



**Paradise Valley Schools Gifted Education
Parent Seminars
2016-2017**

*A Collaboration Between PV Gifted Education Department and
United Parent Council*

Seminar 1: Wednesday, August 31, 2016

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Community Resource Center - Critical Thinking Room

Presenters: Dina Brulles

They Say My Child Is Gifted... How does this impact her education in PVSchools?

Join Gifted Ed. Director Dr. Dina Brulles as she provides an overview of the continuum of gifted services available in PVSchools, Preschool through High School. Parents will gain insights into the continuum of services offered in the district to determine which is the best fit their children's distinctive learning needs. In addition to describing the gifted services offered in the district, Dr. Brulles will discuss academic needs, such as when to provide acceleration, how teachers differentiate curriculum and instruction, and how they incorporate depth and complexity into lessons. Dr. Brulles will also describe the professional development offered to teachers to best meet the needs of our high ability students.

Seminar 2: Wednesday, September 28, 2016

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

District Administrative Center - Governing Board Room

Presenter: Dr. Kimberly Lansdowne

Topic: When is Acceleration the Best Decision?

Is acceleration right for gifted students? What resources are available to help parents and teachers make this decision? How do I advocate for accelerated learning opportunities? This parent seminar will address these questions and more. High ability students have unique academic, cognitive and social needs. In addition to learning with other gifted students, many of these students need academic challenges that go beyond grade level curriculum. In PVSchools we consider content acceleration as a critical aspect of gifted students' education. We recognize that it is one of the most effective and research-based interventions for the academic growth of gifted children. Join us for a discussion with Dr. Kimberly Lansdown from Arizona State University who is an expert in this area.

About the Speaker: Dr. Kimberly Lansdowne, Executive Director -

Formally the Director of Gifted Education for Scottsdale Unified School District, Kim has thirty years working in the field of gifted education as a classroom teacher, gifted teacher, gifted program director, and university professor. She received a Master's degree in Gifted Education from the University of South Florida and a Ph.D. from Arizona State University. Kim served as a long time board member of Arizona Association for the Gifted and Talented (AAGT). She also consults with school districts developing and supporting gifted education programs.

Seminar 3: Wednesday, December 7, 2016

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Community Resource Center - Critical Thinking Room

Presenter: Cathy Flesner

Topic: College and Career Readiness for Parents of Gifted Students

Wait! What? College? When do we start looking? Paradise Valley School District offers a variety of opportunities for the gifted learner. How do you choose? Students and parents are facing increasing pressures to begin the college and career readiness process early. We will discuss some of the strategies and management pieces parents should consider as they work their way through this education continuum decision making process. This parent seminar will address these questions as well as other topics which will include transcripts, admission tests, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate, acceleration in elementary and middle school, Family Connections and Method Test Prep. Understanding some of the subtleties of these topics will hopefully allay some parental concerns about the many choices awaiting your gifted learner's educational path.

About the Speaker: Catherine Flesner, M.Ed, is currently the counselor for PVUSD's PVOnline program. Formerly a Curriculum Specialist and the Lead Counselor for Paradise Valley Unified School District, she provided support for Gifted Services 7-12 and has been involved in gifted education for much of her career. Mrs. Flesner has been an educator for over forty years in a variety of capacities as a classroom teacher, counselor, and administrator. She has been recognized on a state and national level for her contributions in education as an Arizona High School Counselor of the Year, a U.S. Presidential Scholar Educator Award winner, and a Flinn Distinguished Educator. She received her Master's degree in Secondary Education, with an emphasis in English, from Northern Arizona University. She is passionate about supporting the gifted learner and previously served on the board of the Arizona Association for the Gifted and Talented (AAGT), as well as being named a Field Rep for The International Baccalaureate where she was a presenter and consultant for emerging schools.

Seminar 4: Wednesday, January 25, 2017

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

District Administrative Center - Governing Board Room

Presenter: DJ Graham

Gifted in the Middle: Exploring the Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted Middle School Students

All middle school students face difficulties, but for the gifted learner, this can be an especially challenging time. In this seminar, parents will learn the social and emotional changes that their gifted child is undergoing as they transition into middle school. By connecting the individual needs to DC Comic's Justice League (a team of their most iconic comic book superheroes like Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman), parents will have a collection of characters that serve as archetypes to these social and emotional changes. Topics covered include self-image, taking risks, fitting in, slowing down, establishing their own truth, the need for mentors, and a parent's role in establishing hope. In addition, parents will learn of different high school options and the process of guiding their gifted middle school student into the future.

Seminar 5: Wednesday, March 29, 2017

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

District Administrative Center - Governing Board Room

Presenter: Dr. Karen Hudson

In this Parent Seminar, Dr. Karen Hudson will discuss the essential skills of 2E kids and how the synergy between the Special Education and Gifted Departments work to address these needs. She will outline the balance between Team placement decisions and collaboration between parents, the UG program, support services such as Speech, OT, Administration and the entire school community. Dr. Hudson will identify strategies to guide parents and students through the progression of academic expectations related to success within their educational career of elementary, middle school and high school levels. Discussion topics will include:

- Developing the knowledge of appropriate situational expectations
- Factors such as Executive Function/Mindfulness and Overexcitabilities
- Nurturing a progression of independence while decreasing reliance on support services
- Success stories!

About the Speaker: Dr. Karen Hudson is a National Board Certified teacher who has had a variety of K- 12th grade teaching experiences in Paradise Valley School District. With her background in both Gifted and Special Education, she was recruited nine years ago from Paradise Valley High School to develop the middle school level for students in the Uniquely Gifted program located at Vista Verde Middle School.

What is 2E?

Twice Exceptional or 2E kids refers to intellectually gifted children who have some form of disability. These children are considered **exceptional** both because of their intellectual gifts and because of their special needs.

Seminar 6: Wednesday, April 26, 2017

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

District Administrative Center - Governing Board Room

Presenter: Dr. Laura Wingers

Striking a Balance: Teaching Life Lessons for the Real World

Gifted students can be wonderfully, and awfully, intense! Intellectual, emotional and/or behavioral intensity can create feelings of being out of sync with their parents, peers, or

even with themselves. Those with academic or other challenges despite high IQ may experience this even more keenly.

“Striking the right balance” – with sleep, nutrition, exercise, relationships, extracurricular activities, screen time, school/work, chores, and self-care - is just as important for children as it is for adults, and it’s our job as parents to teach and model that balance. “How much is too much?” is a frequent worry for parents of gifted children. Developing the behaviors and attitudes that make an individual strong, healthy, and resilient are critical.

In this engaging, interactive presentation, Dr. Wingers will draw on research from current neuroscience and insights from her clinical experience with gifted learners from preschool to middle school. Learn more about healthy emotional development in gifted children, mindful approaches to finding balance, and practical, proactive, preventative approaches to handling life’s difficulties.

About the speaker: Dr. Laura Wingers is a clinical psychologist in private practice at Beljan Psychological Services in Scottsdale, Arizona.

With a background in pediatric neuropsychology, clinical psychology, and school psychology, her professional focus includes early childhood development, gifted intellect and developmental asynchrony, dyslexia and other learning differences, ADHD and executive function impairments, and anxiety and mood disorders. She is particularly passionate about identifying and meeting the needs of highly gifted children in the early years, and working with children with developmental, social and behavioral needs and their families.

Dr. Wingers’ current work with children and families incorporates assessment and consultation for intellectual, academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs. Dr. Wingers also provides training and consultation services for school districts and parent groups locally and nationally.

Her research interests include recent publications and presentations on executive function skill development in early childhood, differential diagnosis and gifted asynchrony, developmental assessment, parents’ help-seeking during the gifted identification process, mindful practices for children, and mindful parenting.

