



2018 **Scholar's Academy** No Longer Funded by the State



By Steven W. Keller, Ph.D., Director, Missouri Scholars Academy

The Missouri Scholars Academy was founded in 1985. This residential academic enrichment academy operates for three weeks in June. Scholars are selected based on IQ, standardized test scores, high school GPA, student essays and letters of recommendation. 330 scholars represent the top 0.5% of all rising high school juniors in Missouri. The academy was fully funded by the Missouri legislature from 1985 – 2009 and 2015 – 2016. MSA goes further than even the most well - funded AP high school programs because of their interdisciplinary programming opportunities and the focus on creating a community of scholars from every corner of the state.

Funding Needs – Full state funding ensures that all deserving scholars can attend, regardless of socio economic background or the level of support available from their individual schools and districts. Full state funding reinforces the commitment and investment that the state has in these talented young people. The Gifted Association of Missouri has tirelessly fought for funding this special program for gifted children. Please join GAM's advocacy network to fight to continue to fund the Academies!

“MSA challenged my worldview by allowing me to meet so many new people from so many different backgrounds. I once thought that my life was limited to the small town I’m from, but after attending MSA, I realized that the world is so much bigger than a ten – mile radius with a Waffle House and a movie theatre.”

GAM's mission is to communicate, advocate, and educate.
Please consider becoming a member today!

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Publication of information does not imply endorsement of programs or events by the Gifted Association of Missouri unless such endorsement is specifically stated.

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Submissions for publication, inquiries, and comments are encouraged. Send to Sheila_Bonner@idschools.org

You're Invited - Calendar of Events

MEGSSS Summer Programs

(Full and half day available):
Mon-Fri, July 10-21, 2017

Duke Tip Summer CRISIS Program

Session 3 takes place July 10 – 15
Washington University in St. Louis

Burns & McDonnell

2017 Educators Summit
August 2

SAVE THE DATE!
GAM Annual Conference
Friday and Saturday
October 20-21, 2017

If you have events you would like to add to our calendar, please contact the editor at Sheila_Bonner@idschools.org

2017 GAM LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ACCELERATION LEGISLATION

Rep. Donna Pfautsch (R-Harrisonville) filed one of GAM's priority pieces of legislation. House Bill 257 requires each school district to establish an acceleration policy for any student meeting specified requirements.

Supporters say that some schools do have such policies but many do not. We should have the opportunity for our students to be accelerated if it is in their best interests. Currently, some of the opportunities such students have are at the whims of particular administrators, which is not always good for the student. This is an important step. Acceleration policies differ based on the different districts' needs and this bill allows them to maintain policies based on their specific needs.

Although, Rep. Pfautsch was successful in passing this provision through the House, it did not make it through the Senate.

GIFTED REVIEW POLICY LEGISLATION

Rep. Chrissy Sommer (R-St. Charles) filed House Bill 670, which states any district with a gifted education program approved by the State shall have a policy, approved by the board of education of the district, that establishes a process that outlines the procedures and conditions under which parents or guardians may request a review of the decision that determined that their child did not qualify to receive services through the district's gifted education program.

Like the acceleration legislation, this legislation did not make it to the Governor's desk.

GIFTED MANDATE LEGISLATION

Rep. Michael Butler, (D-St. Louis City) filed House Bill 1030, a bill that changed a "may" to a "shall" to require all Missouri school districts to offer a state-approved gifted program. The bill had its first hearing in the House, but never had a vote or further action taken. GAM has some work to do on this legislation prior to filing again next session. The committee asked many quality questions, and GAM will continue to work with our sponsor to file again next year.

A huge thank you goes out to our supporters of gifted education who came to the Capitol to present testimony at the hearings on GAM's priority pieces of legislation. Also, a huge thank you to all who made calls and wrote letters to advocate for more gifted programs in Missouri schools!! Keep up the good fight! Your voices are being heard!

BUDGET AND OTHER EDUCATION BILLS

Although the School Foundation Formula was fully funded, not one education bill made it to the Governor this session. There were many discussions centered around charter school legislation and school voucher legislation. Due to these bills being highly controversial, they slowed all the other education bills to a halt.

MISSOURI SCHOLARS ACADEMY & MISSOURI FINE ARTS ACADEMY

The funding for the Academies was zeroed out of the 2018 budget. Thank you for all the calls and letters to support the Academies, but in a year of \$500 million cuts, the funding did not survive. A coalition of groups are working together to identify other funds to make it through the 2018 year. Please continue to educate your legislator on the importance of these programs for our state's gifted children.

If you have questions, please contact GAM's Governmental Affairs Consultant, Kyna Iman at kynaiman@earthlink.net

The World's Largest Celebration of Creativity

By Jennifer J. Hawkins, Gifted Education, St. Clair R-XIII



Three St. Clair R-XIII Challenge teams competed in the state Destination Imagination competition in Joplin on Saturday, April 1, 2017. Each team shared a solution to a prepared team challenge as well as a spontaneous Instant Challenge.

First place teams earned the opportunity to advance to Global Finals, “The World’s Largest Celebration of Creativity,” which will take place in Knoxville Tennessee May 24-28.

Two St. Clair teams earned the opportunity to compete in the international competition. *The Secret Cypher Squad* earned 1st place for their Scientific Challenge using cryptography to solve a secret mission to save the planet Akropolis. *The Red Ripe Potatoes* earned second place, however the team was chosen as the “wild card” team, because they were only one point behind the first place team. Therefore, they will also have the opportunity share their solution, which highlights a colorful character and theatrical effects, at Global Finals.

WHAT IS DESTINATION IMAGINATION?

Destination Imagination (DI) is an international, educational program that gives kids an amazing outlet for their creativity, while teaching them leadership, teamwork, positive thinking, project management and so much more. Teams of 2 to 7 kids from 3rd grade through university level solve one of six open-ended Challenges (Scientific, Engineering, Fine Arts, Service Learning, Improvisation, or Technical) in their own unique ways, and present their solutions at Regional Teams also solve an on-the-spot Instant Challenge at the tournaments, where they must think quickly on their feet and work together to solve a problem in around five minutes. Winners advance to the Affiliate (state/country) Tournament, and winners at the Affiliate Tournament move on to Global Finals to compete against more than 1,400 teams from around the world, including 48 states and over 15 countries.

www.destinationimagination.org

2017 New Teacher Workshop

GAM is committed to supporting new teachers of the gifted and to renewing skills and strategies for experienced gifted teachers. The New Teacher workshop is an excellent opportunity to learn from veteran gifted teachers, expand knowledge, skills, and best practices.

When: June 26-27, 2017

Where: University of Missouri Campus

For more information contact:

Nancy Gerardy, Teacher Education Committee, Chair

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WIN for Nguyens

By: Kayleigh R., Print Journalism class
St. Joseph School District

Every year, the St. Joseph School District participates in the Scripps Howard Spelling Bee for different grades. This year there were approximately 100 students competing in grades 5-8 and it all came down to a family affair. Sylvia, fifth grade, and Sophia Nguyen, sixth grade, both students at Oak Grove Elementary, and SJSD GATE students battled it out for school and regional honors. During the local competition, judges finally just awarded the girls a first and second since the competition didn't seem likely to end easily.

At the county competition, it all boiled down to a contest between Sophia and Sylvia again. The judges resorted to using more difficult words immediately to break the tie and Sylvia came out on top. Sylvia Nguyen states, "Everyone has words they struggle on during a Spelling Bee or a spelling contest. I was so excited when I won! It was amazing!"

Sylvia will be travelling with a parent to Washington, DC the last week of May to participate in the National Spelling Bee for a \$40,000 prize. The family plans to make it into a vacation and will pay the difference for the rest of the family to go along. No matter what the outcome - they are the Nguyens. Even more astounding is both girls earned first in their grade in the Regional Math Contest the morning of the County Spelling Bee and Sylvia will advance to the National Math Competition in June. Both girls will also be competing in the International Future Problem Solving Competition. It's definitely a win for the Nguyens!

Is Boredom in the Gifted a Problem or an Opportunity?

Dr. Kristofor Wiley and Dr. Brandi Klepper



Imagine a morning of Professional Development from Hell. Administratively required to attend, you watch helplessly as your presenter takes the stage alongside an overhead projector and places a neat grid of single-digit multiplication problems before you and your colleagues.

“Who can tell me the product of six times nine?”

Sensing a hook activity or the setup for a joke, you glance around the room and chuckle as a handful of teachers say, “54” (perhaps a little too tentatively). Your smile fades as the presenter continues forward, one fact after another, for twenty minutes, assuming you need the reinforcement.

This is what some gifted students experience in the classroom. When our kids approach us as educators, psychologists, or parents with claims of boredom, we cannot help but sympathize. Our own personal demons, individualized versions of the scenario above, scream from our emotional centers into our consciousness, and we begin to twitch, engage fight or flight, and attempt to solve the problem. How could we think of doing anything but saving this highly capable child from this disempowered tedium?

As it turns out, this is a complicated and important question. As you might suspect, there are several factors to consider when crafting a response to the cries of the withering scholar:

1. Boredom can mean many things. Research on the topic indicates that while the majority of claims have to do with understimulation, no small number of complaints actually stem from overstimulation and struggle. Furthermore, the word “boredom” is often an easy substitute for more complex but tangentially related states, including agitation, helplessness, or confusion.
2. Responses to boredom differ in varying contexts. Many students opt for internal responses such as daydreaming, doodling, or creating a new language on scratch paper. Under different conditions, the same student might double down on classroom discussion to drive it forward, or use his trombone to shoot wads of paper at the clock behind the conductor in protest.
3. While people differ in their propensity for boredom, it is ultimately an environmental interaction. Belton and Priyadharshini (2007) point out that boredom is both dispositional and situational, highlighting the presence of a “Boredom Proneness Scale” and the potential dangers of labeling a student as prone to boredom. When we consider boredom, we must consider the interaction between student and environment.
4. Boredom is not necessarily a negative state. Boredom is actually a survival trait, built around our brain’s inherent filter that allows us to focus only on the important stimuli in a massive, unending flood of images, sounds, and meanings (Vodanovich, 2003). Instead of contending with every piece of data in our personal universe, we are allowed to absorb only the meaningful and consider it for better use.

This last bit is perhaps the most informative for our response to beleaguered students. It is possible that some degree of boredom is productive, actually necessary, for cognitive function. Mann and Cadman (2014) go so far as to ask whether boredom might inspire creativity, and they show moderate evidence that it can. Boredom is the origin of some of the best play. It is also sometimes precedent to a calm and healthy intellect, an idea increasingly revealed through research in mindfulness technique.

Unfortunately, perception of boredom does not take into account the possible benefits. Of several dozen gifted students interviewed by the authors, only a handful responded that boredom could be, in any way, interpreted as positive. We intend to follow up on that survey with more comprehensive interviews this summer, with the goal of a short primer for students (and the adults surrounding them) on boredom and potential benefits, along with strategies for engaging the complaint. Perhaps, armed with a little understanding, we can teach our students and ourselves to embrace undirected moments and grow through them.

Lamar's Gifted Program Places First at Extemporé

By Teresa Shelton, Lamar R-1 Gifted Teacher

The Lamar Gifted program attended Extemporé competition on May 6th, 2017 at Blue Springs Brittany Hills Middle School. Lamar brought 31 students on 6 teams and competed all day in creative problem solving, skits, and Aha's. The students also competed in scholar's bowl, socket to me strategy game, sync me a song competition, and Thinker's Hall which consisted of checkers, chess, and mancala. The Lamar teams brought home 1st in division 3 (high school) Perspective, 1st in division 2 (middle school) Fine Tuning, 1st Scholar's Bowl, and 1st Sync Me A Song.



The Lamar 8th grade team of Jillian Gardner, Cade Griffith, Kara Morey, and Gabe Davis placed first in Division 2 Fine Tuning.



Autumn Shelton comprised the Lamar Scholar's Bowl team and placed first in division 2/3. She competed in 3 out of 4 rounds of competition. Each round was comprised of 40 questions about this year's theme of Say Watt (Electricity).

The 8th grade team of Cade Griffith, Aaron Morgan, Jillian Gardner, Gabe Davis, Kara Morey, Draiden Willhite, Darcy McDonald placed first in the Sync Me a Song competition. They found music that went with the theme of the competition and created a creative dance/lip sync performance that lasted 3 minutes.



The high school team of Autumn Shelton, Sam Mather, Gavin Carothers, Ethan Hasson, Gabi Miller, and Grett Smith on the back row place 1st in division 3 Perspective. The team created a skit, backdrop, and props for competition. They also practiced instant challenges for the 3 Aha's during competition. The performance score plus aha scores along with teamwork scores are added together to determine winners.

You Can Do the Cube!

By Christa Bell, GAM Regional District B Director

Rubik's Cube offers a lending library of their cubes. They are 3X3 cubes and you can keep them for 6 weeks. Rubik's Cube provides units and lessons when shipping the set. They incorporate critical thinking, Math, and STEM/STEAM. Engaging lessons are written by teachers and classroom tested. Rubik's regularly reviews and expands their collection of lessons and activities. Teachers can even submit their own lesson on their website: <https://www.youcandothecube.com/educators/rubiks-cube-units-and-lessons/>

Each Education Kit contains: 12, 24 or 36 official Rubik's® Cubes and Solution Guides, 1 USB with 40+ lessons aligned to Common Core standards, including a Learn to Solve program (gr 3- 12), Rubik's Cube Unit Study teacher's guide and student workbook (gr 5-8) and STEM unit from STEM.org (gr 2-5), 1 poster, 1 letter of introduction, an Implementation Guide, a Competition Guide and a Mosaic Guide.

Middle School students were all able to solve the cube with the help of this program. Many of them even became incredibly quick at doing it! After learning about the mosaics, several students expressed interest in making them. You can borrow a mosaic builder set of 50, 100, 225, 400, or 600 cubes. The checkout time is also 6 weeks and the teacher just has to pay the return shipping which is discounted.

Each year, Rubik's hosts a Mosaic Contest. Teachers must submit a photo of the mosaic and pertinent information such as how many cubes were used, title of mosaic, teacher's name, school address, and first name and last initial of student or students that created the mosaic. After the entry period is over, Rubik's uploads all the entries to their Facebook page: *Rubik's: You Can Do The Cube* in an album. Anyone could vote for their favorite mosaic or mosaic by liking the photo or photos! The voting period was from April 11 - 30, 2017. We were able to enter 3 entries before the contest closed and we had to return our cubes. One of our students placed 3rd in the 50 cubes or less category!



You CAN Do the Rubik's Cube Mosaic Contest

To vote for your favorite mosaic,
simply "like" the picture!

Voting ends April 30, 2017 at 11:59PM ET.

Prizes will be awarded in 3 categories to the winning student(s)
and their teacher:

50 cubes or less, 51-100 cubes, 101-225 cubes

This contest is not affiliated with or endorsed by Facebook.

www.YouCanDoTheCube.com



36 Rubik's Cubes, mosaic by Charles G.
from Lafayette County C-1 Middle School
in Higginsville MO - Christmas Time!



92 Rubik's Cubes, mosaic by Quentin R. from Lafayette
County C-1 Middle School in Higginsville MO - United
States of America

Camdenton Middle School Students Score Well at Extempore Competition

By Matt Hendon, Camdenton Middle School Gifted Teacher and High School Gifted Resource Educator



What excites gifted students to meet a bus at 6:00 am to spend a beautiful Saturday in May with a school group? Extempore is the answer! According to Extempore's website, the program "is a thematic unit based on higher levels of thinking, creativity, problem solving, teamwork, affective learning and fun." The Camdenton Middle School group brought three teams to the competition and won medals in all three events on Saturday, May 6.

Camdenton won 1st place in the Showtime Division with their team named "Carbon". The team consisted of 7th grade girls who were experiencing Extempore for the first time. The team members were Carly Johnson, Hailey Bender, Natalie Knighten, Maile Huffman, and Ava O'Neal. Part of their skit called for a detective type character. The judges were particularly impressed and paid complements to their character who wore a vest and alligator tail and called herself an "in "vest" i "gator"!

Finishing third place in the Engineering Feats category was a team called "Cell". The team consisted of Reiley Dilks, Finnegan McNalley, Ryan Welch, Madison Morris, and Phoenix Samuel. Part of the challenge for their skit was to incorporate a team-made, battery powered blue light.

Camdenton also won fourth place and ribbons in the Perspective Division with their team, "Charge". This was

a very competitive division with 18 other groups making up the competition. Team members included Maya Irvine, Austin Clay, Reagan Faiferlick, Philip Kurle, Judah Tillett, and Ashley Vest.

Austin Clay, who has participated in the annual event on three separate occasions said, "Extempore is an inventive process where you can show your skills in a multitude of ways."

First year participant Hailey Bender said, "It was a very eye-opening experience that allowed us to be creative in a fun way."

First year coach, Matt Hendon, led the team to the event at Brittany Hill Middle School in Blue Springs. Hendon said, "It was fun to watch the students be creative and build a skit with a script, backdrops, costumes, and props made completely on their own. The whole day was built around challenging students on skills and ideas that cannot be measured on traditional assessments. This sort of competitions is where gifted students thrive!"



Leadership is a Tradition!

By Crystal Koenig, GAM District E Assistant Director



It is a tradition for students in the gifted program at Perry County School District #32 to attend an overnight leadership training. The students sell beef sticks made at a local store to raise funds to pay for their trip. This year, the students visited the YMCA at Camp Lakewood in Potosi, Missouri. The students have the opportunity to step outside of their comfort zone and take part in new experiences they may never have had before. They are encouraged to ride horses and receive instruction from trained wranglers. Students learn the skills of archery and safety. They also have the chance to climb the 30 foot high rock wall as the camp counselors give advice and encouragement teaching students ways to persevere. Once they were done climbing, they conquered any fear of heights by traversing a 30 foot high suspension log to reach a zip line. The zip line promotes courage and trust in the counselors as they jump off of a landing and soar down the line. Students also studied ecology and explored connections between organisms in our water systems. The counselors presented real life problems for students to work on interpersonal, affective skills, and creative problem solving in order to seek solutions. They played games, went caving, and hiked as well. Students from second through the eighth grade had the opportunity to attend and look forward to the trips every year!





Scientifically Speaking

Curiosity for All

By Steve V. Coxon, Ph.D., Maryville University

Curiosity is a curious subject. It's often mentioned as a trait common to scientists, and scientists certainly need curiosity. Although curiosity is considered fundamental to creativity and creativity fundamental to innovation, curiosity appears to be even less of a focus in education than creativity. This may help to account for curiosity's decline with age for most people. However, science is a natural stimulant for curiosity. The science classroom is the perfect place to foster curiosity.

Picture a room full of kindergarteners studying live, wriggling worms and they are bubbling over with curiosity, peppering their teacher with questions and stories of their own experiences with worms. Now picture those same kids a decade later. While we shouldn't expect them to act like 5 year-olds, our hope should be that their curiosity has matured and not disappeared. That is, older students' curiosity, well-fostered, should deepen as their education progresses. They may now be curious about what factors led worms to evolve five hearts or hypothesize about what would happen if all worms disappeared from Earth. Unfortunately, I don't often find this to be the case: Too many older students are disinterested in science. I think the way we teach has a lot to do with it.

In the traditional science classroom, curiosity is not fostered. Students are generally lead through the curriculum with great breadth, but little depth and little, if any, chance to pursue what they are particularly curious about. Professional scientists, on the other hand, often spend their lives researching a topic of interest in great depth. If students are fortunate enough to be in a setting where their teachers are both willing to lead them in experiments and have the budget for needed supplies, such experiments are usually accompanied by step-by-step instructions that, when followed, produce a result long known to their teacher and to science. Professional scientists, on the other hand, develop novel experiments to help answer yet unanswered questions. To foster curiosity, the science classroom should be preparing curious students in a manner more attuned to the work of practicing scientists. There are many ways this can be accomplished. Two of my favorites are through questioning and field experiences.

Questioning

Much has been written about the importance of asking good questions since Benjamin Bloom and his collaborators first released their taxonomy 60 years ago, but classroom questioning appears to be as focused on low-level student regurgitation now as it was in the '50s. This is ridiculous given the advent of the Internet and smart phones that give students immediate access to simple facts. We need to focus on applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating with those now easy to access facts. Teachers asking higher order questions is important, but students asking those kinds of questions—and answering them—should be the ultimate goal. Students should be encouraged to ask questions, but it isn't the teacher's job to know all the answers. It's the teacher's job to facilitate students in finding their answers. In this way, their curiosity can be deepened. Some answers may come from the library or Internet—I keep a box with note cards of student questions to research during computer time. Others may be the subject of student-designed experiments, such as in problem-based learning. Others may need an invention in the school makerspace. When students are able to focus their curiosity on an area of interest such as in these examples, they are really beginning to think and work like scientists.

Field experiences

In this period of hyper-focus on minimum competency testing, field trips and other experiences outside of the regular classroom setting have often been removed from the science curriculum. Not only is this a shame from a curiosity standpoint, it harms students' scores on those very tests. When aligned with the curriculum, field experiences have a greater impact on student learning than any other science teaching method according to a meta-analysis of 61 studies (Schroeder et al., 2007). And they're likely to invoke curiosity.

I organized many trips with my 4th and 5th grade scientists to a nearby national park aligned with our study of animal adaptations and food webs. Half the group would spend the first few hours with a volunteer forester, touring around a large pond with plenty of opportunities to get their hands in the water, observe wildlife, and see our curriculum in action—more memorable than any worksheet. I took the other half on a mile hike along a stream to a point of significant beaver activity. Here students had the opportunity to touch (and trip over) gnawed down tree trunks and to observe beaver dams: the results of both behavioral and structural adaptations. After a few hours, the groups switched. Going back in different seasons allows students additional learning opportunities. Such trips could be coupled with stream monitoring, a survey of macro-invertebrates, plant study, and more and can be scaled for any age group. The trip was nearly free, amounting to less than \$3 per child for the bus. Don't have a national forest nearby? No problem. Use whatever outdoor resources are available in your area. Monitoring of an urban stream or observing insects on an empty lot can be just as stimulating for student curiosity.

Curiosity isn't just a thing for young children, but an important trait for success in the sciences. As such, it shouldn't be left to luck, but considered an important facet of science talent development. And I'm curious to see what happens when science teachers take on that challenge.

References

Schroeder, C. M., Scott, T. P., Tolson, H., Huang, T. -Y., & Lee, Y. -H. (2007). A meta-analysis of national research: Effects of teaching strategies on student achievement in science in the United States. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 44(10), 1436-1460.

Biography

Steve V. Coxon, Ph.D. is a veteran public school teacher who now serves as associate professor of gifted education at Maryville University of St. Louis where he directs the programs in gifted education including the graduate program and STEM Education Certificate, the Maryville Young Scholars Program to increase diversity in gifted programs, the Maryville Summer Science and Robotics Program for High Ability Students, and the CREST-M math and robotics curriculum development program. Visit him on the web at <http://stevecoxon.com> and follow him on Twitter @GiftedEdStLouis.

Dr. Steve Coxon is a member of the Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children. See their report in this issue of the GAMbit.

STEM Resources

By Ginger Beard, Teacher of Gifted, Bernie R-13 School District, GAM District E

Since STEM is the latest buzzword in education, there is a plethora of websites and activities that are worth checking out for FREE lessons and activities. Here are some I have found:



<http://www.dreambox.com/blog/girls-math-more-stem-women>

This website has a list of 10 great activities to try with students that are geared toward middle school.

http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/teacher_resources.shtml

This website has lesson plans, science fair tools, STEM classroom kits, Google classroom resources, etc.



<https://everfi.com/k-12/#tab-id-2>

This website offers free courses for students in STEM readiness with a game format.



<http://forensics.rice.edu/en/For-Educators/>

This website offers educators guides, family guides, online student activities, & demo videos.

<https://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/index.html>

Educators resources for teachers grades K-12.



Looking for a PLC?

(Professional Learning Community)

Are you an “only” and looking for other gifted educators to collaborate with? Do you wonder about gifted programs in other districts? Do you want to discuss topics like assessment, enrichment, programming and other topics with other GT professionals? Do you have about an hour a month to discuss gifted education with peers? If you are interested in any of these activities consider joining Heather Hinze and Cassie Peterein during a monthly PLC discussion online. For the 2017-2018 school year we will be coordinating monthly hour long discussions on a variety of topics relevant to gifted education, all educators of gifted are invited to join us. These meetings will be held on Fridays at a time TBD via Google Hangouts or Meet. If you are interested in joining please send an email to Heather Hinze, hhinze@ofr5.com, or Cassie Peterein, petereinc@jr7.k12.mo.us.

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Courses may be taken in any order beginning in any semester.

For more information, contact:

Nancy Gerardy
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Special Education Department
GerardyN@missouri.edu
573-268-7766

FALL SEMESTER 2017

- Problems In Special Education: Annual Conference on Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8085)
- Nature and Needs of Gifted and Talented Students (SPC_ED 8380)
- Curriculum Methods for Gifted and Talented Students (SPC_ED 8391)
- Assessment and Evaluation in Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8405)
- Differentiating Instruction: Reaching Gifted, Typical and Struggling Learners (SPC_ED 8406)
- Practicum: Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8946)

SPRING SEMESTER 2018

- Assessment and Evaluation in Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8405)
- Differentiating Instruction: Reaching Gifted, Typical and Struggling Learners (SPC_ED 8406)
- Research with Exceptional Children (SPC_ED 8350)
- Practicum: Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8946)

Visit: online.missouri.edu/gifted



Parenting by Example

Dr. Brandi L. Klepper

Clinical Psychologist Specializing in Gifted Individuals
Adjunct Instructor at Drury University

Parents often ask me what they can do to help their children with various concerns. One of the most influential methods parents can use to help their children is modeling, which involves showing children what you would like to see in them, leading by example. Often, our children don't see us struggle with risk-taking, perfectionism, work ethic, or frustration tolerance, because as adults we have mostly settled in with the activities we enjoy and do relatively well. To teach them skills, we need to be more overt and/or step outside our usual behaviors and talk. Identify concerns you have for your children and then come up with ways to show them how to do better. Be sure to show them various examples repeatedly, even if it's overhearing you talking to someone else. It may feel like, and be, cheesy talk, but it will help them learn steps to take.

Remember, though, to keep topics appropriate. (And, you can embellish some, but don't lie!)

If you're concerned with their difficulty in tolerating frustration and remaining calm, model examples for them. Narrate to and show children how to identify frustrations and cope with them. You might come home from a difficult day and say to your child (or to another adult while your child can overhear), "I am so irritated! It seems like every time I turned around today, something went wrong. But, I'm home now, and don't want my day to mess up my evening. I am going to go for a walk around the block and make a list of things I am grateful for and come back in a better frame of mind." Then do it!

If you're concerned that they don't try anything new or scary, then choose something yourself and let them witness your ups and downs associated with learning something new. "I always wanted to learn to play piano. I'm starting lessons! My time is limited so I found someone to meet with me once a month." This models time management. Then, model work ethic too. "Man, I do NOT feel like practicing today, but I am going to do at least 15 minutes, and focus on that challenging piece. Will you start the timer for me?" Practice piano while they are doing homework so you're both engaging in something meaningful, and perhaps tedious.

Also, let them know about your new position at work or having to learn a new computer system. "I can tell I feel nervous about this. I can't seem to concentrate and my stomach feels weird. Running helped, but I think I'm going to have to start practicing regular diaphragmatic breathing again."

If you're concerned with their perfectionism and difficulty handling mistakes, then show them how. "Today I don't really have the time to do everything I want to do well, so I'm going to have to cut some corners. I'm not going to be able to get the car vacuumed, but I can at least get it washed. That's going to have to be good enough for now."

Spill the milk on purpose... on something important. Remain calm! "Oh for goodness sake! What a mess. Could you grab me a towel? Let me see if I can get this calendar dry." DO NOT call yourself clumsy or stupid or count the ways this is a problem. "Luckily I got to it quickly enough that it wasn't completely ruined. I'll be right back; I'm going to refill my milk." Later, laugh about it. "Well, let me check my curdled calendar."

As you see them struggle, after you acknowledge their feelings, you can then remind them of a situation where they saw you feel similarly and what you did to resolve it the best you could at the time. As they become more successful in their own right, you can also cite examples of their successes the next time they struggle. Sprinkling statements and examples is more powerful than a lecture.

Better Parent Communication

By Ruthie Caplinger, Regional Dist. G Director



It began as an experiment. Could I send a daily email to parents? I wasn't sure I really had the time for it. I wasn't sure I could remember to send it consistently. I wasn't sure I could catch all my spelling errors and what if...horrors...I made an egregious error! So, I didn't announce my decision to the parents or even my co-teachers. I just decided to give it a try. Five years later, I still send that daily email, even if I am absent.

I will not pretend that I write a totally different email every single day. We are a pull out program and for the most part, I teach the same thing five days in a row. It's a bit like the movie Groundhog Day. Consequently, one basic email works for five days. I set up email groups at the beginning of the school year for each group of students. It only takes me a few minutes each day to customize the email and hit "send." Each email has the same format. It includes reminders, homework alerts, upcoming enrichment activities, a paragraph for each of the two classes I teach during the day, and a "Gifted 101" column for information on giftedness.

The latter is the part about which I hear the most feedback. Parents are so grateful for information about such topics as anxiety, perfectionism, asynchronous development, etc. I often include specific questions that parents can ask their child to facilitate a dialogue about the day's activities, because we all know the answer to the question "What did you do today?"

During the Legislative Session, I include updates about bills affecting our students and ask for support in lobbying efforts. As a result of the daily email, I feel I have a much better relationship with my parents. It is apparent to me that they feel like they know me, even though they rarely see me.

We teach our students that writing has a voice and through my writing, they hear the voice of someone who cares about their child. Not only do I send the email to parents, but I also have requests to include the emails to interested grandparents in the email groups. This year, I was asked to include the homeroom teachers and principals of my students.

I've been pleased (and somewhat surprised) to receive return emails with positive feedback. The daily email, which replaced a monthly newsletter, has been a great success. It has been an investment of time that has paid dividends. I only wish I had started it sooner.

Do you have a great idea to share with fellow educators? Let the GAMbit know! We would love to include you in our next issue!

Hailey Boss Wins Nestle Purina Contest Award for Drawing

By Deb Ballin, SJSD Gifted Education Teacher



Hailey Boss, sixth grader at Parkway Elementary in St. Joseph, was awarded one of the two sixth grade prizes in the 2017 Nestle Purina Contest for her drawing of a Pug. The contest was open to students K-12 in the St. Joseph School District. Jennifer Hale, Art teacher at Parkway, submitted Hailey's Prismacolor pencil entry and accompanied her to the event with Hailey's mom and grandfather.

A reception was held in honor of the award winners at Purina's main office where all the art work was on display. Hailey's mother, Olga Boss expressed how proud she was to see her daughter's work displayed in such a manner. Purina had mounted and framed Hailey's picture of a pug and displayed it with gallery lighting to best allow for viewing. Hailey was presented with a certificate and a Target gift card for \$20.

The artwork will remain on display for one year. Hailey will return to Purina for the 2018 reception after which she will be allowed to keep her work and display it in her own home.

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Articles needed for the GAMbit!

Let other GT teachers, classroom teachers, administrators and GT families know about the great things that are going on in your district! Submitting an article is easy! Email your article in size 12 Times New Roman font to Sheila_Bonner@idschools – don't forget the pictures! (A title and "by line" is nice too.)

Student Work is Celebrated in the GAMbit!

Do you have a student who has written an amazing poem or article?
We would love to include it in the GAMbit!

Submit an article or student work today!

Northwest Missouri Problem Solving Club Takes Top Honors at State

The Northwest Missouri Problem Solving Club under the direction of Denise Stevens took top honors in the Junior Division of Global Issues Problem Solving at Battle High School in Columbia, Missouri and will advance to International Competition in Lacrosse, Wisconsin during the second week of June.



The writing team of Allison Gentry, Josh Donaldson, Hailey Boss, and Sophia Nguyen competed throughout the year against Middle Level Teams to earn a score high enough to be invited to State and to then qualify for International. Topics studied this year included educational disparity, biotechnology, 3-D printing, and identity theft. The International topic will be biosecurity.

Future Problem Solving involves a six-step process analyzing a scenario set approximately 25-50 years in the future. First, students identify as many challenges in diverse areas as possible, select the greatest underlying problem, brainstorm solutions for that problem, set up criteria and rank those solutions, and then write an action plan which they feel will best address the charge in the scenario. This entire process is conducted within a two-hour period.

Northwest Missouri Problem Solving Club Members

Sylvia Nguyen, Allison Gentry, Sophia Nguyen, Hailey Boss, and Josh Donaldson



In addition to the writing, the team of Josh, Sophia, Hailey, and Allison, were joined by Sylvia Nguyen to compete in the Presentation of the Action Plan. The group wrote a skit, designed costumes and props and presented their production to judges at the

state competition. Not only did they take top honors but they received a PERFECT score from BOTH judges for their efforts.

In a separate competition, one of the group members, Hailey Boss took second place in the Junior Level Scenario Writing Competition. Hailey's Scenario, titled "Hope or Despair?" has advanced to competition at International and results will be announced at the IC Conference.

The Northwest Missouri Problem Solving Club typically meets at Rolling Hills Library and is open to any student grades 3-12. New members will be accepted after the International Competition for the upcoming year. Adults are also welcome to compete and assist with the process. In addition, the group would like to cultivate sponsorships to finance their competitions. Anyone interested in sponsoring a student or making a donation may do so by designating earmarked funds to Northwest Missouri Problem Solving Club and leaving them at Nodaway Valley Bank.

Parents Ask:

How much screen time should we allow our child? Because she's so bright, we want her to be well prepared and know what's going on in the world.

By Dennis O'Brien, MA, LCSW

Probably a lot less time than you think. A little goes a long way, and excessive screen time endangers children in multiple ways. Here are some practical suggestions that help parents protect their children.

➤ **Learn about the dangers of excessive screen time.** For years, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has recommended no more than two hours/day for children over the age of two. According to the AAP, however, studies show that children ages 3-10 average 8 hours/day and older children and teens spend 11 hours/day on

entertainment media, including televisions, computers, phones, video games and other electronic devices, far more than the 2-hour maximum. In addition to the well-known risk of sleep deprivation and weight gain due to inactivity, there are other even more serious threats to a child's wellbeing.

Studies show that children who exceed the AAP 2-hour limit are more than twice as likely to have more attention problems than children who don't. Teachers also report that children have increasing problems paying attention and staying on task. ADHD (attention deficit attention hyperactivity disorder) is 10 times more common today than it was 20 years ago. Although ADHD has a genetic base, scientists believe this frightening increase is primarily due to behavioral changes driven by technology, especially too much screen time and faster-paced shows, video games and media content on screens.

The AAP also recommends no use of screen media for children younger than 18 months except video-chatting with grandparents or someone familiar and very trusted by the parents.

Parents of children 18-24 months who want to introduce digital media "should choose high-quality programming (like those offered by Sesame Workshop and PBS) and watch it with their children to help them understand what they're seeing." The AAP also recommends limiting screen use to one hour per day of high-quality programs for children ages 2-5 years and insists parents watch with them "to help them understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them."

Why these limits? Because "A child's brain develops rapidly during those first years, and young children learn best by interacting with people, not screens," the AAP explains. A television should not serve as a baby sitter, nor a tablet as a child's toy—however fascinated he may find it. And don't confuse a child's adeptness with electronic devices like tablets with giftedness—although her adeptness may be possible because a child is bright, the very activity is destroying the intelligence that could later flourish later in many important venues. Trust the experts.

How long does screen time risk persist? Environmental influences, scientists say, are a major factor in brain development—and the prefrontal cortex isn't fully formed until age 25. The AAP insists that teens need age-appropriate limits as much as toddlers do, perhaps even more so because their risk-exposure opportunities are greater.

➤ **Document your child's use of screen technologies.** The AAP has a [Media History Form](#) readily available online for parents to assess their child's screen time. Answering these questions will help you get an overview of the various media devices you are allowing your child to use. However, the AAP form needs to be supplemented to include comparable questions about smart phone and tablet usage which are much more common now than when the screening form was developed. After completing your survey, log your child's actual screen time for several weeks. This will give you an accurate—and possibly alarming—picture of the amount of screen time she is exposed to.

➤ **Determine your priorities.** What screens does your child spend excessive time in front of? How dangerous are they? It makes a difference what sort of computer games your child plays. Shooting games, for example, are much more dangerous than problem-solving games. What do you consider acceptable or even valuable? Using the information your log reveals, decide which screens should be eliminated completely and which others can be allowed in limited fashion.

➤ **Set clear, firm limits.** Start with the 2-hours/day limit that the AAP recommends for children. That's the outside limit. You can allow less. Then consider how screen time can be spent. It's not just about total screen time on a device: you also need to make it clear what types of usage are acceptable, what are not. Can your child use a tablet or computer for researching school assignments if he does not exceed the 2-hour limit? That's different than using it for video streaming or social media. Spell out the time your child is allowed for each. Be specific about the usage—or non-usage—for various screens. Your decisions will depend on multiple factors, including your child's age, maturity and honesty about his behavior. Explain your rules and the reasons for them. Expect your child to conform to them, though not necessarily agree with you.

➤ **Create screen-free zones and times.** Keep screens out of the bedrooms, your own as well as your children's. This is basic. Yet 71% of children and teens have a TV in their bedrooms. Everyone needs to sleep without the temptation of watching TV or checking their phones, tablets or computers. They should be recharging in the office, the kitchen or somewhere else in the house far away from sleepers who might be tempted to do one more game, text, email or search. Of course, no screens, including television, at meals. Those are also screen-free times.

➤ **Promote other activities.** As the AAP says, "It is important for kids to spend time on outdoor play, reading, hobbies and using their imaginations in free play." Perhaps more than ever, it's important for parents to make sure that their child has a chance to be well-rounded.

➤ **Watch with your child.** View TV, movies and videos together. Ask questions about what you are viewing. Use it as an opportunity to discuss family values or other issues. Make it a bonding as well as an educational experience.

➤ **Set consequences.** The two-to-one rule is a good starting point: your child loses the right to use a technology for two days for every day she exceeds the limits you set. Also, the total screen time should be cut by twice the amount of time involved in the infraction for two days. If problems persist and these simple consequences do not suffice, increase them. Keep in mind, screen time is a privilege, not a right or a necessity.

➤ **Strive to have a predictable daily schedule.** It may vary from day to day, depending on soccer practice, dance class or your work schedule. But if your child knows in advance that on Wednesdays, 4-5:30 is free time for recreating, family dinner is at 5:30 followed by cleanup, 6:30-8:30 is homework time and 9 PM bedtime, life will be much calmer and the chances of extra screen time minimized. And yes, family dinner is important. It should be a relaxed meal, a time to catch up, talk about the day, what's upcoming, and to enjoy one another. Make it a highpoint of the day, not a time to ingest food individually or in front of a television.

➤ **Enforce limits.** Nothing changes behaviors more effectively than following through on predicted consequences. Make it clear that you will check regularly (daily if you must) to be sure that he does not violate the screen-time rules, including both total time spent and the type of screen time. Follow through promptly and matter-of-factly. No negotiating. No "last warning." Any violation triggers an automatic, predetermined consequence.

➤ **Model healthy behavior.** Make sure that your own screen time is not excessive. If you are texting or on the phone at meals or in the car, how can you expect your child to take you seriously when you tell her that it's not acceptable for her to do so? Instead, be proactive about using these occasions to converse, learn more about your child's day and help her develop her social skills. Do you immediately turn to your tablet or smart phone to research any question or area of dispute? What messages does your behavior send about your priorities?

➤ **Bottom Line:** Clarifying the appropriate use of screen time for your child, combined with your willingness to set limits and enforce consequences, will go a long way in assuring that your child learns to use screen technology to enhance her growth, not stunt it. And a final caveat: this does not address the inherent dangers of social media. That's for another column, coming soon.

Dennis O'Brien, MA, LCSW, is a licensed clinical social worker, experienced educator and therapist. He has led five nonprofits, including Logos School which he founded. He has written educational materials for Washington University School of Medicine Dept. of Psychiatry, weekly newspaper columns (St. Louis Suburban Journals/Post-Dispatch) on parenting and numerous articles for a variety of magazines and newsletters, including [Gifted Resource Council](#). He was honored by the Missouri Dept. of Mental Health for outstanding writing about suicide in 2010. He consults, writes grants for nonprofits and brought an online video [ethics program for students](#) developed by the Better Business Bureau to the St. Louis service area. As a volunteer, he plays leadership roles in various groups serving nonprofits including the [Better Business Bureau](#), the [Children's Services Coalition](#), [CHARACTERplus](#) and [Community Service Public Relations Council](#).

This article is adapted from one that first appeared in mindwonders, the newsletter of Gifted Resource Council (GRC) in St. Louis, MO. For information about GRC and additional resources, visit www.giftedresourcecouncil.org.

GATE Teacher, Jodi Meister, Awarded BIVI Scholarship

Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc., awarded GATE Teacher **Jodi Meister** and twelve other recipients with STEM Professional Development Scholarships at the School District Foundation Tribute to Teachers Reception held at MWSU on May 4, 2017. BI believes it is innovating for tomorrow through teachers that they will meet their mission to benefit the health and well-being of mankind in the successful tradition of researching and developing innovative medicines for people and animals. Employees are the greatest asset for Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc., and they count on the incredible minds of the St. Joseph School District to provide them with their future workforce. BI is committed to supporting the continuing education of teachers of the St. Joseph School District interested in targeted STEM subject efforts and, as a result, annually fund several projects. Ultimately, BI believes they will best improve their own workforce through these efforts.

BIVI scholarships are for professional development of teachers in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math education. The expectation is that the teachers will increase their repertoire of STEM concepts and bring their new teaching ideas back to the classroom. The teachers receiving the award, like **Jodi Meister**, are teachers that have a strong desire to improve teaching and learning in the classroom and are committed to education.

As part of the selection process, teachers must submit a plan to be considered. **Mrs. Meister** will be attending the week-long Carnegie Mellon Robotics Academy in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania this summer to further her robotics understanding and to receive ideas for the GATE robotics courses within the St. Joseph School District. GATE students in grades 3-8 will benefit from her additional training for years to come.

Jodi Meister has been working with WeDo and EV3 robots in designing challenges for the very motivated students. The robotics courses are extremely popular with GATE students and **Mrs. Meister** has differentiated coursework for all levels. She is a very organized teacher who has worked diligently to improve the rigor within the STEM framework, utilizing lessons from other sources as well as creating her own. It is very appropriate that Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc. recognizes Jodi's efforts and reward her with this valuable opportunity. The amount spent on this award will be returned many times over through the students Jodi teaches within the SJSJ GATE Program.

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When you have good news, do you tweet about it?

Start sharing your good news about gifted via Twitter! The GAMbit editor is on Twitter as @IndepIMPACT. The Gifted Association of Missouri's Digital Director is @sethjaegerMPA. How about sharing good news with our President – Dr. Lenae Lazzelle @llazzelle. Did you know that GAM has a Twitter handle? Find us at @GAMgifted

GIFTED ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI

2017 State Advocacy Agenda

The Gifted Association of Missouri requests your advocacy on the following issues:

FUNDING FOR GIFTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Support legislation to increase funding for gifted education programs.

- 1) Support legislation that modifies the elementary and secondary education funding formula by adding an additional weight for gifted education. "Gifted Education Pupil Count" is defined as the number of students who qualify as "gifted" under section 162.675 and who are enrolled and have participated in a school district's state approved gifted education program by June first for the immediately preceding academic year.
- 2) Support legislation that mandates every school in Missouri provide state approved gifted education programs for students identified as "gifted" under section 162.675 and that all program services are provided by teachers with a valid certification in gifted education.
- 3) Support legislation that requires all Missouri school districts to have a policy allowing acceleration for students demonstrating advanced performance or potential for advanced performance and the social/emotional readiness for such acceleration. The policy should include subject acceleration and whole grade acceleration, among other opportunities.

MISSOURI SCHOLARS ACADEMY & MISSOURI FINE ARTS ACADEMY

Support state funding for the Missouri Scholars Academy and Missouri Fine Arts Academy for June, 2018. The State Legislature & Governor appropriated \$750,000 for the June, 2017 academies.

- The Scholars Academy is a three-week residential program at MU for 330 high school juniors who are academically gifted;
- The Fine Arts Academy is a three-week residential program at MSU for 150 rising high school juniors and seniors who are gifted in the arts.

MISSOURI SCHOOL FOUNDATION FORMULA FUNDING

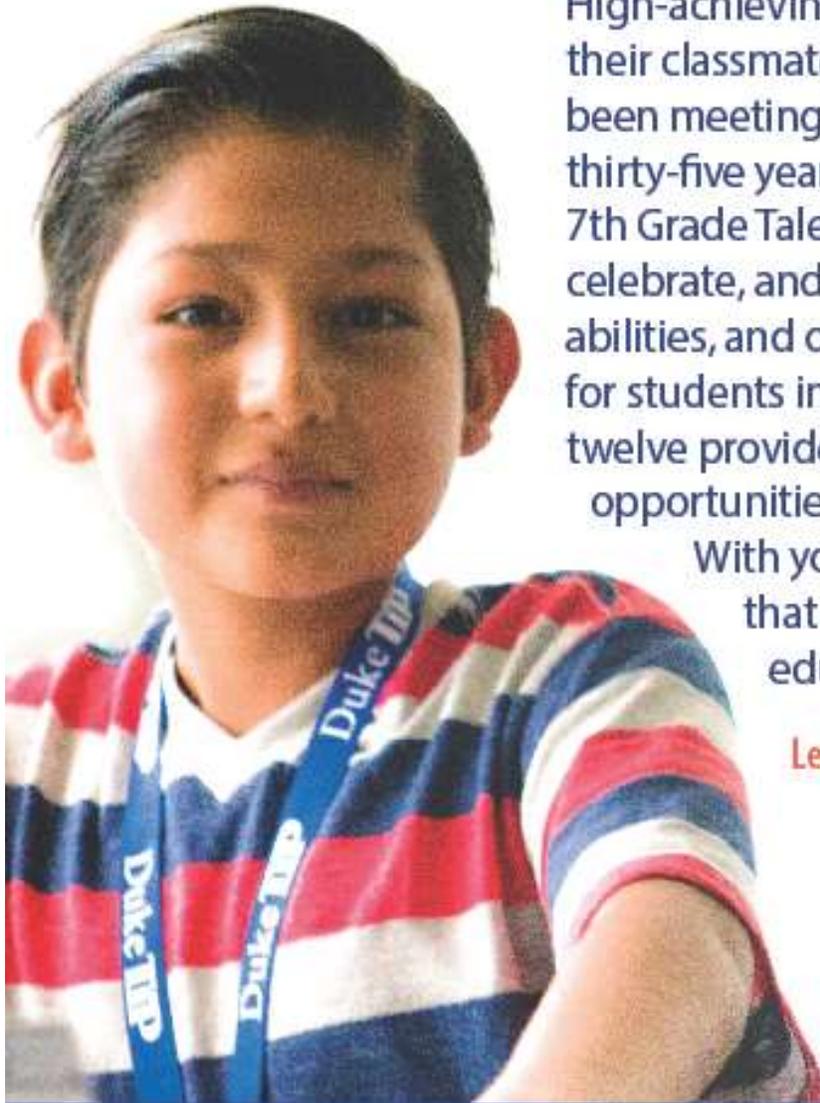
Support increased funding for the Missouri School Foundation Formula. Support \$3.7 billion appropriation in House Bill 2 for the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education.

OTHER GIFTED FACTS & FIGURES

- \$24,870,104 was appropriated for gifted education in FY2006. There were 295 school districts with state approved gifted programs. In FY2007, this amount was rolled into the new foundation formula. Without this line item providing earmarked funding for state approved gifted programs, those funds can be spent on other programs, and there are now only 211 school districts offering state approved gifted programs.

If you have questions, please contact GAM's Governmental Consultant, Kyna Iman, at kynaiman@earthlink.net

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Duke TIP

my optimistic obscurity

by Gracie O'Donnell

Freshman LEAP student, Waynesville High School

every morning, when i wake up,
i wash my hands.
why?
who knows?
maybe it's because i'm a mild germaphobe,
or because the icy water makes me more aware of my own heartbeat.
maybe it's to scrub off the shell of pain that sheltered me the night before,
or maybe to let the suds drown the creativity
dripping from my fingertips,
so it doesn't make too much of a mess
when it spills out
of an indigo pen.

i cannot budge from my bathroom sink,
because somewhere
between my head and the mirror,
entangled in the glass,
so obvious yet so ignored,
is a question, burning.
a great big flame
that serves as fuel and warmth
when i let it be,
but burns me when i touch it.
an unanswered inquiry,
one with no reply:

why
are my thoughts "too much",
yet my ideas are "not enough"?
why am i forced to learn,
but am not taught to think?
i do not sit in silence because i refuse to speak,
but rather because i have everything to say.
i am insecure in who i am
because i have been told
that "me" is wrong.

i have kept my thoughts hidden,
tucked away like precious jewels
because i was scared
that they were not shiny enough,
or worse,
that they were too beautiful for *me* to wear.



"be yourself," they say.
"you do you," they say.
but they do not tell you
that when "you" causes trouble,
when "you" is too angry or too loud,
"you" will be silenced.
that when your mind is filled with philosophies
instead of statistics,
"you" is too different.
"you" is too risky,
because how dare someone believe in something
they can't see, hear, or touch?
their once encouraging words
become verbal vipers, slithering around you
threatening to strike if you make too quick a motion.

but when they tell me i am too "me",
i do not cower.
i do not fade the fingerprints
i leave on their Earth,
for it spins for me, too.
instead i grow taller and more vibrant,
giving my footsteps inspiration to trail behind me,
so that when my fingerprints are wiped from their world
i can transfer them to my own.
you must transfer them to your own.

self is not defined by the smile to glare ratio floating above your head.
it is not determined by the pigment of your skin
or where you're from.
self is not what kind of crown others forge for you
whether from precious metals, or
not.
self is not the flushing of your cheeks when someone questions your motives
and it is not the way you tie your shoes.

so what is it?
what is self? individuality?
what does it mean to be your own person?
to not remain silent when you've been told you should be?
(interviews)

your mind,
like a forest,
needs water to survive.
if a fire of negative thoughts
engulfs every tree,
what is left?
just piles of ash and eroded soil,
the taunting roots still underground
but unable to resurface.

withholding who you are,
swearing your thoughts and opinions to secrecy,
will not keep your forest safe.
it will light the match.

to let someone else set fire to your forest
is to guarantee its demise.
it is to banish all diversity,
to wash out each attempt at thought.
it is to enforce one mindset
and rid the world of creativity.

individuality is what urges you to change,
to grow and fill new shoes.
self inspires you to push yourself to
your full potential.

you cannot reach the stars until you trust yourself enough to get there
and you cannot leave the ground
unless you are prepared to never come back.
you won't ever come back.

until you know who you are, you will never be yourself.
you must shed your own skin,
the shell they gave you and have kept you in.
you need to forge a key from your own palms,
one that will unlock the box that keeps you prisoner
in a single corner of the world.
you must get out.

my wings have only ever been clipped by a pair of scissors I was holding.
you will always be your biggest critic,
but you must also grow to be your greatest supporter.

individuality is your questionnaire and self
the marker you complete it with.
you are defined by that marker.
you get to choose what color it is.

While this poem is longer than the usual one or two page article the GAMbit publishes, the editor felt this was a very moving piece of work that should be shared with our readers.

GATE MIDDLE SCHOOLERS IN ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT WIN TOP HONORS IN SCIENCE COMPETITIONS

(5-10-17) Middle school GATE students from Bode, Spring Garden and Truman Middle Schools have won several awards at science competitions this year, including top honors at the State Missouri Junior Academy of Science.

Bode Student Wins Top Honors for Second Year at the State Missouri Junior Academy of Science

Isabella Wiebelt-Smith and Greycie Bardo, both eighth graders at Bode Middle School, competed at the State Junior Academy of Science at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri where both took blue ribbons in their categories.

Isabella was also awarded a Purple ribbon entitling her to advance to finals where her project, “Turf’s Up” was awarded the Kirkpatrick Junior Eagle – the top award in the state and the Amy and Beth Lawson Best Microbiology Paper Award. This was the second year for both awards for Isabella.

Isabella was mentored by Dr. Michael Grantham from Missouri Western State University for her 2017 project, when she conducted microbiological testing on turf from the training field of the Kansas City Chiefs. Isabella conducted her first microbiology project under the direction of Dr. Platt from the Kit Bond Incubator. The previous year, she emphasized lab safety and learned testing techniques to analyze the cleanliness of surfaces in her middle school.

Mid-America Regional Science and Engineering Fair (MARSEF) and Missouri Junior Academy of Science: Northwest Region

Seven GATE Middle School students competed in the Mid-America Regional Science and Engineering Fair (MARSEF) and the Missouri Junior Academy of Science: Northwest Region under the direction of GATE teachers Deb Ballin and Jodi Meister.

Isabella Wiebelt-Smith (Bode, eighth grade) took first in Chemistry, received Blue for her category in Academy, and was designated a Broadcom Master. Isabella also received a Purple ribbon for Academy qualifying her to compete with her project comparing turf cleaners for their ability to control bacteria, at the State Junior Academy of Science.

Greycie Bardo (Bode, eighth grade) took first in Behavioral for a project dealing with the Uncanny Valley, a theory that when robots are more like humans they become disturbing, and received Blue in Academy. Greycie received the Purple ribbon for Behavioral Science and was also invited to compete at State Academy. She was also designated a Broadcom Master.

Cowles Anderson (Bode, eighth grade) was awarded first in Engineering for MARSEF, Blue in Academy, and was the third Broadcom Master recipient. His project was on projectile motion and involved the creation of a Trebuchet.

Emma Younger (Spring Garden, seventh grade) placed second in the Biomedical/Health Sciences for MARSEF. She worked with a partner to see if a dog had a cleaner mouth than a person.

Jason Fuller (Bode, eighth grade) took third in Chemistry and Red in Academy. Josh Fuller (Bode, eighth grade) and Solana Rivera (Truman, seventh grade) both took Red in Academy.

Isabella Wiebelt-Smith, Greycie Bardo and Cowles Anderson will go on to compete at the national Broadcom Masters this summer. All the students who competed at both MARSEF and in Academy may enter their projects in the Google Science Fair in a chance to win one of several \$25,000 prizes.

Benefits of Science Competitions

Competing in science competitions is an excellent way to help fund college for many students. Sponsors are eager to reward students for their efforts. At the high school level, it is possible to receive awards totaling more than a college education.

After graduation, there are many opportunities available to someone who demonstrates proficiency in the process. Students with the background in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math will find themselves far ahead of their peers in pursuing successful careers.

Research on Gifted Populations

Every year, graduate students at universities across the state conduct rigorous, locally informed research on gifted populations. While the results of these studies may or may not make it to presentation or publication, they have the potential to be immediate and relevant for Missouri gifted educators. The table below is a summary of research that is in process or has been recently submitted by our emerging scholars in gifted education. We encourage you to reach out to these authors, via email or at our state conference, to discuss their work!

Topic/Title	Author	Affiliation
The Impact of the Engineering Design Process and Concurrent Growth Mindset Training on the Perfectionistic Tendencies of Gifted Middle School Students in a Public School Setting	Anne Cummings	Maryville University
Problem Based Learning in the Gifted Classroom	Amanda Clark	Maryville University
Technology Integration for Meaningful Learning	Victoria Hauser	Maryville University
Problem Solving Strategies in Gifted Middle School	Nikkole Briggs	Maryville University
World Cultures and Reading Engagement in Second Grade	Polly Lauck	Maryville University
Using Gifted Teaching Strategies in the General Education Classroom to Improve Achievement in Literature Comprehension	Michelle Harris	Maryville University
Is there a significant difference between gifted girls and boys, when it comes to learning and understanding geography?	Mason Lea	Drury University
In what ways is underachievement related to socioeconomic status in gifted students?	Ariele Lee	Drury University
What is the relationship between professional development and support for gifted education in rural districts?	Allison Renkoski	Drury University
A Study of Perfectionism and Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities in Gifted Students	Erica McConnaughey	Drury University

Authors can be contacted through their mentors, Dr. Steve Coxon at Maryville University (scoxon@maryville.edu) and Dr. Kristofor Wiley at Drury University (kwiley002@drury.edu).



Report from the Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children

Linda Smith, Council Chair
May 17, 2017

The Council submitted its first article to GAMbit in January 2014, saying that members of the Council are excited that their work on behalf of Missouri's gifted students was now underway. As Chair of the Advisory Council since the Council was formed, I am happy to report that we have made significant progress. We developed guiding documents so the Council's structure, purpose and operating procedures would be clear to the public. We studied data on gifted programs in Missouri and developed analyses that could track changes over time. We produced two reports, our initial report in 2015 and a subsequent one in 2017. These reports include background information, data analyses, findings and recommendations related to improving gifted education in Missouri. (For the 2017 report, see <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/qs-Gifted-Advisory-Council-Report-2017.pdf>.) In addition, we have had the opportunity to share our report findings directly with the State Board of Education. Those opportunities followed one-on-one meetings with the Commissioner, Dr. Margie Vandeven, who supports the Council's work and statewide efforts to meet the needs of gifted students.

We are particularly pleased that DESE now has a best practice model for districts to use in identifying and serving students who are traditionally underrepresented in gifted programs. A document entitled *Identifying and Serving Traditionally Underrepresented Gifted Students* is now on DESE's website. (See <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/qs-Gifted-Underrepresented-Gifted-Students-2016.pdf>.) We are pleased that districts no longer report students as gifted based on enrollment in AP or IB classes. DESE is also working to implement other recommendations in the Council's reports.

I want to thank members of the Council for their help in identifying and addressing key issues related to gifted education in Missouri. I would also like to recognize the efforts of David Welch, liaison to the Council, and Renee Hasty, administrative assistant. Lastly, I want to extend a heartfelt thanks to Matt Goodman and Education Plus. Their support provided the data and analyses needed to make meaningful recommendations for improving gifted education in Missouri.

My four-year term on the Council is expiring this summer. I am pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute to the Council and Missouri's efforts related to gifted education. The Commissioner will soon appoint a new Chair to take over the reins of the Council in September. In the years ahead, I will be available to provide input and support to the new Chair and Council as needs arise. As the saying goes, once a gifted advocate, always a gifted advocate.

COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

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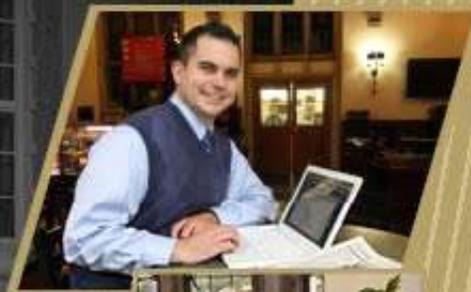
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Changes to GAM Membership!

We need the support of our members now more than ever...

By Meredith Burstin, GAM Membership Vice-President

“Why should I join GAM?” This is a question I’ve addressed in past GAMbits. Members play a crucial role in our advocacy efforts. Over the past few years our voices have been heard loud and clear by our legislators. Establishing the Gifted Advisory Council, ensuring that we have a full-time director of gifted at DESE, and more -- none of this would have been possible without GAM’s advocacy efforts. There is strength in numbers, and a strong membership communicates our collective commitment to gifted education in Missouri. These victories have long-term impacts that will benefit all gifted students, families, and teachers in our state.

GAM strives to achieve this goals, but as a non-profit organization we depend in part on revenue from membership dues. To continue our efforts in supporting gifted education, on January 1, 2017 we will be introducing a new, streamlined membership dues structure:

Individual memberships -- \$30/year
Institutional memberships -- \$100/year
Lifetime memberships -- one-time payment of \$500

These dues are tax-deductible donations to the organization that will allow us to better serve our members and fulfill our advocacy agenda. If you have any questions, please let me know at mburs10@hotmail.com Thank you again for your support!



**Join the
conversation!**

Twitter **#gtchat**

Powered by the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented

Tuesdays at 7 PM CT

Requirements for Gifted Education Certification

Beginning on **8/1/2017**, new subject area requirements for all areas of certification will go into effect. These changes were approved by the State Board of Education at its January 2014 meeting. The following list provides the specific requirements approved by the State Board for the Gifted Education K-12 certificate:

(A) General Requirements—

1. A valid Missouri permanent or professional certificate of license to teach;
2. Two (2) years of classroom teaching experience; and
3. The applicant must achieve a score equal to or in excess of the qualifying score on the required exit assessment(s) as defined in 5 CSR 20-400.310 and 5CSR 20-400.440. The official score shall be submitted to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (department).

(B) Professional Requirements—

1. Psychology and/or Education of the Exceptional Child, including the Gifted (minimum of two (2) semester hours.)

(C) Content Knowledge for Teaching—

1. A Survey of Gifted and Talented Education;
2. Programming Planning and Development: An Understanding of Administration and Supervision of Gifted Programs;
3. Screening, Assessing, and Evaluating Gifted Students;
4. Curriculum and Instruction for the Gifted;
5. Meeting the Affective Needs of Gifted Students; and
6. A minimum of one (1) graduate course in research procedures.

(D) Field and Clinical Experience (three (3) semester hours)—

1. Culminating Clinical Experience. A supervised clinical experience in which candidates acquire experience in planning for and working with gifted students in various instructional settings in both elementary and secondary schools. The clinical experience should include collaboration with other educators to support student learning.

Candidates are expected to complete coursework in each of the areas cited. It should be noted that, with the exception of the exit assessment, the requirements remain essentially the same as those currently in place. To date, no exit assessment has been approved by the State Board for the area of Gifted Education.

ALERT! Requirements for gifted certification are changing! Please be sure to be informed! We need more GT teachers in education! If you need a few more hours to move on the pay scale, consider obtaining your gifted certification.

Apply for GAM Scholarships and Awards

The Nicholas Green Distinguished Student Scholarship

The Nicholas Green Distinguished Student Award is awarded to one Missouri student each year. Recipients are given a \$250 scholarship along with a Certificate of Excellence by the Gifted Association of Missouri (GAM). Students selected for the award are between grades 3 and 6 and have distinguished themselves in academic achievement, leadership, and/or the arts. Nominations, application, and parental release form for the Missouri NGDS Award must be postmarked by **June 1**.



The Bob Roach Scholarship for New Teachers

Sponsored by Drury University

In 1999, GAM created the New Teacher Scholarship to promote the certification of teachers in the field of gifted education. In 2007, the award was renamed the Bob Roach Scholarship for New Teachers in honor of the continuous dedication of gifted educator, Bob Roach. In 2010, the gifted community lost this life-long educator and friend. GAM honors Bob's passion for Gifted Education with a \$250 scholarship awarded annually at the Gifted Association of Missouri Conference. To apply, applicants must be in the process of obtaining certification in gifted education and in their first or second year of teaching gifted. **Submit by September 1.**



The DeDe Smith Friend of Gifted Award

Dede, one of GAM's founders, served as GAM president and GAMbit editor. Under her insightful guidance, the Missouri Scholars Academy was established. Dede initiated and served as Director of Drury's Center for Gifted Education until her untimely death in 1991. The Dede Smith Friend of Gifted Award is awarded by nomination. GAM invites nominations of individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the field of gifted education in Missouri. An individual who is eligible to be a recipient of this award will belong to one of the following categories: legislator or other elected official, administrator, counselor, regular classroom teacher, media person, business person or mentor. **Submit by September 1.**



The Delma Johnson Outstanding Educator of Gifted Award

The Delma Johnson Outstanding Educator of Gifted Award is for educators who have made outstanding contributions to the field of gifted education in Missouri. GAM invites eligible nominees who belong to one of the following categories to apply: teacher of gifted, coordinator of gifted programming, or college professor directly involved with gifted students or teachers of gifted. **Submit by September 1.**



The Norine Kerber Parent of Gifted Award

The Norine Kerber Parent of Gifted Award recognizes parents who have made outstanding contributions to the field of gifted education in Missouri. GAM invites nominees who belong to one of the following categories to apply: parent, step-parent, or guardian of a gifted child in the state of Missouri. Submit by September 1.

The student award must be submitted or postmarked by **June 1, 2016.**
The adult awards must be submitted or postmarked by **September 1, 2016.**

Submit nominations to:

Gifted Association of Missouri Executive Secretary – Awards & Scholarships
P.O. Box 3252, Springfield, MO 65808

Please see the GAM website for directions on how to nominate and submit information.
We look forward to recognizing those who have worked hard for GAM.



Did you know GAM is on Facebook?

**Keep up with what is going on in gifted
by liking us on Facebook!**

<https://www.facebook.com/MissouriGifted/>



We are excited to offer a new ***Lifetime***
Membership option!

We are only as strong as our membership, and we want to recognize members who wish to show continued commitment to supporting gifted education in Missouri.

For a **one-time payment** of \$500 lifetime you will become a permanent member of GAM – no yearly renewal forms or additional payments required! All we ask is that you respond to a brief yearly request from our Membership Vice-President to keep our contact records updated; we want to ensure that you are receiving all information and member benefits!

Questions? Ready to join GAM for life? Contact Meredith Burstin at mburs10@hotmail.com to know more or to get started!

GAM Board of Directors

Name, Title	GAM District	Email	Home Town
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Have you thought of becoming more
involved in GAM?



GAM Membership Application

- I am a new member
- I am renewing my membership

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

School District _____

County _____ GAM District _____

E-mail address _____

Telephone Numbers:

Home (_____) _____

Work (_____) _____

Please check appropriate one: (You can also pay for 2 yrs!)

Educator/Individual/Parent . . . \$30

Sponsor . . . \$100

Lifetime . . . \$500

I am a (n): (Please check all that apply)

Teacher of Gifted Education

Elem. MS HS Admin.

Teacher in the Regular Classroom

Elem. MS HS Admin.

Parent

Other _____

Why join the Gifted Association of Missouri?

GAM is the only organization in the state that advocates for gifted programs and provides support and resources to gifted teachers, students, and parents. We work at the district and state level to lobby for funding for gifted programs, create networking opportunities for parents, and support teachers in the development and implementation of curriculum.

We truly cannot do this with you; your membership makes a difference!

To join, visit

www.mogam.org

and click on

“Join GAM Today”!



Mail to: Gifted Association of Missouri
P.O. Box 3252, Springfield, MO 65808