

ELP NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS

ELP UNIVERSAL TESTING

Who does this apply to?
All currently SLCSDD enrolled Kinder and 3rd grade students will be assessed automatically

When will it happen?
In March, before Spring Recess

What do parents need to do?
Nothing beyond looking for the results to be sent home around early April.

ELP OPT-IN TESTING

Who does this apply to?
-Kinder & 3rd gr students NOT enrolled in a SLCSDD school.
-ALL Pre-K, 6th & 7th gr students

When will it happen?
In March, before Spring Recess

What do parents need to do?
Sign up for testing on the ELP website (see upper right corner), then look for the testing slot email. Deadline: January 31st

ELP EVENTS

Parent Q&As with Dr. Parsons
January 18, 5:30 - 7:00pm
Zoom

Clayton MS Open House
MELP Jan 12 5:30-6:30pm
All Students Jan 24 5:30-6:30pm

Hillside MS Open House
Jan 19, 5:30-7:00 pm

West MS Open House
Jan 26 5:30-6:30pm

SUPERVISOR'S NOTE

ELP Network,
It has been a busy school year so far. It has been great getting to know the teachers, principals, parents, and students in the ELP Department. The community has been welcoming and excited to learn and grow together.
As it is my first year here at SLCSDD, I have been using this year to establish a baseline of all the programs within the Department. This work is both vital and substantial. Thankfully I have a profound team of stakeholders around me helping with the work - both big and small. This is especially poignant as we work to stabilize in a COVID-normalized world.
Look for more information and items of change in the future. In this newsletter, you will find the standardization for some of the words we use and how this standardization will influence our next steps. That step may seem small, but it will prove to be mighty with future decisions and programming choices available to our students.
Thank you for trust and collaboration for the betterment of our students,
Dr. Alex Parsons

ELP EXCELLENCE IN ACTION



HABITS OF MIND

We are trying a curriculum that teaches and fosters the Habits of Mind in our students. Habits of Mind is a framework that focuses on behaviors students need to reach excellence. [The Habits of Mind Institute](#) has great information on the specific Habits and resources for all stakeholders to use.

Elementary Neighborhood ELP teachers are using the curriculum in their Discovery Groups, and K-3 Magnet ELP teachers are incorporating it into their weekly lessons.

A curriculum is not always needed, though. Joylynn Brown, the Neighborhood ELP teacher for North Star and Rose Park, had her students walk around the school and connect all the posters, art, and signs around the school with the Habits of Mind. She did this to teach that Habits of Minds are not just for the ELP classroom - they can apply to every part of our lives!

MAKING THINKING VISIBLE - PRESENTATIONS & PRODUCTS

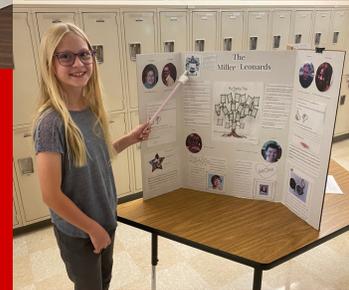
Wow! Anyone could stay busy everyday seeing the great products and presentations our ELP students are doing. Presentations are a way of showing what students are thinking, their thinking process, and what they learned from the experience. Presentations take many forms; they are not the only way to make student thinking visible - but they are certainly entertaining to see. Some examples of presentations seen in our district:

At Hawthorne:

- Scientist of the Week in Katherine Kelly's Magnet ELP 2nd grade classroom
- Holiday Reader's Theater in Julie Henderson's Magnet ELP 6th grade classroom

At Washington:

- Who I Am in Riego Castillo's Magnet 4th grade classroom (also a local Science Fair, not pictured)
- Translating Fairy Tales to News Reports in Sarah Kelly's Neighborhood ELP classroom
- A play about impacts on the Uinta forests - written by the students themselves! Presented in Robin Dotterweich's Magnet ELP 6th grade classroom



ELP EQUITY IN ACTION

EXACTNESS OF LANGUAGE

As a former Advanced Placement (AP) teacher, I am very aware of the importance of exactness in language. There were many times that a phrase or word used correctly or incorrectly was what was explicitly written in the open-response rubrics. All AP courses provide teachers with analyses of the open-response answers and the most common pitfalls students did to not earn points. This was a vital tool in my practice to anticipate what I would need to include or remediate in my classroom to maximize learning and success. Consistently, the most frequent errors are attributed to basics or foundations - such as using a word or phrase incorrectly.

Our ELP Department is working towards this level of exactness to address basic needs and understanding. We must be explicit and consistent in the words we use to remove any confusion of what we do and why we do it. And we cannot assume that the words ELP uses every day are known or used correctly by all stakeholders. Just as it is a teacher's job to help students use academic language appropriately, it is the ELP Department's job to accurately use words and educate others of the accurate definitions and uses. Here are some words commonly used and the corresponding definitions:

Gifted - Undeveloped high potential or skill in a specific domain and a commitment to developing that potential or skill

Talented - Developed high potential or skill in a specific domain and a commitment to further developing that potential or skill

Domain - A specific subject or topic that has direct applicability to some usable outcome in adulthood. The five broad domains acknowledged by the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1988 and the National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC) are: intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, and academic.

Gifted & Talented Programming - Students identified as gifted or talented in a domain deserve services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop their capabilities and potential in the appropriate domain.

Advanced Academics - Academic programming that is available to any student that aspires for an increase in scope, rigor, depth, or complexity than a general education classroom

HOW DOES THIS ADDRESS EQUITY IN ELP?

Exactness of Language helps provide focus and consistency to any situation. For ELP, the seemingly cryptic nature of what we do is a commonly cited barrier. That is, parents, students, and teachers struggle to know how and when to advocate for and seek out ELP services. Transparency and clarity will help with this barrier.

Even common words like 'gifted' have not had a standard definition within the department. Which left a wide berth of interpretation and implementation. Now there is a common language and meaning to the words most used in ELP. This will help provide context and focus to the recruitment, identification, and appropriate services available to our students.

The specific word 'domain' is key to addressing equity. No student will be gifted in all things. And that is OK. By specifying that giftedness is not all things all the time, we are able to expand who we are looking for and what we can offer to support what our kids are great at (or want to be even better at).

Further, we are acknowledging that students exist in different forms and places of development. There are differences between students with raw abilities that need refinement and children who have been shaped into good students from a young age. With this component to the definitions of gifted and talented, we can proceed to shape our services to reach more students with a variety of needs.