Seminar Program Summary 2014-2015

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<tr>
<th>Site Name: Dana Middle</th>
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<tr>
<td>Site Address: 1775 Chatsworth Blvd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Contact Person: Scott Irwin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Person email: <a href="mailto:sirwin@sandi.net">sirwin@sandi.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 619-225-3897</td>
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<td>Emphasis: GATE Seminar</td>
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<td>Teacher(s)*: Gisella Gigglberger, Kim Visser, Keryn Kober, Kelly Kocar</td>
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The School Environment/Mission Statement:

The Seminar program is intended to serve varied profiles as presented by students who need extraordinarily high-level, advanced, and challenging curricular activities; those with extremely high tested ability but low school achievement; and those students who are divergent thinkers and “march to a different drummer.” Because these students represent a heterogeneous group with a wider range of abilities than those represented in the GATE Cluster class population, the learning program must be designed for and adapted to individual differences.

Curriculum modifications to provide depth, novelty and complexity:

Just as GATE Cluster curriculum and instruction is differentiated from the core curricular or Advanced Placement offerings, the Seminar curriculum and instruction must be differentiated from that of the GATE Cluster in content, process, product, and learning environment. The content must be differentiated in levels of abstraction, depth, and complexity, focusing to an even greater degree on generalizations and essential questions. A larger percentage of classroom processes and interactions revolve around interplay and exchange of ideas, with students defending their thinking and looking at their own and others’ thinking critically. Students spend more time in pursuit of their own passions and interests with greater emphasis on independent study and long-term projects.

Learning and intellectual exploration are accomplished in an environment purposefully designed by teachers knowledgeable about psycho-social as well as intellectual development of students who, because of their uneven development may be many ages simultaneously. Students are made to feel they “fit,” are safe to express their ideas without stigma, and encounter no ceilings to limit their reach. At the same time, students must acquire the necessary skills and knowledge in a manner and a pace which support their inquiry and investigation. These may be quite different for each individual.
Opportunities for student choice and creative expression:

- Multimedia productions, symposiums, and oral presentations
- Writing within the curriculum for student publication
- Collaboration with various organizations i.e. Class-Act, Junior Achievement, Biz World
- Debates that address multiple perspectives of real life issues
- Use of digital tools, such as Moodle, active engage, flip charts, etc...

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Unique activities and approaches:

- Multi-grade level Seminar activities provide a cohesive program and nurturing, encouraging environment.
- Rigorous implementation of core curriculum coupled with an emphasis on student centered learning and inquiry
- Vertical and interdisciplinary team to ensure academically challenging, sequential curricula.

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*Teacher is GATE certified with at least three years experience **This description is subject to change