

SOUTHWESTERN COLORADO REGION - Gifted Education (970) 769-2187

Special Interest Articles

Communicating with
Parents of Exceptional
Children

On-line Courses and
Staff Development
Opportunities

Important Dates

Sept. 20-21, 2007 GT
Directors' Meeting
Breckenridge

Oct 1 & 2, 2007 CAGT
Annual Conference
Denver

Oct 11, 2007 First
Regional GT Meeting

Oct 12 USTARS Fall
Institute
Denver

Oct 22-26 Jim Delisle
Regional Workshops

Nov. 7-9, 2007 CAGT
Conference
Minneapolis, MN

Jan. 17 & 18, 2008
USTARS Winter Institute,
Denver

Jan. 30-31, 2008 GT
Directors' Meeting,
Denver

Feb. 22, 2008 (T)
Beyond Giftedness
Conference
Denver

April 24-25, 2008 GT
Directors' Meeting
Denver

Betsey Krill
SW GERC - Gifted Education
Regional Consultant
bkrill@sjboces.org (NEW)



Advanced by Design
REACH-Out and Nurture
Exceptional Abilities

Underachieving or Twice Exceptional?

How do we address the learning needs of a student who is obviously very capable, but not performing to his or her ability? Could we be referring to a student who is twice exceptional? How might a disability mask gifts and talents when in the classroom? Does the student perform at or below grade level in some areas and above grade level in others? Does it help to identify these students early, and if so, what do we look for? What screening tools will work? Will this student require both an IEP and an ALP to be successful in school?

As we continue to break down the stereotyping of gifted students in our school communities, we will be in a better situation to address the needs of this unique and perplexing population. There are no easy answers, but as Response to Intervention (RTI), professional learning communities (PLC) and collaborative problem solving become embedded in our schools cultures, we will discover we are addressing the needs of all students, not just those who struggle with grade level material. Often our twice-exceptional students will present themselves as "grade-level" and will not rise to our attention using our district progress-monitoring tools. Now, and in the future, gifted education screening practices used in early childhood will help us identify these students through tools such as the Kingore Observation Inventory or the Harrison. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) will provide opportunities for discussion about tiered programming strategies for use in the regular classroom. Monitoring student progress through authentic practices in the classroom will quickly illustrate the asynchronous development of these students and help keep them engaged and productive in school. When we work in close partnerships with parents and address social and emotional needs of the "whole child," student strengths will help create learning environments and support relative weaknesses.

Oct 11 Gifted Education Regional Meeting

Our first Gifted Education Regional Meeting is October 11 from 9:00-3:30 and will be held in Durango in the 9R Board Room at 201 E. 12th St. With the passage of House Bill 1244 late last spring, and new rules adopted in the fall of 2006, there may be questions concerning compliance and interpretation of the law as it relates to gifted education. Other topics will include highlights and information from the Sept. 20-21 GT Directors' Meeting.

This is the final year of our three-year plan and we will be working as a region and a state to set our course for the next three years. Be thinking about goals and hopes for the future. Afternoon professional develop group will review the "language" of collaboration, how to de-escalate and focus on solutions, and leadership strategies. There are funds to cover your substitutes, should you need them. Please consider bringing your administrator, a teacher, or a parent as well. Finally, we will conduct a needs-assessment to determine interest in staff development topics for 2007-08.

Please send your ideas for other agenda items to me at bkrill@sjboces.org. (NOTE: New email address.)

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Often parents express concern about being reluctant to contact teachers, as they do not wish to be perceived as over-protective. Teachers will sometimes state, "Parents just aren't as involved as they should be." How can we reach a productive relationship?

Our technological world has created opportunities, and barriers, to communication that have never existed before. E-mail offers an easy way to share or gather information. Some teachers create web sites listing upcoming units of study, homework and suggestions for home enrichment. Some districts provide parents with access to current student grades. Can these methods cause further breakdown in communication?

Just like our students, no teacher or parent is alike. All have different needs when it comes to the highly personal experience of sending a child to school. As a result, we need to ensure an easy flow of communication between home and school for the benefit of students.

- Survey parents and discover their preferred way of communicating with the school or classroom teacher(s).
- Devote a newsletter to "trigger words" kids may use at home to engage their parents in what is happening at school (I'm bored...) How might parents respond?
- Create an advisory committee of parents to plan the agenda for parent/teacher conferences or back-to-school night.
- Send home a survey post-conference to assess if further contact is necessary.

Above all, be open and flexible with classroom and school structures in order to create strong school/parent partnerships.

GIFTED EDUCATION DIRECTORS' MEETING — Sept. 20 & 21

Featured Speaker – Susan Assouline, PhD
Breakout Sessions – Math for Advanced Learners, Vocabulary for Advanced Learners, Rigor, Data that Informs, Basics of RtI.



LINKS FOR INSPIRATION

www.cty.jhu.edu/imagine/php

www.raisingresilientkids.com

www.learnimprov.com

ON-LINE COURSES AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Beginning October 1, two six-week on-line courses will begin, *Differentiating for Gifted Learners* and *the Social/Emotional Needs of Gifted Learners*. These classes are appropriate for general education teachers and will help districts meet the intent of the ECEA Rules for personnel qualified to provide instruction for gifted students. One credit from Adams State College is available. Please enroll soon as these classes are limited to the first twenty people.

Even though these are on-line courses, they are perfect for teachers to do as teams. Follow-up activities can be addressed in collaborative groups at your school.

Begin to share information with parents and colleagues about Jim Delisle's visit this October. His workshops are appropriate for administrators, counselors, special education teachers, gifted education facilitators and classroom teachers K-12. One-half credit from Adams State College is available. Two parent evenings are also scheduled.

Monday, Oct 22 – Parent Evening – Cortez
Tuesday, Oct 23 – Workshop – Cortez
Wednesday, Oct 24 – Durango
Wednesday, Oct 24 – Parent Evening – Bayfield
Thursday, Oct 25 – Workshop – Pagosa Springs
Friday, Oct 26 – Workshop – Alamosa

Topics in Gifted Education III will also be available for those who attend the BOCES and GT Network Meetings.

[WATCH FOR FLYERS - COMING SOON!](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that "feedback" is effective when it focuses on the features of the task, such as how to improve in relation to established criteria or emphasizes the learning goal? One third of feedback given by teachers is non-specific praise, or focuses on normative comparisons and results in a negative effect.

FUTURE ARTICLES

*What is happening in your district?
Send in student success stories.*

**Grading That Supports Learning
Progress Monitoring in Gifted Education**