The Gifted Network was created as a professional learning community for teachers and supervisors of gifted students. IU13 formed this network specifically for the 22 school districts and other nonpublic institutions in Lancaster and Lebanon counties; but districts outside IU13 are also welcome to participate as members.

Each year, IU13 organizes four network meetings. Each meeting addresses topics relevant to gifted education and also provides a forum for discussion about current issues in gifted education at the classroom, building and district levels. Networking with others in the field of gifted education is an integral part of each meeting and allows for collaboration between participants. Online learning platforms developed for the network also foster communication and resource sharing across districts.

Gifted Network membership and meetings support Chapter 16 requirements for professional development in the area of gifted education. Regular education teachers are always welcome. PDE emphasizes the importance of collaboration between gifted support and regular education teachers in meeting the individual needs of gifted students.

§ 16.5. Personnel

(c) A school district and intermediate unit shall provide, under section 1205.1 of the School Code (24 P. S. § 12-1205.1), in-service training for gifted and regular teachers, principals, administrators and support staff persons responsible for gifted education.

If selected for a compliance monitoring by PDE, the district will be asked for evidence that professional development in gifted education has been provided. Information will be gathered from the past two years prior to an audit. IU13 can provide documentation, as needed, that staff attended professional development through the IU13 Gifted Network.
**Gifted Network Meetings & Collaborative Sessions 2017-2018**

*Through the Roof: Raising Students’ Thinking Skills through Depth & Complexity ~ Guest presenter Lisa Van Gemert*

This session provided a helicopter tour of the Depth & Complexity Framework, exploring the fundamentals of how it works in real classrooms. Helpful ideas for classroom activities using the Depth & Complexity Framework for all grade levels and content areas were shared. In the afternoon, teachers explored a variety of recommended online resources that can be used to build depth and complexity within curriculum content serving as enrichment for gifted and advanced learners.

*Staying Current on Diagnostic and Growth Data (1/2-day Session) ~ Dr. Lauren Beal & Rachael Haverstick, IU13 and Dr. Kristen Lewald, PVAAS Team*

During the morning portion of this meeting, Lauren Beal and Rachael Haverstick focused attention on CDT data analysis and student conferencing. The Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) is a set of online assessments, divided by content area, designed to provide diagnostic information to guide instruction, intervention and enrichment. It assists educators in identifying student academic strengths and gap areas by providing links to classroom resources. Moving from CDTs, Kristen Lewald led the group in a practical look at using PVAAS with students who have a history of higher achievement. PVAAS data is useful in developing PLEP, selecting courses and making informed projections.

*Practical Use of Data and Conference Updates (1/2-day Session) ~ Janice Estabrook*

The collaborative portion of this meeting was spent looking at ways to organize data (gathered from a variety of sources) so it can be effectively used for PLEP. Gifted Network members shared organization systems that have worked for them as they compile data for GIEPs. There was also time to explore the CDT and PVAAS information shared in the morning session. Recent conferences were highlighted by those teachers who attended. Thanks to all teachers who shared throughout the afternoon.

*Blended Learning: Taking a Closer Look (1/2-day Session) ~ Colette Cairns and Ken Zimmerman, IU13*

Last year teachers explored resources and models that enable gifted support teachers to use assessments, instructional technology, and individualized instruction to meet student needs. They experienced blended learning in action, connected with colleagues, and learned from Colette Cairns and Ken Zimmerman. Upon request, we continued that discussion with a panel of teachers (including members of the Gifted Network) who have used the hybrid rotation model to create effective instruction for all students, with a focus on advanced/gifted students.

*Annual Goals and SDI: Training Using a Hybrid Rotation Model (1/2-day Session) ~ Janice Estabrook, IU13 and Charlie Trovato, IU14*

A gifted support teacher must craft individual plans for each student on his/her caseload. Focusing on the PLEP gathered for each student, teachers are tasked with creating one/two annual goals that focus upon each student’s academic strength(s). Many resources are available to help guide the development of plans that adhere to the information offered by PDE, but tackling goal writing in a Gifted Network Meeting has proved to be difficult. Therefore, this meeting tried a new approach. Working with job-alike colleagues, teachers participated in a hybrid rotation training that focused on writing annual goals and SDI. Through this model, each job-alike group moved through stations created for direct instruction/discussion, collaborative work, and independent study. Targeted discussion and shared documents will allow for continued work on GIEP goal writing in future meetings.
Using 4 Color Analysis & Nature Journals: Content + Creativity (1/2-day session) ~ Guest presenter Dr. Carol Welsh

Spring is the perfect time to consider a new way to experience the joy and content exploration provided through Nature Journaling. Observation, writing, sketching, painting and photography were examined through a 4 Color Analysis and a series of 8 frames of thinking. Participants learned from Dr. Carol Welsh how Nature Journaling can enhance how students learn. Carol served as an elementary educator of gifted children in Penn Manor, developed the secondary gifted program in the School District of Lancaster and then served MU as director of the Governor’s School and professor of education where she taught the evaluation course for the Masters in Gifted Education. Now retired, Carol has developed the Nature Journal Project which she shares with classrooms, museums and civic organizations. Journaling can be extended beyond nature and is applicable to all grade levels.

Checking Back: Lisa Van Gemert Virtual Visit (1/2-day Session) ~ Guest presenter Lisa Van Gemert

As we wrapped up another school year, this networking time allowed us to consider the topics we discussed at earlier meetings, share resources with job-alike groups, and have a virtual visit with the Gifted Guru, Lisa Van Gemert. PDE updates as well as summer opportunities for teachers and students were shared.

Building Meeting Plans for 2018-19

Thanks to requests and feedback from Gifted Network members, plans are already underway for next year. As always, offering meetings with relevant topics is key!

- ✔ Christine Fonseca, Author-Speaker-Coach: Social/Emotional Issues with Gifted Students
- ✔ Diving Deeper into PVAAS
- ✔ STARLAB and Google Expeditions Training
Gifted Network Meeting Feedback from Members:

Through the Roof: Raising Students’ Thinking Skills through Depth & Complexity

- “The entire presentation was filled with examples and ideas that can be used to deepen the thinking of my students.”
- “The presenter provided an excellent framework that can be used to differentiate instruction for gifted learners. This is something I can use when working with a gifted group or the regular education teacher can use with individual or small groups of gifted students.”
- “The presenter had so many great ways to engage gifted students. I walked away with an added understanding of the students with whom I work.”
- “The presenter’s discussions about gifted students, teacher resources, websites, even her humor relate to what I do on a daily basis.”
- “While I understood the terms depth and complexity, I was unfamiliar with the specific framework. Therefore, that in and of itself was a new idea. I really like the concept of this framework, and I plan to utilize the 11 Elements in the creation of my online/blended course.”
- “The presenter understands gifted children and the intricacies of working with them. Her information is based on experience and research. This was most appreciated.”
- “This was one of the most beneficial professional development seminars I have attended in my twenty years of teaching.”
- “I plan to implement Introduction to Depth & Complexity Model not only with gifted learners but with struggling learners too.”

Staying Current on Diagnostic and Growth Data

- “This morning we looked at CDT data and then at PVAAS. It was some of the most valuable training I’ve ever received on these two sources of data.”
- “This activity gave me a much better understanding of how to use data from CDTs and PVAAS. It will help me to make more evidence-based decisions in my classroom.”
- “Data analysis is an integral part of writing GIEPs, but understanding what the data means in more depth is beneficial.”
- “I will be utilizing the Child Success Summary and sharing that with parents. I will also be using the diagnostic information both in CDTs and PVAAS to inform my classroom instructions.”
- “All three presenters were extremely knowledgeable and engaging as they shared their passion for the work they do for students! Thank you!”

Practical Use of Data and Conference Updates

- “Gathering data for a GIEP is always something I try to improve upon. This session not only reviewed the morning session’s ideas, it allowed for colleagues to share real examples of their PLEP sections on the GIEP. It was helpful to see how other gifted support teachers build their GIEPs.”
- “We were given many resources to explore on our own on the social and emotional side of gifted education. One great tool that I will use in the future will be the Google tools shared by colleagues. They will help me to collect information.”

Blended Learning: Taking a Closer Look

- “I liked hearing the hands-on use of hybrid in the classroom with the focus on gifted learners.”
- “There was positive communication and feedback about hybrid learning. This is something that I believe this would benefit all students and teachers within our district.”
- “I enjoyed getting to hear different perspectives on the rotational learning model and its implementation and share my experience as the gifted support teacher. I enjoyed being able to reflect on the ways my push-in piece in the classroom has worked and what areas need improvement.”
- “The presentation was very informative. I did not know much about blended learning before going to this training. I am very interested in learning more about it. The results that the presenters have seen in their work are amazing. It has caused me to be more reflective on my own practice.”
- “The teachers who volunteered their time to share their success stories with the rotational method truly inspired me as a teacher.”
- “A teacher can make or break a child’s learning experience, and these teachers made changes by attending trainings and asking for in-class support to create an atmosphere that works for all students.”
What makes Gifted Network meetings valuable to you?

“The testimonials from the panel of teachers were compelling.”

“I appreciate opportunities like this each year for colleagues to share what they are doing or have learned for us to take back to our programs.”

“The Depth & Complexity framework is an especially effective one for working with our gifted students or sharing with classroom teachers to use with all students.”

“I really liked the guest panel presenters who presented authentic uses of the different personalized learning modalities.”
2017-18 Participating Members (100)

Annville-Cleona
Cocalico
Columbia Borough
Conestoga Valley
Cornwall-Lebanon
Donegal
Eastern Lancaster County (ELANCO)
Eastern Lebanon County (ELCO)
Eastern York
Elizabethtown Area
Ephrata Area
Hempfield
Lampeter-Strasburg
Lebanon
Manheim Central
Manheim Township
Palmyra Area
Penn Manor
Pequea Valley
Red Lion Area
School District of Lancaster
Solanco
Warwick
LC PAGE

Membership Benefits

- Four Gifted Network Meetings per year - no additional cost ($50 per person for nonmembers)
- Optional collaborative work sessions on meeting days
- IU13 Schoology site for Gifted Education: This online site allows members to easily access gifted resources and collaborate with other teachers in the network
- Personal support for new Gifted Support Teachers
- Inclusion on the IU13 Gifted Network distribution list which provides notifications of the following:
  - Local, statewide, and national opportunities for gifted students
  - Chapter 16 updates and training information from PDE
  - New PDE and ODR forms and documents
  - Updates on national, state, and local issues, resources, and research in the area of gifted education

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