

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Department of Instruction

MEMORANDUM

February 24, 2006

TO: Mark A. Johnston, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

FROM: Mark Macekura, Special Projects Coordinator

RE: Preliminary Evaluation of Abingdon's Project GIFT

As requested, the following is a preliminary evaluation of Abingdon's exemplary project, Project GIFT. The evaluation looks at the evaluation indicators outlined in Abingdon's original exemplary project proposal through three lenses:

- Abingdon administration and staff comments
- Student Data
- Staff Survey

Of course, while no one programmatic or instructional change can account for every student success, I believe that the results of this preliminary evaluation suggest that, after only not quite a year and a half of full implementation, Project GIFT is making a significant positive impact on Abingdon Elementary School.

Background

Abingdon's exemplary project, Project GIFT (Gaining Instruction, Fostering Talents), is designed to develop a community of learners by extending the instructional time and broadening the daily educational opportunities for all members of the Abingdon community. Project GIFT was initially approved by the School Board in June 2003, with a policy waiver in June 2004 by the School Board to allow Abingdon to eliminate early release Wednesdays from its schedule. The schedule for 2004-2005 provided for:

- Daily, regularly-scheduled, planning time for all teachers
- Increased instruction time for all students by 90 hours or 3 additional weeks by eliminating most early release Wednesdays
- Instruction for all students in specialty courses such as Science Lab, Architecture, Physical Education/Health, Visual Art, Dance, Drama, Vocal Music, Journalism, and 21st Century Communications (writing and technology)
- Coordination of instruction and services at each grade level and collaborative assessment of student progress through daily team meetings

Preliminary Evaluation

Part A – Administration and Staff Perspectives and Comments

The Abingdon administration and staff was asked to provide comments on the various specific evaluation indicators mentioned in the Exemplary Project Proposal for Project GIFT. The following are their responses to the indicators. Italicized text represents actual staff comments with only minor editing.

Evidence from the Learning Wheel that Demonstrates Student Grasp of Enduring Understandings

- *Students are able to synthesize information learned in Wheels to design and construct culminating projects utilizing diverse realms of knowledge, as demonstrated at Abingdon's semester product shows*
- *Students are able to discuss in depth, topics and Big Ideas from units of study in the wheel classes. For example, second graders can expound upon the Big Idea of "culture" being a product of environment, in relation to their study of Native American architecture.*
- *Students are able to connect & apply SOL-based lessons from the Multiple Intelligences Wheel classes in their classroom studies. For example, students in 3rd Grade can discuss in depth in their home classrooms, tangential overlaps from SOL-based Architecture class lessons on Mali (the exchange & spread of ideas via trade, the economic base of Ancient Mali, and West African secular & Islamic architecture).*
- *Children are showing increased background information and understanding of curriculum that overlaps with Learning Wheel classes. They are excited and asking to share information learned in Learning Wheel Classes that relates to classroom instruction. Children are engaged in discussions both comparing information learned in Wheel classes and new material presented in class. They are identifying and using more abstract ideas within class discussion/activities and relating information to show increased knowledge and application of material learned (for example, we were discussing the extreme heat during the summer for the Plains Indians. The discussion leaned towards how difficult it would be for them since in extreme heat there is lightning and the plains are flat so that the teepees were likely to be hit or the grasslands burned.)*
- *Students consistently make connections between concepts taught in the science and architecture and our classroom instruction. Vocabulary words used in science, such as producer and consumer, become a starting point when the same words are used in social studies. Students share information they have learned in architecture that is over and above what is required for the SOLs. While I was teaching the students about columns and the Parthenon, they were given a more in-depth history through architecture that was evident from test results.*

Curriculum Units that Require Students to Use Multiple Intelligence to Develop Understanding

- *The administrative team observed all staff implementing at least one of the History Alive strategies during the 2004-2005 school year. The Level II History Alive trained staff also conducted peer observations. The Social Studies Specialist observed the nine History Alive Level II staff. A report on Abingdon's Learning Alive project is being completed by the Social Studies Supervisor.*
- *Over 50 new, Multiple Intelligences-based units (and over 200 other lessons) have been written and/or assembled for the K-5 Architecture Classes. Many lessons employ History Alive structure or elements. Units have diverse lessons that require the employment of many intelligences: Logical-Mathematic, Linguistic, Music, Visual-Spatial/Art, Body Movement, Group Social Skills, Understanding Yourself, and Classification/Nature. Units require students to "do": research, design, construct, experiment, hypothesize, test, explore, work cooperatively, analyze, deduce, measure, compare, connect, apply, synthesize, evaluate, create, classify, identify problems, find solutions, and always have fun.*
- *My class this year is very strong in the musical multiple intelligence. Therefore, during social studies and science units, I have had them compose songs incorporating the SOLs to help them remember the information. Some chose to make up raps about the Powhatan Indians while others composed songs about the Sioux tribe to tunes they learned in music class.*
- *I have developed 3 science units and 2 social studies units with full Multiple Intelligences, History Alive, and problem based learning. I have created 5 math lessons using History Alive strategies and a math unit using Multiple Intelligences. I have also incorporated the interactive student notebook strategy into science, math, and social studies.*
- *For ESOL/HILT students from Grades 3-5, we have implemented the unit on "Reading for Meaning". Our unit incorporated Multiple Intelligences and History Alive strategies within the framework of UbD. After two grading periods, the DRA test results indicated that all students have made progress in reading. We look forward to our final "Performance Task in May/June. Our unit started off with building students' own cultural awareness. We read literature from their own country and from different countries. This in turn, motivated them to study, learn, and understanding other cultures.*

Teacher Reflections that Show How an Instructional Method or Activity Was Designed to Use an Area of Student Strength to Improve an Area of Student Weakness

- *All wheel curriculum is SOL-based. Assessment of student weakness in an area (for example measurement), is addressed in an authentic manner, allowing students to employ intelligence strengths to gain understanding: using Multiple Intelligences to solve real-world problems & create products, simultaneously gaining novel knowledge & skills. (In our measurement example, measurement would be instructed, and rehearsed in a real-world, cooperative, problem-solving setting, where for example, student teams might help each other measure & construct a scale*

- model. Until the team in using measurement & scale accurately, the model cannot be completed. A student approaches this concept/skill through various intelligences.)*
- *Using the book Craft Lessons By Ralph Fletcher and Joann Portalupi, I was able to successfully teach my students how to improve their writing by making the page "friendlier" to the reader using paragraphing strategies.*
 - *More than 50% of the students in my science class are below grade level in reading. Therefore science concepts must be taught through other methods prior to reading about the topics. We use the students strengths of acting it out (bodily kinesthetic), patterns (musical), sorting and grouping (naturalist), touching and building (bodily kinesthetic), picture studies on overhead (visual/spatial), tableaux (bodily kinesthetic) and open ended projects that incorporate many different intelligences to teach the vocabulary and concepts prior to reading. After doing all of this, the students are better able to comprehend the reading passages in the text books and mini books.*
 - *The fifth grade holds an annual Museum Night to display our understanding of Ancient Civilizations in a variety of ways (Ancient Newspaper, Display Boards, Hand made Artifacts with Description Placards, Tableau Statues that come to life to Teach the Museum Visitors, Music that represents the Time Period, and if we have enough time - Student created projects that include technology use such as homemade video, digital pictures story board, PowerPoint, and interactive computer games made through HyperStudio).*

Increased Attendance at School Functions such as Parent/Teacher Conferences

Note: Attendance at fall conferences by class averaged 93%

- *Many families toured the Wheel Classes at Wheel Product Night. Students were thrilled to share their products with their families.*
- *Back-to-School Picnic - In the Hundreds! Best turnout I've seen in years!!*
- *Fifth grade also had 9 parent volunteers for our Chinese Auction and 12 parents sent in donations and/or cakes. That is more than 33% of the fifth grade parents that participated!*
- *There has been a visible increase in both social and educational opportunities for parents. Wheel Nights (opportunities for students to showcase what they have done in art, music, P.E., architecture, journalism, and science lab) have been well attended. The concerts have also been well attended with standing room only.*
- *To date we have had four Library Nights (opportunities designed to encourage literacy development) with an average of 50 families attending each event.*

Increased Number of Community Volunteers and Partnerships

- *We have a newly established partnership with Long and Foster where at least 6 volunteers will tutor, mentor and have lunch bunches with Abingdon students.*

In addition, the Science and Instrumental Music teachers provided the following descriptions of their programs, both key components of Project GIFT.

Science Lab

Students come to science lab with a great deal of enthusiasm knowing they will be interacting with each other in cooperative groups conducting hands-on experiments and activities applying the knowledge and concepts which they are studying. Students work together to solve problems and hypothesize ways to come up with conclusions for their experiments and provide evidence for their findings. These hands-on activities help the students to grasp the “big idea” or “enduring understanding” of the content being presented so that they can apply their knowledge to real life situations and make it a more meaningful educational experience.

Students in first through fifth grade use the Student Interactive Notebook used in the Learning Alive teaching strategy. The information is presented using the multiple intelligence approach to learning focusing on different intelligences throughout each unit. Evidence of student understanding is found in the assessments in the Interactive Notebook which require higher level thinking skills of content presented. The assessments utilize a variety of learning styles.

Over the last few years the science lab teacher has organized Family Night at the National Air and Space Museum in which our students are invited to bring family members for an evening field trip to the popular museum. The families hear an interesting talk from a scientist and then view one of the IMAX movies. Our attendance has consistently been outstanding for this event. Parental involvement such as this is due to the increased student enthusiasm and curiosity about science and the world around them due to the science lab learning wheel.

The utilization of a “science lab” and learning alive approach to science has increased student enthusiasm and achievement in science. Students are eager to come to science knowing they will be working with other students in a totally “hands-on” atmosphere. The Interactive Notebook helps students to enhance their organization skills, increase learning for those who are second language or below grade level through the use of graphic organizers, thus increase student learning and understanding of the concepts being presented.

Instrumental Music Program

The instrumental music program at Abingdon enrolls all Grade 4 students in violin class, and all Grade 5 students in an instrument of choice. Two music teachers staff the program, one specializes in violin instruction. The two instructors team teach the Grade 4 violins who take lessons with their entire class. The Grade 5 students choose to either continue with violin or begin a band instrument. The lessons are taught by the teachers in half-class groups.

The Grade 4 violin program is based on principles taught by the Suzuki program. Each student is responsible for cooperatively learning proper technique and playing position.

Students presented a demonstration in January including various bowing patterns and songs including “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”.

The Grade 5 violin program is a continuation of the Grade 4 program. Suzuki method is used as part of the pedagogy and students focus on music reading and listening skills. Students work in a class setting as well as in small groups during recess. Over 20 students recently participated in the Wakefield Pyramid Concert, a regional gathering of elementary school string students. In February, students will perform in concert using songs from the Suzuki method and “Essential Elements 2000”. Highlights include “Rockin’ Strings” and “Cripple Creek”.

Students in the violin program may practice before school or join the Violin Club after school. Continuation into the middle school orchestra program is encouraged through recruitment efforts and visits from middle school teachers.

The Grade 5 band program begins students on flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, or percussion and works toward ensemble performance where every member is considered essential to the group. Reading and listening skills are encouraged, and after-school help is available. Several students recently participated in the Wakefield Pyramid Concert, a regional gathering of elementary school band students. These students made additional preparations beyond their regular band studies. In March, students will present a concert featuring all sections of the band. Selections will include “Six-Note Blues” and “Mickey Mouse March”. Continuation into the middle school band program is encouraged through recruitment efforts such as “Band Bash” and visits from middle school teachers.

Finally, staff provided us with a brief overview of the impact on the Extended Day Program and the opportunities the new schedule provided.

Extended Day

Abingdon has extended Wednesdays for our Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) and preschool handicapped students by providing them with enrichment activities coordinated through the Extended Day staff. Initially, Abingdon staff met with the Early Childhood Specialist and discussed appropriate enrichment activities that the Extended Day staff could do with the students in those two programs that is different from what takes place in their program. In addition, Abingdon continues to provide Extended Day services on the five early release Wednesdays that county-wide staff development is offered.

Transportation

Both the Abingdon administrative staff and APS Transportation staff agree that they have not had any issues with transportation due to the change of schedules. This includes parents remembering or the bus returning students to school on the five early release Wednesdays.

Part B – Assessment and Other Data

Increased Number of Minority Students Identified as Gifted

There have been increases in the percentage of Asian, Hispanic, and White students identified as Gifted; the percentage of Black students identified as gifted has decreased slightly, a trend that mirrors the change in their school-wide proportion of Black students. Between 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 the Asian population increased from 45 to 58 students, while the Black, Hispanic, and White population decreased from 102 to 92, 203 to 199, and 66 to 42 respectively.

Percentage of Ethnic Group Identified as Gifted				
School Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
2004-2005	17.2%	4.3%	7.5%	19.0%
2003-2004	11.1%	4.9%	6.9%	12.1%

Positive Patterns of Achievement in SOL, Stanford 9, Arlington Math Assessments, and Writing Scores

Abingdon made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2004-2005; it had not made AYP in 2002-2003 and 2003-2004.

Abingdon Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) 2004-2005																
AYP Groups	2004								2005							
	Reading				Math				Reading				Math			
	# tested	% tested	% passed	Met AMO	# tested	% tested	% passed	Met AMO	# tested	% tested	% passed	Met AMO	# tested	% tested	% passed	Met AMO
Total	125	100%	68%	Met	126	100%	68%	Met	123	100%	77%	Met	123	100%	77%	Met
Black	30	97%	66%	TS	31	100%	59%	TS	39	100%	75%	TS	39	100%	75%	TS
Hispanic	68	101%	59%	Not Met	68	100%	69%	Met	57	100%	71%	Met	57	100%	71%	Met
White	16	100%	87%	TS	15	100%	87%	TS	13	100%	92%	TS	13	100%	100%	TS
F/R	74	99%	63%	Met	80	100%	71%	Met	79	100%	72%	Met	79	100%	77%	Met
LEP	74	101%	55%	Not Met	74	100%	72%	Met	68	100%	72%	Met	68	100%	72%	Met
SWD	17	94%	37%	TS	21	100%	26%	TS	15	79%	47%	TS	19	100%	26%	TS
Made AYP	No								Yes							

As the next two tables show there has been an increase in the percent passing in 53 out of 56 of the possible categories on the Grade 3 SOLs and an increase in the percent passing in 65 out of 70 possible categories on the Grade 5 SOLs between 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. The highlighted cells show where there was not an increase.

Abingdon Grade 3 Standards of Learning 2005													
School & Groups	Year	English: Reading /Writing			Mathematics			History			Science		
		%	#	%	%	#	%	%	#	%	%	#	%
		Tested	Tested	Passing	Tested	Tested	Passing	Tested	Tested	Passing	Tested	Tested	Passing
ABINGDON	2004/05	100	43	95.3	100	46	97.8	100	47	97.9	100	45	93.3
	2003/04	94	17	47.1	100	18	77.8	100	18	77.8	100	18	61.1
Asian	2004/05	NA	5	100.0	NA	6	100.0	NA	6	100.0	NA	6	100.0
	2003/04	NA	1	*	NA	1	*	NA	1	*	NA	1	*
Black	2004/05	NA	9	77.8	NA	10	90.0	NA	10	90.0	NA	10	80.0
	2003/04	NA	10	30.0	NA	11	63.6	NA	11	63.6	NA	11	45.5
Hispanic	2004/05	NA	21	100.0	NA	21	100.0	NA	22	100.0	NA	21	100.0
	2003/04	NA	2	*	NA	2	*	NA	2	*	NA	2	*
White	2004/05	NA	8	100.0	NA	9	100.0	NA	9	100.0	NA	8	87.5
	2003/04	NA	4	100.0	NA	4	100.0	NA	4	100.0	NA	4	100.0
Non-SpEd	2004/05	NA	39	97.4	NA	42	97.6	NA	43	100.0	NA	41	97.6
	2003/04	NA	14	50.0	NA	14	85.7	NA	14	85.7	NA	14	71.4
SpEd	2004/05	NA	4	75.0	NA	4	100.0	NA	4	75.0	NA	4	50.0
	2003/04	NA	3	33.3	NA	4	50.0	NA	4	50.0	NA	4	25.0
Native	2004/05	NA	20	90.0	NA	20	95.0	NA	20	95.0	NA	20	85.0
	2003/04	NA	16	50.0	NA	17	76.5	NA	17	76.5	NA	17	64.7
Non-Native	2004/05	NA	23	100.0	NA	26	100.0	NA	27	100.0	NA	25	100.0
	2003/04	NA	1	*	NA	1	*	NA	1	*	NA	1	*
Female	2004/05	NA	18	94.4	NA	19	100.0	NA	20	95.0	NA	19	94.7
	2003/04	NA	9	44.4	NA	9	66.7	NA	9	66.7	NA	9	44.4
Male	2004/05	NA	25	96.0	NA	27	96.3	NA	27	100.0	NA	26	92.3
	2003/04	NA	8	50.0	NA	9	88.9	NA	9	88.9	NA	9	77.8
Non-F/R	2004/05	NA	18	94.4	NA	18	94.4	NA	18	100.0	NA	18	88.9
	2003/04	NA	5	80.0	NA	7	85.7	NA	5	100.0	NA	5	100.0
F/R	2004/05	NA	25	96.0	NA	28	100.0	NA	29	96.6	NA	27	96.3
	2003/04	NA	12	33.3	NA	11	72.7	NA	13	69.2	NA	13	46.2
ESOL/HILT	2004/05	NA	16	81.3	NA	20	80.0	NA	17	100.0	NA	17	88.2
	2003/04	NA	30	46.7	NA	36	86.1	NA	35	82.9	NA	35	65.7

Abingdon Grade 5 Standards of Learning 2005																
School & Groups	Year	English: Reading			English: Writing			Mathematics			History			Science		
		%	#	%	%	#	%	%	#	%	%	#	%	%	#	%
		Tested	Tested	Pass	Tested	Tested	Pass	Tested	Tested	Pass	Tested	Tested	Pass	Tested	Tested	Pass
Abingdon	2004/05	100	52	84.6	100	63	82.5	100	56	83.9	100	38	81.6	65	55	80.0
	2003/04	92	44	61.4	96	50	62.0	100	48	52.1	95	38	60.5	96	46	67.4
Asian	2004/05	NA	6	100.0	NA	6	100.0	NA	6	100.0	NA	5	100.0	NA	6	100.0
	2003/04	NA	2	*	NA	3	66.7	NA	3	66.7	NA	2	*	NA	3	33.3
Black	2004/05	NA	28	75.0	NA	29	79.3	NA	28	71.4	NA	9	33.3	NA	28	64.3
	2003/04	NA	16	62.5	NA	13	61.5	NA	16	43.8	NA	27	51.9	NA	14	85.7
Hispanic	2004/05	NA	14	92.9	NA	24	79.2	NA	18	94.4	NA	16	100.0	NA	17	94.1
	2003/04	NA	18	55.6	NA	24	54.2	NA	21	47.6	NA	5	60.0	NA	21	52.4
White	2004/05	NA	4	100.0	NA	4	100.0	NA	4	100.0	NA	8	87.5	NA	4	100.0
	2003/04	NA	8	75.0	NA	10	80.0	NA	8	75.0	NA	4	100.0	NA	8	87.5
Non-SpEd	2004/05	NA	42	92.9	NA	51	94.1	NA	48	93.8	NA	35	85.7	NA	46	87.0
	2003/04	NA	35	71.4	NA	38	78.9	NA	36	63.9	NA	31	71.0	NA	35	82.9
SpEd	2004/05	NA	10	50.0	NA	12	33.3	NA	8	25.0	NA	3	33.3	NA	9	44.4
	2003/04	NA	9	22.2	NA	12	8.3	NA	12	16.7	NA	7	14.3	NA	11	18.2
Native	2004/05	NA	30	76.7	NA	30	83.3	NA	30	73.3	NA	16	68.8	NA	30	66.7
	2003/04	NA	28	67.9	NA	27	66.7	NA	31	54.8	NA	31	61.3	NA	27	85.2
Non-Native	2004/05	NA	22	95.5	NA	32	84.4	NA	26	96.2	NA	22	90.9	NA	25	96.0
	2003/04	NA	16	50.0	NA	23	56.5	NA	17	47.1	NA	6	66.7	NA	19	42.1
Female	2004/05	NA	29	96.6	NA	35	94.3	NA	31	93.5	NA	15	80.0	NA	31	90.3
	2003/04	NA	17	76.5	NA	20	80.0	NA	19	57.9	NA	18	66.7	NA	19	73.7
Male	2004/05	NA	23	69.6	NA	28	67.9	NA	25	72.0	NA	23	82.6	NA	24	66.7
	2003/04	NA	27	51.9	NA	30	50.0	NA	29	48.3	NA	20	55.0	NA	27	63.0
Non-F/R	2004/05	NA	23	82.6	NA	24	79.2	NA	23	73.9	NA	14	100.0	NA	24	70.8
	2003/04	NA	20	60.0	NA	23	65.2	NA	22	50.0	NA	18	66.7	NA	21	71.4
F/R	2004/05	NA	29	86.2	NA	39	84.6	NA	33	90.9	NA	24	70.8	NA	31	87.1
	2003/04	NA	24	62.5	NA	27	59.3	NA	26	53.8	NA	20	55.0	NA	25	64.0
ESOL/HIL	2004/05	NA	22	36.4	NA	23	56.5	NA	29	41.4	NA	32	43.8	NA	24	50.0
	2003/04	NA	12	33.3	NA	16	43.8	NA	18	33.3	NA	29	48.3	NA	16	31.3

Positive Patterns of Reducing the Achievement Gap among Groups of Children on SOL Assessments

There has been a decrease in the achievement gap in Grade 3 in three out of four subject areas for Black students and two out of four subject areas for Hispanic students. There has been a decrease in the achievement gap in Grade 5 in five out of five subject areas for Hispanic students.

ABINGDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL								
Change in Gap Between Black and White Students and Between Hispanic and White Students (Adjusted Pass Rates)								
Test	Year	Black			Hispanic			White
		Pass rate	Gap**	Change*	Pass rate	Gap**	Change *	Pass rate
Grade 3								
Reading	2005	77.8	22.2	-13.5	100.0	0.0	-8.8	100.0
	2004	30.0	70.0	51.2	***	***	***	100.0
	2003	50.0	35.7	16.9	76.9	8.8	-3.6	85.7
Math	2005	90.0	10.0	32.2	100.0	0.0	21.3	100.0
	2004	63.6	36.4	6.5	***	***	***	100.0
	2003	77.8	-22.2	-52.1	76.9	-21.3	-40.3	55.6
History	2005	90.0	10.0	-14.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
	2004	63.6	36.4	32.6	***	***	***	100.0
	2003	76.0	24.0	20.2	100.0	0.0	-40.8	100.0
Science	2005	80.0	7.5	-6.2	100.0	-12.5	-18.2	87.5
	2004	45.5	54.5	45.9	***	***	***	100.0
	2003	72.0	13.7	5.1	80.0	5.7	-25.6	85.7
Grade 5								
Reading	2005	75.0	25.0	3.6	92.9	7.1	-6.2	100.0
	2004	66.7	8.3	-9.3	55.6	19.4	5.1	75.0
	2003	78.6	21.4	3.8	86.7	13.3	-1.0	100.0
Writing	2005	79.3	20.7	2.2	79.2	20.8	-5.0	100.0
	2004	61.5	18.5	-3.4	54.2	25.8	19.2	80.0
	2003	71.4	21.9	21.9	86.7	6.6	-12.4	93.3
Math	2005	71.4	28.6	0.3	94.4	5.6	-21.8	100.0
	2004	46.7	28.3	-33.7	47.6	27.4	20.8	75.0
	2003	31.3	62.0	33.3	86.7	6.6	-12.7	93.3
History	2005	33.3	54.2	6.1	100.0	-12.5	-52.5	87.5
	2004	51.9	48.1	26.7	60.0	40.0	21.0	100.0
	2003	78.6	21.4	-15.2	81.0	19.0	17.5	100.0
Science	2005	64.3	35.7	33.9	94.1	5.9	-29.2	100.0
	2004	85.7	1.8	-41.9	52.4	35.1	21.8	87.5
	2003	56.3	43.7	-1.8	86.7	13.3	-13.6	100.0
* A negative change means the gap has DECREASED								
** A negative number indicates that the Black or Hispanic group outscored the white group								
*** 1 or 2 students tested								

Part C – Results of Staff Survey

Executive Summary

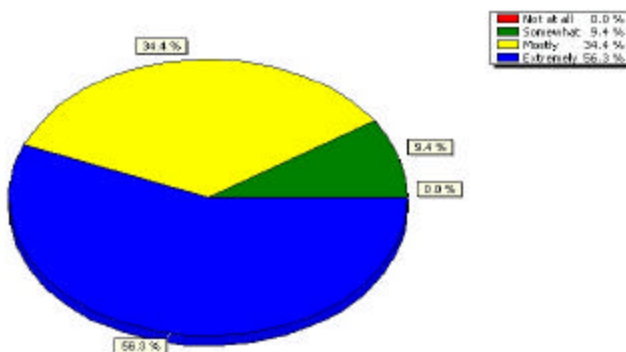
Abingdon Elementary School teachers and teacher assistants were surveyed using a web-based survey between February 15 and February 21 on their perceptions of Project GIFT's impact on instruction. The analysis includes answers from all respondents who took the survey during that seven day period. There were 32 out of a possible 44 completed responses (teachers and teacher assistants) submitted during this time.

More than half of the respondents stated that they were extremely familiar with Project GIFT, and no one replied that he/she was unfamiliar with the exemplary project. Staff stated that Project GIFT has allowed them to implement best instructional practices and that the project has been beneficial to instruction. Staff believed that the students liked their new schedules because they had more hands-on activities and more time to explore subjects. Responses were unanimous that Project GIFT supports the APS Strategic Plan and that eliminating most early release Wednesdays enhanced instruction. In addition, staff stated that Project GIFT enables the learning community to take an interdisciplinary approach to instruction. Finally, staff found that Project GIFT allowed for increased collaboration to deliver a rich and rigorous curriculum. A review of this survey will demonstrate that staff believe Project GIFT has had a positive impact on instruction at Abingdon.

Results by Question:

1. I am familiar with Project GIFT.

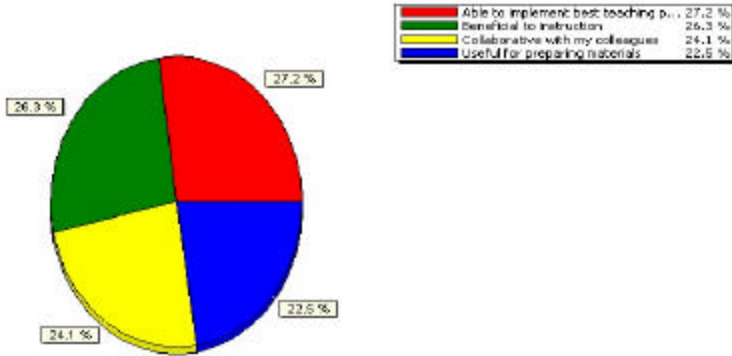
Over 56% of respondents said they were extremely familiar with Project Gift. No respondents replied that they were not familiar with Project GIFT.



2. I have found the daily planning time GIFT provides me to be . . . (Please rank the following four choices.)

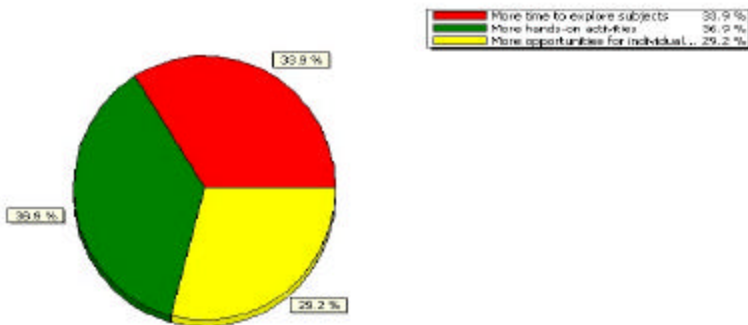
When asked to describe how the daily planning time Project GIFT affects staff, over 27% of respondents stated that the planning time allowed them to implement best teaching

practices. The response selected second most was that planning time was beneficial to instruction. The third response stated that planning time allowed staff to be collaborative with their colleagues. Selected fourth was that planning time was useful for preparing materials.



3. The students like our new schedules because they have . . . (Please rank the following three choices.)

When asked to rank three choices on why students like their new schedules at Abingdon, 36.9% replied it was due to more hands-on activities. 33.9% stated they had more time to explore subjects and 29.2% said that they had more opportunities to provide individual support and/or enrichment.



4. Project GIFT supports the APS Strategic Plan (Demonstrate rising student achievement, Provide a Rich and Rigorous curriculum, Enhance Teacher Quality, Close the Achievement Gap, Engage the community).

100% of survey respondents declared that Project GIFT supports the APS Strategic Plan.

5. Eliminating most Early Release Wednesdays has added instructional time for Abingdon Students.

All respondents believed that eliminating most early-release Wednesdays has added instructional time for students.

6. Project GIFT's Learning Wheel encourages staff, parents, and students to take an interdisciplinary approach to instruction.

Over 93% of respondents reflected that Project GIFT's Learning Wheel encourages staff, parents, and students to take an interdisciplinary approach to instruction.

7. Daily team meetings have allowed staff to collaborate and foster a more rich and rigorous curriculum.

Over 93% of respondents believed that daily team meetings have allowed staff to collaborate and foster a more rich and rigorous curriculum.