

Welcome to GEAC! from GEAC president Cathy Webb

Hello, Quest families and staff!

Welcome to or welcome back to another year of school in the full-time and pull-out Quest programs. I am grateful that despite state budget cuts that the gifted education program in LWSD continues to survive and thrive. This outcome is due to the efforts of many parties, GEAC included, so thank you to those who continue to give their time and resources to this group. If you haven't yet completed an annual membership form for 2011-2012 or attended a monthly meeting, we encourage you to do so. More information about both opportunities can be found in this newsletter.

This year, GEAC will continue working on our mission to 1) facilitate communication among Quest families, administration, and teachers, as well as offer parent education opportunities; 2) make sure the funds from your membership donations and corporate matching go back into the Quest classrooms to support an enriched educational experience for our children; and 3) help advocate for gifted education at both the local and state level.

(Continued on page 3)

- [Please join GEAC](#) -

**Help GEAC meet our annual goals for the 2011-2012 school year!
Please consider joining and/or making a donation.**

Donate by 12/31/11 for a tax-deductible contribution for 2011.

In This Issue

Welcome to GEAC.....	1
From The Quest Director.....	2
Parent Education.....	3
Where Does Your Money Go.....	4
Getting Involved.....	5
Your GEAC Board.....	6

What is GEAC?

Gifted Education Advisory Council (GEAC) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization started in 1989 to serve the Lake Washington School District (LWSD) Quest program.

GEAC works in coordination with the LWSD and the Quest program similarly to how a PTSA serves your local neighborhood school.

All GEAC members are parents and volunteers; our operating budget is funded 100% by direct donations/corporate matching.

Your support serves the special needs of highly capable students/families, assists Quest teachers, and provides supplementary and enrichment materials for Quest classrooms.

From the Quest Director, Dan Phelan

The start of the year has been a bit busier than usual. It was made so because of a change in staff in the Quest Office. I wanted to let all GEAC members know that Diane Durant has taken the position of Administrative Secretary Accelerated Programs. This is the position previously held by Janette Cimburek, who recently moved to the position of Administrative Assistant for Curriculum and School Support. Diane is coming to us from Evergreen Junior High School where she has performed many building support functions. Diane started her new position October 3rd. She can be reached at 425-936-1238 and ddurant@lwsd.org. Welcome, Diane! We're pleased to have her in this position!

Our Quest classes are into the rhythms of this year. Watch your email for a Quest Learning plan you will be receiving sometime in January for your child. It is a new document and we will need a signed copy back twice this year. The first time we need a return will be when you first receive it, and the second time will be in May or June, when you will be using it to tell us you intend to return to Quest for the following year.

Since the start of the year we have opened the application window for elementary Quest and held our parent information nights. The middle school Quest application window opened October 24th. As we announced last year, we are no longer testing kindergarten students. Our criteria for screening and qualification remain the same as last year, 99th percentile in cognitive and academic for full time, and 98th percentile in both for pull out. Middle school criteria are 99th percentile for cognitive and 98th percentile for academic.

Our elementary Quest program will be grades 2-5 and middle school Quest program will be grades 6- 8 next year. This year we are spending a lot of our energies ensuring the transition to middle school Quest goes smoothly for the current elementary full time Quest students in 5th and 6th grade. We have sent individual emails to the parents of all 5th and 6th grade students, reminding them they must apply for middle school Quest. We will also be working to smooth the transition for Quest teachers next year, as many of them will be teaching a new grade configuration, and some of them will be moving to middle school along with the students.

Last, our Quest teachers just finished writing GEAC classroom grant applications to further enrich their teaching and their classrooms. Thanks to all of you for your generosity which makes this possible. We also want to thank the GEAC members who will be reviewing the grants and making the awards!

Parent Education News

Help us serve you better!

Throughout the year, GEAC organizes, initiates and funds educational classes, information sessions, and conferences for gifted families. Please help us plan our 2011-12 offerings by completing this survey before December 9.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TC5KYXN>

For information about upcoming GEAC-sponsored classes and information sessions, please visit www.lwsdgeac.org or contact Deborah Sleeman at GEACParentEd@gmail.com.

A session of "Guiding Your Gifted Child" is currently underway. This eight-week session is based on the SENG (Supporting the Emotional Needs of Gifted) and facilitated by Quest psychologist Sandy Malone-Long. Look for more information about further parent education opportunities.

The class uses the book, "A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children" by James T. Webb, Janet L. Gore, Edward R. Amend, and Arlene R. DeVries. This book is a comprehensive resource for understanding the gifted child.

Welcome to GEAC (continued from page 1)

In addition, this year GEAC would like to specifically focus on a) increasing the opportunity for Quest families to informally socialize and connect with one another, and b) strengthening communities where the programs are co-located. If you have any ideas or suggestions on ways to facilitate these goals, please contact your GEAC school rep or a GEAC board member or email us at info@lwsdgeac.org.

Finally, we encourage you to let us know at any time if there is any way that GEAC can better support you as a Quest family or staff member. Chat with us in person, come to a meeting, send us an email - whatever works best for you. Even stop us just to say hello and introduce yourself. Whether we are in the same classroom or across the district from each other, community is built one person at a time.

Best,
Cathy Webb
GEAC President
Parent of 2nd grader at Thoreau Elementary, Mrs. Cote's class

LWSD Quest and GEAC serve hundreds of families who are spread across the District.

Full Time program students attend **Alcott, Franklin, Redmond, Smith or Thoreau Elementary Schools.**

Enrichment Pull Out students spend one day per week at **Blackwell, Franklin, or Sandburg.**

Junior High Quest students enjoy a clustered grouping of highly-capable learner peers for Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science at **Kamiakin or Redmond Junior High Schools.**

Over 1,000 students across the different schools!

For the 2012-2013 school year, Elementary Quest will serve grades 2 - 5. Middle School Quest will replace Junior High Quest and serve grades 6 - 8.

Where Do Donations Go?

Annual GEAC Grants to Quest Teachers

GEAC sponsors a grant program for all Quest teachers to request special items they would like for their classrooms. Past grants have included field trips, materials for special projects, supplementary curriculum, training, books, cameras, software, and science kits. The current round of grants is now being awarded. More information will be announced soon.

Fall Direct-to-Classroom Checks for Teachers

As the school year begins, GEAC provides every Quest teacher with a check. Teachers use the money for items such as additional school supplies, enrichment materials, learning tools, organizational materials for the classroom, etc. The initial amount was \$150 per teacher, but with your support, the amount has grown to \$175, and now \$200.

Professional Development, Education, and Advocacy

GEAC organizes, initiates, and funds information sessions, parent education programs, and professional development opportunities. It supports statewide advocacy measures.

Annual Membership + Matching ~ it all adds up!

Over the last 6 years, GEAC has contributed over **\$62,000** directly to Quest classrooms for special projects, field trips, training, books, technology and supplementary materials.

Last year alone, close to **\$8,000** was made available to fund Classroom Grant applications, and just this past August, teachers received a check for **\$200*** to start the school year.

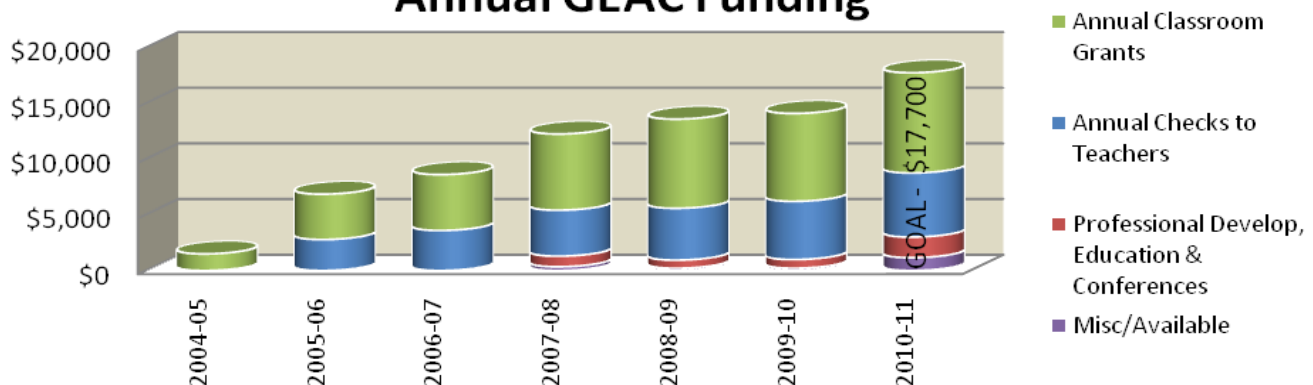
These efforts are made possible only through the generous donation of time and dollars from our members, with matching and grant support from local companies like Microsoft, The Fred Meyer Foundation, and Boeing.

Please consider joining us to further help our children's education.

Membership forms are available online at www.lwsdgeac.org.

**This amount is adjusted per contract time. Part-time Quest teachers are adjusted accordingly.*

Annual GEAC Funding



What Do We Do?

- **Communicate** information related to highly capable issues and opportunities between LWSD, Quest office, schools, teachers, and parents.
- **Provide financial support** directly to Quest classrooms.
- **Offer classes** for parents including “Guiding your Gifted Child,” and “Parenting the Highly Capable Adolescent.”
- **Sponsor or co-sponsor information sessions** about topics such as: Transition to Quest, Twice-Exceptional Students, Advanced Placement Q&A, Applying to Highly Selective Colleges, and Brain Sports (Math, Chess, Robotics, etc.)
- **Advocate** for programs and funding for highly capable/accelerated learning programs at state and local levels.

If you are curious about GEAC, or want to learn more about the QUEST program and education for highly capable students, join us Wednesday, Dec. 7th for our next meeting - the meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of each month, and are open to anyone who is interested.

Getting Involved

GEAC serves a large population of students spread across the entire school district - from Finn Hill in Kirkland to the Sammamish Plateau. This can make community-building more challenging, but YOU can make the difference.

GEAC is looking for School Representatives to help facilitate communication and build community. Representatives act as liaisons between the school community and the rest of GEAC. Responsibilities include helping to introduce GEAC to other families at Curriculum Night, supporting Enhancement with grant communications, and helping to organize an informal back-to-school play date in late August/early September.

Regular attendance at the monthly GEAC meetings is not required, although it is encouraged.

If you are interested in learning more about the School Representative position, please feel free to contact Jodi Gaertner at info@lwsdgeac.org.

GEAC also currently has open board positions in the areas of advocacy and outreach. We are particularly in need of someone with web development expertise.

2011 - 2012 GEAC Board Members

President

Cathy Webb - Thoreau parent

Treasurer

Diana LaFornara - Franklin parent

Secretary

Jeff Longcore - Thoreau parent, Sandburg parent

Co-Vice President - Enhancement

Carol Lewis - Franklin parent, Northstar Junior High parent

Co-Vice President - Enhancement

Vinaya Kulkarni - Blackwell parent, Smith parent

Vice President - Outreach

Jodi Gaertner - Thoreau parent

Parent Education

Deborah Sleeman - Franklin parent, Rush parent

Open board positions: Vice President - Advocacy, Co-President, President Elect, Co-Vice President Outreach

GEAC is in the process of developing its website and adding individual emails for each board position. In the meantime, please feel free to contact us at info@lwsdgeac.org.



Thank you for your patience as we work on the website. If you have suggestions or expertise to offer, please contact us.

What Can I Do?

■ JOIN & SUPPORT GEAC

Go online to: <http://www.lwsdgeac.org/>. Fill out and return the Membership "Enrollment" form via mail. You can *donate online via PayPal* or by sending a *personal check or money order*. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible as per allowed by law and many companies match \$. *Please follow-up with your employer for the appropriate matching gifts form.*

Thank you. GEAC needs and appreciates your annual support!

■ ATTEND ANY GEAC MONTHLY MEETING

Are you interested in learning more about gifted education? Please join us at any of our regular monthly meetings which are always open for anyone interested.

GEAC Monthly Meeting Dates:

1st Wednesday: 2011 - Dec. 7

2012 - Jan. 4, Feb. 1, Mar. 7, Apr. 11, May 2, June 6

Time: 6:30-8:30 pm

Location: LWSD Resource Center, 1st floor (free parking behind building & in Redmond Town Center)
16250 NE 74th St.

Redmond, WA 98052

(NE corner of 74th St. and Bear Creek Pkwy, next to the Marriott.)

■ VOLUNTEER TO BE A GEAC REP FOR YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL OR CLASSROOM

Contact us at info@lwsdgeac.org for more information.

**GEAC c/o LWSD
Quest Office
P.O. Box 97039
Redmond, WA
98073-9739**

info@lwsdgeac.org

www.lwsdgeac.org