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LEC – June 13, 2005

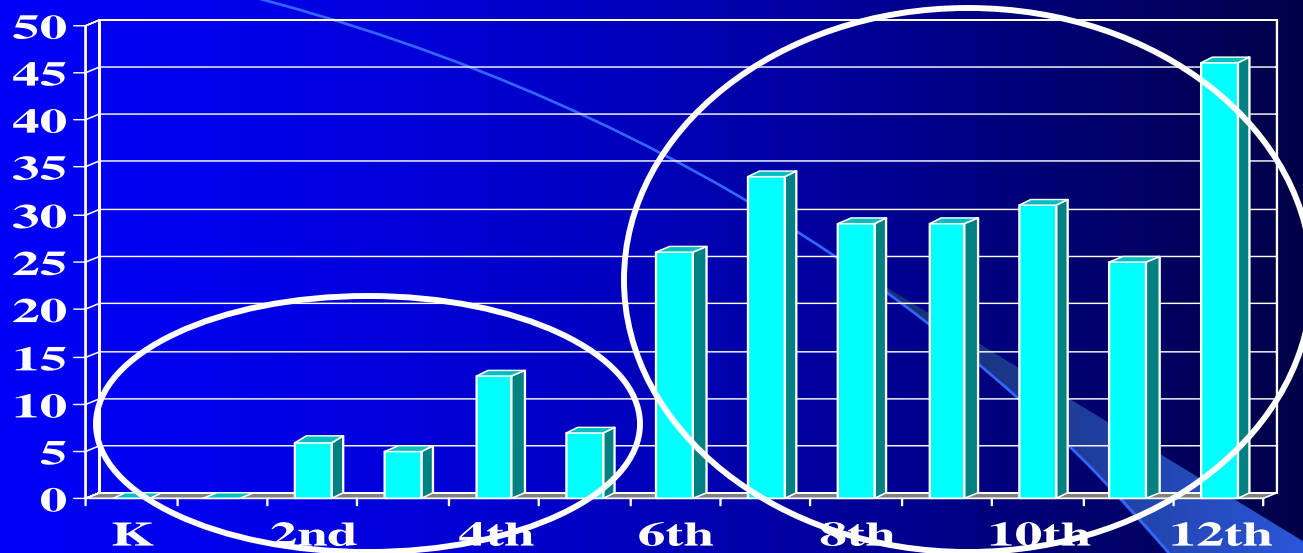
LEC

The Beginning

- In 1996 local anonymous benefactor gifted \$250,000. Benefactor believed that a strong and educationally rich and gifted program is critical to the development and preparation of gifted students as the leaders of tomorrow.
- Spirit of the trust/contract was to change the attitude the district was showing toward the gifted program via the allocation of their funds.
 - 1994/1995 special education budget 5,500,000
 - 340,00 allocated to gifted students (6.2%)
 - 2004/2005 special education budget 8,408,000
 - 438,800 allocated to gifted students (5.2%)

LEC Today

- Discussing major changes to the program including location
- Confused over facts and figures
- Struggling with accountability – Austin, Gifted Support and Sechriest reports

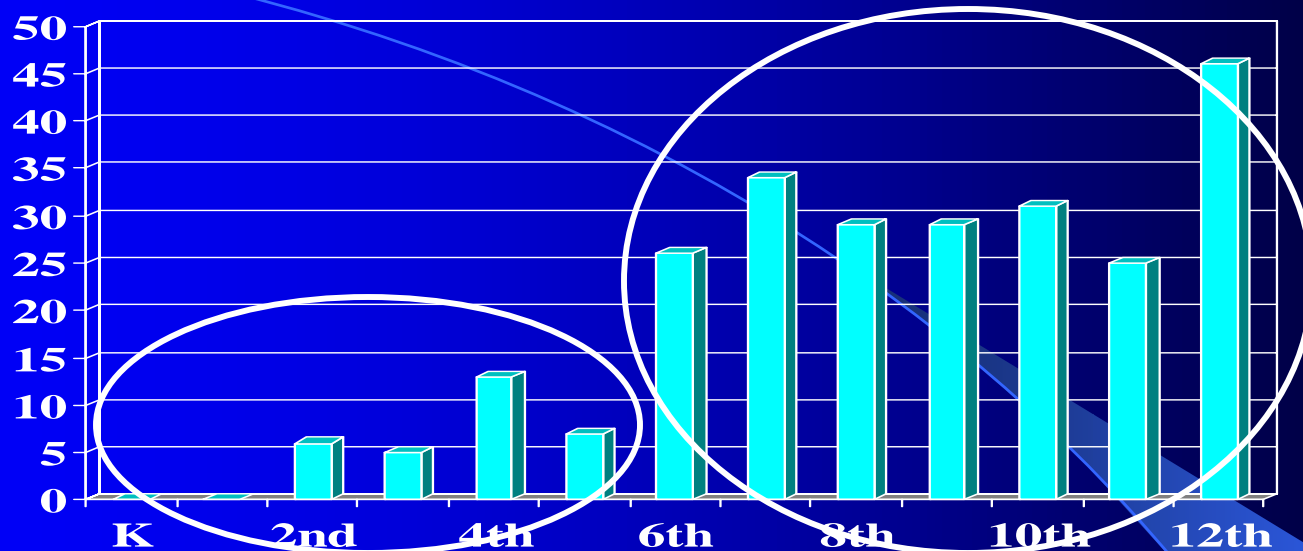


What Has Changed?

Changes in how we are evaluating the children?

Changes in How We Are Evaluating Children

- What metrics/processes is the district using to locate and identify all students that are thought to be gifted?
22 Pa. Code §16.21(a)
- California Achievement Test



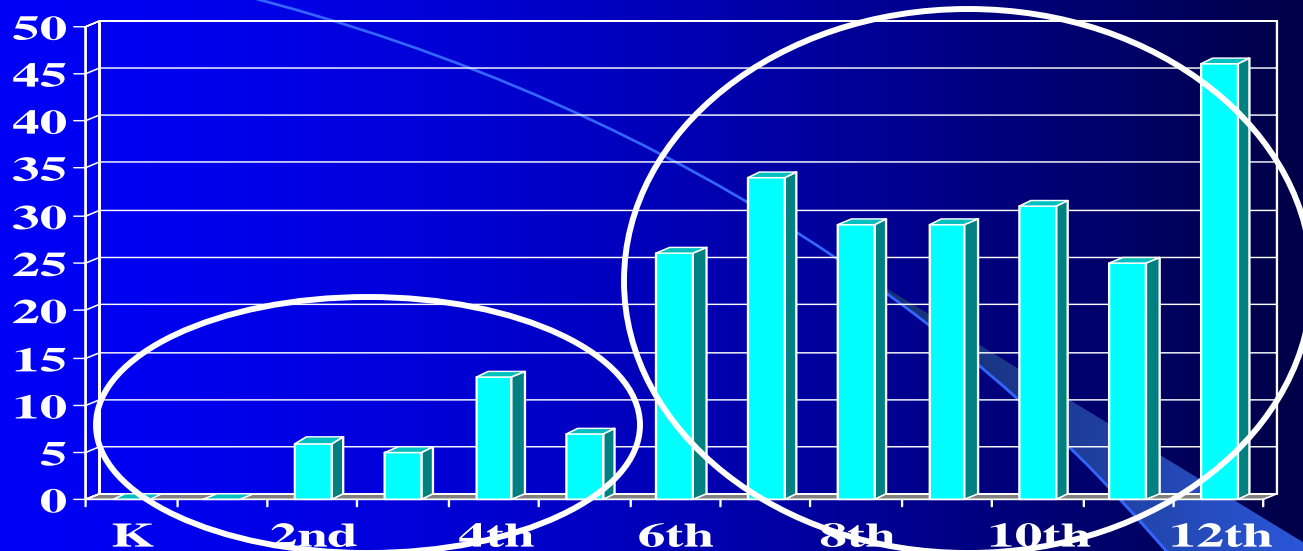
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Changes in how we are evaluating the children?

An event which triggered less support of the program?

Event Triggering Decline of Support

- End of benefactor's trust agreement?



What Has Changed?

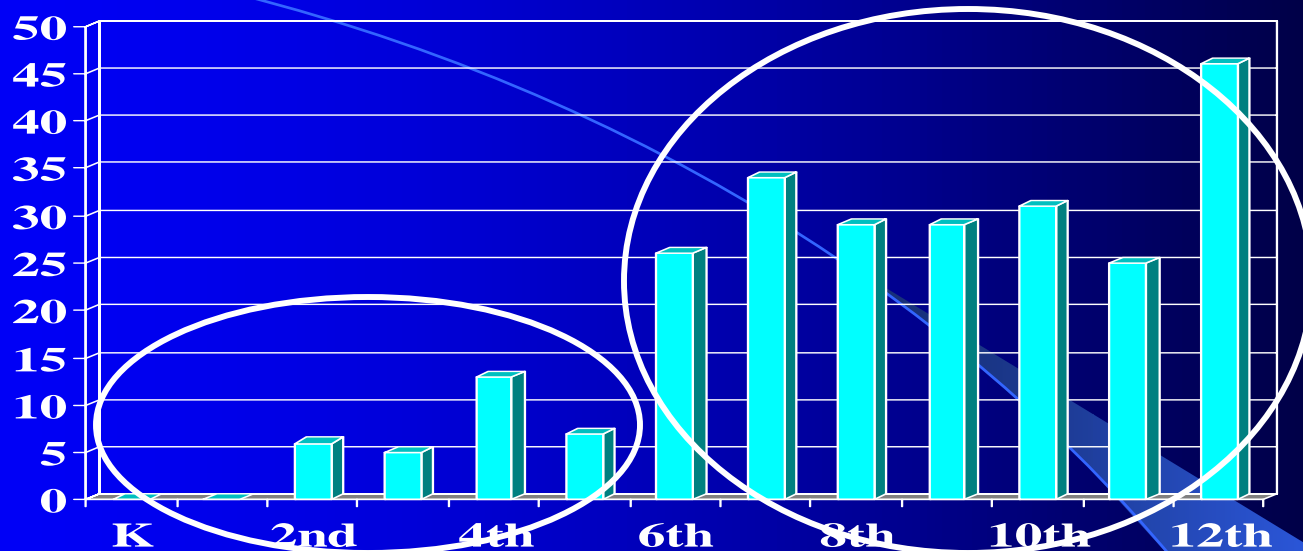
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Changes In Staff

- Historical supporters retired, relocated....?



What Has Changed?

Changes in how we are evaluating the children?

An event which triggered less support of the program?

Changes in staff previously big supporters of the program?

A large proportion of bright children have left the area due to professional job reduction?

Professional Job Decline In Warren County

Jim Decker, Executive Director

Warren County Chamber of Commerce – 814-723-3050

- Jim seeing a Growth in the upper end professional jobs
- Bank Expansion – 100 jobs over the next 5 years
- New surgical unit in farm colony
- New eng. and architectural firm (Larson) in farm colony
- Hospital currently working with investors to greatly expand medical services
- Pet treat business 100 manufacturing jobs plus Professional jobs
- Not a huge increase in home sales for Warren County – No mass exodus –
Sechriest report showing STEP CHANGE
- Forge did not close, reorganized and is now expanding
- If professional job losses contributed to the low participation in K-5,
why didn't we see a dramatic drop in participation in the 6-12 grades.

Performance

- Austin Report – December 2003
 - Report highlighted deficiencies and areas of improvement
 - Inequities in # students not in findings or recommendations
- Gifted Program Review Team – June 2004
 - Goals established
- Sechriest Report – April 2005
 - Little interaction with home school
 - A proactive plan to reach stakeholders not developed
 - Not standards based, children did not perform
 - Data shows dramatic decline in gifted students?

Performance Continued

Quote From April 2005 Sechriest Status Report

“ As with any program evaluation, goals are by their very nature long term and are normally assessed at the midpoint of the program during the fifth or sixth year of implementation.”

“ The document presented to Dr. Dwyer dated June 1, 2004 formulated by the Gifted Curriculum and Program Review team did not formulate objectives to support the stated goals.”

“ The report was reviewed by the Board’s Curriculum, Instruction And Technology Committee and approved by the Board of Education.”

Performance Continued

- Austin Report issued December 2003 – Commendations and recommendations submitted.
- Six months later, Gifted Review Team puts a plan together to address the recommendations and the plan was submitted to Dr Dwyer and approved by the school board
- Ten months later Dr. Sechriest offers an update on the program. Says program evaluation takes 5 to 6 years. June report, although approved by the school board, lacked objectives to support it's stated goals
- Sechriest offers recommendations and here we are today.

Summary

- Beginning of the LEC – The LEC exists because of the vision and graciousness of the benefactor. The start up costs of the LEC have been bought and paid for. Operating costs are going to exist at the current LEC building or Beatty. No proof of a significant educational benefit shown by changing location. In fact, possible decline due to curriculum changes.
- No attributable root cause established for decline in K-6 students. Data suggests structural change in identifying students.
- Money and time spent on highlighting areas of improvement for the LEC program. Mixed feedback to the Gifted Support Team. Not enough time to affect the desired changes

Moving Forward

- School Board delays LEC building location change decision for 3 years
 - Time needed to evaluate proposed changes
 - Make the recommended Austin report changes

Further study required

- Decrease in eligibility questioned
 - Root causes TBD
- Accountability issues to be resolved
 - What gets measured gets done.

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Thank You