Luther Jackson Middle School’s Gifted and Talented Center

Information Night

December, 2007
Academic Program

Challenging academic program designed to meet the needs of highly gifted students.

- Follows FCPS Program of Studies
- Differentiated in depth, breadth and pace of instruction
- Incorporates advanced reading materials across the curriculum
Instruction

Emphasizes:

• Critical thinking and analysis
• Concept-based instruction
• Cross-disciplinary instruction
• Independent research skills development
• Challenging learning experiences constructed around students' interests, learning styles, and preferred modes of expression
Fairfax County Public Schools Middle School Gifted and Talented Programs

The following diagram highlights the major similarities and differences between the Gifted and Talented Center and the Honors Program in the middle school.

**Gifted and Talented Center**
- Students identified as gifted through screening
- Students have high intellectual ability
- Students are served in all core subject areas
- Program is offered in ten schools
- POS and SOLs are used as a base for compacting, accelerating and/or enriching curriculum
- More focus on higher order thinking skills and meta-cognition
- Emphasis on demonstrating autonomy and independence

**Similarities**
- Students identified or placed based on multiple criteria
- Students demonstrate above average ability
- Services are available
- Program offers level of service according to needs of students
- POS and SOLs are extended and enriched based on the Parallel Curriculum Model
- More focus on problem-based and concept-based learning
- Emphasis on demonstrating and developing critical-thinking skills
- Ongoing professional development for teachers

**Honors Program**
- Students selected based on academic performance
- Students placed according to areas of strengths
- Students may or may not be served in all core subject areas
- Program is offered in all schools
- POS and SOL extension lessons provide Ascending Levels of Intellectual Demand
- More focus on increased depth and complexity in specific subjects
- Emphasis on developing emerging autonomy and independence

For more details, contact your middle school director of student services. For a complete description of gifted and talented program services, visit [http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/gt](http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/gt).
Differentiation through Content

- Use advanced reading, resource, and research materials
- Present content with greater levels of depth, breadth, complexity, or abstractness through levels of questioning, problem-based learning, and instruction that focuses on “big ideas”
English

Shakespeare

Diary of Anne Frank

Literature and Life
General Education Lesson

Students will explore the theme of good vs. evil as they read the play *The Diary of Anne Frank.*

*Slide courtesy of the OMSI GT Program Office for informational purposes only*
Differentiated for Gifted Using the Parallel Curriculum Model (Honors)

Students will explore the concept of duality through various examples, such as good vs. evil, wisdom vs. inexperience, and love vs. hate, in the play *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare.

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Ascending Levels of Intellectual Demand (Center)

Student will explore the concept of duality through various examples in multiple Shakespearian plays. Students will create generalizations about the nature of duality in literature and in life based on patterns and trends they have identified.

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Differentiation through Process

- Accelerate the pace of teaching and learning
- Compact basic knowledge and skills in core content areas
- Apply ideas and skills to contexts that are unfamiliar and dissimilar from those explored in class
- Provide opportunities to make choices to explore deeper understandings and apply new knowledge
Science, Forces and Motion (Speed)
• Students complete a prewritten lab activity Keep On Truckin’ to determine the speed of a vehicle (set mass and height of ramp).

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Differentiated for Gifted (Honors)

• Students work in groups to complete the lab activity varying factors such as mass, and/or ramp height, etc.

*Slide courtesy of the OMSI GT Program Office for informational purposes only*
• Students design and conduct experiments to determine the speed of an object, varying factors such as mass, ramp height, etc.

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Differentiation through Product

• Offer assignments that are more open-ended or ambiguous in nature
• Assign products that require greater levels of independence
• Assess work with indicators of quality that model the work of experts in the field
Social Studies

Linking the Prosperity of the 1920’s with the Disparity of the 1930’s
General Education Lesson

• Students develop a museum display that shows the causes and effects of the prosperity of the 1920’s and the disparity of the 1930’s.

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Differentiated for Gifted (Honors)

- Students connect the events of the 1920’s and the 1930’s to the concept of order vs. chaos and create a museum display with representative symbols of their understandings of the concept.

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Ascending Levels of Intellectual Demand (Center)

- Students look at the patterns and trends in the events of the 20’s and 30’s. Using the patterns and trends they discover, they then compare that to our current economy and write an article from the perspective of an economist on predictions for future.

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Math

- Math 7 Honors and Algebra 1 Honors each have a specific program of studies that outlines academic objectives for the course.
- Placement is based on county-wide selection criteria.
GTC Teachers

- Experienced teachers
- Highly qualified in content area
- Have completed or working towards GTC endorsement
- Collaboration with GTC teachers from other center programs
- Support from OMSI gifted and talented specialist
7th Grade Course Offerings

Full-year required courses

• English/Language Arts
• Math 7, Math 7 Honors, or Algebra I Honors
• U.S. History, 1865-Present
• Investigations in Environmental Science
• Health/Physical Education
Elective Course Offerings

Year-Long

- Band (Beg., Intermed., Adv.)
- Percussion Ensemble
- Mixed Chorus & Men’s Chorus
- Orchestra (Beg., Intermed., Adv.)
- Applied Spanish & Technology

Both year and semester electives offered in 2007-08 are subject to change based on student interest and enrollment.
Elective Course Offerings (continued)

Semester
• Introductory Art
• Family and Consumer Sciences
• Technology Tools (Keyboarding)
• Advanced Technology Tools
• Multimedia Productions
• Introduction to Foreign Language
• Chorus
• Inventions & Innovations
• Peer Helping
• Newspaper/Publications
• Music Participation Lab
Additional Elective Course Options
for 8<sup>th</sup> grade

- **Year-long:**
  - Adv. Theatre Arts (Multimedia Productions)
  - French 1, Spanish 1, Japanese 1, Latin I, Spanish for Fluent Speakers 1

- **Semester:** Technological Systems and Intermediate Art.
Middle School Structure

- Interdisciplinary Team – core group of teachers sharing the same group of students
- Team consists of four teachers (English, Math, Social Studies, and Science), a counselor, and approx. 125 students
- Common planning period for teachers - team expectations, student progress, cross-curricular connections, parent conferences, team activities
Teaming Benefits

- Eases transition from elementary to middle school
- Allows for coordination of assignments, tests, projects
- Facilitates discussion and development of strategies to meet the needs of the students
Jackson Highlights

• Rich multicultural environment reflecting our global community
  58 Countries Represented
  40 Languages Spoken

• GT Coach/Resource Teacher provides support and assists in the development of appropriate lessons for high-ability learners

• On-site Honors Geometry for 8th Graders
Jackson Highlights (continued)

- Wide variety of elective offerings including Multimedia Productions and Applied Spanish and Technology.

- Student achievement reported through electronic progress reports and quarterly report cards. Periodic Progress Reports are sent electronically several times during a quarter.
Extracurricular Program

- A wide variety of clubs, programs and activities are offered after school
- Offerings reflect student interest
- The library is available for student use on all late bus days
Communication with Parents

- **LJ Website**
  http://www.fcps.edu/LutherJacksonMS/

- **Newsletters**

- **Blackboard**

- **Keep in Touch:**

- **Phone Call-Outs**
Open House-January 17

- For rising 7th grade Jackson GTC parents and students
- 6 to 8 p.m.
- Opportunity to interact with GTC teachers and 7th grade GTC students and their parents
- Learn more about the specific curriculum and instructional materials