



ITAG Spotlight on Gifted Education December 2010

Mathletes in Iowa

Kids being kids, but with kids of like abilities/interests. It's a Saturday in Iowa and Mathletes from around the state meet to solve math problems. At noon they play games and await the morning's testing results. Actually, they're all winners; they learn to solve complicated problems; problems far more challenging than in the regular classroom.

A bit of history:

In the early 1990's, Pat Fox and Karen Dotseth (Page) got together and started a program to encourage kids to solve math problems. They attended a competition at Iowa City West and that competition evolved into the Great Plains Math League run by Tim Sanders. What began with about 20 students, has grown today to over 150 per Saturday competing. The schools were grouped as large schools and small schools with large schools being those with enrollment of 250 or more per grade.

Today:

Schools from Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, Waverly, Iowa Falls, Chariton, Ames, Algona, Columbus, Regina, Western Dubuque, Marshalltown . . . all compete – at least once a month from September through March. The state finals are held in April in Iowa City. Qualifying students then compete in the regionals in Kansas City, KS in May. This is one way to stretch students with an interest in mathematics that goes beyond the regular high school curriculum.

The testing format of GPML consists of four types of tests. Two are individual tests, one of which is a 30 question multiple choice test on which students may use calculators. The other individual test is an eight question test given in pairs where calculators cannot be used. The other two tests are team tests which encourage collaboration. One is a ten question test on which calculators may be used and the other is a five round relay test where calculators are not allowed. The variety of testing formats allows the students to experience a wide range of mathematical problems and discover where their strengths may lie. By attending these events around the state, the students also get to interact with each other and make new friends with similar interests. Many of them then communicate with each other throughout the years.



Certificates of performance and plaques for the top 3 teams

Testing tables with students dressed in the mathlete T-shirts that teams create



For more information, contact Pat Fox at pat.fox@wsr.k12.ia.us or check out the website mathleague.org for upcoming events.

ITAG 2010 Conference Notes

Are you looking for a ppt. from one of the ITAG keynote speakers or did you not get to go to ITAG but wondered what you missed out on? Then check out our link to conference presentations on the website <http://www.iowatag.org/HTML/2010conference.html>

While attending the ITAG conference did you lose or leave anything behind? We had a few items turned into us and have them in safekeeping in our office. If so, just email us – itag@assoc-serv.com – about the item. We will see if it is in our lost and found and make arrangements to return the item to you.

ITAG Booth at the Iowa Association of School Board Conference

Over 40 people completed the “Ten Things All Administrators Should Know About Gifted Education” survey developed by Kenn Wathan during the ISAB Conference. Claudia Koch provided for the \$50 gift card. The card was awarded to Doug Olson from Audubon.