

# IU13 GIFTED NETWORK

## 2020-2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

**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 is also available to nonpublic institutions in Lancaster and Lebanon counties. School districts outside IU13 are also welcome to participate as members.**

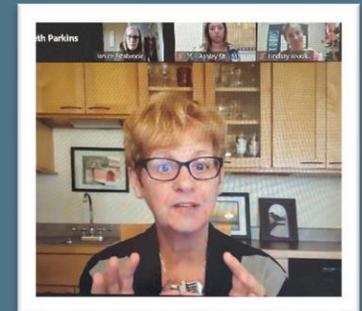
Each year, IU13 organizes at least four network meetings. These meetings address relevant topics in gifted education and provide a forum for discussion around current issues for gifted learners at the classroom, building, and district levels. Networking with others in the field of gifted education is 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 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, demonstrating staff attendance at Gifted Network professional development opportunities.



**2020-2021**  
**5050-5051**



# Gifted Network Meetings & Collaborative Sessions 2020-2021

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## **Advocating for Gifted Learners in the Time of COVID-19: Teacher/Student Partnerships**

Deb Douglas, teacher, author, and gifted education advocate, was the speaker for the first Gifted Network meeting of 2020-21. Through Zoom and supported by resources housed in a Schoology Course, she spoke about the many ways we can partner with gifted students by supporting their needs and guiding them toward self-advocacy. We learned that, with teacher guidance, students can craft their own unique routes to graduation (and beyond) regardless of the circumstances. Teachers assessed their own district's support for self-advocacy, discussed the barriers for underserved learners, shared strategies that encourage student autonomy, sampled activities that promote self-advocacy, and created action plans that support their gifted learners as they find their own voices.

## **Best Practice in a Chapter 16 World – GIEP Writing, PDE Guidance, and More**

This meeting was in response to requests for further discussion with Shirley Moyer from the Bureau of Special Education at PDE and focused on compliance issues and the gifted education monitoring process throughout PA. Best practice is also very important when planning for gifted learners. Shirley, along with Amy Davis (IU3) who works closely with PDE to co-lead the statewide gifted liaison group and who develops guidance for best practice, shared information related to Chapter 16 and answered questions from IU13 network members.

## **From the Gifted Guru: Things That Work! Powerful Pre-Assessment and Vocabulary Development with Concept Capsules**

This meeting focused on ways to individualize instruction and develop academic enrichment options. Lisa Van Gemert shared an entire alphabet of pre-assessment strategies and discussed when to use pre-assessments, how to do them, and what to do with the data. This valuable information can be shared with general education colleagues and used for compiling data for PLEP. In addition, Lisa shared how to create Concept Capsules to build academic vocabulary and boost reading comprehension. The morning Zoom session was followed by an afternoon Zoom session with job-alike colleagues to practice creating Concept Capsules.

## **Reflections on the 2021-21 School Year - What Have We Learned? How Have We Grown?**

Using results from a survey of Gifted Network members, this meeting tackled some issues that have been highlighted as important throughout this most unusual school year. Using breakout rooms, small groups of colleagues talked about student empowerment vs. engagement, screening and evaluation for giftedness, collaborating with general education teachers, annual goal writing, and social-emotional support for students. We also heard from gifted support teachers from Eastern Lebanon County, Northern Lebanon, and Red Lion Area regarding student self-advocacy. Deb Douglas, our presenter from October, joined this portion of the meeting to hear how conversations in the fall impacted plans for the school year.

## **Using 4-Color Analysis to Develop Nature Journals for STEM Enrichment**

Dr. Carol Welsh's 4-Color Analysis and the work of John Muir Laws focus on detailed observations and research through the art of journaling. By request, this has been the topic of several Gifted Network meetings over the last few years. Historical journals and nature journals provide a creative source of academic challenge and enrichment for all students. Working with Naturalist, Lisa Sanchez, at the Lancaster Environmental Center, this meeting in May will incorporate both nature journaling and STEM enrichment development.

## What makes Gifted Network meetings valuable to you?

"I appreciate how IU13 invites nationally renowned speakers as presenters. Lisa Van Gemert brings ideas to increase the rigor and engagement for our gifted learners. I always walk away with multiple ideas to try."

"The gathering tools and language to use with students, shared by Deb Douglas, were extremely helpful. Walking with her through resources in her book was fantastic."

"Networking with professionals in the field of gifted education is helpful to learn of methods for delivery of services. Shirley Moyer's information, coming directly from PDE, is always the easiest way to keep up with the current regulations and trends required in our positions. This meeting is one of the network meetings I most look forward to attending!"

"I appreciate opportunities like this each year for colleagues to share what they are doing or have learned so we can take ideas back to our programs."

"Networking with other elementary educators and hearing how they implement coaching with teachers of gifted students was very valuable."

"The IU13 gifted networking community is a valuable resource, and I believe the support it provides strengthens gifted programming across our counties."

### MEETING PLANS FOR 2021-2022

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!

*"Giftedness is a greater awareness, a greater sensitivity, and a greater ability to understand and transform perceptions into intellectual and emotional experiences."*

*- Dr. Annemarie Roeper, 1982*

# Gifted Network Feedback from Members

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## **Advocating for Gifted Learners in the Time of COVID-19: Teacher/Student Partnerships**

- The conversations and information provided from students themselves, inspired me to take a more critical look at how we address the needs of learners that are gifted in our district.
- Deb Douglas provided attendees with strategies to assist gifted students to understand and advocate for their needs—excellent tools to use when faced with any challenge.
- I really appreciated the discussion about the six learner profiles and how districts need to think creatively about ways to instruct gifted learners.
- Deb Douglas understands the barriers gifted support teachers and gifted students have when asking for more challenging work.
- It was emphasized how it is important for students to understand what their giftedness means and how it affects their learning.

## **Best Practice in a Chapter 16 World – GIEP Writing, PDE Guidance, and More**

- Shirley Moyer's information coming directly from the PA Department of Ed. is always the easiest way to keep up with all the current regulations and trends required in our positions. (It's one of the network meetings I most look forward to attending.)
- I gained a better understanding of Chapter 16 regulations and clarified many key points that I needed to understand for my work with students and their families.
- Not only is this a network of well-educated people, but they are willing to support and help. I like to listen to the creative ideas that others have implemented.

## **From the Gifted Guru: Things That Work! – Powerful Pre-Assessment and Vocabulary Development with Concept Capsules**

- Lisa Van Gemert is renowned in the gifted community. Her entire presentation was engaging and informative. I immediately ordered her book and recommended it to the district curriculum directors.
- Lisa brings ideas to increase the rigor and engagement for our gifted learners. I always walk away with multiple new ideas.
- I learned about Content Capsules and can see them as a beneficial learning tool for general education classrooms, as a powerful tool for teaching ELs and special ed students content vocabulary, and as a way for gifted students to demonstrate what they know in a way to help their peers learn.
- I loved all the resources that Lisa shared with us. The idea of holding a book club with teachers and parents for Lisa's book on perfectionism is of great value to me.

## **Reflections on the 2021-21 School Year - What Have We Learned? How Have We Grown?**

- The open dialogue of today's session allowed me to hear how other districts are tackling gifted issues such as goal writing, student identification, and addressing social/emotional needs of gifted learners. The session was incredibly helpful.
- This session was truly collaborative with a focus on members sharing and discussing the highs and lows of serving students who are gifted during this very unusual year.
- I appreciated the breakout sessions where we got to share in small groups our thoughts on the topics of discussion. These conversations were very beneficial.
- I appreciated hearing from my colleagues concerning the various ways they are delivering services in this past school year. It was both reassuring and affirming that no one has found "one right way", but that there have been unexpected positive outcomes in some cases.

## **Using 4-Color Analysis to Develop Nature Journals for STEM Enrichment - May 2021**

## Membership Benefits

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- Four Gifted Network Meetings per year - no additional cost (\$75 per person for nonmembers)
- Connections with national leaders in gifted education
- 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 gifted education

### 2020-21 Participating Members (94):

Anville-Cleona, Cocalico, Conestoga Valley, Donegal, Eastern Lancaster County (ELANCO), Eastern Lebanon County (ELCO), Eastern York, Elizabethtown Area, Ephrata Area, Hempfield, Lampeter-Strasburg, LC PAGE, Lebanon, Manheim Central, Manheim Township, Northern Lebanon, Our Lady of the Angels School, Palmyra Area, Penn Manor, Pequea Valley, Red Lion Area, Sacred Heart of Jesus School, School District of Lancaster, Solanco, St. John Neumann Catholic School, Warwick

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**Gifted Education in Pennsylvania:** Watch for updates on the [IU13 website](#) for training opportunities for new gifted support teachers or updated information on GIEP goal writing. IU13, IU12, and IU14 are planning a collaborative session for new for late summer or early fall. New or experienced teachers and administrators welcome!

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