

# The GAMbit

*An official publication of the Gifted Association of Missouri*

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## A Letter from the President

*by Dr. Tracy Bednarick-Humes*



To say that the beginning of the school year finds my brain in a flurry, would be a bit of an understatement. I swear I had an awesome idea just the other day for what to write in my GAM president's letter, but the thought flitted in and flitted right out, likely being replaced with the concern of a new IEP or thoughts on our new teacher evaluation tool. I'm sure all of you are also dealing with the busy brain excitement of a new year as well, so I thought for this issue of the GAMbit, I'd highlight some upcoming events and end with a reminder of why we do what we do!

# President's Letter

*continued from Page 1*

1. The Annual GAM Conference planning is in its final stages and we are anticipating over 100 attendees for the October 7th and 8th event on University of Missouri's Columbia, MO campus. I'm so excited to hear Dr. Denise Ford for our keynote speaker. I observed her classroom last year and was greatly impressed with how she weaves an understanding of giftedness into her core content instruction and fosters critical thinking. The breakout sessions also look awesome—I'm always eager to learn more about serving our twice exceptional students and fostering affective development in our gifted students. A big SHOUT OUT to our PLATINUM sponsor—Byrdseed.TV (<https://www.byrdseed.tv/shut/>) and our GOLD sponsor Beast Academy and The Art of Problem Solving (<https://beastacademy.com/>) Their support helps ensure a viable conference for years to come! Early bird registration has wrapped up, but it's not too late to register and your support helps us support gifted education initiatives year round.
  
  2. While I won't be eating a cicada (ask a GAM Board member), we did get our GAM Gifted Speaker series fully booked! It's a great line up covering topics for both teachers and caregivers. All the sessions are virtual at 7 pm Central Time and free!
    - Monday, September 16--Parenting your Gifted Child with Aisha Hasan (Region 8 Representative)
    - Monday, October 21--2E Students with Gayle Bentley
    - Monday, November 18--Lesson Plan Share Out
    - Monday, January 13--New Gifted Education Program Guidelines with Christine Nobbe (State Director of Gifted Education)
    - Monday, February 10--Managing Expectations and Anxiety with Pam Washington (Webster Groves Schools Gifted Director)
    - Monday, April 14--Supporting Gifted Kids in a General Education Classroom with Jennifer Hawkins (GAM Executive Secretary)
- [Click here for registration information.](#)

# President's Letter

*continued from Page 2*

And lastly, I recently read the article summary of “What Happens to Gifted Children,” by David Brooks of The New York Times in the Marshall Memo. The gist of the article is that while academics are important and academic success can indicate future success, what is more important is the inner drive, work ethic, and mindset of individuals. With more focus on social emotional learning in gifted programs, I believe we are honoring this understanding and truly helping our gifted students to grow into self-actualized individuals. I’m hoping that the jokes about gifted adults being disillusioned and disfranchised fade away as a new generation of gifted individuals move through more holistic gifted programming that goes beyond advanced classes and creative thinking but seeks to differentiate to meet the needs of the whole individual. I liked this quote from the article, “When you get a glimpse of the real lives of gifted people, you see that it’s a mistake to separate this thing we call intelligence from all the other aspects of their lives.”

Have a wonderful 2024-25 school year and see you at the conference!





# MEMBER UPDATE

## **Proposed GAM Slate of Officers for the 2024-2026 term:**

*Executive President:* Heather Tomicich

*Executive Vice-President:* Amanda Sauerwein

*Executive Finance Vice-President:* Shannon Fuller

*Executive Conference Vice-President:* Tracy Bednarick

*Executive Membership Vice-President:* Cindy Turner

*Executive Board Secretary:* Jennifer Hawkins

# GAM MEMBER CAUCUS INVITATION

Dear Gifted Association of Missouri Members,

We are excited to invite you to the upcoming Annual Membership Caucus, which will be held on Monday, October 7th, at 11:15 AM at Memorial Union on the campus of the University of Missouri-Columbia. This is a great opportunity for you to connect with fellow members, learn about the accomplishments and goals for the districts, and elect new district representatives.

During the meeting, outgoing representatives will speak about their achievements and future objectives, and we will hold elections for new district leadership. If you are unable to attend in person, we still encourage you to share any celebrations or concerns regarding your district with your representative prior to the meeting. Additionally, if you are interested in running for district leadership, please let us know—attendance at the meeting is not required to be elected. As of right now, District 9 will have two openings.

District representatives attend quarterly GAM board meetings and work to advocate for and support gifted education in their regions. Many districts use a co-director model, providing opportunities for shared leadership and collaboration.

We hope to see you there and look forward to your continued involvement in advancing gifted education across Missouri!

District representatives are listed on the next page. If you need contact information, please feel free to reach out to our Executive Secretary ([gamexecsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:gamexecsecretary@gmail.com)).

# Member Caucus Invitation

*continued from Page 5*

## Region Directors

Region 1 Director	Crystal Koenig	1
Region 1 Assistant Director	Ginger Beard	1
Region 2 Director	Brian Stuhlman	2
Region 2 Assistant Director	Jody Thompson	2
Region 3 Director	Jenna Nelson	3
Region 3 Assistant Director	Kurt Austin, Jody Brison	3
Region 4 Director	Angie Cochran	4
Region 4 Assisstant	Anna McNay, Emily	4
Region 5 Director	Woodall Ashley Zeiler	5
Region 5 Assistant Director	Sarah Mason	5
Region 6 Director	Michelle Bobo	6
Region 6 Assistant Director	Christina Wallace	6
Region 7 Director	Heather VanOtterloo	7
Region 7 Assistant Director	Christina Landburg	7
Region 8 Co-Director	Jennifer Blank	8
Region 8 Co-Director	Aisha Hasan	8
Region 9 Co-Director	Marissa Cochran	9
Region 9 Co-Director	Lori Peel	9

Warm regards,  
 Dr. Tracy Bednarick-Humes  
 Executive President  
 Gifted Association of Missouri



# 2024 GIFTED ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI

*Conference*

## ALL OF US



JOIN US TO SEE  
**DR. DENISE  
FORD**

7TH-8TH  
OCTOBER  
2024

JOIN US AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - COLUMBIA

SCAN OUR REGISTRATION QR CODE ABOVE

# GAM Conference Schedule

*Monday*

Start Time	Session Title (Abbrev.)	Session Presenter
9:15 am	Nurturing the Whole Gifted Child	Rottjakob
9:15	Magic in the Middle	LaFollette
9:15	Hidden Potential: ...Nonverbal	Iborg
9:15	Building Community Among Gifted Learners	Gunter
9:15	Fostering Talent	Kincaid
10:15	Empowering Parents	Maschmann
10:15	New Teacher Workshop Take 2	Peterein, Harashi, and Spellmeyer
10:15	Gifted or Exceptionally Gifted Students	Brisch, Bennett
10:15	National History Day as Gifted Education	Prusnick, Winton, and Caplinger
10:15	Molding Motivation in Gifted Students	Klepper
2:45 pm	A Call for Equity in Gifted Identification	Brulles
2:45	School of Rock	Lee
2:45	Getting Excited about Overexcitabilities	Mansfield, Moore, and Voller
2:45	No More Lonely Onlies	Rogers, Gunter, and Hamm
2:45	Intelligence and Intimate Relationships	Huff
3:45	Success in Cluster Grouping	Brulles
3:45	Music Therapy and the Gifted Child	Kidwell, Politte
3:45	Service Learning	Burian
3:45	LGBTQ+ Gifted Students	Fuller
3:45	Empowering and Powering Down Perfectionism	Klepper

**Registration Information [HERE](#)**

See page 6 for Tuesday's schedule.



# GAM Conference Schedule

*continued from Page 8*

*Tuesday*

9:15 am	Unleashing Creative Potential	McKoy
9:15	Creating Advocates	Pohlman
9:15	Scaling Programs for HS	Holmes, Blank
9:15	Twinkle, Twinkle - SEL for higher level thinking	MacFarlane
9:15	Parent Support	Long
10:15	Identification and Support of High Ability Visual Artists	Fisher
10:15	Show-Me Green Schools	Curtis, Moylan
10:15	Your brain at play - the cognition of joy	Ford
10:15	Empowering Rural Gifted Education	Fuller
10:15	Think Like an Engineer: An After-School Class Fundraiser Idea	Smith



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Lauren Hanahan or Kristi Ponder  
at [ace@moaae.org](mailto:ace@moaae.org)

# GIFTED EDUCATION IN MISSOURI:

## Exploring Missouri’s Gifted Learner Outcomes (MO-GLOs) and Portrait of a Gifted Learner



### Missouri Gifted Learner Outcomes



### Portrait of a Gifted Learner



# Mastering Missouri Gifted Learner Standards Through Clarity for Learning: Essential Back to School Professional Development

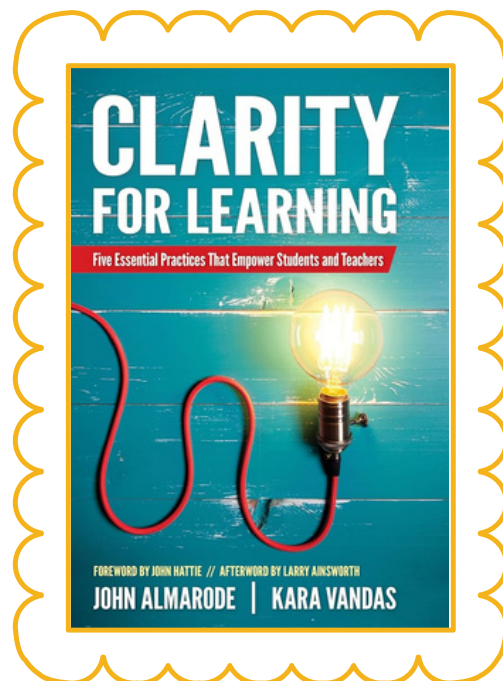
By Dr. Mollie Glazer (Parkway School District Gifted Program Lead)

There was excitement in the air as the Parkway gifted staff gathered for its second day of professional development during back-to-school week. The day before had focused on updates to our gifted testing and communication, using a brand new data card, and discussing updates to our gifted testing and communication processes. Now, we were ready to dive into day two with a clear focus: connecting clarity in testing with clarity in learning.

My mission going into day two was to show how this initiative will impact every facet of our work. With Parkway's new five-year strategic plan emphasizing "student success in school," it was the perfect time for us to explore how essential standards, learning intentions, and success criteria fit into our approach. This gave us a chance to dive deeper into MO-GLOs (Missouri Gifted Learning Objectives) and make them part of our everyday routines. Based on my experience, these tips were crucial for getting this initiative off to a strong start.

## Tip 1: Get Teachers on Board:

Our time began by focusing on the "why" behind our approach. I clarified that the district's strategy, as part of the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP), aims to achieve "student success in school" by improving clarity in learning across all grade levels and subject areas. This initiative presents a chance for our gifted team to leverage MO-GLOs to ensure that every student in every class understands what they are learning, why it's important, their current progress, and what they need to do to continue growing.



# Mastering MO-GLOs

*continued from Page 11*

## Tip 2: Hands-On Learning is Key

To drive home the importance of clarity, we turned the tables and had our gifted specialists play the role of students. They were tasked with drawing a butterfly without any instructions on what it should look like. They had to deduct points if their drawings missed certain features. This exercise showed just how crucial clear directions are for high-quality student work. We then discussed how unclear instructions could affect our ability to see if students are hitting their MO-GLO targets.



## Tip 3: Practice Makes Perfect

Identifying essential standards and constructing both learning intentions and success criteria based on MO-GLOs is no small feat. We broke down each concept, looked at some examples and non-examples, and talked about what works and what needs tweaking. With this insight, we started applying these ideas to our work.

## What's Next?

Given the size of Parkway, with its 18 elementary schools, we've put together an elementary curriculum team of three members to develop essential standards, learning intentions, and success criteria. They'll meet three times throughout the school year. I made sure to include teachers with a mix of experience in gifted education and curriculum writing. Once their work is done, it will be reviewed by the gifted staff for feedback before going through the formal curriculum review process. The middle school team, being smaller, will be actively involved in every step.

As we continue refining our approach with MO-GLOs as our guide, I'm confident we'll see a stronger gifted education experience here at Parkway. The goal is to help students produce even better work by making sure they know exactly what's expected of them.



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Washington University in St. Louis

# Aligning Curriculum to the MO-GLOs

By Jennifer Hawkins (St. Clair R-XIII)

Many school districts are implementing the DESE Missouri Learner Outcomes, or MO-GLOs, for their gifted education goals. This is not a DESE requirement, but a recommendation. The Portrait of a Gifted Learner includes six domains: Complex Reasoning, Creative Thinking, Affective Processing, Executive Functioning, Global Mindedness, and Communicating Effectively. The MO-GLOs are divided into four grade bands (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12) and focus specifically on three of the six domains: Complex Reasoning, Creative Thinking, and Affective Processing. Global Mindedness, Communicating Effectively, and Executive Functioning are embedded within those three domains. To learn more, visit [dese.mo.gov](http://dese.mo.gov).

The MO-GLOs came at the perfect time because I was revamping the St. Clair R-XIII Gifted Goals, and the MO-GLOs aligned well with the curriculum I was teaching. However, adopting the Missouri Learning Standards was just the first step. I then had to figure out how to identify the standards I was using for each activity and unit. There are many ways to do this, but a spreadsheet worked best for me. I included the three main domains, Complex Reasoning, Creative Thinking, and Affective Processing, along with their sub-categories. Then, I added the fourth column for Other (Embedded). I aligned daily activities as well as curriculum units for each grade level. Here is a small sample:

St. Clair Gifted Education Outcomes and Sample Activities

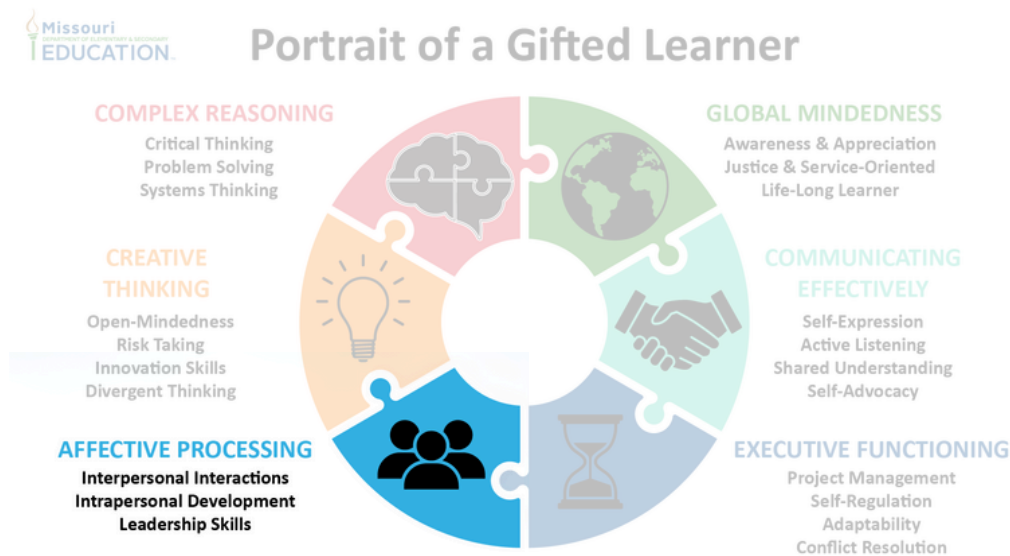
Domain Grade Span Outcomes	Complex Reasoning							Creative Thinking			Affective Processing			Other (Embedded)										
	Analyze Problems	Identify Solutions	Evaluate and Explain Reasoning	Use Deliberate Processes	Test, Analyze, and Iterate	Reflect on the Impact of Solutions	Systems Thinking	Logical Reasoning	Communicate Ideas	Risk Taking	Divergent Thinking	Innovation Skills	Self Expression	Intrapersonal Development	Interpersonal Interactions and Leadership	Self Regulation/Project Management	Adaptability	Global Mindedness	Communicating Effectively	Executive Functioning	Equity	Technology	Research	Workforce Readiness
	<b>All Grades</b>																							
Logic Puzzles	X	X	X	X				X		X														
Philosophical Questions	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X		X			
Daily Conversations													X	X					X		X			
Creative Problem Solving Challenges	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X				X
Social Emotional Learning Activities	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X		X	X	X				X		X			
Breakout Boxes	X	X	X	X				X		X	X		X		X		X		X			X	X	
Mystery Skype								X	X	X				X			X					X		
Chess Competitions				X			X			X														

I imported the complete spreadsheet into my gifted handbook so students’ parents and their teachers can see how our program incorporates the MO-GLOs into our curriculum. If you’d like to see the complete spreadsheet, contact [jhawkins@stcmo.org](mailto:jhawkins@stcmo.org).

# Growth Mindsets

By *Laura Edwards (Rockwood School District)*

I work in a k-5 gifted center model program in suburban St. Louis. I was a member of a committee charged with creating standards based on the Gifted Missouri Learner Outcomes. After developing academic standards based on the first two domains, our committee tackled the task of utilizing the affective processing domain.



When creating standards based on the Gifted Missouri Learner Outcomes, our staff took a different approach to incorporate the affective processing domain. While we wanted to address this area and provide feedback for parents, we also wanted to show how these skills are both fluid and ever-changing in students. We decided to create a section of the assessment that was user-friendly for teachers, students, and parents and also demonstrated students' progress on a continuum.

Our first task was to determine which parts of the affective processing domain to utilize. Based partially on our district's report card assessment, we chose to create a list of gifted academic growth mindsets. These skills included: academic risk-taking, engagement and persistence, collaboration, active learning, self-reflection, and self-regulation. We found that these 6 skills gave teachers and parents a chance to view how students learned and behaved in our classrooms. The skills reflected the big idea of the affective processing domain: as gifted learning, students will develop self-acceptance and self-awareness while demonstrating responsibility for their personal growth and engagement in their communities while embracing cultural and personal differences.

# Growth Mindsets

*continued from Page 15*

Our second task was to make these skills user-friendly for teachers, students, and parents. We discussed at length the big picture behind each of the learner outcomes. After we decided the most important skills to include, we wrote descriptions for each skill. For example, for academic risk-taking we added “views setbacks as an opportunity for learning”; self-regulation is “demonstrates the ability to organize, focus, and complete tasks in a timely manner.” The objective of making these descriptors was to make an efficient way to identify and assess the skills in students and to communicate to parents efficiently.

Our third task was to determine how to evaluate these skills in a productive way. It never quite feels right to mark a student as “below the standard” for risk-taking or collaboration. Students vary in these behaviors based on situation, age, experience, and other factors. Some students will join us at early ages with advanced ability to work with others, and others struggle to even make eye contact. It takes time to learn these skills. Our staff settled on a 3 tier approach to assessment: area for growth, making progress, and area of strength. This allowed teachers to acknowledge the students who already thrived in these areas, but also allowed teachers to show parents that, while students might struggle, they are improving. This 3 tier approach helped us to communicate to parents the level of the skill while also showing encouragement in that skill.

Overall, these growth mindsets helped us to evaluate students’ learning behaviors and provide feedback to parents.







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## FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

**Jena K. Randolph, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor and Special Education Online Program

Director, Department of Special Education

RandolphJ@missouri.edu

573-884-1911



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# Proficiency Scales in Gifted Education

By Megan Mann (Coordinator of Gifted Education for Springfield Public Schools, Springfield, MO)

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, the Phelps Center for Gifted Education faculty collaborated to create proficiency scales aligned with the Missouri Gifted Learner Outcomes (MO-GLOs). In vertically-aligned teacher teams, priority standards were selected based on faculty observation of our students' greatest affective and cognitive needs. Once the priority standards were chosen, the vertical Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) unpacked the standards to ensure faculty had a universal understanding of the standard's goals and expectations.

Next, we established a Proficiency Scale Committee, who wrote the first drafts of the proficiency scales for each prioritized MO-GLO. The grade-level PLTs then reviewed their band for each proficiency scale (e.g. 1st and 2nd grade teachers reviewed the 1-2 proficiency scale) and provided feedback on wording, content, and alignment to the MO-GLO. Once all grade levels' feedback was received, the vertically-aligned PLTs met again to review and revise the scales, producing a final draft of the proficiency scale.

This tedious process ensured all faculty members had input in the creation of each proficiency scale and were unified in understanding each standard's expectations. We have already used the proficiency scales to revise our diagnostic and summative assessments for the 2024-2025 school year. One pilot grade level began introducing proficiency scales to students during the introduction of each lesson to support the development of students' self-assessment skills. We anticipate these scales being used to guide lesson planning, formative assessment, and create a system in which expectations for student growth and achievement are aligned from 1st through 8th grade.

**Today's Goals**

**Granite**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

**PROFICIENCY LEVELS**

1	2	3	4
<b>BELOW PROFICIENT</b> I still need help and support from my teacher to do the simpler parts of the standard.	<b>APPROACHING PROFICIENT</b> I am getting close to meeting expectations and I can do the simpler parts of the standard independently.	<b>PROFICIENT</b> I meet the expectations described in the standard and can do them independently.	<b>HIGHLY PROFICIENT</b> I have a deep understanding of the standard and can demonstrate it in complex ways.
I can do it with a lot of help and support.	I can do it with some help and reminders.	I can do it myself.	I can do it myself and add extra details.

**I can...**

- select a specific goal in order to improve my thinking skills.

**Reflection Questions**

What progress did you make toward your goal?

Next time you set a goal, would you do anything differently?

(Proficiency Scale embedded in goal setting lesson on the “Today’s Goals” slide)

# Proficiency Scales

*continued from Page 18*

## Goal Setting

**Prioritized Competency: 3. Affective Processing, Intrapersonal Development, b.** Identify an actionable plan with strengths and areas of growth to exhibit confidence

**Grade Level Band: 3-4**

### Score 4.0: Complex Content

Demonstrations of learning that go above and beyond what was explicitly taught.  
For example, the student will:

- Identify success criteria in the context of goal-setting
- Evaluate the predicted effectiveness of proposed solutions to problems
- Independently justify success criteria of proposed solutions to problems

### Score 3.0: Target Content

The expectations for all learners.  
The student will:

- Identify a relevant grade- or age-appropriate goal.
- With guidance, formulate an action plan related to their goal.
- With support (as needed), evaluate the predicted effectiveness of proposed solutions to problems.

### Score 2.0: Simple Content

Foundational knowledge, simpler procedures, isolated details, vocabulary  
The student will recognize or recall specific vocabulary, such as:

- Elements of goal setting: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Oriented
- Confidence

The student will perform basic processes, such as:

- Identify strengths and areas of growth.
- Assess your ability within strengths and areas of growth.
- Choose a goal from a list of age- or grade-appropriate options.

### Score 1.0

With help, the student can perform expectations of 2.0 and 3.0 scores.

### Score 0.0

With help, the student cannot perform expectations.

# Proficiency Scales

*continued from Page 19*

## Goal Setting

### Prioritized Competency:

**3. Affective Processing, Intrapersonal Development, b.** Identify and assess strengths and areas of growth as a baseline for growth

### Grade Level Band: K-2

#### Score 4.0: Complex Content

Demonstrations of learning that go above and beyond what was explicitly taught.

For example, the student will:

- With guidance, formulate an action plan related to their selected goal.
- With guidance, monitor their progress within a teacher-determined time frame.
- Create a personal goal related to a specified topic.

#### Score 3.0: Target Content

The expectations for all learners.

The student will:

- Identify relevant areas of growth.
- Choose a goal from a list of age- or grade-appropriate options.
- With guidance, assess progress towards completion of their chosen goal.

#### Score 2.0: Simple Content

Foundational knowledge, simpler procedures, isolated details, vocabulary

The student will recognize or recall specific vocabulary, such as:

- Action plan
- Time frame
- Goal

The student will perform basic processes, such as:

- With guidance, identify strengths and areas of growth.
- Identify examples and non-examples of goals.

#### Score 1.0

With help, the student can perform expectations of 2.0 and 3.0 scores.

#### Score 0.0

With help, the student cannot perform expectations.

# Proficiency Scales

*continued from Page 20*

## Goal Setting 5-8

**Prioritized Competency: 3. Affective Processing, Intrapersonal Development, b.** Apply knowledge of strengths and areas of growth to personal decision-making

**Grade Level Band: 5-8**

### Score 4.0: Complex Content

Demonstrations of learning that go above and beyond what was explicitly taught.  
For example, the student will:

- Use knowledge of strengths and areas of growth to make decisions about the future.

### Score 3.0: Target Content

The expectations for all learners.  
The student will:

- Identify success criteria in the context of goal-setting
- Evaluate the predicted effectiveness of proposed solutions
- Independently rank and evaluate success criteria of proposed solutions to problems

### Score 2.0: Simple Content

Foundational knowledge, simpler procedures, isolated details, vocabulary  
The student will recognize or recall specific vocabulary, such as:

- Elements of goal setting: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Oriented
- Confidence

The student will perform basic processes, such as:

- Identify a grade or age-appropriate goal.
- With guidance, formulate an action plan related to their goal.
- With support (as needed), evaluate the predicted effectiveness of proposed solutions.
- Connect the progress of the action plan to self-efficacy.

### Score 1.0

With help, the student can perform expectations of scores 2.0 and 3.0.

### Score 0.0

With help, the student cannot perform expectations.



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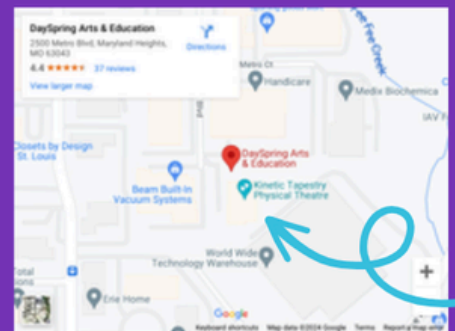
Maryville University's Center for Access and Achievement is excited to announce the location of our new space at DaySpring Arts & Education in Maryland Heights. We will offer daytime, after-school, and weekend STEAM courses for students ages 4-15. Topics include:

- ✓ Maker Mania
- ✓ STEAM Story Scholars
- ✓ Drones to the Rescue
- ✓ Engineering & Robotics
- ✓ Game Design
- ✓ Coding 101
- ✓ Robotics Workshops
- ✓ Movie Making

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## DESE Gifted Education Update August 30, 2024

Christine Nobbe  
Director of Gifted Education  
[Christine.Nobbe@dese.mo.gov](mailto:Christine.Nobbe@dese.mo.gov)



### Missouri Scholars and Missouri Fine Arts Academies

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I visited (and presented at) both academies in June and observed engaged scholars, enthusiastic educators, and a whole lot of learning! MFAA's website includes a list of their students and links to their social platforms. I followed them on Facebook but check out the posts on your favorite platform: <https://www.missouristate.edu/MFAA/students.htm>

MSA's website includes a "News & Profiles" section, links to Facebook and Instagram, and annual reports. They have posted the 2025 dates: <https://moscholars.missouri.edu/selection-process/important-dates/>.

It is time to get students excited about applying and the social media posts and photos are motivating! Please note: the Academies are funded for 2025. Make a plan to nominate students!

### The Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children (Council)

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The Council took the lead on revising the K-12 Gifted certification and changes took place August 1, 2024. The requirements are [posted](#) on the DESE Gifted Education page.

This year the Council will present to the State Board of Education at the December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. We have two new Board members and a new Commissioner so the presentation will include information from DESE on Missouri Gifted Programs and an update from the Council.

Council meetings, past reports, and white papers are available on the Council's webpage. One of the most recent publications (in the Quick Links) is on high school services. <https://dese.mo.gov/quality-schools/gifted-education/gifted-advisory-council>

### Gifted Rule and Gifted Program Application

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Because of SB 681, the gifted education rule and *Gifted Education Program Guidelines* needed an update. The amendment is focused on the fact that in schools with ADA of 350 or less, teachers providing services are not required to hold K-12 gifted certification. The rule was making progress and then we had to pull it back and adjust the guidance on Alternate Identification Plans. The amended rule and updated *Gifted Education Program Guidelines* will be in effect in November. If you haven't studied the changes, you can read the documents shared at the [April State Board of Education Meeting](#).

DESE requests that all districts indicate **if they will or will not have a gifted program** in 2024-25 by completing [this form](#). Please verify that someone in your district has completed the form. (Thank you!)

I am analyzing the information received and have contacted all districts who responded "yes, we will have a gifted program" and provided information on their responsibilities. Other action steps:

- The form collected the official Gifted Contact and the Lead Gifted Education Specialist, and those names have been subscribed to the Gifted-Ed listserv.
- Districts' first responsibility is to complete Core Data Screen 25 by September 13, and I shared information in three listserv messages.
- The form includes a question about "further support," and I reached out to districts about these three topics: identification/selection processes, completing Screen 25, and professional learning opportunities. I provided information in the email and invited them to reply to discuss further.
- My next set of emails will be about marking students as GS or GN (gifted served or not served) in MOSIS and marking teacher schedules with the 08 gifted program code.

### DESE's 2024 Summer Gifted Education Workshops & GAM's New Teacher Workshop

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2024 Summer Gifted Education Workshops: six dates, five Zoom events, three main topics, and one in-person meeting. The workshops were well

attended with many new educators present. GAM's New Teacher Workshop at the Innovation SAGE Center in North Kansas City brought together a record setting 35 new teachers and a dedicated team of organizers and presenters. For the second year, the Ferman Fund provided value-added experiences and materials for workshop attendees.

## Gifted and Talented Tuesdays 2024-25

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Gifted and Talented Tuesday events are planned for the 2024-25 School Year and will continue with the same general layout:

- First Tuesdays will be Space Talks for Students at 10:00 AM (not 11:00 AM).
- Second Tuesdays will be Information for Gifted Education Leaders at 9:00 AM, focusing on guest speakers.
- Third Tuesdays will focus on classroom ideas at 3:30 PM and will include guest speakers.
- Fourth (and Fifth) Tuesdays will focus on a book study, which is typically a free online book.

The Fall Flyer is available on the [Gifted Education page](#).

## Powerful Learning Conference

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The Call for Proposals is open for the Powerful Learning Conference. Conference attendees are interested in learning how to meet the needs of gifted learners in all classrooms. A team approach works well for presenting include at least one general education teacher who successfully meets the needs of gifted learners paired with a gifted education professional. Also, there is an interest in how gifted programs are using the Portrait of a Gifted Learner and MO-GLOs. Please consider [submitting a proposal](#)! (Due September 23<sup>rd</sup>)

## Upcoming Fall Conferences

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My focus for fall conferences is "The Case for Advanced Education and Ten Strategies to Support Gifted and Advanced Learners," based on a recent Fordham report. For each of the 10 strategies listed below, I am sharing one or two action items. I would love to share your success stories at eight fall conferences. [Please email me](#) if you have examples of the following...

## Ten Strategies to Support Gifted and Advanced Learners

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1. Provide accessible front-loading for all students in pre-K and kindergarten through classwork focused on complex reasoning, and through after-school, weekend, and/or summer enrichment opportunities.
2. Re-think the gifted program identification process so that more students are identified and served.
3. Adopt universal screening to identify students with potential.
4. Use data from universally available assessments at all grade levels, so that identification is on-going year after year.
5. Accelerate students in particular subjects, allow grade skipping, and offer competency-based pathways.
6. Provide advanced courses in as many subjects as possible in grades 6-12 online or in-person.
7. Provide high-quality professional-learning opportunities for educators about evidence-based advanced learning strategies.
8. Empower teachers to use data to support advanced learners.
9. Develop (or purchase) pre-differentiated curriculum where unit plans and lesson plans include activities, materials, and resources at a variety of academic levels.
10. Implement a plan for supporting advanced students' mental wellbeing.

These ten strategies are from a list of 36 in the [Building a Wider, More Diverse Pipeline of Advanced Learners](#) published by the Fordham Institute.

## Staying Connected

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Even though I am in a state office building, I strive to remain connected with gifted learners and gifted education classrooms. Help keep me connected by inviting me to participate in your events. I will do my best to attend virtually or in-person.

## Looking Ahead!

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*Progress is rarely a straight line. There are always bumps in the road, but you can make the choice to keep looking ahead.*

-Kara Goucher





# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



## Missouri State Capitol Report

By Kyna Iman (GAM Governmental Affairs Consultant)

GAM'S ADVOCACY EFFORTS NEVER END!!

During the 2024 election cycle, 163 of the State House of Representative seats and 17 of the State Senate seats will be up for election on November 5. Over a third of the House seats are “open” seats and will elect new, first-time legislators to office. While several of the candidates running for office are teachers, I would guess that they are not experts – LIKE YOU – regarding gifted educational needs.

That’s why GAM’s advocacy work is ongoing. There are always new legislators to “educate” on the importance of providing programs and services for gifted students in Missouri.

Not only is GAM’s advocacy work never done with educating new incoming legislators, we also need to continue to nurture and grow and support those who support gifted education to become strong leaders for us as they are re-elected.

GAM has been successful with our advocacy efforts, but there is much work to be done! Our students need your voice! Lend your voice in helping persuade policy makers that Missourians care about gifted children and gifted education. By advocating, YOU – the EXPERT IN GIFTED EDUCATION – can make a difference in the life and education of our gifted students.

Get Out to Vote!! You can start by making a difference by making sure you are registered to vote! Please check the Secretary of State’s website, [Check Your Voter Registration \(mo.gov\)](#), to get all the information you need to vote. It will give you the voting location, and the candidates and issues you will be asked to vote on. Make sure you do your homework before you get in the ballot box, to help elect candidates who support gifted education.

From October 9, to the day before the election, you may vote a no-excuse absentee ballot in person at a location designated by your local election authority. [Local Election Authority \(mo.gov\)](#)

# Legislative Update

*continued from Page 25*

A complete list of all Statewide Candidates who won the Primary Elections on August 6, can be accessed here: [CertificationOfCandidatesNovember2024.pdf \(mo.gov\)](#)

## **Gifted Mandate goes into Law!**

In 2022, the Missouri General Assembly approved legislation, that starting this school year, to require all schools in Missouri to provide gifted education services to students identified as gifted. Senate Bill 681 & 662 stated the following in Chapter 162.720:

“For school year 2024-25 and all subsequent school years, if three percent or more of students enrolled in a school district are identified as gifted and their development requires programs or services beyond the level of those ordinarily provided in regular public school programs, the district shall establish a state-approved gifted program for gifted children.

For school year 2024-25 and all subsequent school years, any teacher providing gifted services to students in districts with an average daily attendance of more than three hundred fifty students shall be certificated in gifted education. In districts with an average daily attendance of three hundred fifty students or fewer, any teacher providing gifted services shall not be required to be certificated to teach gifted education but such teacher shall annually participate in at least six clock hours of professional development focused on gifted services. The school district shall pay for such professional development focused on gifted services.

The state board of education shall determine standards for such gifted programs and gifted services. Approval of gifted programs shall be made by the state department of elementary and secondary education based upon project applications submitted at a time and in a form determined by the department of elementary and secondary education.”

Thank you to all the advocates for gifted education that helped this mandate become Missouri law!!

I look forward to working with GAM in the upcoming session and achieving more victories on behalf of all the gifted and talented students in Missouri!  
Keep up the good fight!!



# 2025

DRURY UNIVERSITY PRE-COLLEGE PROGRAMS

# CAMP



## SIGN UP NOW FOR FALLSCAPE

**FALLSCAPE 2024** October 12, 2024 – [www.drury.edu/giftededucation](http://www.drury.edu/giftededucation)

**SUMMER PALS & SUMMER QUEST** July 7 – 18, 2025

Grades PK – 5<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 am – 11:30 am – *registration opens in January 2025*

**SUMMERSCAPE** July 13-20, 2025

Grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> classes and residential – *registration opens in January 2025*

**DRURY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY** July 13-20, 2025

Grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> classes and residential – *registration opens in January 2025*

Hoping to see you in 2025! Financial need scholarships available. Please contact me with any questions.

Mary Potthoff, Director  
Center for Gifted Education  
[mpotthof@drury.edu](mailto:mpotthof@drury.edu)



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\*The information in this flyer does not constitute the District's endorsement of the activity, organization, organization's mission, organization's message or any opinion expressed by the organization, its members or persons who attend the activity.



## 2024-25 Gifted Association of Missouri Upcoming Virtual Speaker Series Monday Nights 7-8 pm Central Time

### Monday, September 16--Parenting your Gifted Child with Aisha Hasan (Region 8 Representative)

Parenting gifted children can be challenging, but new research shows that environments focused on strengths and talents are helping students to thrive. But what does that mean? We'll discuss what strengths-based means, how it can change your parenting, and ways to shift into a strengths-based mindset.

Register [HERE](#)

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### Monday, October 21--2E Students with Gayle Bentley

Gayle Bentley, a leading expert in the field of education, will share her insights on 2E (Twice Exceptional) children. Her presentation will focus on understanding the unique challenges and strengths of 2E students, offering strategies to help them thrive both academically and emotionally. With her extensive experience, Gayle Bentley will provide practical tools for educators and parents to support the success of these gifted yet learning-challenged individuals. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from a distinguished voice in educational excellence.

Register [HERE](#)

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### Monday, November 18--Lesson Plan Share Out Hosted by Tracy Bednarick-Humes (GAM President and Lindbergh School Gifted Coordinator)

Drop in to pick up some fun ideas for bringing creativity and problem solving lessons to your gifted students.

- Lesson 1: Designing for Others--Tracy Bednarick-Humes
- Lesson 2: Gifted Curriculum Ideas Grades 3-5--Jennifer Blank (Region 8 Representative)
- Lesson 3: Six Bricks Challenges--Michelle Bobo (Region 6 Representative)

Register [HERE](#)

# GAM Speaker Series

*continued from Page 28*

## **Monday, January 13–New Gifted Education Program Guidelines with Christine Nobbe (State Director of Gifted Education)**

Happy New Year! Happy New Gifted Education Program Guidelines! Happy New State Statutes! Join Christine Nobbe, DESE's Director of Gifted Education, for an update on Gifted Education in Missouri. Beyond the new guidelines and statutes, the Portrait of a Gifted Learner and Missouri Gifted Learner Outcomes will be discussed.

Register [HERE](#)

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## **Monday, February 10–Managing Expectations and Anxiety with Pam Washington (Webster Groves Schools Gifted Director)**

Using the facets of emotional intelligence, we will discuss ways to support our children with managing expectations and anxiety. We will also discuss ways parents and educators can strengthen their emotional intelligence to best support their children.

Register [HERE](#)

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## **Monday, April 14--Supporting Gifted Kids in a General Education Classroom with Jennifer Hawkins (GAM Executive Secretary)**

As gifted educators, it's important that we make sure our students continue to learn when they go back to their general education classrooms. Learn ways to differentiate curriculum using interventions and extensions for "Those Who Already Know It."

Register [HERE](#)



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**New to  
GAMbit!**

# GAMbits *and* Pieces

GAMbits and pieces is a new section in our quarterly GAMbit newsletter that features articles which don't necessarily fit the issue's main theme but are still valuable and relevant to our readers. It's a collection of diverse topics and insights that complement our themed content, ensuring we cover a wide range of interests within the gifted community.

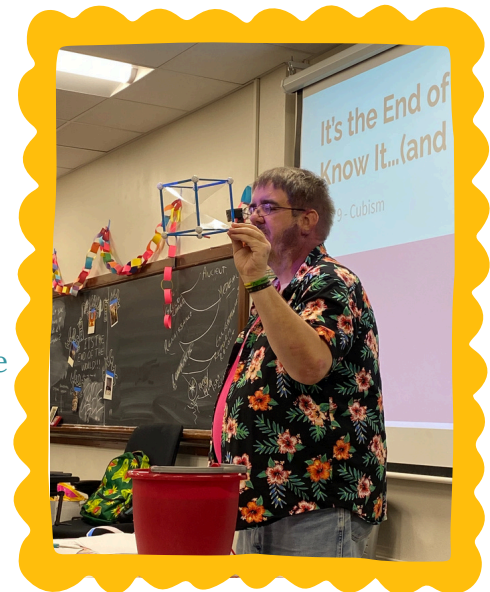
# A Day at MSA

By Jody Thompson (Camdenton Schools, GAM Director for District 2)

GAMbits  
and Pieces

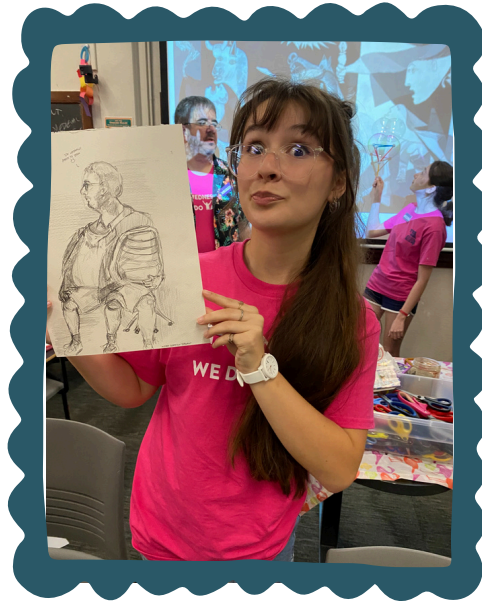
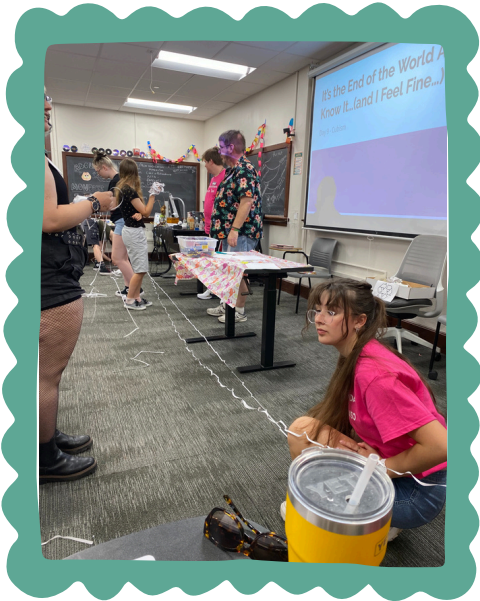
As I woke up early to dress for my day at MSA. I considered what to wear. I decided to dress in layers for the warmth outside and the possible cool temperatures of a collegiate building. I scanned my closet for a cardigan that would be light and just right. I decided that the beautifully intricate dragonfly crochet cardigan my daughter made me for Christmas would be something that gifted students would appreciate. I left my house early for my almost two hour drive north to Columbia. This gave me time to think about the purpose and intent of my day. One, I wanted to visit my nominee and show them my support. Secondly, I wanted to see what my fellow District 2 GAM Director, Brian Stuhlman's, day looked like during the MSA festivities. Thirdly, I wanted to see for myself what all the fuss was about so that I could share my newfound knowledge with the next year's nominees.

Luckily, I have a true friend in Brian who is wonderful at giving directions. I found his classroom in Lafferre Hall, without any mishap despite the minimal staff available that day due to it being Juneteenth holiday. As I sat in Brian's classroom awaiting the arrival of 16 gifted students and their fearless leader, I noticed something written on the board. It was a Gen Z quote; you may have heard this one, "What the Sigma". I had heard it a few times before the end of the school year. I had a bit of time so I looked it up. So, basically, Sigma is the third letter in the Greek alphabet, and Sigma by itself has been used by Gen Z's to describe a male that is a lone wolf and is someone who could step up and lead the pack if needed. Now, the phrase "What the Sigma " comes from our favorite mind numbing show, Spongebob Square pants. In the show Squidward just comes out with the phrase "What the Sigma", which basically means nothing. It is just a filler phrase, so do not be alarmed if you hear this being tossed around. Just as I finished reading this the students started to file in. After everyone was settled, Brian began his lesson on cubism. It was a wonderful lesson - one that began with a challenge: each student received a piece of paper, scissors, and one inch of tape. Their task was to create the longest continuous piece of paper possible. Most of the students worked very hard on the task with one girl making her piece stretch from one side of the room to the other. When I thought surely she had won the competition, quietly from the back of the room one student held up his piece of paper that he had turned into a mobius strip. He had won by creating an endless loop. Genius!



# A Day at MSA

*continued from Page 31*



As I sat pondering the rest of the lesson, I thought about how Picasso was inspired by other great thinkers of his time like Einstein and the concept of 4 dimensional shapes. It made me appreciate being on the GAM board because I was able to meet Brian and all the rest of the wonderful members. I greatly value all the knowledge, insights, and curriculum ideas that I have gained from them. Plus, it provides me with a network of friends that share my passion for gifted education. This lesson on Cubism not only encompassed art, culture, history, math, and forward thinking, but inspired the students to embrace what is new and build on what is old. My favorite quote from Brian, “You are not wrong”. This is such a fun way to validate a student's ideas while allowing room for more ideas to flow. With that simple phrase, he is saying, this is a new concept you are learning, and I am here to help you grow in understanding. You are not wrong, but you're not fully there yet either. At the end of the lesson, we formed a circle and he gave us all a piece of paper and asked us to draw him. Brian posed as The Thinker by Rodin in the center of the room, and our determination was evident as we got to work on our “masterpieces”. After about 5 minutes in this pose, Brian rotated his chair by one quarter of a turn clockwise. The room was in an uproar, “How could you,” the students growled, “I was just getting started.” He said, “Just roll with it guys.” I had to chuckle under my breath, knowing that is easier said than done by a group of perfectionist, gifted students. He rotated all the way around the clock, and then one more click. What we had when we were done was a fantastic, 4D-ish piece of artwork.



# A Day at MSA

*continued from Page 32*

Brian and his colleagues welcomed me to visit their classrooms while chatting during lunch. We had interesting conversations about dark matter, foraging, and pop music. I received several compliments from the gifted students in the lunchroom on my dragonfly crochet cardigan. See, I knew they would appreciate the craftsmanship and creativity behind its evolution. After lunch, we all descended to the auditorium with one task in mind. We wanted to hear all the activities that were available for the students to choose from after their minor and Cor PSD. The opening speaker began the conversation by asking the students to share something that they learned in their major. The students began to share funny stories about their professors and what they had said or done. The speaker smiled and said, “Well that didn't go as I had expected.” I enjoyed the merriment that resulted from the students razzing their professors. The professors had been successful at creating a welcoming environment for the students to be themselves with the rest of their new friends at “Nerd Camp”, as the students so lovingly nicknamed MSA.



# A Day at MSA

*continued from Page 34*

Now it was time to meet up for the minor on Criminology with my nominee. We were excited to see each other and she asked, "Are you going to follow me around all day?" I said, "I don't have to," and she replied, "No, please do." We all gathered under a tree outside to hear the instructions for the scavenger hunt. The professor asked the students to walk around the campus grounds looking for evidence of engineering and design to promote prosocial behavior, and to keep the campus police from patrolling the grounds nonstop. We took a stroll, jotting down any design ideas we noticed that subconsciously promotes good behavior. We reconvened at a previously disclosed location across the way from where we started. It was a fun exercise, but the shade was welcomed once we arrived at our destination. The students enjoyed sharing what they had found for barriers or deturents; such as landscaping, signs, railings, and benches. They also discussed the scheduling of their day and how keeping them busy prevents them from down time that could lead to mischief. At the end of the minor, the students have what is called Cor PSD. This is the original social emotional curriculum designed by the MSA faculty members specifically for the MSA program. During this lesson the students were doing a WOOP. Which I learned stands for Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, Plan. The professor had the students draw pictures to represent their WOOP. He gave them the option to think of something they had encountered with MSA or with life in general. My favorite piece of artwork had to be the student who explained his desire to use his phone, but how after a few weeks at MSA without it, he began to feel better and more appreciative of the beauty of the world around him. For more information about how to use a WOOP, check out this website: [How to use a WOOP](#)



All in all, it was a wonderful experience, and I would definitely encourage other gifted educators to nominate their high school students for the program. If you would like to reach out to me, you can email me at [jthompson@camdentonschools.org](mailto:jthompson@camdentonschools.org). Also, for more information about MSA check out my friend Brian Stuhlman's GAMbit article beginning on page 29. [2023 Spring GAMbit](#)



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## SPRING 2025

- ED 550 G – Introduction to Gifted and Talented\*
- ED 605 G – Psychology of Exceptional Children^
- ED 619 G – Gifted Internship^
- ED 626 G – Creativity\*
- ED 633 G – Research in Gifted Education^
- ED 652 G – Affective Needs of Gifted\*\*

\* Offered first 8-week session

\*\* Offered second 8-week session

^ Full semester

## SUMMER 2025

- ED 550 G – Introduction to Gifted and Talented (1st or 2nd, 5-weeks)
- ED 605 G – Psychology of Exceptional Children (1st or 2nd, 5-weeks)
- ED 626 G – Creativity\*
- ED 650 G – Identification of Gifted\*\*
- ED 652 G – Affective Needs of Gifted\*
- ED 653 G – Programming and Administration of Gifted (1st or 2nd, 5-weeks)

\* Offered first 5-week session

\*\* Offered second 5-week session

## FALL 2025

- ED 550 G – Intro to Gifted\*
- ED 604 G – Professional Learning: Gifted Policy, Practice, & Research\*\*
- ED 605 G – Psychology of Exceptional Children^
- ED 619 G – Gifted Internship^
- ED 633 G – Research in Gifted Education^
- ED 651 G – Curriculum for Gifted (1st or 2nd, 8-weeks)

\* Offered first 8-week session

\*\* Offered second 8-week session

^ Full semester

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Email  
[gifted@truman.edu](mailto:gifted@truman.edu)



# Overexcitabilities

By Summer Cowick (Owner, Brilliant and Then Some, LLC)

GAMbits  
*and Pieces*

Meltdowns, tantrums, outbursts and disrespect. Gifted children aren't supposed to act like this! If they do, surely, they aren't gifted. What if I told you that those behaviors are absolutely normal for many gifted children and they have been normal for a very long time?

Kazimierz Dabrowski's research into an individual's mental growth, in the mid-1900's, led to his overarching theory of Positive Disintegration. Serendipitously, while conducting his research, he noticed hypersensitivities, particularly in gifted people. We found 5 main areas of sensitivities, which can be known as "overexcitabilities": Psychomotor, Sensual, Intellectual, Imaginational and Emotional.



Imagine being able to understand the holocaust but emotionally being too young to process such terror, violence, fear and abhorrence. One could think of overexcitabilities as a form of asynchronous development as they can cause extreme highs and lows in the ability to process the world. If you understand the concept of overexcitabilities, you know gifted children experience the world in a very different way—diverging from neurotypical peers.

When looking through the lens of a parent or teacher, overexcitabilities can look like many other things such as ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorder, Autism, etc. which has led to skepticism in the gifted and psychological world. But, what if naming these traits helps gifted people understand they are not broken? They are just wired differently and still have so much to contribute.

Children with a psychomotor overexcitability can seem restless but when their brain is fully engaged or completely bored, the body has to do something with the energy—move! They can also be ultra-competitive and focused on rule following (often for everyone else more than themselves).

# Overexcitabilities

*continued from Page 36*

Emotionally overexcitable children can seem dramatic or like they overreact to situations. Look up: “college girl overreacts to mars rover birthday” for a classic example of an emotional OE and a typical response of those around her. Pointing out the mistakes of others, hyper fixation and info dumping are key traits of the intellectually overexcitable child. They will act like a sponge for information—as long as it is interesting to them. These scholars may not seem to live up to their potential, however, in areas where they are disinterested.

“Liar” and “Overexaggerating” are words often used to describe those with an imaginal overexcitability. They have vivid imaginations that can make it difficult for them to tell the difference between fact and fiction.



Extreme aversions to sights, sounds, smells, tastes, textures that are hard-wired and less controllable plague the scholar with a sensory overexcitability. This can also be diagnosed as Sensory Processing Disorder.

In my gifted classroom and within my business, Brilliant And Then Some, we explore the OEs, how they affect your life and how to mitigate and make them work for you, as opposed to hindering you.

Whether the concept of overexcitabilities will ever be truly embraced in the world of psychology, education and giftedness remains to be seen but if they help a single person understand who they are and to actualize their potential... it's worth it.

# 2025 GAMbit Call For Articles!

Whether you are a parent, educator, or administrator, GAM would love to hear from YOU! Potential article topics could be parent involvement, teacher tips, best practices in gifted education, and so much more!

## ARTICLE REQUIREMENTS

- 250-500 Words
- Related to Gifted and Talented Education
- Times New Roman, Size 12 Font
- Double Spaced
- Submitted via Word or Google Docs
- Includes 3-4 photos of author and/or related to topic

**2025  
DUE  
DATES**

SPRING: FEBRUARY 1, 2025

SUMMER: APRIL 1, 2025

FALL: SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

WINTER: NOVEMBER 1, 2025

Questions? Email  
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