

age 2 1/2 to determine whether they qualify for services. The Extended School Year program serves about 120 students per summer.

Fleury said that in the 2013-14 school year, she provided additional training for paraprofessionals and made training videos on the creation and use of IEPs and Extended School Year qualification. Specialists were scheduled in such a way that they did not need to commute between schools.

Highlights of the SEAC year included presentations on text anxiety, augmentative communication, and family-school-community support.

Fleury reported that four schools in the district received state grants for the use of MTSS. The state provided training to address issues of academic and behavioral issues together.

Teacher effectiveness update

Director of Personnel and Student Services Bob Foster reported on the status of the new teacher evaluation process, overseen by DAAC. The process for teachers and principals began this year and continues to evolve. Standards for teachers differ from those of principals. Professional Practices encompass 50 percent of a teacher's score.

Foster said that a major challenge is the fact that many teachers teach subjects that are not assessed through standardized tests. This makes it difficult to assess student growth and performance, the basis for 50 percent of a teacher's assessment.

Foster said that in the coming year, the district will finalize its evaluation systems, continue to work on assessment tools, analyze and adjust data, and develop a method of evaluating other licensed providers such as psychologists and therapists.

Teachers will be assessed through self-appraisals and midyear reviews. Probationary teachers will have two observations in the classroom per year; non-probationary teachers will have one.

Lewis-Palmer has developed a unique system by which teachers with more challenging populations can receive a "bump" in their scores if they "grow" students on free/reduced-price lunch, minorities, students with disabilities, and English language learners even though those students may not achieve high scores on tests.

Director of Gifted Education and Assessment Lori Benton said this adjustment would encourage teachers to continue to work with this population and not fear that test scores would rob them of their non-probationary status. Benton also said that teachers are aware of the students' scores from the previous year and in that way know where to concentrate their efforts.

Gifted Education Leadership Team

Benton reported that the Gifted Education Leadership Team divides its attention among gifted programming, identification of gifted students, development of personnel, budget concerns, and a new addendum for the district's Unified Improvement Plan.

The district has a gifted population of 13.9 percent. Students are identified in the third and sixth grades. Once identified as gifted, the designation is not removed.

There is a four-year program in place to redefine the identification process and improve the quality of advanced learning plans. Benton said that

most of the facilitators in the district meet state requirements as Highly Qualified in Gifted Education.

Students are identified on the basis of cognitive ability (evaluated on the basis of the Cognitive Ability Test, or CO-GAT), academic achievement (in the 95th percentile or above), behavioral characteristics, and demonstrated performance in creativity or leadership.

The district continues to develop identification techniques in the areas of fine arts, music, performing arts, leadership, and creativity.

Once a student is identified as gifted, parents receive a letter from the district and must then

request or refuse services.

Benton said that it is sometimes difficult to identify as gifted those individuals who are

disabled or economically disadvantaged.

She said that her department has recently received additional

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