Spring 2016

GAMbit

The Newsletter of the Gifted Association of Missouri

From Director to Dad!

There are many benefits to living in the community in which you work. I am a proud resident of Independence, Missouri for the past thirteen years. My children attend schools in the district. My wife works as a banker in the community. I know my neighbors by first name. My commute to the office is all of seven minutes. Life could not get any better…so I thought.

One of my responsibilities in the district is to help coordinate the district's elementary gifted program called IMPACT (Independence Missouri's Program for the Academically and Creatively Talented). I have worked closely with the elementary IMPACT teachers for the past seven years. Over the years we have worked to improve the identification and testing process, rewrite curriculum, and develop a progress report to keep parents informed. I value the program and the opportunities it provides to students in the district, but up until this year I tended to view it from an administrative perspective. I did not realize how much I was missing.

Kayla, my youngest child and only daughter, was identified last winter in second grade as a potential gifted student. As a proud father, I have always felt that Kayla was exceptional. However, due to my role as deputy superintendent in the district, I did not press her teachers for any special treatment or recognition. I always thought that if she were truly exceptional, others would recognize it without pressure from me. I was excited when her teacher recommended her for screening. Almost immediately I began to view the IMPACT program from an expanded perspective. I am sure I experienced the same wave of emotions that most parents feel when they have a child who is going through the identification and testing process for gifted education. I felt the pride of having a child that was recognized as highly intelligent. I experienced anxiety while waiting for the results of Kayla's IQ and Achievement tests. I prepared myself for how I would respond if she did not qualify. I was flooded with joy when I found out that she met the qualifications for the program.

Going through the gambit of emotions also helped me to understand the other side of the process, the disappointment some parents feel when their children do not qualify for the program. I now better understand the father who calls each year to have his child screened despite them not qualifying after multiple attempts in the past. Also, the grandmother that wants her grandchild retested because they were fighting a cold the day their IQ test was given. I see now that they only want what is best for their children. They are advocating for what they believe is important to the success of their student.

My daughter is the type of child that rarely has a bad day. It has been a joy to watch her blossom due to the opportunities to learn, stretch, and explore in IMPACT. I see firsthand the benefit of placing her in an environment that is aimed at supporting her unique needs. As I continue my work in helping to direct the program, I now do so with a sensitivity that only comes from being a parent of a gifted student. I have a greater appreciation for the work that gifted educators do to support students like my daughter. I am forever changed due to my experience of moving from director to dad!

All the Good Stuff Inside!

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We want YOU to be a part of the GAMbit!

Tell us about your students or write an article! We want to hear from our GT teachers and parents!

Gifted Association of Missouri

The GAMbit is published quarterly by the Gifted Association of Missouri (GAM) to inform educators, parents, and others about the unique educational, social and emotional needs of gifted and talented children and the issues that impact their development.

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@isdschools.org**

You're Invited - Calendar of Events

GAM District D - April 1st will be our "GifteDiscussions" collaboration event!

April 1, 2016 One Day KC

High school juniors and seniors are eligible.
https://www.facebook.com/ONEDAYKC/?fref=ts
http://onedaykc.org/

Extemporé – Saturday, April 30 hosted by Raymore-Peculiar LEAP

DRURY SUMMER CAMPS 2016

July 11-22 -- Weller Elementary
Summer Pals -- grades pk-1st 8:15-11:15
Summer Quest -- grades 2nd-5th 8:30-11:30

July 10-21 -- Drury University
Summerscape -- grades 6th-8th
Drury Leadership Academy -- grades 9th-12th
Financial need scholarships available upon request.

COLLEGE FOR KIDS 2016 DATES:

Session I, Grades 3 & 4 = June 19 -24
Session II, Grades 5 & 6 = June 26 – July 1
Session III, Grades 7, 8 & 9 = July 10 - 16

Project MEGSSS Elements of Mathematics nomination season begins Jan. 1.
Project MEGSSS Elements Testing:
Saturday, April 2, Washington University, 8:30 a.m.
Saturday, April 9, Washington University, 8:30 a.m.
Wednesday, April 20, South Tech High School (limited seating), 8:30 a.m.
Summer Programs (full and half day available): Mon-Fri, June 13-24
Mon-Fri, July 11-22

Conference on Academic Acceleration, July 24-26, 2016
Belin-Blank Center at the University of Iowa
More information and to register, see http://belinblank.org/bbali

March 2016
Gifted Association of Missouri
P.O. Box 3252, Springfield, MO 65808

GAMbit Readers:

For my letter in this GAMbit, I would like to give you a glimpse into a day I recently spent in Jefferson City, Missouri. On Monday, February 15, I traveled to Jefferson City to testify in support of House Bill 1429. What seemed to be a normal day in Jefferson City turned out to be a very special day, a life changing day, a reminder of why my life focuses on gifted education. I am going to omit names out of respect for the family. The first bill heard was on drivers education. The second bill.....suicide. Representative Dunn opened with a summary of HB 1656 that would require training for teachers on suicide prevention. What happened next, turned this usual all business Dr. Lady into a teary-eyed, still all business Dr. Lady. A broken mother spoke about her daughter who had committed suicide, a daughter that was gifted, had a 4.4 GPA, took AP classes, played varsity soccer. She spoke of her daughter's diagnosis of depression, and how no one had any idea she was suffering to the degree she was. She was diagnosed with depression, taking medicine, and seeing a psychologist. She was feeling better, then out of what seemed nowhere, took her life one day before a varsity soccer game.

This heart wrenching story stopped me in my tracks the moment I realized I had taught this young lady in middle school. The mother mentioned four times that her daughter was gifted. She talked about school counselors, gifted teachers, and the school and how unprepared we were. She did not speak viciously of the school, just that we didn't know.....The longer I sat there, the more I knew I had to testify for this bill. After the mother spoke, a very frustrated father spoke. He just couldn't understand why this had to even be debated. He said words I'll never forget, "if its about the money, I have the money, I'll spend my daughters entire college savings for this, I have that, but I don't have her". I was the only educator to speak on behalf of this bill, and I talked about my credentials and why I was there, then I listed a few of the trainings I go through at the beginning of each year, and how I would welcome this requirement. After the hearing, the mother approached me and thanked me for my words. As she complimented my strength in speaking and how much I made a difference, I told her I taught her daughter in middle school. I told her I would help her anyway I could. I then spoke to Representative Dunn and told him the same, then I spoke to the dad. To see the loss in his eyes, his desperation, wow.... I spent the rest of the day trying to pacify my 15 year old son, then finally after testifying for the bill I came to testify for started my journey home. I gave the mother, father, and representative my card and the father left a message for me earlier in the day.

On my way home as my son and I were listening to his iPod, I told him I needed to call this dad back. Michael said cool, leaned back and took a nap. I spoke to this dad for an hour, and it was almost more than I could take, watching my son sleep in the seat next to me and talking to this dad who lost that 20 months ago. I listened, told the dad I would help them any way I could including help write curriculum for this proposal, then we hung up. I will never forget this experience, I will look at my students in a different light. I will not complain about the long hours I spend advocating for gifted education. I will kiss my son good night, every night..... My heart goes out to this family, and I wish Representative Dunn success on this bill.

Some days in my job as president of GAM, I return emails, discuss the future, talk with Kyna about bills, or plan for future meetings, but on this day, I spoke as a teacher, and a mother. I spoke on behalf of all of the suffering families. Gifted advocates, we must never forget why we do what we do. I am honored to serve in this position, and honored that I have a son to call me mom.

Sincerely,
Dr. Robin E. Lady, NBCT
President, Gifted Association of Missouri

Incorporating Creative Expression and Innovation into Higher Ed

By Risa J. Stein, PhD

Three years ago my son left for college.

I teach psychology at Rockhurst University and I am fully aware of the statistics pertaining to challenges facing recent graduates in today's workforce. Not wanting my son to live in my basement upon graduation, I began to research the most sought-after "workplace soft-skills" to compliment his academic instruction. This line of inquiry produced the expected results – oral and written communication skills, ability to work in diverse teams, critical thinking… But, at the same time, an abundance of anecdotal evidence surfaced suggesting that Millennials thriving in the competitive market place share a set of skills and experiences not often highlighted in business reports.

Most surveys regarding workplace competencies incorporate a checklist of tried and true characteristics. However, I noted additional emphasis on expectations surrounding creativity, curiosity, culture promotion, and risk-taking – "Fail Often and Fast" as Mark Zuckerberg puts it. Unfortunately, many of my highest-achieving students evidenced a tendency to behave in a manner rather inconsistent with this trend. Indeed, it appeared to me these responsible, conscientious, and intelligent young men and women were sacrificing their creativity and curiosity in order to retain a comfortable low-risk culture in which they were able to ensure predictable success experiences on conventional terms.

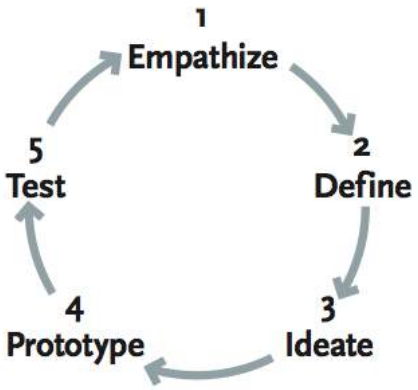
I felt as an educator, an obligation to break them out of their conditioned conceptualization of education in order to maximize their gifts. I began by insisting each of my Honors Introductory Psychology students complete a creative project. The instruction was limited to, "Express yourself in some creative fashion and share your expression with the class". I received far greater demonstrations of disdain, chagrin, and objection to this task than I expected and certainly more than anything else I requested from students in years past. However, the results were remarkable. An isolated angry young man who resisted the most became enthralled in photography and later moved into participating in theatre productions. A pre-med student who was adamant that he was not in the least bit creative, began welding pieces of metal together to form Christmas trees. Three years later, he is still creating trees as gifts.

The impact this assignment had on my students spurred an assessment of the perceptions RU students hold regarding campus infrastructure and support for creative expression and innovation. Interviews with students and faculty revealed a high demand for greater latitude and instruction in

creativity, a weakening of disciplinary silos, and a desire for means through which faculty, staff, and students could join forces to share insights and collaborate on ideas with one another.

In an effort to begin to address this need, last year two of my students and I successfully entered into the University Innovation Fellows (UIF) program. The UIF program is sponsored through VentureWell and EpiCenter with strong ties to Stanford University. The program designates Rockhurst University as a site for progress in innovation. My students and I have received training in Design Thinking and Innovation and will attend an on-site meet-up in Silicon Valley in March for further hands-on experiences. As UIFs, the students and I have worked tirelessly to promote opportunities for creativity and innovation for students in classes, on campus, and in our community.

As the RU innovation program gained traction, we attracted attention from community members invested in making Kansas City a national leader in innovation. During the summer of 2015, I was contacted by Jennifer Wilding of the non-profit community relations building organization Consensus. With cooperation from the mayors of Kansas City, MO and Kansas City, KS, Ms. Wilding secured one of seven slots designated by the White House to focus on opening lines of communication and decreasing negative associations surrounding mental health challenges in our community. I was invited to serve as an Action Team coordinator and, with the assistance of my students and numerous community organizers and leaders, we developed and implemented a highly successful weekend experience for high school students. During the weekend event, high school students implemented Design Thinking principles of empathy, ideation, and prototype development to create programs to reduce stigma against and open lines of communication surrounding mental health challenges among their peers.



Universities are institutions facing the same challenges as any organization established a hundred or more years ago. We are mired in our traditions, reticent to change, concerned with the bottom line, and heavily influenced by governmental policy. However, universities also exist to serve young people and to provide excellence in education. It has become increasingly clear to me that change is not only necessary, but imminent. All that is required is for students to recognize that a richer more meaningful educational experience is possible and to insist that colleges and universities create atmospheres conducive to the fulfillment of creative promise and the cross-pollination of divergent thoughts and ideas.

Many school districts in the Kansas City area are making training in innovation a priority. I would strongly encourage our gifted youth and their parents/guardians to investigate institutions of higher learning with regard to their philosophy surrounding the integration of ideas across campus and opportunities for creative expression. In an age when virtually all substantive knowledge is available in three computer clicks or less, it becomes vital that young people practice putting seemingly discordant or unrelated pieces of information together to create masterpieces out of messes.

Scientifically Speaking

The Four Cs in 21st Century Science Education

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (http://www.p21.org/) offers 4Cs of learning and innovation skills in which all students should be regularly engaged: **critical thinking**, **communication**, **collaboration**, and **creativity**. Many educational programs speak of these skill areas, but fall short in actually improving students' talents in them, especially for the gifted. In order for gifted students to grow, they should be routinely challenged in the 4Cs. What can teachers do in science education to genuinely challenge gifted students with the 4Cs?

Problem-based learning (PBL) science units are one of the best means of promoting student growth in these skills. PBL is an instructional strategy within which science content is reorganized to put the learning in the hands of the students. In PBL science units, students are first given a complex yet incomplete real-world problem based on the content they are expected to learn. However, instead of being passive consumers of that content, students are in the driver's seat in PBL units. The teacher acts as a metacognitive coach—using questioning to guide student thinking, but the students have to determine what they need to do to solve aspects of the problem.

Once students review the problem statement, the class completes a Need to Know Board. I like to turn a bulletin board into a large chart with four columns in which the students determine what they know, what they need to find out, how they will find out, and, later, what they learned. The bulletin board can be updated throughout the unit. Teachers with multiple classes can do this on an interactive board and save each as individual files.

Students work in small, collaborative groups or "research teams" on the next several steps. They must determine what aspects of the problem to focus on answering, hone these to specific questions, then conduct research to find solutions. The research may involve finding multiple quality sources online and in the library, interviewing an expert, or scientific experimentation. The latter should be the ultimate focus in science, with each group designing and conducting several experiments.

The 4Cs should be immediately visible. A good PBL problem statement will contain many facets and lines of potential research. Students must communicate with the class to complete the Need to Know Board, then collaborate and critically evaluate the problem statement within their groups to determine what aspects of the problem they see as most important on which to work. Determining how to go about finding answers can require creativity, including in experimental design. Groups ultimate, potential solutions require creative thinking and, again, students need to communicate with the class regarding their findings. These should be updated on the Need to Know Board.

Most importantly, the class discussion should focus on critical evaluation of the fairness of student designed experiments. Students will often design experiments that are unfair, such as using containers with different volumes of water to dissolve the same amount of sugar. Students in PBL should be allowed to make mistakes and the teacher should model questioning to help the class become better critical thinkers. PBL steps are repeated and multiple units should be engaged in each year to promote student growth in the 4Cs over time.

Finally, after several phases of experimentation and before a pre-determined deadline, students must present their findings to the class and possibly other audiences as well. I like to do this like a scientific conference where teams present their findings and their suggestions for solving aspects of the problem using a poster, presentation software, or other means of sharing with the audience—another chance to let the 4Cs shine!

Problem-Based Learning Steps

1. Read the **problem statement**
2. Complete a **Need to Know Board** to determine what is known, what needs to be learned, how it can be learned, and—later—what was learned about each aspect of the problem statement.

Small groups of students:

3. **Identify questions** within the problem statement that the group finds important
4. Revise those broad questions to specific, **testable questions**
5. Determine the best means to **answer those questions**: conducting fair experiments, critically reviewing existing research, seeking experts, or other means
6. **Conduct the research;** follow the scientific method for **experiments**
7. **Report** results to the class and update the Need to Know Board

8. Whole class **discussion**: synthesizing results and evaluating the fairness of experiments
9. **Repeat** steps 3-9 as needed.
10. **Present** overall findings and potential solutions to aspects of the problem to an audience

Biography

Steve V. Coxon, Ph.D. is a veteran public school teacher who now serves as assistant professor of gifted education at Maryville University in St. Louis where he directs the programs in gifted education including the graduate program, the Maryville Young Scholars Program, and the Maryville Summer Science and Robotics Program for High Ability Students. Visit him on the web at http://stevecoxon.com and follow him on Twitter @GiftedEdStLouis.

Did you know that some of your favorite games are online?

Rush Hour, Laser Maze, Chocolate Fix, Solitaire Chess, Word Around, Code Master and Compose Yourself can be found at http://www.thinkfun.com/play-online/

The daily Sets puzzle can be a "head scratcher".
You can find Sets and Quiddler at http://www.setgame.com/set/puzzle
If you have a favorite online "brain game", let the GAMbit know!
We would love to include it in our newsletter.

35th Annual Gifted Education Conference

CELEBRATING THE PAST...
SUPPORTING THE FUTURE

October 15-16, 2016
University of Missouri, Columbia

Call for Proposals

Emphasis for proposals is on lessons and hands-on activities that educators can take back and incorporate immediately into their classrooms.
This need is based on feedback from conference attendees.
Informational/theory based proposals will be considered, but are not a priority.
Share your expertise,
and be part of the celebration!

SUBMIT PROPOSAL HERE

or go to

www.mogam.org

Deadline to submit is April 22

The Gifted Association of Missouri welcomes the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, as the first federal legislation to specifically address the needs of gifted and talented learners in 27 years. As No Child Left Behind comes to a close, GAM is excited about the impact this act will have for Missouri's gifted students. ESSA specifically uses the language "gifted and talented" which is progress at the national level. For the first time, school districts may use Title I monies to identify and serve gifted students. This is just one component in support of gifted education in ESSA. See the information packet below for details regarding ESSA. GAM applauds The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) for its dedication and hard work in helping this act become a law. Please do not hesitate to visit our website at www.mogam.org, or email me at robin.lady.gam@gmail.com for more information.

ESSA HISTORY

- In 1965, as part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, Congress passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA sought to boost the achievement of disadvantaged students.
- In 2001, eager to ensure that federal funds were being used effectively and that vulnerable children would no longer be overlooked, President George W. Bush and key congressional Democrats revamped ESEA, the result was NCLB.
- The **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** is the name of the 2015 legislation that revised and reauthorized the federal K-12 education law known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). It is 1061 pages long and may be found here: http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Advocacy/ESSA%20FINAL%20Conference%20Report.pdf

ESSA BASICS

The goal of ESSA is "to ensure that all children receive a high-quality education". The law specifically mentions gifted and talented as part of the all. The 2016-2017 school year will be the transitional year, with the 2017-2018 school year being the year the accountability plans go into effect.

States will have to report:

DATA

- Student achievement data at each achievement level that is disaggregated by student subgroup. Previously, states provided detailed information for students performing at the proficient level and below. Now, states also will have to include information on students achieving at the advanced level.
- The PLC question 4 will hopefully become more important to school and district administrators when the high scores are disaggregated out.

TITLE II PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

- In applying for funds, states must include information about how they plan to improve the skills of teachers and other school leaders that will enable them to identify gifted and talented students and provide instruction based on the students' needs.

Local School District level (ESSA language, "local education agencies") will have to:

DATA

- Collect, disaggregate, and report their student achievement data at each achievement level, as the states are required to do
- Districts that receive Title II professional development funds must use the money to address the learning needs of all students. **ESSA specifically says that "all students" includes gifted and talented students.**

PROS / CONS

- Flexibility on dollars $$ - each year approximately $21 billion dollars in federal funds is distributed to states and school districts under Title I and Title II
- Title I funds (for financially disadvantaged schools) can for the first time EVER be used for gifted services including identification and programming
- Competition for these dollars will be the main issue since the state and local district have final say over where to spend the money

GAM

- The Gifted Association of Missouri will collaborate with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children to ensure the most current information is provided to gifted stakeholders in our state.
- GAM will continue to advocate for gifted students in Missouri, including how ESSA can help advocates at the local and state levels.

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- Nearly every school district in the nation receives Title I funds
- Don't assume your administration already knows about ESSA and how it relates to gifted education
- Make sure your superintendent knows that Title I funds can be used to identify and serve gifted students
- Make sure your superintendent knows that Title II (Professional Development) funds can be used for training on the needs of gifted students
- Any school district that receives Title II funds must provide in their plan how the needs of gifted and talented students are met

JAVITS

http://www.jeffcogifted.org/index.php/news/745-every-student-succeeds-act-essa
http://storiesfromschool.org/essa-and-gifted-education/
http://www.courant.com/opinion/letters/hc-new-education-law-covers-gifted-students-too-20160112-story.html
http://www.nagc.org/sites/default/files/Advocacy/Q%2BA%20on%20ESSA%20%28web%29.pdf

Name _____ Day _____

Taking a Trip to Branson!

Use **Google Earth** and "Fly To" box to travel to Branson, Missouri.

Branson is close to Missouri's border with which state? _____

Which large city is north of Branson? _____
While you are in Branson, your family wants to stay close to White Water. Which road is that on?
_____

How many miles is Andy's Frozen Custard from White Water? _____

Here is the challenge! **Take notes** for a hotel to stay in. You will be staying in Branson June 8th until the 11th. You will have 2 adults and 2 children in the room. Your family does not want to spend more than $135 per night for a double queen bedroom. Find three possible hotels near White Water and list them below. Afterwards write a letter to your parents suggesting a trip to Branson! (or pitch a new idea!)

Hotel Name _____ Price per night _____

How far is it to White Water **(miles)** _____ Andy's Frozen Custard _____

What else is close to your hotel? _____

What do you like about this hotel? _____

_____

Hotel Name _____ Price per night _____

How far is it to White Water **(miles)** _____ Andy's Frozen Custard _____

What else is close to your hotel? _____

What do you like about this hotel? _____

_____

Hotel Name _____ Price per night _____

How far is it to White Water **(miles)** _____ Andy's Frozen Custard _____

What else is close to your hotel? _____

What do you like about this hotel? _____

_____

Name _____

Minecraft Mission to Branson Attractions

Team Members _____
(No more than 3 people)

_____

_____

Mission #1 (Novice)

White Water – Build three water slides. Each water slide must be: 20 feet tall, 15 feet tall, 10 feet tall. (One Minecraft block = one meter or 3.6 feet) Estimate 3.5 feet when building.

- **Slide One** (20 ft.) must cross over another slide.
  # of blocks tall _____
- **Slide Two** (15 ft.) must have a drop off. # of blocks tall _____
- **Slide Three** (10 ft.) must have a tunnel. # of blocks tall _____

Mission #2

Go-Cart Track – This mission requires the team members to be experts. The road must have at least 60 meters of track that is powered by red stone.

- You must include a hill that is 10 meters high and a mini hill that is at least 5 meters high.
- You must also include a tunnel.
- Use a mine cart for your go-cart.
- You must have a start and finish line.

Mission #3

Ice Mini Golf – This mission requires the team members to be experts. You must create at least four holes of golf. One should have a hazard. Another hole has a windmill. A third hole has a structure with a hole path inside. The last hole must have large statue of Mrs. Bonner.

Final Evaluation: Students must use Screencastify to record and explain their Minecraft World. (Script Outline Required – talking points)

DRURY UNIVERSITY

DRURY UNIVERSITY COURSE OFFERINGS

All courses are online and three hours of graduate credit (unless noted) which meet requirements for gifted certification.

SUMMER
EDUC 676 A Survey of Gifted
EDUC 678 Administration and Supervision of Gifted
EDUC 686 Practicum in Working with Gifted Students

FALL
EDUC 676 A Survey of Gifted
EDUC 677 Curriculum and Differentiated Instruction for the Gifted

SPRING
EDUC 676 A Survey of Gifted
EDUC 679 Counseling and Guidance of the Gifted

Dr. Laurie Edmondson, Director
School of Education & Child Development
(417) 873-7271 - ledmondson@drury.edu

DRURY SUMMER CAMPS 2016

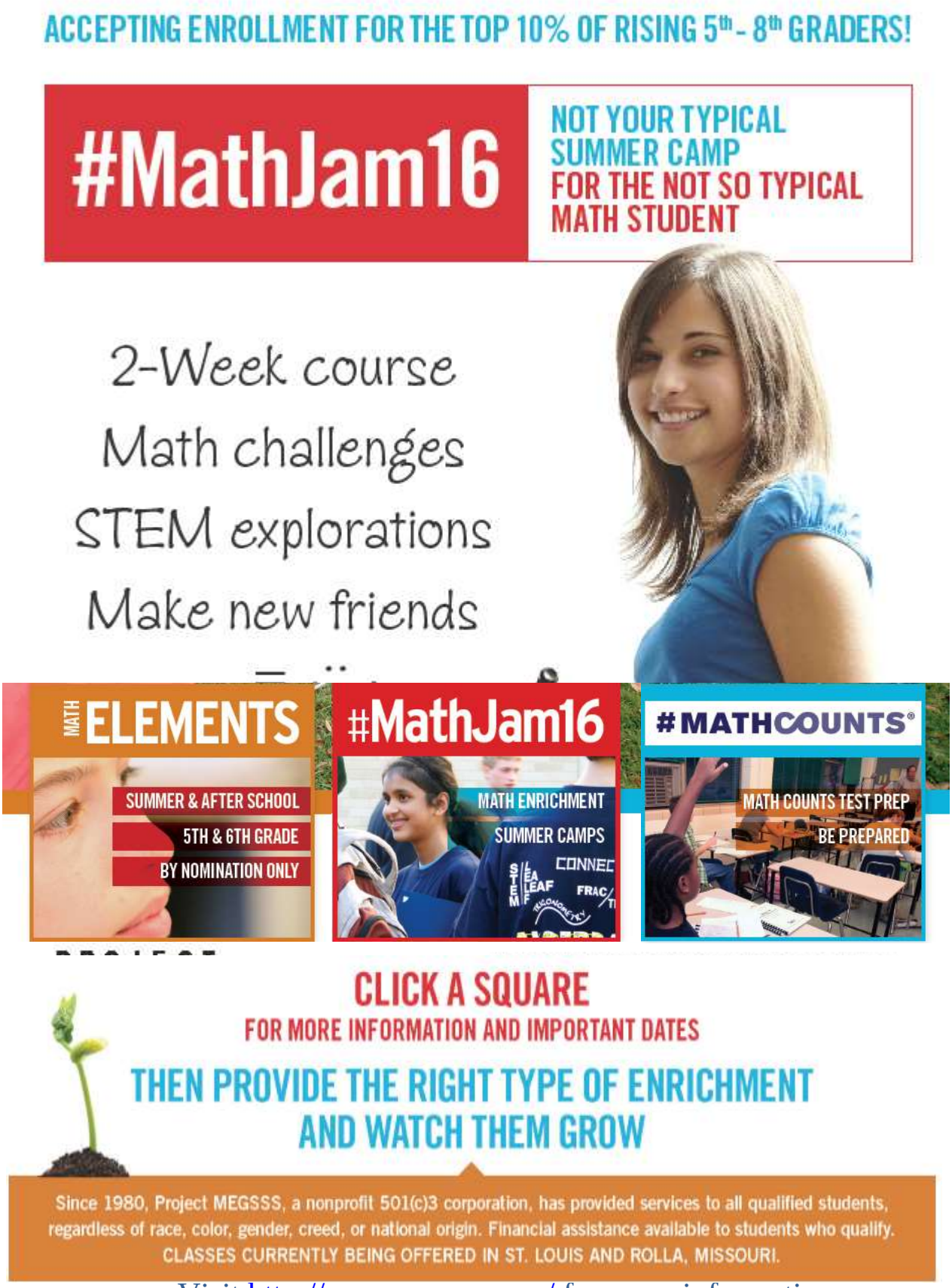
July 11-22 -- Weller Elementary
Summer Pals -- grades pk-1st 8:15-11:15
Summer Quest -- grades 2nd-5th 8:30-11:30

July 10-21 -- Drury University
Summerscape -- grades 6th-8th
Drury Leadership Academy -- grades 9th-12th

Financial need scholarships available upon request.

Mary Potthoff, Director
Center for Gifted Education
mpotthof@drury.edu - www.drury.edu/giftededucation

gifted:gamad2016



Visit http://www.megsss.org/ for more information.

GAM Celebrates Gifted Education Day at the Capitol

Jefferson City, February 24, 2016

Another great Gifted Education Day at the Capitol happened Wednesday, February 24, 2016 in Jefferson City, Missouri. Even though a snow storm covered the St. Louis and southeast regions of the state, hundreds of students still filled the First Floor Rotunda and Second Floor Rotunda Balcony. Students travel to Jefferson City each year during Gifted Education Week in Missouri to promote awareness of gifted education and the needs of gifted students by visiting their legislators and participating in GAM's Gifted Education Day at the Capitol.

This year's program began with a welcome from GAM President, Dr. Robin Lady, then introductions of special guests including GAM board members, and David Welch, Director of Gifted Education with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. A welcome from our honored guest, Dr. Margie Vandeven, the Commissioner of Education for Missouri followed. Marquette High School student Sydney Ring read a poem she wrote about giftedness, then awards were given for this year's GAM Student Contest, a public service announcement about gifted education competition. Sarah Ludlow, GAM Legislative/Advocacy Chairperson coordinated this annual event, and recognized the winners. And the winners are……..

Middle School:

1st - Mrs. Vicki Mikow's students from Fox Middle School (unable to attend due to snow)
2nd - Mrs. Diana Casebolt's students from Nowlin Middle School, Independence School District
3rd - Ms. Elicia Ligon's students from Phelps Center for Gifted, Springfield School District

Elementary:

1st - Mr. Howard Fields' students from Koch Elementary, Riverview Gardens School District (unable to attend due to snow)
2nd - Ms. Jennifer Medina's students from Cardill Mason Elementary, Blue Springs School District
3rd - Ms. Julie Coram's students from Lee's Summit School District

After the winners were recognized, Representative Chrissy Sommer talked with the students about work being done in Jefferson City on behalf of gifted education. Finally, Kyna Iman, GAM's Legislative Advocate made the attending students honorary deputies for the day then sent them off with the charge to talk about House Bills 1419 and 1429, and Senate Bill 904.

Thank you to all of the student advocates for attending and supporting gifted education and Gifted Education Week in Missouri. The Gifted Association of Missouri continues to advocate for gifted education in our state and strives to promote awareness of the needs of gifted students.

Elementary

3rd - Ms. Julie Coram's students
Trailridge Elementary
Lee's Summit School District

Middle School

3rd - Ms. Elicia Ligon's students
Phelps Center for Gifted
Springfield School District

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. Robin Lady @RLady74. Dr. Lenae Lazzelle, GAM's Executive Vice President is also on Twitter @llazzelle. Did you know that GAM has a Twitter handle? Find us at @GAMgifted

Gifted

By: Thomas

Being gifted is a blessing,
Not ever a curse,
Always moving forward,
And never in reverse.

Never acting rude,
Or being arrogant,
Large tasks are pushovers,
But not always relevant.

Sometimes we don't fit in,
It all will be okay,
Just stick to the planning,
And never be cliché.

We all find our own place,
At the very end,
All of us fit in,
And find our new best friend.

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!

Advisory Council for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION – 2015

Reporting Data on Gifted Students and Programs

RECOMMENDATION 1: DESE should make district information related to state-approved gifted programs readily accessible to the public. Specifically, information available on DESE's website should include but not be limited to grade levels served, identification criteria, service delivery model by level (per DESE categories), contact minutes per week by level, number of gifted teachers by level and the student-to-teacher ratio by level.

RECOMMENDATION 2: DESE should generate an annual state data report in October on gifted students and state approved gifted programs. The report should use data from the prior school year and include but not be limited to:

- Number and percent of districts with state-approved gifted programs (state totals and disaggregated by DESE region and county)
- Number and percent of gifted students served in state-approved programs (state totals and disaggregated by DESE region and county; by grade level and as a percent of all Missouri students in grade level)
- Number and percent of gifted students identified and not served in state-approved programs (state totals and disaggregated by DESE region and county; by grade level and percent of all identified gifted students)
- Gifted teacher certification in state-approved gifted programs by level (Elementary, Middle School, High School and total)
- Gifted program types and contact minutes per week (state total by program type, level, DESE region and county; average contact minutes by level, DESE region and county)
- Gifted student demographics by DESE region (district cells merged so actual count is possible) and total
- Gifted student achievement (MAP) by grade level tested and in comparison to all students at grade levels tested

Identification of Gifted Students

RECOMMENDATION 3: DESE should eliminate the practice of reporting students as gifted based on the criterion of being enrolled in an Advanced Placement (AP) and/or International Baccalaureate (IB) course. Additionally, AP and/or IB courses should not be counted as part of a state-approved gifted program.

RECOMMENDATION 4: DESE should provide a best practice model for districts to use in identifying and serving students who are traditionally underrepresented in gifted programs, the goal being to have program participants more closely reflect the ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic diversity of individual school districts. The best practice model should include research-based recommendations on identification, interventions to scaffold learning and delivery of gifted program services.

RECOMMENDATION 5: DESE should provide a best practice model for districts to use in identifying students who are twice exceptional (students with both learning challenges due to disabilities and/or physical impairments and exceptional learning abilities).

Programming for Gifted Students

RECOMMENDATION 6: DESE should require all Missouri 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.

Educator Preparation and Professional Development

RECOMMENDATION 7: DESE should require teacher preparation programs to include a minimum of one three-credit hour course addressing the nature and needs of gifted students and designing curriculum and instruction to meet those needs.

RECOMMENDATION 8: DESE should require all districts to provide teachers ongoing professional development addressing the nature and needs of gifted students and designing curriculum and instruction to meet those needs. Professional development may include such options as staff development, university coursework, professional conferences, workshops and web-based learning.

Requiring and Funding Gifted Education

RECOMMENDATION 9: Gifted identification and programming should be required in Missouri.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Earmarked funds should be allocated for gifted identification and programming in Missouri.

JUNE 2–27 2016

Earn a certificate in STEM Education through hands-on, real-world learning experiences to integrate STEM into classrooms.

MARYVILLE UNIVERSITY AND BOEING OFFER A

CERTIFICATE IN STEM EDUCATION

There is a tremendous national and global need for increased education integrating science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to bolster the pipeline of talented individuals ready for 21st century careers. Now K-8 teachers, librarians, media specialists, technology trainers, principals, instructional coaches, and others interested in meeting state and national standards while engaging students in STEM can participate in this innovative program. Learn to integrate STEM into the classroom with research-based best practices led by expert educators in the field.

Complete the entire program June 2-27, 2016
8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. at Maryville University's
9 credit hour intensive June, 2016 session:

- **One-credit hour STEM Overview**
- **Three-credit hours Creative Problem Solving**
- **Four 1-credit hour Electives**
- **One-credit hour STEM Capstone**

Maryville educator discount rate of $440/credit hour

ELECTIVES INCLUDE:

- Integrating Science, Art and Engineering into Mathematics
- Problem-Based Learning
- Markerspace Movement
- Robo-Basics with LEGO Robotics
- STEAM Up Your Classroom with Theatre Arts
- Filmmaking in the Classroom
- Design Thinking: Incorporating Architectural Projects into the Classroom
- App Development for Teachers

To learn more and register, visit:
maryville.edu/stem
or contact Michelle Schoeck
mschoeck@maryville.edu
314.529.9568

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MANY CONNECTIONS. ONE U.

Duke TIP

Opportunity. For Life.

Searching for ways to support your academically talented students in reaching their full potential? Duke TIP is here to help.

The Duke University Talent Identification Program (Duke TIP) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving academically talented youth worldwide. TIP will work with you to identify, recognize, nurture, and challenge your gifted students.

We offer gifted students in grades 4-12 a number of special opportunities:

- Talent searches to support gifted youth with above-level testing and formal recognition of ability.
- Dynamic residential educational programs that take place on the Duke University campus and other campuses throughout the U.S. and abroad.
- Independent and distance learning opportunities that provide unique, above-level curriculum at home or on the go.
- Resources, publications, and advisory services focused on guiding gifted students and their parents.

Our services are provided at no cost to schools. Financial aid is available to qualifying students.

Visit www.tip.duke.edu to learn more or contact Duke TIP at (919) 668-9100.

Creativity Day

by Jocelyn Kreuger,
Elsberry R-2, Gifted Facilitator

Creativity Day: All kids grades K-4 at the Elsberry R-2 school district participated (3 classrooms for each grade level at our school) My middle school ALP (Advanced Learning Program) kids grades 5-6 volunteered at each station as well as 1 parent and/or grandparent at each station. My students were to give instructions and keep spaces organized. At the end of the day all of my ALP students got to paint a circle for the mural as well. I did provide lunch for my volunteers. Each group was at each station for 7 minutes. I was the time keeper all day who announced the transitions. Some teachers assigned groups, some teachers left that up to me.

Fantastic Contraption on Computers http://fantasticcontraption.com/original/

Fidgets Game on computers http://pbskids.org/designsquad/games/fidgit/index.html

Construction Station Materials:

Marble Run
Lincoln Logs
kapla blocks
castle blocks
gears
Zoob

Makerspace:

Variety of materials and idea sheets
Materials: pipe cleaners, blocks, tape spools, plastic Easter eggs, old game pieces, etc.
Camera to take pictures of creations
Ideas: make your name, design a rocket ship, make an animal, etc.

Legos: Legos and building plates

Games: Izzi, Izzi2, Set, Rush Hour, Story Cubes, Suspend, Swish, Swish Jr.

Puzzles: Logic puzzles for each grade level (retired teacher ran this station, big envelopes with teachers name to pass out later)

Circle painting: different size circles on card stock and drying racks
Art teacher ran this station and encouraged each student to design a unique circle

Design Station: Artistic creativity using doodle loops and uncoloring pages. Materials needed included colored pencils, pencils, and envelopes with teacher names.

Our finished mural was designed by my ALP students the following fall. Each child drew an idea. We looked at all of the ideas and ended up blending many of our ideas together into this one design.

This has become an annual event that has expanded into 5-7 grade as well. We have renamed the middle school event STEAM Day. The event is scheduled the last week or two of school and is held in our elementary gym.

Parents Ask:

Just how important is making friends at school anyway? Our daughter is exceling academically—isn't that most important?

By Dennis O'Brien, MA, LCSW

It's critically important. Responsible parents MUST proactively help their child accomplish one of the most challenging developmental tasks gifted children face: acquiring the social skills to develop and maintain friendships throughout her life. Savvy parents make that a priority, not excelling in school.

Making friends can be difficult for gifted children who feel superior and speak critically to peers who don't share their intellectual prowess. As a result, they often fail to develop age-appropriate social skills. This makes the task of forming friendships increasingly unlikely.

Well-meaning parents often make it harder for a gifted child to acquire age-appropriate social skills and same-age friendships by encouraging intellectual growth at the expense of social development. As a result, many children who excel academically are developmentally arrested in their psychosocial growth. This is a serious life-long handicap.

Here are some strategies you can use to help your child overcome these challenges.

Critique your own social skills. Parents of gifted children frequently fail to model healthy social behavior and values themselves. They tend to prize the intellectual development of their child above all else, are critical of teachers and programs, belittle others, and insist on getting special advantages for their child. Often they also micromanage their child's academic progress.

Ask yourself: does this describe you? How often have you complained that your child was being held back by others, not challenged enough or not recognized by teachers for his academic prowess? How often do you thank teachers for the good job they are doing? How often does your child hear you speak negatively of others? Positively of others?

Teach your child basic social skills. Why? Because teachers and counselors who work extensively with bright student remark at how often they fail to make eye contact with others, fail to smile at others or say good morning, use other children's names or complement them, ask "How was your weekend," or make other intentional efforts to be pleasant.

Teach these skills explicitly. Role-play them with your child. If you feel that you have taught your child how to do these most basic skills, don't take it for granted that she is using them. Ask her how frequently she uses these skills each day. How do other children respond when she's pleasant and shows interest in them? Continue to monitor your child's behavior until she habitually uses appropriate social skills with peers. Seeing her form friendships with peers is a good sign your coaching is having a positive effect.

Don't fall into the trap of serving as an approving audience for your child's narrow focus on his intellectual abilities. Gifted children tend to seek adult companionship, attention and approval for their intellectual abilities and achievements. Parents and teachers who respond to this inappropriate approval-seeking unwittingly contribute to the arrested social development of a gifted child. Constantly seeking adult approval makes it less important for a child to communicate with same-age peers and to acquire appropriate social skills. Who needs peer friendships if he can shine in the eyes of adults?

Make it clear that you expect your child to learn to get along with his classmates. There are many ways to do this. Tell your child how important being well-rounded, having social skills and making friends are to you. Look for opportunities to praise the character traits, skills and behaviors of others. Avoid references to their intelligence. Instead, focus on traits like their willingness to get along with others, their honesty, kindness, perseverance and cooperation.

Encourage your child to form friendships with children who may not be her intellectual peers but have other things to offer. Encouragement may be enough for some children. But some need their parents to arrange social occasions with other children—at least once each week. In addition to helping with the logistics, you may need to coach your child specifically on how to behave on these occasions. Follow up afterwards by discussing how she did behave. Gifted children can be so self-

absorbed that they are unaware of how their behavior affects others. And yes, it's OK for your child to have friends of different ages who share common interests.

Recruit your child's teacher to partner with you in promoting your child's psychosocial growth. She is probably aware that your child needs help in learning to interact with other children. But she is also busy and may be reluctant to take it upon herself to help him improve. If she knows that helping your child develop the social habits he needs for success and happiness in life is important to you, she will be much more likely to help. Ask her to keep you informed on how well your child is interacting with classmates. Ask her to not give attention to your child when he inappropriately seeks adult approval rather than interacting with classmates. Thank her in advance.

Avoid programs and competitions that focus narrowly on intellectual prowess. These will do more harm than good for your child. Unless a child has strong support from parents to be well-rounded and can resist the seductive attraction of these programs, he will become increasingly focused on intellectual prowess and adult recognition, while falling further behind in psychosocial development.

Involve your child in extracurricular activities that promote teamwork and cooperation. Team sports are excellent, as are cooperative activities like theater, band or Scouting. Avoid intellectual competitions unless they are the rare kind like Academic Challenge Cup, sponsored by Gifted Resource Council (GRC) in St. Louis, which promotes teamwork and "working together for a common goal." Activities which stress cooperation with teammates and fair play with opponents will help your child develop social skills.

Insist that your child be involved in at least one such activity year round. If your child complains–as many gifted children do–that he is not good at the activity, so much the better. Participating on a team in which his performance is average or below average will help a child develop empathy for others who do not excel academically. And it will help him become more well-rounded.

Make use of programs which go beyond academics to promote growth in interpersonal skills. In the St. Louis area, all GRC programs do this, and GRC teachers are hired with this in mind and then given them further training in in-service workshops to enhance their abilities to promote this type of growth.

Even the academic approach of GRC programs is special: the process is not only based on teamwork, but creativity and a focus on the process rather than the result. In short, the academic challenge is broadening rather than restrictive; the approach is based on cooperation; and the goal is to strengthen the interpersonal skills of students while challenging them with an enrichment program unlike those in their home schools.

Parents who intentionally use strategies and resources like these can help a child develop the social skills and peer friendships so essential for being well-rounded and successful in life.

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.giftedrerourcecouncil.org.

Kyna's Report - GIFTED LEGISLATION

The House of Representatives has passed House Bill 1419, sponsored by Rep. Donna Pfautsch, by a vote of 158 to two. This bill modifies provisions relating to gifted education. Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, a school district will incur a reduction in funding if it experiences a decrease in its gifted program enrollment of more than 20. If a school district experiences a decrease of 20 or more in its gifted program enrollment, an amount equal to the product of the difference between the number of students enrolled in the gifted program in the current school year and the number of students enrolled in the previous school year multiplied by 680 must be subtracted from the school district's current year payment amount. This provision does not apply to a school district with less than 300 enrolled students. The bill is now in the Senate waiting further action.

MISSOURI SCHOLARS ACADEMY/MISSOURI FINE ARTS ACADEMY

On March 16, the House of Representatives used a new Constitutional power for the first time ever. In 2014, voters approved Constitutional Amendment 10, which allows the Legislature to overturn budget restrictions implemented by the Governor. The General Assembly already had the authority to override budget line-item vetoes. Amendment 10 also allows the Legislature to vote to overturn budget items that the Governor has withheld but not vetoed.

After the General Assembly passed the fiscal year 2016 budget last year, the Governor withheld some of the money they appropriated. Lawmakers have complained repeatedly over the years that Governors withhold money for reasons that do not comply with the Constitution. On Wednesday, the House voted to restore $925,000 of withheld funding for programs, including $575,000 for the Missouri Scholars Academy, Missouri Fine Arts Academy, and $350,000 for waivers that allow victims of a brain injury to stay out of nursing home facilities. These budget items will now move to the Senate for their approval.

The full appropriation for the Academies is $750,000. The Governor withheld $575,000 of that amount in September, stating there were not enough funds to cover the full cost of the Academies. If the Senate takes the same action as the House the Governor will be forced to release the full amount of the funds for the June, 2016, Academies.

For the 2017 Academies, the House of Representatives has approved $750,000. The Senate has not taken action on the budget item at this time.

STEM PILOT PROGRAM LEGISLATION

The House Committee for Emerging Issues passed House Bill 2671, sponsored by Rep. Travis Fitzwater. This bill establishes a pilot program to be known as the STEM Career Awareness Pilot Program to increase awareness of science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall select twenty-five secondary schools for participation in the program which will introduce students to a wide variety of STEM careers and technology through an on-line-based STEM curriculum. The bill sets out the specific criteria for the on-line program. The pilot program will run from 2017 through 2022. Supporters say that exposing students to math and science fields at an early age leads to a more robust job market, benefiting both the students themselves and their future employers. Testifying for the bill were Representative Fitzwater Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry Gifted Association of Missouri and The Boeing Company.

The House of Representatives appropriated $50,000 in the FY2017 budget for the program.
Please contact your State Representative and State Senator and urge their support for gifted education legislation and funding!!

GAM Advocacy Platform

In the State of Missouri, "gifted children" means those who "exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent that continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum." RSMo. 162.675

GAM has actively supported the needs of high-ability and high-potential learners in Missouri since 1980. GAM provides teacher training, curriculum development, parent support, regional seminars and workshops, scholarships, student competitions, and awards. Further, GAM conducts an annual state conference for all Missouri stakeholders in gifted education. In addition, GAM employs a legislative consultant to advocate for gifted students at the state level and through the legislative process.

GAM Advocates for:

1. Legislation to support funding for gifted education in all Missouri Public Schools.
2. Legislation to support a mandate to provide gifted services to identified gifted students in all Missouri Public Schools, through a state-approved gifted program.
3. Legislation to require each school district to report annually to DESE regarding the programs or services being provided for gifted students within their district and the number of students being served.
4. A required undergraduate level course in gifted education to prepare future teachers to address a wide range of abilities and to facilitate their use of instructional strategies to maximize their students' potential.
5. Professional development in differentiation to assure that all teachers are equipped to differentiate the curriculum for a wide range of learners, including students from diverse populations, with a focus on academic rigor.
6. Mandatory Professional Development hours for school personnel responsible for the coordination and administration of gifted programs and services in the areas of Nature and Needs of Gifted Learners and Curriculum and Instruction for Gifted Learners.
7. Initiatives and opportunities which will benefit gifted students beyond high school, (i.e. Bright Flight, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Dual Credit).
8. The support of enrichment programs which go above and beyond school requirements including summer programs, higher education opportunities, Missouri Scholars Academy, Missouri Fine Arts Academy, as well as other programs which support gifted learners.
9. A state-wide Advisory Council with members who have experience with gifted programs to advise the State Board of Education regarding applicable rules and regulations, as well as other issues that relate to programs for gifted and talented students.
10. A full-time Director of Gifted Education position through the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

For further information concerning advocacy please contact:

Kyna Iman, GAM Legislative Consultant, kynaiman@earthlink.net
Sarah Ludlow, GAM Legislative Public Issues, sludlow@hotmail.com

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.

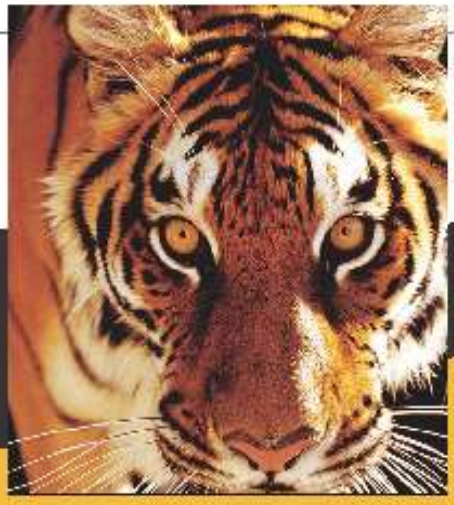
(D) Field and Clinical Experience (three (3) semester hours)—

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.

University of Missouri



GIFTED Education Online

Master's degree (M Ed) in special education with an emphasis in gifted education

Choose your option:

Master's Degree An online master's degree designed to enhance the process of teaching and learning in the elementary, middle or high school classroom.

Missouri Certification The necessary gifted course work to prepare for Missouri gifted education certification — available online.

All courses listed meet requirements for Missouri Gifted Certification.

Teachers seeking Missouri Gifted Certification may enroll online as post-baccalaureate students without making an application to a degree program.

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

For more information, contact:

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

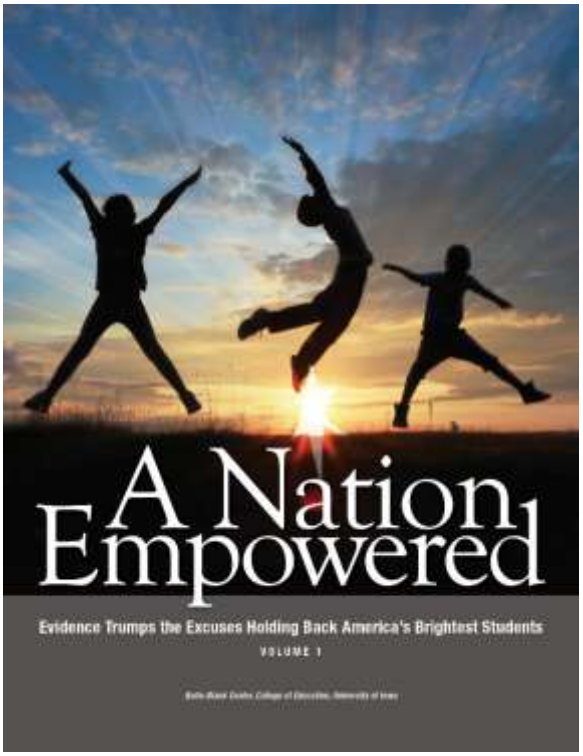
SUMMER SEMESTER 2016

- Research with Exceptional Children (SPC_ED 8350)
- Nature and Needs of Gifted and Talented Students (SPC_ED 8380)
- Curriculum Methods for Gifted and Talented Students (SPC_ED 8391)
- Practicum: Gifted Education (SPC_ED 8946)

FALL SEMESTER 2016

- 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)

Visit: online.missouri.edu/gifted



Conference on Academic Acceleration

July 24-26, 2016

The Belin-Blank Center at the University of Iowa is offering a conference focused on academic acceleration. The target audience is gifted education teachers, administrators, and school counselors. Parents are also welcome to attend. The goal is to present attendees with practical information about acceleration, using existing research and tools to help make data-driven decisions.

At the Pre-Institute (Sunday, July 24 from 2-5 p.m., $75), participants will learn specific information about how to use the *Iowa Acceleration Scale* (3rd edition) a tool designed to help educators and parents make decisions about grade skipping for K-8 students. Individuals may register for only this session, if desired.

The focus of the Two-Day Institute is *A Nation Empowered: Research-Based Evidence about Acceleration and Gifted/Talented Students*. (July 25, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., plus optional evening activities and July 26, 8:30 a.m. to noon, $250). Participants will meet the editors and authors of *A Nation Empowered*; interact with others who have successfully implemented acceleration in their schools; choose from multiple sessions focusing on practical applications of how to implement acceleration in schools; and create their own plan for next steps!

Released last spring, *A Nation Empowered: Evidence Trumps the Excuses Holding Back America's Brightest Students,* includes updated information about the best-researched yet most under-utilized educational option for gifted students: academic acceleration. In spite of the strong research base supporting the implementation of the many forms of acceleration, many schools do not routinely utilize any of the options, and educators often express concerns about accelerating students, assuming that doing nothing is better than taking a "risk" with acceleration.

All Institute participants will receive a copy of *A Nation Empowered*. The Institute will include a strong focus on applying the research in practical settings, and participants will have opportunities to learn from educators who have successfully implemented various forms of acceleration. Discounts are available for students and groups, and a credit option is also available. For more information and to register, see http://belinblank.org/bbali.