June 1, 2015

Dear Students:

In order to create the best academic environment for every student, the ELA department is proud to offer an advanced class (GATE) for higher levels of instruction. The information below will provide insight into the process for determining student placement for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders into the GATE level classes.

**How are placements for the advanced class determined?**

* The student must complete the following to be considered for placement.
  + Students will complete an application of interest.
  + Students will provide a portfolio of self-selected writing samples in any genre.
  + Students will need to draft a personal statement regarding their reading interests and habits, focusing on one or more favorite books, during their recess or after school with one of the ELA teachers.
* The following will be used to determine eligibility.
  + Student Application
  + Writing Portfolio
  + Reading Statement
  + Yearly Grades (92% or greater)
  + Teacher Recommendation
  + Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAt) Score

**Am I prepared to be successful in an advanced class (GATE)?**

*Students in advanced classes...*

* Possess exceptional self-direction, initiative, and perseverance.
* Are capable of scoring a five or six on a writing sample (using a six-point rubric)
* Are highly organized and possess excellent time-management skills.
* Analyze, evaluate and synthesize more complex text and in depth concepts.
* Are expected to complete more independent work at home.
* Are motivated to apply what they learn beyond the classroom.
* Have a genuine interest and a love of reading.

Attached please find the application. If after careful thought and consideration you decide that you’d like to be considered for the GATE class please complete the application and submit your portfolio to your ELA teacher by June 5, 2015. The date for the completion of the Reading Statements will be on June 10th & 11th.

We hope that you’ll be joining us on what is sure to be a successful and exciting year.

Sincerely,

The ELA Department