

## Gifted Touches Us All!

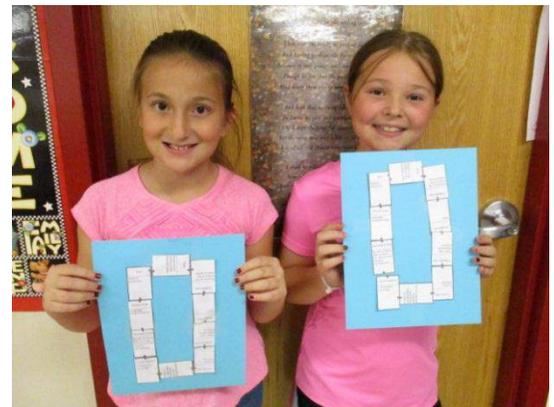
If you are reading this newsletter, chances are you know someone who is gifted. You may have a gifted child, grandchild or student. You may be the director of a gifted program, or the principal of a building that houses a gifted program. You might be teaching in a classroom, unsure of what to do with your gifted students, or you might have your own kids attending a district that does not offer services for gifted, and you would like to see a program started.

Whatever has brought you to our newsletter – we are excited you are here! The GAMbit’s mission is to share information and services about gifted with parents, teachers and administrators. That is one of the reasons the Gifted Association of Missouri wanted to make the GAMbit free and online! We want to get the word out that gifted services are important and need to be advocated for in our state. **Did you know that gifted services are not required in Missouri? Currently, districts do not have to spend money received from the state for having a gifted program, on gifted education!**

Gifted students will tell you how important their services are to them. They are passionate about the projects, classes and units that challenge them to think creatively. Children who are gifted know they are unique, and they need affective lessons so they can be more accepting of who they are as a gifted person. It is vital that they believe it is okay to be different! Gifted programs teach that.

**GAM has a BIG goal this year!** We would like to see gifted services mandated in our state. We need all parents, teachers and administrators to make their voices heard. All of our children are important. All of our children have the right to learn at school. All of our children need a voice that is on their side. Please consider joining GAM and becoming a part of our organization. For \$15 a year, parents can become part of a community that cares about their child and the learning that goes on in the classroom. Becoming a member of GAM makes a difference for us all.

**When we stand together, we can make a change. It is time for gifted services to be mandated in Missouri!**



# All the Good Stuff Inside!

Table of Contents

## Table of Contents is Hyperlinked!

<a href="#">GAM Board of Directors</a>	3
<a href="#">Calendar of Events</a>	3
<a href="#">Letter From Our GAM President</a>	4
<a href="#">GAM Day in Jefferson City – Feb. 24</a>	5
<a href="#">Battle of the Brains!</a>	6
<a href="#">Scientifically Speaking</a>	8
<a href="#">Is America Failing its Brightest Stars?</a>	12
<a href="#">Ten Things Pixar Can Teach Us About Creativity (A Lesson)</a>	16
<a href="#">Edcampkc</a>	20
<a href="#">GAM District G Conference</a>	23
<a href="#">Advisory Council Recommendations for Action</a>	24
<a href="#">Where There’s a Will, There’s a Way</a>	26
<a href="#">Where Are They Now? Bill Phillips</a>	27
<a href="#">Gifted Advisory Council Update</a>	29
<a href="#">Parents Ask!</a>	30
<a href="#">Where Are They Now? The Girls from Seattle</a>	32
<a href="#">Where Are They Now? Major George Johnson</a>	33
<a href="#">Parent’s Perspective (2e)</a>	34
<a href="#">GAM’s 2016 State Advocacy Agenda</a>	36
<a href="#">GAM Advocacy Platform</a>	37
<a href="#">College for Kids Remembers</a>	38
<a href="#">NEW Requirements for Gifted Education Certification</a>	39

**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

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### H – Vacant – We NEED YOU!

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@idschools.org](mailto:Sheila_Bonner@idschools.org)

## You're Invited - Calendar of Events

### Gifted Resource Council

Winter Saturday Learning Labs for Pre-k – 8<sup>th</sup> graders  
Wydown Middle School in St. Louis on the following  
Saturdays: February 6, February 13, February 20, February 27,  
March 5, and March 12.

Academic Challenge Cup at UMSL  
March 1-4 and at Washington University March 15- 17.

### Feb. 24 is GAM day in Jefferson City!

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

**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

December 17, 2015



Dear GAM Members,

Thank you very much for continuing to support GAM. During this busy time of year, I want to personally wish you all the happiest holiday season ever. As I reflect on memories from this year, I think about our very successful GAM Day in February, then the NTW that means so much to our organization and all of the new teachers of gifted in Missouri, our outstanding 34th Annual GAM Conference in October at MU, and finally our very productive planning board retreat two weeks ago.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as the GAM President for the last year. Some of the goals we set last year were to increase membership, conference attendance, and to help GAM with a long-term vision, goals, and planning. I'm proud to say we've worked hard on these goals and we will continue to pursue them. My personal goal is to serve this organization and all stakeholders in gifted education locally, state-wide, nationally and globally to the best of my ability.

This year, GAM will host and celebrate its 35th Annual GAM Conference. What an exciting time full of rich history and future potential for our organization. I want to personally thank everyone involved in making our 34th Annual Conference a huge success and I'd like to encourage your participation in the 2016 conference also.

Please know you may contact me anytime by email or phone. My email address is [robin.lady.gam@gmail.com](mailto:robin.lady.gam@gmail.com), and my personal phone is: 314-203-1165 (text preferred).

Stay tuned to our website, [www.mogam.org](http://www.mogam.org) for our latest updates and events. I would personally like to wish you a 2016 full of happiness and success.

Sincerely,

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

# Feb. 24 is GAM Day in Jefferson City!

## Let our legislatures know you care about gifted services!

The legislative briefing and awards will start in the Capitol Rotunda at 10:45 am.

This year it is more important than ever to support GAM with your [membership](#)! Your \$15 for parent/\$25 for educator/\$500 lifetime goes to fund GAM's legislative consultant who works relentlessly to inform our elected officials in Jefferson City know that gifted education is important in our state! This year GAM is focusing on three areas for gifted students:



1. Changing the funding formula to add a weight for gifted education.
2. To re-establish a payment adjustment for schools that eliminate or decrease enrollment in state approved gifted programs.
3. To mandate that every school in Missouri provide a state approved gifted education program.

Every child has the right to learn, including gifted students. Many teachers and administrators think that gifted children will do fine in class because they are smart, but that is not always the case. 73% of teachers agree that “too often, the brightest students are bored and under-challenged in school; we’re not giving them a sufficient chance to thrive.” As of 2014 only 43% of Missouri districts offer gifted programs versus 64% in 2003.

## Did you know that GAM is on Social Media?

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

You can find our website at [www.mogam.org](http://www.mogam.org)

Twitter @GAMgifted



# BATTLE OF THE BRAINS

**By Jenny Reidlinger**

Whenever a contest comes up, I always ask my G/T class if they are interested, and the answer is always a unanimous, YES! We know that a lot of creative and talented kids turn in entries, and that winning is a long shot, but we also know that somebody's going to win...and it might as well be us.

I am extremely blessed to be working with a group of self-motivated, go-getters whose personalities work really well together. The nine kids in my group range in age from 3rd to 6th grades, with seven of them being girls and two being boys. Though they all show strong leadership qualities, they naturally and seamlessly take turns in the leadership role.

When Burns & McDonnell announced that they would be holding their Battle of the Brains (BOTB) competition again, my kids were quick to jump on the opportunity. The BOTB competition is open to all schools in the Kansas City area, elementary through high school. This year's challenge was to design the next exhibit for Science City at Union Station in Kansas City, MO. The twist for this year was that the exhibit was going to be an outdoor exhibit to add to the popular science center. Cash prizes are awarded to the top ten elementary and the top ten middle/high school entries, with the top prize being \$50,000. The most amazing thing about this contest is that the one school who is chosen as the grand prize winner also gets to see their exhibit come to life as a million dollar addition to Science City.

My goal for our first team meeting was to research other outdoor science centers around the country and to brainstorm a list of possible ideas. Not only did the team accomplish that objective, but they also came to a unified decision about the direction they wanted to go with the exhibit. Initially, we generated a huge list of potential topics for our exhibit. The kids began eliminating ideas that they thought sounded commonplace, or that they assumed a lot of other teams would consider. They did not want to go with an obvious topic like weather or plants. When they had the list narrowed down to four or five topics, I handed out paper and told them to choose their favorite idea from the list and sketch a preliminary idea for



the exhibit. After ten minutes of sketching, we discovered that seven of the nine kids had chosen simple machines as their topic. After a group discussion, we all knew it was the perfect idea. You know how it is with G/T kids when they start formulating ideas that play off each other...the excitement was contagious, and we could hardly write fast enough to get all their ideas down on paper. After only one meeting, I knew our concept of a simple machines playground was solid. You can almost feel a winning idea when you hear it.

The following team meetings were filled with generating drawings and computer images of the exhibit, and writing out the details for each component. The kids ended up with a design that centers around a compound machine jungle gym with six simple machine attractions surrounding it. For example, the lever attraction has three teeter totters lined up, each having the fulcrum in a different spot. A seat at one end is labeled “Resistance Force” and handprints at the other end say, “Effort Force”. As kids push down on the resistance force sides, they can feel the different amounts of force needed to lift a person on the other end.

In addition to images and written descriptions of the exhibit, the kids were also required to include a section on constructability. We invited our district’s Director of Facilities into our classroom to discuss construction and safety issues. We included our notes from his visit in our presentation. The kids also got to experience the power of networking, as he also connected us with his playground equipment company. Athco LLC helped us to generate some 2D and 3D images of what our playground could look like.

One of the things that I think pushed our entry to the top was the section called, “Social Media and Supplemental Materials”. All that was required for this portion was to provide examples of what could be posted on social media. The amazing little creative brains in my group would not stop at that. They built their own webpage where they housed five instructional videos showing kids what they can do at home to learn more about simple machines. Then they programmed two video games about simple machines, and found other online resources for kids and parents. The cherry on top was the QR code they generated for quick and easy access to their supplemental resources.

You know going into the awards ceremony that your group is one of the top 20 entries. This year they received 520 entries. Each group invited to the awards ceremony wins prize money for their school. As more and more groups were called, and our school still remained...the eyes of my students were getting bigger and bigger. At one point, they held hands down the row, knowing that in a few more minutes the grand prize winner would be announced. When our school was announced, we all stood and cheered and went up to the stage to be recognized. That is one of those moments that will stay with those kids forever. The media captured us all with our mouths hanging open when the next announcement was that our exhibit was the one they had chosen to build at Science City. The kids will get to meet with engineers and architects to help plan the exhibit and experience the building process.

In our district, we teach thematically by semester, and next semester’s theme is coincidentally architecture. I am giddy at the thought of the experience my students will have as the things they are learning about in class are playing out in the building of their exhibit.

As a teacher, you can’t ask for anything more than to see your kids inspired and to watch them experience success. Sometimes it’s just really fun to be a teacher.





# *Scientifically Speaking*

## **Art, Science, and Elmo: STEAM for Creative and Spatial Abilities**

Elmo, the little red monster famous among two-year-olds for his role on Sesame Street, is bringing new thinking to the 43<sup>rd</sup> season of the show and his young audience. You are probably familiar with the acronym STEM: Science, technology, engineering, and math. Savvy educators—including Elmo—argue for adding a new field to the list: Art (SesameWorkshop, 2012). The new acronym is “STEAM.”

Does art seem out of place among these other fields? Artists and those in STEM fields may seem very different, but they are connected through their need for well-developed creative and spatial abilities (Coxon, 2012). We should follow Elmo’s work with preschoolers with increasingly challenging STEAM instruction in our K-12 classrooms to help develop creativity and spatial ability.

Today, students rarely have opportunities to improve upon their creative and spatial abilities in school. This is unfortunate. Researchers have known of the importance of spatial ability to STEM fields for more than 50 years (Super & Bachrach, 1957). Creativity is essential to the scientific innovation that has driven our economy and improvements to our quality of life since at least World War II (National Science Board, 2010). Spatial ability has never been well developed in schools, and children’s creativity has declined over the last 20 years (Kim, 2011).

You can facilitate the spatial and creative growth of future STEAM innovators in your classroom: Integrate art into science in challenging activities and use important concepts common to both fields. Integrate STEAM in your classroom!

### **A Whole New Animal: Challenging Activities that Integrate Art and Science**

There is an unlimited number of possible activities to do with students involving art and science in such a way as to develop creative and spatial abilities. Students can dance to learn about the laws of physics, create sculpture of the atom or a cell, and draw in their science note books. Students can act out the role of a butterfly in the pollination of plants.

One of my favorite art-science activities is creating “newly discovered” animals. I give students each a bag of craft supplies including pipe cleaners, balloons, markers, glue, construction paper, and an array of random and odd small materials. I have them set up a private space with folders to focus on their own, creative ideas. I then have them select random cards to do with our science curriculum, such as the soon-to-be-created animal’s prey, predators, and kingdom. Students then work to create such an animal—perhaps a new reptile that feeds on birds and is eaten by lions. What adaptations might it have evolved as defense against lions or to help it capture birds? When finished, students share their newly discovered animal with the class. This activity encourages students to form a mental image of their animal-to-be, a task that is demanding of both creative and spatial abilities.

### **A Little Perspective: Concepts Common to the Arts and Sciences**

There are many concepts common to the arts and sciences, creativity being king among them. Critical thinking can be seen as another link. An artist must be prepared to subject her work to an audience, marketing, explaining, and defending the art to critics and curators. Scientists use critical thinking throughout their work, including problem finding and experimental design. I see perspective

taking as being an important facet underlying critical thinking. Perspective taking is also a concept that can be used to challenge creative and spatial abilities.

Perspective taking is fundamental to the arts. Consider Picasso's cramming multiple perspectives into each of his Cubist works, Van Gogh's many self-portraits, or Monet painting his water lilies from so many angles, times of day, and seasons. Likewise, scientists must consider many sides to an argument, weigh evidence critically, think logically, and determine a view they can defend based on the evidence. For example, scientists must consider many factors with such questions as: How much impact will current rates of carbon dioxide production have on Earth's climate in 100 years? Was Tyrannosaurus Rex a hunter or a scavenger?

In the classroom, have your budding innovators draw leaves from different perspectives, take various stakeholder roles in problem-based learning (PBL) units, and—my favorite—answer “what if” questions. “What if” questions beg a different perspective by changing something within our present state.

“What if” questions push not only for students to demonstrate what they understand about the way things are but to understand why they are that way. What if the Earth had no moon? What if we had chlorophyll in our skin cells? Answering questions demands not only that students know about the moon's influence on the Earth and the purpose of chlorophyll, but allow for creativity in considering the change in perspective. Many of these questions can also be spatially demanding, such as in understanding the Earth/moon relationship.

## Conclusion

Art is not as different from STEM fields as many may think. With STEAM, creativity and spatial ability can be further developed among students. Elmo is already hard at work incorporating art into his STEM songs and skits, don't let our big kids lag behind. Generate some STEAM!

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## 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 graduate programs in gifted education 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.



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**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  
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**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.

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gifted:gamad2015

# Is America Failing its Brightest Stars?

*The story of a 14-year-old who built a nuclear reactor shows us why we need to support our smartest students before it's too late.*

By [Tom Clynes](#)



One afternoon, Tiffany Wilson ducked her head into her 11-year-old son's garage laboratory to call him in for dinner and saw her son in his yellow hazmat coveralls watching a pool of liquid as it spread from an overturned container across the concrete floor.

"Taylor, it's time for supper."

"I'm going to have to clean this up first."

"That's not the stuff you said would kill us if it broke open," Tiffany asked, "is it?"

"I don't think so," Taylor said. "Not instantly."

Taylor's parents had watched his science obsession progress through grade school from rockets and explosive chemistry to a passion for nuclear physics. A year earlier, distraught over his grandmother's cancer diagnosis, Taylor came up with an idea to use nuclear fusion to produce cancer-spotting medical isotopes (they light up cells in tumors). He set out to build a

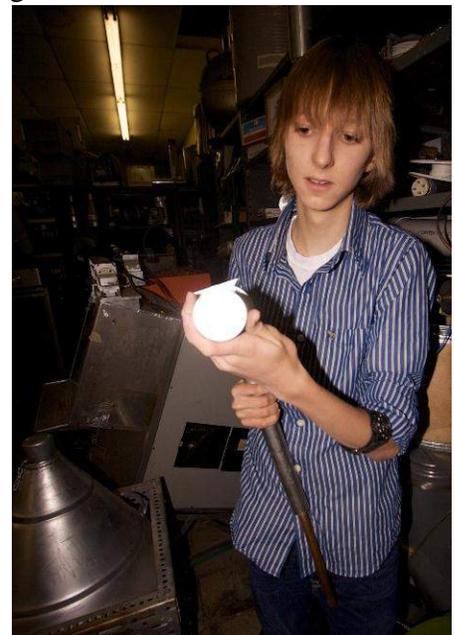
nuclear fusion reactor—something that, at the time, only 10 individuals in the world had done. Tiffany and her husband, Kenneth, often joked that they had no idea where their son had come from. Kenneth is a Coca-Cola bottler, a skier, an ex-football player. Tiffany is a yoga instructor.

"Neither of us knows a dang thing about science," Kenneth says.

For months, Taylor had been collecting and experimenting with some supremely scary stuff. Instead of instinctively doing what most parents would regard as common sense—keeping their kid away from things that could kill him—Tiffany and Kenneth did everything they could to nurture Taylor's talents. They connected him with educational opportunities, they found mentors who could help him safely pursue his unnerving interests, and they let him convert his grandmother's garage into a nuclear physics laboratory where he made batches of yellowcake and experimented with transmuting elements.

But when it came to school, they were stymied. Whether public or private, the Texarkana area offered little for a child like Taylor or his brother, Joey, both of whom scored in the top one-tenth of one percent on standardized tests. By the seventh grade Taylor was spending most of his school days on autopilot, going through work he'd long outgrown.

Decades of research have produced very few real-world stories to support the bright-kid-overcomes-all anecdotes. Under-stimulated [gifted](#) children who don't get support become bored and frustrated, and often drop out of school. Two recent papers published in the [Journal of Educational Psychology](#) found that these children tend to underachieve throughout their lives, compared to equally smart peers who get the support they need to accelerate.



*Those whose abilities are identified early and who are given opportunities to develop their talents are the ones most likely to grow into creative, high-achieving adults. Four decades of tracking data have shown that many innovators transforming society, advancing knowledge, and reinventing culture are in the top one percent in intellectual ability—and many were identified as top performers by their teenage years.*

For instance, Mark Zuckerberg and Sergey Brin each attended a summer program sponsored by the Center for Talented Youth—open, at the time, to kids who scored in the top one percent on standardized tests. Bill Gates was in the top one percent; Steve Jobs too.

The post-Sputnik years was the golden age for gifted education in the United States. American policymakers, terrified that the Soviets had gotten ahead, regarded our brightest students as a strategic resource and gave them the support they needed. As the Cold War progressed, all kinds of new programs emerged for academically gifted children.

Gifted education in American public schools began its long decline after the Soviet Union broke up in the 1980s. In the 1990s, academic acceleration fell out of favor due to fears—which were unsupported by research—that acceleration hurt children socially and hurried them out of childhood. Outspoken researchers such as Berkeley sociologist Samuel Lucas warned that segregating elite students could exacerbate inequality, especially inequality linked to race and class. Advocates for the gifted countered that concerns about elitism missed the point: Kids of all abilities deserve an education that identifies and supports each student’s needs. Nevertheless, dedicated gifted-and-talented (G&T) programs started declining and disappearing, first in liberal college towns then in districts across the country.

During the George W. Bush administration, a long-overdue focus on the nation’s underachievers further overshadowed the educational needs of high achievers (and many other aspects of education). “Odd though it seems for a law written and enacted during a Republican Administration,” wrote *Time* magazine’s John Cloud, “the social impulse behind No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is radically egalitarian. It has forced schools to deeply subsidize the education of the least gifted, and gifted programs have suffered.” When the law took effect in 2003, states began pulling funding away from G&T programs.

The Obama administration tweaked some aspects of NCLB, including its name, but the focus has remained on achieving grade-level proficiency.

*“They call it Race to the Top,” says Jane Clarenbach of the [National Association for Gifted Children](#), “but it isn’t really about the top at all; it does nothing to help gifted kids.”*



During the past decade, specialized education for gifted students has stalled—to the point that it is largely nonexistent outside of elite pockets in the U.S. The focus on academically precocious children, and many of the dividends it produced, has moved abroad. Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore funnel top scorers into innovative programs. China is midway through a 10-year “National Talent Development Plan” to steer bright young people into science, technology, and other in-demand fields. Vietnam, who’s per capita GDP of \$1,910 is less than four percent of that of the U.S., now outscores the U.S. impressively in math and science.

Though there are bright spots—mostly in the wealthiest schools—the trends are clear: Educators are generally failing to cultivate our most promising students as they grow. As a result, we are squandering a crucial national resource—our best young minds.



As it turned out, Taylor was one of the lucky ones. By chance, his parents discovered [Davidson Academy of Nevada](#), a public school for profoundly gifted children. They made the difficult decision to relocate the family so that their boys could get an education commensurate to their abilities. Bob and Jan Davidson founded the academy in 2006 on the premise that gifted education needs to be customized, that a one-size-fits-all program can't possibly work for everyone. Davidson's educational approaches include individualized learning, targeted acceleration, dual enrollment (students can attend classes at the University of Nevada-Reno), and the acceptance of every kind of diversity.

Finally surrounded by his intellectual peers, Taylor was able to work at an accelerated pace—and to thrive. At 14 he completed a reactor that could hurl atoms together in a 500-million-degree plasma core, becoming the youngest individual on Earth to achieve nuclear fusion, the process that powers the stars. By the time he'd finished high school, Taylor had won most of the major awards at international science fairs, given two [TED](#) talks, and been invited to the White House to show President Obama the neutron detector he'd designed to prevent terrorists from importing nukes. Now 21, [he's building a company](#) and inspiring a new generation to take on the challenges of science.

So, how can we shift an educational culture that has, for the past several decades, under-challenged the children it once regarded as its best hope? Research shows that acceleration benefits gifted children socially, since they share similar interests with students who are closer to their intellectual level. Many of the most effective interventions—such as grade-skipping and single-subject acceleration—are not expensive, and some can actually save schools money. The long-term benefits of acceleration, especially in the STEM areas, are documented by hundreds of studies indicating that the vast majority of accelerated students adjust well socially and emotionally.

And yet, our inertia-driven education system has been slow to accept the research evidence. Some educators and parents continue to believe that acceleration is bad for children—that it will hurt them socially, push them out of childhood, or create gaps in their knowledge.

*"We cling to this idea that children are better off socially with children who match them in age," says Bob Davidson, "despite decades of research that tells us that kids are actually happier with other kids at their own intelligence level."*

"It's about flexibility," says David Lubinski, a Vanderbilt University psychologist who co-directs the [Study](#) of Mathematically Precocious Youth, "giving bright younger kids what older kids are already getting—only earlier. We need to structure the lower grades more flexibly, like universities so that they don't ask 'How old are you?' they ask 'Do you have the prerequisites?'"

*While early generation G&T programs were prolific and available to most qualified students nationwide, they were hobbled by the fact that they could draw on very little quality research as to what actually worked in gifted education.*

*Paradoxically, this 30-year decline in G&T programs has coincided with tremendous academic progress and understanding of how we can best nurture remarkable talent. These best practices are summed up in a new report by the Acceleration Institute, titled [A Nation Empowered](#). The optimistic title is representative of the mood of many academics: After decades in the shadows, gifted education may, in fact, be making a comeback.*

And yet, it's important to note that the beneficiaries of the latest expansion of G&T programs have been primarily the children of affluent, well-educated parents. A booming talent-development industry has sprung up to boost these children's chances of success, with legions of tutors, test-prep entrepreneurs, and admissions consultants. It's not a whole nation that is empowered, but rather a



subclass of students who are at the top end of both the talent and socioeconomic curves (and a few lucky outliers clustered in very good, or at least very large, school districts). Low-income, rural, and minority gifted students are still unlikely to be noticed or given the resources they need to develop their prodigious talents.

Taylor Wilson's journey shows us the good things that can happen when an exceptionally bright child gets the freedom and support he needs to surge ahead and become one of tomorrow's

innovators. Taylor's story hints at what might happen if we have a full-scale renaissance in gifted education, one that's both widely distributed and based on a solid research. Hopefully, we won't need another Cold War to create such a renaissance. We shouldn't stop neglecting gifted children because we need to win the next arms race, or dominate the global economy. We should do it because these children need our support, and deserve opportunities to reach their full potential.

*All images courtesy Tom Clynes and Taylor Wilson's family.*

You can also read Tom's latest book [The Boy Who Played With Fusion](#)



The editor of the GAMbit tries to keep all articles short (one or two pages) in order provide a “quick read” for the busy person. This article was so informative and relevant that she had to make an exception to that rule. Thank you to Kyna, GAM's legislative consultant for bringing this article to the editor's attention! It is definitely worth reading!

# TEN THINGS PIXAR CAN TEACH US ABOUT CREATIVITY

BY JOHN T. SPENCER



I just finished reading [Creativity, Inc.](#) I'm hoping to start a monthly book club soon and I have a hunch this might be the first book on the list. Written by Ed Catmull, the president of Pixar Animation and Disney Animation, the book explores the topics of innovation, creativity, and leadership by offering a behind-the-scenes view of the Pixar story.

Photo by Lucius Kwok

I am naturally skeptical when people point to corporations as examples that schools should emulate. However, I have always admired Pixar for the fact that they consistently craft amazing stories. The first fifteen minutes of *Up!* are some of the best cinema around.

What strikes me, though, is how they have achieved such creative success with two leaders (Ed Catmull and Alvy Smith) who seem to be the opposite of most of the bold, brash CEOs. Catmull is the polar opposite of an Elon Musk or Steve Jobs. He is approachable, affective, humble, and imminently practical.

As I read this book, I was struck by the number of things Pixar can teach us about creativity. Some of these are simple ideas, but they challenge popular conceptions about what creative work looks like:

1. **Creativity isn't a solitary endeavor.** We tend to think of lone creative types hashing out ideas by themselves. However, I am struck by the fact that the best creative ideas are often solved by entire teams. What I found fascinating about Pixar is the way they empower so many people to contribute. The structure is surprisingly hierarchical, from the meetings to the decision-making to the fact that nobody gets a special parking spot.
2. **Critical feedback doesn't have to crush creativity.** When trust and transparency are present, critical feedback can fuel creative thinking. If you check out the book, I'd highly recommend you read the section on the Brain Trust meetings. As Catmull puts it, "We believe that ideas - and thus, films - only become great when they are challenged and tested."
3. **There is power in pivoting.** Pixar began as a technology company that slowly pivoted into filmmaking. Their movies often take multiple shapes, with constant pivoting along the way. Typically, they have one foot on an idea, concept, or value, and then keep trying new things until it works. I loved seeing how movies like *Monsters, Inc.* evolved over the years of planning.
4. **Play matters.** Pixar has built celebrations into their company culture. They throw parties and go on retreats. They encourage workers to cover their workspace with personal trinkets. But it runs much deeper. Some of their best breakthroughs have come from making Pixar short films, which are essentially sandbox spaces to test out new approaches and to allow a small team to learn a broader range of skills.
5. **Trust the process.** Although Pixar is incredibly flexible, they have structures and processes that allow creativity to happen. One quote that stuck out to me was, "People who take on complicated creative projects become lost at some point in the process." However, there are specific processes that help people through these darker parts in the journey.
6. **You can't value risk-taking and unless you allow for mistakes.** This theme popped up often but in a way that was much more meaningful than the typical "embrace your mistakes" mantras that you see on social media. It's the idea of having a growth mindset and knowing that experimentation means mistakes will occur. This is such a sharp contrast to a story in the book where Steve Jobs fires an Apple employee in front of the entire company. By the way, if you're interested in the topics of mistakes, shame, and courage, I would also recommend [Rising Strong](#) by Brene Brown.

7. **Art and science are complimentary.** This was one of the earliest themes. I've seen this with STEM folks who bemoan the A added in STEAM. However, I am struck by the fact that there is artistry in science and so much science in the art of storytelling. A similar thought is that you can create something innovative and timeless at the same time.
8. **We need mental models to battle fear.** Creativity is scary. I have had moments when writing a novel or in our journey with Write About, or even when I decided I would create sketchy videos and post them online, when I felt terrified. I worried about what people would think. I worried about entering the unknown without any assurance that I would create what I wanted to create. What I loved about this book is the fact that the fear never goes away. If anything, it intensifies with success. There's a section in this book where they explore the fear that the directors face and the mental models they use to make sense of everything.
9. **The goal of creativity isn't creativity.** With Pixar, the goal is always storytelling and, I would argue, highly emotional myth-making. Creativity isn't what drives the storytelling. Rather, storytelling drives the creativity. This, by the way, is why I rarely talk about creativity with students. I don't assess it. I don't place it on a rubric. I don't tell students, "Go out and be creative."
10. **People are more important than ideas.** There was a great quote here, "Ideas come from people. Therefore, people are more important than ideas . . . too many of us think of ideas as being singular, as if they float in the ether , fully formed and independent of the people who wrestle with them. Ideas, though, are not singular. They are forged through tens of thousands of decisions, often made by dozens of people." This has a few big implications. First, it means trust and relationships are more important than the products we make. Second, it means we need to be okay to abandon ideas without taking things personally. Finally, it means our success in generating ideas does not define who we are as people.

Resource: <http://www.spencerideas.org/2015/11/ten-things-pixar-can-teach-us-about.html>

<b>1. Vocabulary</b>
What does the word emulate mean?
<b>2. Comprehension</b>
Why are people more important than ideas?
<b>3. Paraphrase</b>
What does the phrase "It's the idea of having a growth mindset and knowing that experimentation means mistakes will occur" mean?
<b>4. Analysis</b>
Analyze what it means to become lost in the process.
<b>5. Critical Thinking</b>
Based on the article, analyze how we might add creativity to a lesson.

**Please consider submitting a lesson to the GAMbit!  
We love for teachers to share their ideas!**



# Washington University in St. Louis



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[summerexperiences.wustl.edu](http://summerexperiences.wustl.edu)

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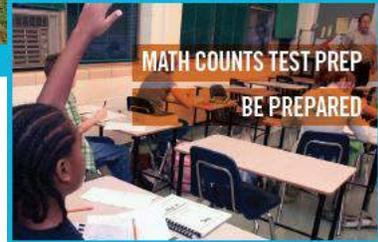
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# Edcampkc

By Lezlie Waltz @WaltzLezlie

So what exactly IS it? Perhaps you've heard the term "edcamp" flying about of late and didn't exactly know what it was. Well it's time has come!

Edcamp is a professional development setting that is teacher centered and driven. Upon arrival those in attendance determine what the sessions will be for the day. Imagine a room with post-it charts on the wall. Each chart represents a

room and the chart is divided into time blocks for the sessions that will occur that day. (perhaps 3 one hour sessions for example) When things begin -teachers walk around the room and select a session in which they write down what they're interested in learning about and would be comfortable facilitating. This does not mean they need to be the "presenter" and "expert" on the topic but that they could facilitate a discussion in which the participants in the room collectively share their knowledge on the topic, including resources, successes, and failures on that topic. Those who have interest in that topic or area of education then attend that session.

A common phrase used with edcamp is that you "vote with your feet". I love this! Basically, if the session doesn't end up being what you thought- or what you need- or if you only had a question that was quickly answered, or if you've processed enough to "sum it up" you can get up and quietly walk out. No one feels offended and no one is insulted. It's understood that there are various reasons why one might walk out of a session and so it's O.K. to do that! Did I say I love this? Now, you no longer feel "trapped" because you want to leave but don't want to be disrespectful. Now you're able to double or triple your learning if you process quickly and if you're interested in multiple sessions going on simultaneously - it's no longer a problem!

Edcampkc was a great experience. Some examples of sessions were:

Genius Hour, PBL, Assessing Ss learning in PBL flipped classrooms, Flipped Learning, Breakouts, T2, Makerspace, Google Class and Addons, SAMR, Skype in the class, Coding in the class, 1:1 In the class, Chromebooks in the class, Building Adult Learning to capacity in a digital world, School Day Schedules in the Secondary School, Art and Technology, Gamification, Utilizing self-selected text, independent reading and SSR in the classroom, Class design, and Privacy & Technology Usage for those Under 13.

In addition to great learning, the food was amazing. The coordinators had brought in food trucks which gave options from light snacks and Sandwiches to all out ½ slabs of BBQ off the Flaming BBQ Food truck.

Wrapping the event up included amazing giveaways. When I say amazing it's because the giveaways included a 3D printer. Multiple GoPro cameras and certificates as well as t-shirts.

The fact that educators from around the greater KC area chose to get up early on a Saturday morning to meet for voluntary professional development without a stipend or movement across a salary scale tells you something. Add to this that there was a buzz of excitement about it including tweet countdowns and for many a restless night due to the excitement that rivaled the night before the first day of school. Couple that with teachers arriving early so as not to miss a moment and it tells you there's really something to this! (Administrators, did you catch that?)

The funny thing is that with each edcamp I've attended I've found myself (and others) expressing disappointment ONLY in that there weren't *more* sessions. We wanted *more*- wanted it to go *longer*. Whoever wants a PD meeting to go **longer**? Let the reader understand there's something to this.

I used to show disdain towards the term "networking" or even making "connections" but I see growing my PLN (Professional Learning Network) as establishing vital relationships which are a support system for my own longevity in the profession, not just to survive in the field but to thrive.

Edcamps connect you with other professionals in the field of education who are positive life giving lightning bolts of energy. Maybe you need a jump start or a life line? Perhaps you can't currently change some things in your teaching scenario, but maybe someone who's currently making it happen can share some tips that will help you see how you can make it happen in your scenario- maybe you can be motivated in seeing you actually are on the cutting edge and on the right track to truly do what's best for students. Maybe you have something that will help others, maybe you need to pour out where it will be received. It's not just semantics - it's real. Maybe it will motivate, refresh, and bring life into you to be with other swans who "get it" and validate that you've found your niche. . . you're not alone . . .

Edcamps let you leave on an educational high that causes you to float back into your classroom bringing an infectious passion and zeal to your students about what their potential is and how you'll be partnering with them to bring it forth. It's time for you to attend. Heck, it's time for me to attend another one!



**Info for the next EdCamp in Missouri is at:**

<http://www.connectedlearningstl.org/edcamp/>



## 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](mailto:mburs10@hotmail.com) to know more or to get started!

# District G

## Family Conference Number 5

By Vicky Bennett, Scholarship Committee Chairperson

We tried something a bit different this year and had our conference on November 19th which was a weeknight. It worked great! No worries about the snow in January and no conflicts with sports events on a Saturday. As teachers, we did miss Sue Winters and Ellen Wright's teacher workshop, but I think we may try something different with that as well...after a brainstorming session or two.

The conference hosted 37 adults for Kyna Iman and Dr. Beth Winton's presentation. We even saw David Welch there offering his insight throughout the evening. Kyna did a wonderful job explaining to our parents the issues facing gifted education in the political arena and Dr. Winton held onto their attention with information on the new Gifted Advisory Committee as well as tips for dealing with gifted children. The floor was then opened for specific questions from parents to Dr. Winton about dealing with classroom teachers, administrators and advocating for their gifted kids. The conference was officially over at 8pm, however, Dr. Winton stayed for even more questions afterwards. Thank you to both Kyna and Dr. Winton for making our District G Conference a huge success!

The student part of the conference went great as well! We had 35 students attend. Tim Campbell with the Mid-Missouri Chess Academy had the kids' interests peaked with his chess strategies. Ann Seider was on fire with games around the world. Thank you both for providing a challenging and fun evening for our students.

Thank you to all of our volunteers that helped make this night happen. Jefferson City has a strong gifted parent group who paid half of Tim Campbell's fee for the evening. We also had three parent volunteers: Kristen Hilty, Nikki Veit and Jen Harper who kept the flow going at the registration table, answered questions about the facilities, and made copies. We had Sue Winters and Scarlett Richardson whose troubleshooting abilities kept the conference on track. Elle Bennett, who was a student volunteer dear to my heart, did 'go for' duties and traffic control and finally a huge thank you to Ruthie Caplinger who organized the facilities for the event. All of these people were instrumental in the success of our conference.

Finally, I want to congratulate Ruthie Caplinger as the new District G Director. There was a short ceremony that included a tiara at the end of the parent presentation. She will take over duties after our board meeting on December 5th.



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

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**Reporting Data on Gifted Students and Programs**

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**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

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**Identification of Gifted Students**

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**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).

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**Programming for Gifted Students**

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**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.

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**Educator Preparation and Professional Development**

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**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.

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**Requiring and Funding Gifted Education**

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**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.



## MARYVILLE ANNOUNCES GIFTED EDUCATION COURSES AND PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

### FOR STUDENTS

**The Maryville Science and Robotics Program** is an engaging opportunity for students ages 4–15 who are interested in science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) fields. Monthly weekend programs are offered in addition to the summer program, offered annually over two weeks in July. [Learn more at maryville.edu/robot](http://maryville.edu/robot).

**The Maryville Young Scholars Program** identifies students from groups underrepresented in gifted programs and serves them through summer academies, after-school programs, parent workshops, and teacher professional development. [Learn more at maryville.edu/youngscholars](http://maryville.edu/youngscholars).

**The Children using Robotics for Engineering, Science, Technology and Math (CREST-M) Program** develops math curriculum to engage students from diverse backgrounds in STEM careers through robotics and compelling story-lines.

### FOR TEACHERS

For teachers that enjoy developing their own talents as well as their students', Maryville offers state-approved gifted certification courses and a comprehensive master of arts with a concentration in gifted education in small, face-to-face classes with leading experts:

FALL

**Psychology of the Gifted** (Educ 617)

**Differentiation for All Learners** (Educ 616)

SPRING

**Curriculum and Instruction for the Gifted** (Educ 615)

SUMMER

**Survey of Gifted and Talented Education** (Educ 627)

**Creativity, Problem Solving, and Critical Thinking** (Educ 629)

**Psychological-Educational Testing** (Educ 659)

ALL SEMESTERS

**Culture Language Learners** (Educ 611)

**Educator as Action Researcher** (Educ 619)

**Practicum in Gifted Education** (Educ 692)

**Capstone in Gifted Education** (Educ 699)

[Learn more at maryville.edu/gifted](http://maryville.edu/gifted).

For information on graduate admissions, contact:  
Holly Stanwich at 314.529.9542 or hstanwich@maryville.edu.

### PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

Steve Coxon, Ph.D., is associate professor and director of programs in gifted education at Maryville University in St. Louis. A former classroom teacher, Steve conducts research on developing STEM talents and is author of numerous publications including the book *Serving Visual-Spatial Learners*. He serves as the science education columnist for *Teaching for High Potential* and book review editor for *Roeper Review*. Steve was the 2010 recipient of the Joyce VanTassel-Baska Award for Excellence in Gifted Education.



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## Where There's a Will, There's a Way

By Billie Holladay Skelley

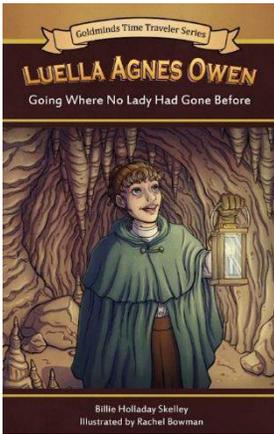
I have not written an article for *GAMbit* since 2009—and on that occasion it was about my son taking matters into his own hands in order to meet the famous astrophysicist, Dr. James Van Allen. I learned about their meeting after it happened, and I still remember my somewhat shocked feeling on making the discovery. I also remember my “light bulb” moment when I realized that gifted children often have their own agendas and their own time clocks for achieving items on those agendas. Their plans, goals, and timeframes are not necessarily synchronized with anyone else’s schedules or goals, but that can be okay. In fact, my son’s efforts frequently showed me that where there’s a strong will, there is almost always a way.

Today, all four of my children, who were in the Joplin R-VIII Gifted & Enrichment Program, have graduated from college and professional school. They are all adults with established careers. As they were growing up, however, I think each one, with their diverse intellectual interests and varied aspirations, at times felt a little out of step with their peers and occasionally even out of sync with their own family members. It can be discouraging and hurtful for children to feel like they don’t fit in or to believe they don’t belong. It is easy to think that you and you alone are different, but the reality is many children, at times, feel different and isolated.

The one stabilizing force and unifying link in our family was reading. It was so important that we even had a “reading fairy” (also known as *me*) who visited our home frequently wearing her green fairy costume, tights, and sparkling wings. (Just for your information, I don’t look well in tights and wings, but cell phones did not exist back then, so fortunately there are no photographs with which to embarrass me today!) When the reading fairy “flew in” with her topic of the day, we all read. Stories and subjects varied, but I frequently tried to highlight historical figures who, in their own times and ways, also felt a little out of step with their surroundings and a little out of sync with their peers and family. My message to my children was that these people managed, usually quite successfully, and they could also. Reading was a way to let our children know they were not truly alone in their desires and interests, and they were not really out of sync—at least not with *everyone*. A gifted child may feel like they alone hear a different drummer, but in all likelihood, someone somewhere, at some time in history, has likely had similar interests and concerns.

The benefit of this reading “link” was one of the reasons I wanted to write about Luella Agnes Owen—Missouri’s pioneer female caver. I wanted to share her story with other young readers. Luella was intellectually very gifted, and she wanted to study geology and speleology at a time when few girls studied science at all. She wanted to become a scientist in an age when females were actively discouraged from pursuing scientific careers. She faced many obstacles, and she definitely felt out of sync at times with many of her peers—but Luella was highly motivated and focused. She had a strong will. She had her own agenda and timetable for meeting that agenda. It was not an easy path, but she knew it was the right one for her, so she took it.

Today, if a child has an interest in a certain scientific area, there are multiple “grade-level” appropriate books and supplemental sources to aid that interest. There are “child-friendly” dictionaries and encyclopedias to augment their studies. There were no resources like these available to Luella. She had to write away for her study materials and figure them out on her own. Often her sources were complicated geological surveys or technical reports, but she had a passion for what she was studying, and she taught herself what she needed to know. Luella epitomized the expression “where there’s a will, there’s a way.” Against many odds, she followed her dreams and made them a reality.



Through *Luella Agnes Owen: Going Where No Lady Had Gone Before*, I hope young readers will learn about this remarkable woman and relate to her story. There have been many children who felt out of sync with their peers and out of step with their times, but they still managed to find their own path and be successful doing what they loved. Sometimes it can be good to hear your own drummer. As my son taught me, there are also times when you have to take matters in your own hands if you want certain things to happen. Luella Agnes Owen knew this. There was no path for her to follow, so she made her own.

Billie's new book, *Luella Agnes Owen: Going Where No Lady Had Gone Before*, can be found at: [www.goldmindspub.com](http://www.goldmindspub.com) when finished!



## Where are they *NOW*?

### Starting Young to Jumpstart Growth

"I participated in Gifted Resource Council throughout the 1990s in Math, Marvels & More, Ancient Academy and Space Academy," said **Bill Phillips, now an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Illinois**. "Abigail is currently three (not for too much longer), but she has a huge appetite for knowledge and an endless supply of energy and enthusiasm. GRC helps provide her with constructive stimuli and broadens her quickly expanding knowledge base. It is great to see creative learning

opportunities offered to children as young as Abigail.

"So far Abigail has completed a class on farm animals and a class on nocturnal animals in GRC's Saturday Learning Labs. This provides her with subject material for her spontaneous at-home lectures and gives her more material for her ever expanding art gallery. The classes provide an excellent synthesis of creativity, information, physical activity and social skills.

"There is a wonderful symmetry when I put my daughter's GRC raccoon mask next to my GRC Roman armor. I look forward to many more art projects and lectures in years to come."

"As a former GRC student and current GRC parent, I would encourage prospective parents to take the opportunity to broaden your children's learning experience through GRC's programs," said Bill Phillips. "Both in Ancient Academy and in Space Academy I got the opportunity to explore subjects in a depth that was not offered in a standard school environment."

Want to "brag" on a former gifted student or a program in our state? Send an email to [Sheila Bonner@idschools.org](mailto:Sheila_Bonner@idschools.org). We love to hear about all the great things going on in gifted!



### 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](http://www.tip.duke.edu) to learn more or contact Duke TIP at (919) 668-9100.



## **Gifted Advisory Council**

### **New Certification, ESSA, & More!**

**By Dr. Robin Lady, NBCT**

On December 10, 2015 the Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children met in Jefferson City, Missouri. There were many important topics covered in the meeting, including the new certification requirements for gifted teachers in Missouri, the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), GAM's upcoming legislation, and more.

The meeting started with an update from DESE on the Council's recommendations that will be put into place for the next school year. David Welch referenced the Administrative Memo that went out to superintendents on December 8, 2015. It states that students in Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses will not be labeled as Gifted Served (GS) in MOSIS. Next, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that replaces No Child Left Behind (NCLB), was discussed. It has been passed by both the House and Senate, and signed by President Obama. Gifted and talented is specifically mentioned in the act. Leaders in DESE and GAM are studying this act and the implications for Missouri. NAGC ([www.nagc.org](http://www.nagc.org)) is a good source on ESSA and how it relates to gifted education.

Robin Lady reported GAM will propose three bills this legislative session. The bills include a revenue adjustment proposal, a bill that establishes a weight for gifted in the foundation formula similar to those for ELL, and a mandate that would change "may" into "shall" as it relates to identifying and serving gifted students in Missouri. Session begins January 6, 2016.

David Welch commented on Council Recommendation #4 which is under-represented and Recommendation #5 which is twice exceptional. Most of the decisions made and services offered concerning these topics are made at the district level. Successful programs include a scaffolding of services. DESE is working now to create a model with different levels and types of services to serve as a best practice model for school districts.

During lunch, Council member Rosemary Hodge-Graves presented an article called "Early Enrichment for Young Gifted Children" which focuses on nurturing children from birth and the potential of every student. The article "The Raising of America Kansas City" is a guide showing how to share information with people.

A discussion of gifted certification in Missouri has taken place at the last two Council meetings. At this meeting, we had special guests from DESE to answer questions for us. The guests were Margery Tanner, Director of Teacher Certification, and Dr. Chris Neale, Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Quality Schools. David Welch will prepare a Q & A sheet to address questions about the new requirements. The sheet will then be posted on GAM and DESE's websites. The next Council meeting will take place on January 15, 2016.

**Parents Ask:  
How hard should our child  
strive for perfection? He's  
extraordinary talented.  
Should we push him to excel?  
By Dennis O'Brien, MA, LCSW**

No. Stop promoting expectations that might be possible for your child to achieve, but ultimately could prove to be destructive. Instead, identify realistic and healthy goals you can guide your child to pursue. Unhealthy expectations pose serious dangers for talented children.

**Gifted children who face this jeopardy come from loving, well-educated families** and, if helped to develop in a healthy fashion, will make significant contributions to society.

But sometimes it does not work out so well. With a little well-intended but misguided help from their parents, many talented children drive themselves crazy trying to be perfect. Their sense of identity and personal well-being get tangled up in the notion that they must be the best at whatever they undertake. Pushing a child to always excel often backfires by sending her the message she must be perfect—or she's a failure.

**Some of these children defend themselves** against the pressure to excel and the pain of failure **by deliberately underachieving or refusing to try** many activities that they may actually enjoy just because they fear they cannot do them "perfectly."

Talented but misdirected kids too often define themselves by their achievements. They live in a black-and-white world. "Being the best" at whatever they do becomes the enemy of being good enough at a variety of things they might enjoy and benefit from.

That's tragic. It's also why they need to learn to do some things "poorly" by their standards. Often in life doing something as well as it actually deserves is more important than doing it perfectly. This is another reason why their goals need to be both realistic and healthy. Here are some tips for raising a healthy, well-adjusted child.

### **Examine your own values and attitudes**

**Begin with an honest self-assessment.** Do the unspoken norms of your family require perfection? To what extent are you inflicting success-at-all-costs values on your children by the way you lead your own life, plan activities or communicate? How does your child reflect these parental expectations?

**Discuss your concerns with your spouse.** Identify current challenges and the gains your child seems to be making to become a well-rounded person with appropriate goals and behaviors. Make sure you and your spouse agree so you can send your child a clear, convincing message.

### **Help your child set appropriate goals and plans to pursue them**

**Evaluate how your child defines failure.** Is being the best too important? Will your son work hard even if not rewarded by complete success? Is he defensive when he falls short, or can he shrug it off and keep going? "Not perfect" should not mean failure. The real failure is staying on the sidelines of life and not trying at all.

**Help your child set reasonable goals and develop a practical plan to achieve them.** Encourage her to redefine success in terms of making a reasonable effort, not perfection. Use open-ended questions and paraphrase what she says to help her identify what reasonable outcomes of her effort might be, what sort of effort it's worth and what's a realistic way to approach it.

**Help your talented child keep life in perspective and activities in balance.** Gifted kids who don't learn to live a healthy, balanced life may place terrible pressures on themselves until they snap, frequently in college. More than a few National Merit scholars seriously underachieve or drop out to wait tables and write the great American novel.

**Help your child develop a strategy for school.** Does your child know how much he needs to study to earn an acceptable, though not a perfect, grade? Does he realize he doesn't have to know everything to be prepared for a test? How important is an "A" on a fourth-grade French quiz? Has getting all "A"s become more important than learning itself? Than having friends? Than being well-rounded?

**Train your child to recognize when it is really important to do her best and when “good enough” is good enough.** Never say, “Just do your best” unless the circumstances really call for it. This will allow your child to do well enough—or “poorly enough”—to succeed and still have a life. When should a child “do her best”? That depends on priorities and circumstance. For some, it might be taking a school entrance exam such as the ACT. For others, it may be memorizing her lines for a school play. The take-home message is that not everything a child engages in can be a top priority. Help your child sort it out sensibly.

**Encourage but don't pressure.** We all want our children to work hard and accomplish much, but pressure usually backfires. Gifted children are not inherently lazy and do not need to be flogged through life. Praise your child's risk-taking as well as his efforts, grit and determination. Parents have to be extraordinarily alert to avoid putting too much pressure to achieve on children who seem to have the most promise.

**Empower your child to develop a sense of self.** Encourage her to pursue her personal interests and talents. Be careful not to inflict your ambitions on her. Far too often, high achievers are pushed to pursue their parents' dreams so vigorously they don't have time to develop their own. No wonder the pre-med student shuts down her freshman year: she's no longer willing to pay the price required to fulfill her mother's ambitions for her.

**Nurture a well-rounded child.** Encourage him to participate in a variety of activities, which are fun or enriching, even if they are not venues in which he excels. Praise your child's participation and his efforts, not his performance. Encourage him to have fun and develop friendships.

**Stress your interest in your child's social skills and her progress developing relationships with peers.** Too often parents of gifted students focus narrowly on their child's academic progress to the detriment of the development of the whole child. Yet success in life—especially in leadership positions—often depends on having good judgment and inclusive social skill, not raw talent.

## **Don't enable irresponsible behavior**

**Expect appropriate social behavior and reasonable efforts to achieve healthy goals** your child has set. Hold the line on this. However talented your child may be, she needs to learn to live in the real world, get along with others and behave responsibly. She also needs to make appropriate efforts to achieve even in areas in which she cannot be the best, whether that be team sports like club soccer or performing in the school musical.

**Don't make excuses for your child.** Parents of gifted kids often do, and it drives professionals crazy. Who wants to hear mom say, “He only did it because his older brother does that to him?” Sure, and who lets older brother get away with that misbehavior? Besides alienating others, parental excuse-making damages the child. Parents who rescue and excuse their child's poor behavior actually enable him to misbehave repeatedly and avoid responsibility for his actions.

**Examine your motives if you are tempted to make excuses for your child's behavior or accomplishments.** Some parents make excuses because they doubt their child can live up to their expectations. Others make excuses because they are anxious and want their child to be seen doing everything perfectly—beginning in preschool. Having the perfect child proves how wonderful they hope they are. Of course, in reality, it does nothing of the kind. It actually signals a parent's personal insecurity and inability to separate her life from her child's and to parent responsibly.

**Bottom line:** Assure your child that you want her to be happy, well-rounded and enjoy activities with friends. Then follow up with parenting strategies that will make this possible.



**Dennis O'Brien** is a licensed clinical social worker, experienced educator and therapist. In addition to writing educational materials used by the Washington University School of Medicine Dept. of Psychiatry, he has written weekly columns on parenting for the Suburban Journals, monthly columns for St. Louis Moms and Dads (Savvyfamily), and occasional columns for CHARACTERplus, Foster and Adoptive Coalition and Gifted Resource Council. He was recently honored by the Missouri Dept. of Mental Health for an outstanding column about suicide. The BBB also honored him for his service to nonprofits at its 2010 Symposium.

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](http://www.giftedresourcecouncil.org).



## Where are they *NOW*?

### The Girls from Seattle

“I participated in GRC’s Ancient Academy the summer before I started 7th grade,” said **Dana Jacob, an attorney who clerks for a Magistrate Judge in the Federal District Court in Seattle, WA.** “The subject was Ancient Rome, I absolutely loved the subject and the class was so much fun. It was a very memorable experience.”

“For the past several summers my girls have visited their grandparents in St. Louis. One of the best parts of this time in St. Louis is the opportunity to attend GRC. Aubrey, who is nine, has attended Space Camp, Academy Americana, and Ancient Academy. She has loved them all, but Ancient Academy really suits her passions.

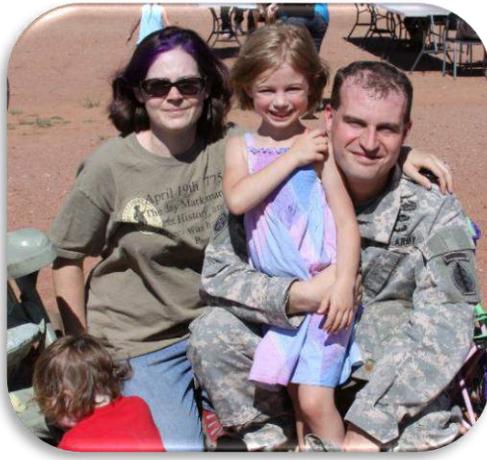
“We knew early on that Aubrey was gifted. She spoke in grammatically correct full sentences from the time she was about two and read chapter books at four. Unfortunately, I have not been impressed by the opportunities for gifted education near us. Aubrey attends a great private school that is definitely able to challenge her due to the small class size and wonderful teachers. But, she is definitely ‘different’ from many of the kids in her class. Gifted Resource Council gives her an opportunity to be with kids ‘like her.’ Her complicated and creative brain has free reign at GRC. She loves it!

“Just the other day one of her past teachers was reminiscing about Aubrey coming back to school after Americana Academy and exclaiming, ‘I learned all about the Great Depression. It was so much fun!’ Last summer, after Ancient Academy Greece, she was playing word games with a friend—thinking of a word that begins with the last letter of the previous word. Her friend said ‘kangaroo.’ Aubrey’s word that starts with an O? ‘Ostracism.’ We all stared at her, and she proceeded to explain what it meant and how the ancient Greeks ostracized people. It was an amazing example of how her brain works and how ‘different’ she is from many kids.

“My Kindergartener, Phoebe, will attend Jr. Science Searchers this summer. My hopes for her are a bit different. She is also extremely bright and smart, but has lived in her sister’s shadow. I am hoping that GRC will give her an opportunity to see herself as the very bright girl that she is. I hope for her to be inspired and empowered. I want her to learn that challenges and using her brain can be fun and that she is every bit as capable as her sister.”

“GRC provides a great supplement for gifted kids who may not be in a gifted environment all the time,” said Dana Jacob. “The classes are a lot of fun. I also really like that there are humanities based classes. Much of gifted education seems to focus more on STEM. STEM is important, but while Aubrey enjoys science, her passion is really mythology, history, literature, etc. GRC has opportunities for her and addresses the subjects in an interdisciplinary way that is thought provoking and fun with hands-on activities.”

“GRC’s Summer Academies give bright students the opportunity to interact with like-minded students whose parents have some of the same intellectual values as their parents,” said Johnson. “It stimulates their intellect as well as encourages their growth socially. It’s a place where they can learn and grow in a manner which best suits their style and isn’t necessarily bound by conventional school structure and rules. And it’s all fun.”



## Where are they *NOW*?

### Acquiring a Passionate Interest and Leadership Skills

**Major George Johnson** began attending GRC's Space Academy in 1986, the summer he completed first grade. He loved it and continued every year through 1992. For the next three years he returned as a volunteer and began the transition "from experiencing activities to helping others achieve through the experience," his mother Fran Johnson said. In 1997 and 1998, Johnson served as an assistant teacher. "Space is my hobby. I like teaching at Space Academy because you get a lot more out of it—a lot more

contact with really knowledgeable people, like the Space Academy Captains," he said at the time. In fact, Captain Jon Heerboth "became perhaps George's favorite teacher in his entire academic career," his mother said.

"Space Academy challenged George intellectually and kept him grounded in academia at a time when the public school system was not. He learned teaching and leadership skills which have been crucial in his job as a Major in the US Army," she added.

He has taught at a university level and served as a Company Commander in the storied 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne in Iraq. Currently he is a senior advisor on a Joint Military Training Base in Eastern Europe.

With such positive experiences himself, it is no wonder that Johnson's 5-year-old daughter Virginia came from Colorado last summer to attend her inaugural GRC class: Jr. Science Searchers. "As the mother of a son who gained so much from GRC, I couldn't wait until Virginia was old enough to attend," said her grandmother. How did it go? "She left each day with a skip and a hop and a smile on her face. She enjoyed it immensely."

And what are they hoping for in the future? "It's a fun program where she can learn from teachers who know how to meet the needs of gifted students like George and Virginia."

"GRC's Summer Academies give bright students the opportunity to interact with like-minded students whose parents have some of the same intellectual values as their parents," said Johnson. "It stimulates their intellect as well as encourages their growth socially. It's a place where they can learn and grow in a manner which best suits their style and isn't necessarily bound by conventional school structure and rules. And it's all fun."

**Want to "brag" on a former gifted student or a program in our state? Send an email to [Sheila Bonner@idschools.org](mailto:Sheila_Bonner@idschools.org). We love to hear about all the great things going on in gifted!**



# Parent's Perspective

## Graduation of a Gifted Kid

By Cat Finney, August, 2015

My son was valedictorian of his high school, but he did not give a valedictory speech at graduation. As far as we can tell, it's because he acted goofy. He danced around the school sing-singing about being valedictorian (thinking he was being ironic and self-effacing); he wore a cape at the school's honors trivia bowl; he told friends he might talk about Batman in his speech. He lost his right to give a speech. He stayed in his room for two days, in anguish and grieving.

Thinking about this, and thinking about our long, sometimes confusing journey with this young man, I've written my own speech. As mom, I claim the top GPA in this endeavor of raising a child who is different.

My child has dyspraxia. It's a diagnosis better known in Great Britain than the United States. Dyspraxia is when a kid's brain doesn't connect effectively with his muscle system. It can affect posture, speech, fine motor skills, spatial sense, organizational skills, and social skills. Kids with dyspraxia can speak too loudly, mispronounce words, stand too close, talk too much, act immature for their age, and have trouble picking up nonverbal signals. There is some correlation between dyspraxia and giftedness. Some aspects of dyspraxia can look like Asperger's.

At school, my kid has had an IEP for dyspraxia since fifth grade. It has allowed him to use a keyboard instead of handwriting and to take a little more time on exams. My kid also "has" giftedness. For what it's worth, he scores in the 99.9 percentile on typical standardized intelligence and scholastic tests; and he has many fierce interests: math, physics, international politics, Game of Thrones, Africa, the Middle East, Nordic skiing, trail running, American history, and nature. He's intense, sensitive, introverted, introspective, athletic, loyal, sometimes clueless and, too often these days, cranky. This is what a gifted kid diagnosed with dyspraxia, with a few Asperger's traits, looks like.

My kid has been excluded, jostled, taunted, and made fun of for most of his life. He's naïve, once coming home using the F word in every sentence because a kid at school told him it was a good word to use as much as possible. In middle school, he was shunned for about a year and a half. Two kids did the slandering and all the others rejected him — even his best friend. He lost 10 pounds, became depressed, and scuttled, alone, to the library for recess and lunch. The school couldn't seem to resolve the problem; parents couldn't resolve the problem; so we finally switched schools.

My child is also the kind of kid who gets mistreated by adults. When he was 12, he saw a fuzzy caterpillar in the middle of some smaller children playing. My son gently moved it out of the way. Another mom started yelling at him, accusing him of hurting the creature, then gossiped about him for months, asking our friends "What's wrong with him?" This is what a gifted kid, diagnosed with dyspraxia, with a few Asperger's traits, looks like.

My kid has had an unusual school career. He tested into college algebra at 12, completed every locally available 200-level college course in math by age 14, earned A's in all those courses, then taught himself linear algebra and real analysis online. He went from middle school right into his high school's eleventh-grade International Baccalaureate program. He took 300-level university art and literature classes, which he aced, did two senior years, and graduated valedictorian after a total of three years. He had the highest-ever GPA at his school. This is what a gifted kid, diagnosed with dyspraxia, with a few Asperger's traits, looks like.

This is my kid — bold, brash, clueless, occasionally impulsive, fervent, and tough. I'm not excusing his behavior. He's made mistakes, but he owns them like the man he is. This is my kid, one who runs a math club for grade schoolers; tutors college students in calculus; is a varsity athlete; helps his little brother with his homework; and can cook a dinner and make an excellent apple pie.

This is the kid who wrote a valedictorian speech he will not give. The first line is this quote by Charlie Chaplin: *"We all want to help one another. Human beings are like that. We want to live by each other's happiness, not by each other's misery."*

This is my son, and we are so thankful for him and for the people who support him — like the pediatrician who diagnosed our guy with dyspraxia at age nine and said, "This is what a gifted kid looks like"; like the teachers who tolerated, explained, got his jokes, insisted he do his best work, and gave him honest grades; like the friend who runs with him and serves as his confidant; like the team mates who listened, cared, and let this awkward guy be part of their group.

And finally, thanks to my son, my first born. Look at you. You've made some mistakes (but then, as you know, to be human is to make mistakes), but you are resilient. You know yourself. You know you need a team, how to be a friend, and that you need alone time. You've retained your passion for learning and for your sport. You have a personal code of ethics as well as honor and dignity.

Now you're embarking on a wonderful college adventure with a fabulous scholarship. You did it. You grew up. I'm so proud of you. And *this* is what a gifted kid, diagnosed with dyspraxia, with some Asperger's traits, looks like.

*Cat Finney is the mom of two boys and lives in the Oregon high desert.*

*This article was published with the permission of Cat Finney and the 2e Newsletter*

<http://www.2enewsletter.com/>

If you have a gifted child that is also twice exceptional, consider telling the GAMbit his/her story. It is vital for teachers and administrators to understand the special needs of gifted students. **Advocacy** only happens when people better understand the situation. Your child's story can do that! If you are interested in writing an article for the GAMbit, please email the editor – [Sheila\\_Bonner@idschools.org](mailto:Sheila_Bonner@idschools.org).

# **GIFTED ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI**

## **2016 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 re-establishes a payment adjustment for schools that eliminate or decrease enrollment in state approved gifted programs. Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, a school district will incur a reduction in funding if it experiences a decrease in its state approved gifted program enrollment of more than 20%. If a school district experiences a decrease of 20% or more in its state approved gifted program enrollment, an amount equal to the product of the difference between the number of students enrolled in the state approved 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.**
- 3) 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.

### **MISSOURI SCHOLARS ACADEMY & MISSOURI FINE ARTS ACADEMY**

**Support state funding for the Missouri Scholars Academy and Missouri Fine Arts Academy for June, 2017. The State Legislature & Governor appropriated \$750,000 for the June, 2016 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 \$3.5 million 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 223 school districts offering state approved gifted programs.

If you have questions, please contact GAM's Governmental Consultant,  
Kyna Iman, at [kynaiman@earthlink.net](mailto:kynaiman@earthlink.net)

# 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](mailto:kynaiman@earthlink.net)  
Sarah Ludlow, GAM Legislative Public Issues, [sludlow@hotmail.com](mailto:sludlow@hotmail.com)



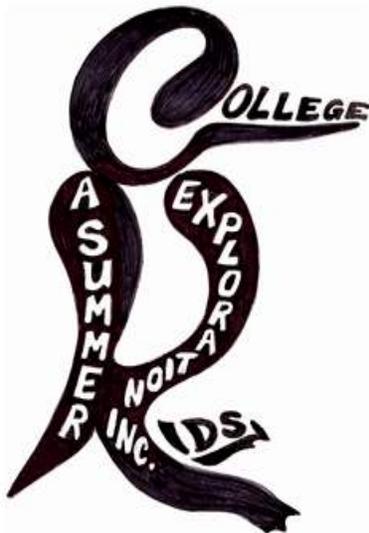
## Two Years and Counting!

My name is Erin. I live in Independence, Missouri. My first year at College for Kids was an amazing experience. Though I was the only Independence kid there, I made tons of new friends! My roommate and I would laugh and talk in between classes and I enjoyed my suitemates and the RA in charge of our hallway. I was a little scared the first night, but the bed was comfortable and I knew my friendly roommate was just across from me. I fell asleep smiling. Everyday gets better and better. The classes are educational yet there are games and fun too.

My second year, I had a roommate I knew, two suitemates that kept me laughing, and a comforting RA. Again, I met new friends, and old friends! I learned even more and had even more fun (I didn't know that was possible). In my free time my friends and I listened to the radio, sang songs with ukuleles, or played around outside. The scenery was beautiful and unforgettable!

I plan to go to College for Kids every possible year I can! -Erin Oyster

Photo Credit: Sarah Schraml



## College for Kids!

The most fun your kids will ever have!

College for Kids, a Summer Exploration, Inc. is a residential summer program for gifted students that places an emphasis on academic subjects to encourage creative, critical thinking skills and addresses the affective and physical needs of the gifted student.

Students live in air-conditioned residence halls that are divided into sections for every 8 – 12 students with a Residential Advisor. College for Kids, A Summer Exploration, Inc. will house their twenty eight year on the campus of Williams Woods University in Fulton Missouri. The College for Kids staff is delighted William Woods University has opened its doors to us in providing a beautiful and safe environment.

If you would like more information about College for Kids a Summer Exploration, Inc., e-mail: [collegeforkids@hotmail.com](mailto:collegeforkids@hotmail.com), call- 573-642-2935 or check out our website: [collegeforkids.net](http://collegeforkids.net)

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

# **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.

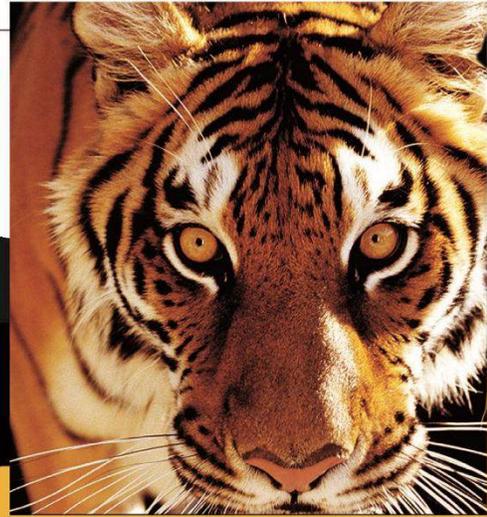
**ALERT! Requirements for gifted certification are changing! Please be sure to be informed! We need more GT teachers in education! If you need a few more hours to move on the pay scale, consider obtaining your gifted certification.**



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

#### SPRING SEMESTER 2016

- Research with Exceptional Children (SPC\_ED 8350)
- 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)

#### 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)

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