students can also learn about admission requirements and view tests scores by schools based on previous years’ data in Naviance.
 - Schools with rolling admission dates visit NASH during the spring.

General Topics

- Naviance
 - There will be a middle school roll out of Naviance next year. Naviance capabilities are available at the elementary level as well, however, there has been no decision to use it at that level.
 - There were general concerns as to the confidentiality of the information in Naviance and the potential for students to change information regarding other students given the initial logon and password process. The counselors emphasized that students are urged to change their passwords to prevent this. While the data on an individual student cannot be changed, there is the possibility of a lack of confidentiality if there are unique identifiers to a particular student.
 - There was also concern about the post-secondary education tracking component in the Naviance software which monitors where a student attends college. (Clearinghouses use this information to track alumni and provide statistics on college acceptance rates and students changing universities.) Students have the ability to opt out of this tracking.
- Keystone Exams
 - Keystone exams are ‘end of course’ assessments and testing windows are mandated by the Department of Education. Students are notified of exam dates during the school year.
 - The school district offers summer testing for courses completed during the summer. Gwynn Maximo is in charge of the summer testing.

The next NAPAGE meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 10, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. at the Baierl Center in the Ponce Room.

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Mission Statement:

NAPAGE is a parent support/advocacy group. We are the North Allegheny chapter of the Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education (PAGE). PAGE is a nonprofit advocacy group dedicated to helping gifted learners, parents and educators. You can visit their website at www.giftedpage.org for more information.

NAPAGE's mission is to advocate for and support gifted children and their families in the North Allegheny School District. We accomplish this by:

- Providing parent representation to NA's Gifted Advisory Committee (GAC and SEAC)
- Sharing experiences, concerns and successes
- Proactively addressing issues that arise
- Encouraging the use of best practices in gifted education

NAPAGE Officers 2016-2017 School Year:

President	Jacki Herring	412-952-1096
Vice President	Elinor Avigad	724-934-4334
Treasurer & Membership	Rebecca Hufnagle	412-367-4695
Secretary	Amy Franz	412-952-5597
Website	Jen Husek	412-512-5430

Administration:

Supervisor of Special Education and Pupil Services	Gwynn Maximo
Gifted Support Master Teacher	Sharon Kroll

Building Representatives to the Gifted Advisory Council 2016-2017 School Year:

Elementary		High School		
Bradford Woods	Anne Yatchenko	NAI	Mary Lee Majewski	
Franklin	Anisha Shah		Lingga Herman	
Hosack	Kathy Dwyer		NASH	Yanbing Ye
Ingomar Elementary	Anne Paczula			Suzanne Bridges
Marshall Elementary	Dilhari DeAlmeida			
Peebles	Elizabeth Warner			
Middle School				
Carson Middle	Sue Gaertner			
	Melissa Tabbarah			
Ingomar Middle	Joe Greenberg			
	Mary Wolfe			
Marshall Middle	Julie Evanish			
	Harkirat Dhingra			