



Mission: To advocate for appropriate education for gifted, creative and talented students.

OAGCT

Oklahoma Association of Gifted, Creative & Talented

Volume 31, Issue 3

May 2009

Donna Walker, President

State Superintendent's Encyclo-Media Conference

The 29th Encyclo-Media Conference is scheduled for September 17th - 18th, 2009, at the Cox Convention Center in Oklahoma City. Encyclo-Media registration is free. This two-day conference includes programming in all curricular areas, concentrating on gifted and talented education, library media, reading, counseling, and technology. More than 3,000 educators across the state and region attend this annual event. There will be nationally-known speakers and authors, over 275 exhibitors and 100 breakout sessions. **Register online at the address at the bottom of this page.**

**Please Note:
Luncheon will
be on FRIDAY,
Sept. 18.**

Encyclo-Media/OAGCT Luncheon

The OAGCT luncheon will be held **Friday, September 18th**. We are so excited to be hosting the phenomenal **speaker, Dr. Eric Cooper**, the President of the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education, whose educational mission is to support the improvement of education for urban and minority students. He maintains an irrefutable belief in the capacity of all school children and youth to succeed at the highest academic levels. Learn more about Dr. Cooper on Page 4.

The luncheon registration forms are not online yet, but should be available in the coming month at the above address. There will be a fee for the luncheon.

Program Proposals

This year the Encyclo-Media gifted and talented committee is working hard to increase the gifted and talented education attendance. With more gifted and talented attendees, we need more GT break sessions! Please plan on sharing your area of expertise with others across the state. **Find the program proposal form on pages 16 and 17.** The deadline for submitting a program proposal is **Friday, June 5, 2009**. When filling out your program proposal, be sure to select ALL subject/audience members that would benefit. With such a variety of attendees at Encyclo-Media, you will need to reach out to more than just GT. Last year, we had several comments that presentations geared towards Middle School were missing in the breakout sessions. If you are a middle school GT educator, please consider sending in a proposal. This conference can only be as good as we as teachers are willing to make it!

Host/Hostess

When registering online, you will also notice information in regards to being a host/hostess for a session. The Encyclo-Media committee is seeking over 100 people to serve as room hosts to introduce the breakout session speakers, handout materials, and collect evaluations. Being a hostess is a great opportunity to connect with new people in gifted education plus you will receive a free gift along with a huge thank you! **Please register to be a host/hostess at the online address at the bottom of this page.**

If you have any questions about Encyclo-Media, please contact:

Sara Austin, Director of Gifted and Talented Education
Oklahoma State Department of Education, 405.521.4287

<http://www.sde.state.ok.us/Services/Conference/Encyclomedia/default.html>.

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President's Corner

by Donna Walker, President

I love to see the faces of the kindergartners and early grade level children arrive at school. Most are excited and eager to step into the doors. They find it exciting to learn and discover new ideas and information. However, the same face six or so years later may not appear so eager and happy to arrive at school. What can we do for our gifted and talented students to keep them engaged and interested in learning?

Teachers who have received gifted and talented training need to provide support and assistance for classroom teachers. We cannot expect people to do something they've never received training to do. Our methodology courses do not prepare teachers to adequately meet the needs of gifted learners. What we've learned at state meetings or through coursework or colleagues, we are obligated to share. We need more coursework in gifted and talented education offered through our colleges and universities. We can speak up and ask for it to be provided. And, when courses are provided, we need to gather friends and colleagues to attend the classes with us.

We can certainly encourage our students to think outside the box. Teachers can encourage multiple responses from various perspectives rather than the "one right answer." Classroom teachers can use compacting, open-ended and higher-level questioning strategies, and utilize research projects with rubrics to help meet the needs of advanced learners. To solve real-world problems, we seldom look to a book or index for the answer. The real world is constantly changing, and knowledge is not static. We approach problems from our previous experiences, compare and contrast similar events or situations, brainstorm possible solutions, and come up with steps to solve the problem. Inventors are real-world problem-solvers that utilize creative thinking.

We can help students see the progression from creative thought to productive action. Providing authentic assessment for students helps students appreciate the creative process. The different approaches students use in solving problems helps students appreciate others' thinking. The creative process should be taught and respected. Inspiration can lead to intellectual passion, resilience, and commitment.

Teachers and parents can work together to promote creativity. Family visits to the museum, toothpaste tube messiness, or ideas jotted down in fragments are all opportunities for parents and teachers to encourage children to dream, investigate and question, and propose alternatives. We can celebrate the imagination and the struggles involved along the way to finding solutions. Let's keep the faces of our gifted children eager and excited for new learning opportunities.

Celebrate Creativity!



Bylaws Revisions—Results of the Voting

In the beginning of February, OAGCT members received an email with proposed revisions for the OAGCCT Bylaws. Members voted to accept or reject the bylaws at our Spring Conference. One hundred percent of the votes were in favor of the proposed bylaws revisions. Thank you to everyone who worked on the Bylaws Committee to update our guidelines.

The State Department...

Proficiency Based Testing:

How it Relates to Oklahoma's Promise

Proficiency Based Promotion (PBP) was approved by the State Board of Education in June of 1993. Since then, Oklahoma has had many students take advantage of the opportunity it provides. By law, a PBP test must have a minimum passing score of 90% in order for the student to advance to the next level of instruction. (If a score of below 90% is received, no documentation is placed on the transcript or in the student's file). There are two ways in which schools record the PBP score. Since the exam takes the place of class instruction, some schools record the exact score the student received on the PBP test. For example, if a student scores 94% on the Algebra I PBP test, a grade of 94% will be recorded on the transcript as the score earned in the class. Other schools record the score as a PASS on the transcript. A PASS score instead of a percentage score can greatly affect a student that is enrolled in Oklahoma's Promise, also known as Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP). Oklahoma's Promise is a scholarship program that has assisted thousands of Oklahoma stu-

dents in their dreams of pursuing a college education. One of the qualifying criteria in receiving the Oklahoma's Promise scholarship is a 2.5 grade point average (GPA). When calculating a student's GPA, there must be a way in which to calculate each score received for the required courses in the Oklahoma's Promise curriculum. If a course score is recorded on the transcript as PASS, and not given a letter or grade score, the score given when calculating GPA for Oklahoma's Promise will be a D because it is the lowest passing score accepted. This method of recording PASS/FAIL transcript documentation is based on the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rules. Districts have a choice in how Proficiency Based Promotion tests are documented so be very careful how your district chooses to record PBP scores.

Sara Austin, Director

Gifted and Talented Education

Oklahoma State Department of Education

(405) 521-4287

Sara_Austin@sde.state.ok.us

<http://sde.state.ok.us/GiftTalented>

Get to know the 2009 Encyclo-Media Luncheon Speaker!

Eric Cooper, Ed.D.

"When we are able to break the glass ceiling for inner city children and see achievement gains go way beyond system expectations; that is when I am the proudest. To seize the opportunity to create hope out of despair—commitment out of frustration . . . change rather than inaction . . . hard work leading to huge gains (not easy simplistic answers, but focused commitment)—to see children and teachers' eyes light up with expectation and awareness that they can teach and learn complex concepts . . . Wow!" stated Eric Cooper.

Dr. Cooper has an enormous list of accomplishments! He has worked in the capacities of Associate Director of Program Development for the College Board, Administrative Assistant in the Office of Curriculum for the Boston Public Schools, and Director of a treatment center for emotionally disturbed students, in addition to working as a teacher, researcher, counselor, and Washington Fellow. He has also been a member of the Select Committee in Educating Black Children; fund-raiser for the National Conference on Educating Black Children; chief advisor for the Thinking Skills Project, Macmillan Publishing Company; director of restructuring team for the Mt. Vernon Public Schools (NY); and has served on the advisory board of WGBH/PBS, Boston, MA. Some additional professional activities include: producer of educational documentaries and talk shows; producer for the Public Broadcasting Service; congressional testimony for House committees; presentations for federal and state educational agencies; advisor to the International Reading Association, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the Editorial Advisory Board, and the Journal of Reading. He is the President of the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education (NUA). He served in a similar position as Executive Director for the NUA at Columbia University's Teachers College and as Adjunct Associate Professor for 7 years. Prior to this position, he was the Vice President for In-Service Training & Telecommunications for the Simon & Schuster Education Group. Cooper received a \$500,000 award from the MacArthur Foundation to produce a television series of prime-time documentaries and training programs on improving the literacy skills of students with NAK Productions of D.C. With NAK, Cooper works as producer for projects that have included numerous talk shows, teleconferences, and documentaries. These projects have been produced for PBS, AED, ASCD, James Comer, Peter Senge, W. Edwards Deming, The College Board, and the Carnegie Foundation.

Publications include: Teaching All the Children: Strategies for Developing Literacy in an Urban Setting; Reading, Thinking & Concept Development, Educating Black Children: America's Challenge; "It Begins with Belief: Social Demography is Not Destiny;" "The Importance of Professional Development to Unlock the Potential of Students in Urban Settings," "Toward a New Mainstream of Instruction of American Schools," "Reading, Thinking and School Effectiveness," "An Effective School Network with a Legislative Emphasis," "Managing the Change Process for Teaching Thinking," "Addressing Urban School Reform: Issues and Alliances," "School Improvement Through Instructional Design," and "The Change Process and Its Implications in Teaching Thinking." Dr. Cooper is also a frequent op-ed contributor for "The Stamford Advocate," "Education Week," "USA Today," "Newsday," "Los Angeles Times," and "The Chronicle of Higher Education," Stories about the work of his organization have appeared in: "Indianapolis Star," "Education Week," "Hamden Journal," "Poughkeepsie Journal," "Cooper has been nominated for the 2003 Eleanor Roosevelt Freedom Medal and the 2004 Gleistman Foundation Education Leadership Award. He has received the Connecticut Voices for Children, First for Kids 2002-2003 Community Advocacy Award. He has received the 2008 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award from the Israeli Consulate of New York City, the Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Federation of Stamford, New Canaan and Darien.

Education: Dr. Cooper received a B.A. from City University (NYC) with a major in Psychology, an MA in Special Education, an Ed. M. in Educational Administration, and a doctorate in Interdisciplinary Studies, all from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Educational mission: His educational mission is to support the improvement of education for urban and minority students. In line with this mission, he has worked on a restructuring project with Ted Sizer and the Education Commission of the States, has been the president of the National Council on Educating Black Children, and writes, lectures and produces television shows to provide advocacy for children who live in disadvantaged circumstances. Cooper is currently working with the University of Alabama/Birmingham to improve education for the City of Birmingham students and has lead a project with Senator Mary Landrieu, The Eleanor Roosevelt Center, The College Board and partner school districts called "Eleanor & Brown," which commemorated the Brown vs the Board of Education decision; viewing education not just as a civil right but as a human justice right. He is co-founder of the Urban Partnership for Literacy with the International Reading Association, is working with the National Council of Teachers of English to support improvements in urban education, and collaborates with the Council of Great City Schools. Cooper maintains an irrefutable belief in the capacity of all school children and youth to succeed at the highest academic levels.

See Dr. Cooper's article on page 11.

FAMILY FACTOIDS

A Great Resource for Parents of Gifted Children...

Great Books with Gifted Characters

Check out the gifted characters found in the following stories:

Avi. *Nothing But the Truth: A Documentary Novel*. Grades 4-8.

This is a witty satire of high school politics that invites the reader to question and analyze what is read and heard from the mass media.

Fitzhugh, L. *Harriet, the Spy*. Grades 1-5. Intelligent and curious Harriet writes observations of her neighbors and classmates and then must devise a creative solution to convince them to forgive her.

Fox, M. *Wilford Gordon McDonald Partridge*. Grades K-3.

Wilford's favorite friend at the retirement home loses her memory, and he wants to figure out how to find if for her.

Lowry, L. *The Giver*. Grades 4-8. This complex novel relates the story of a perfect world with no problems, fears, or pain. The Giver holds the memories of the pain and pleasure of life for the rest of the population.



Ross, T. *Eggbert the Slightly Cracked Egg*.

Grades K-2. With a generous serving of puns, Eggbert uses his creativity and has many adventures trying to fit in and be accepted.

Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education has **FREE** Summer Academies in Math, Science and Technology!

The Academies are throughout the state at various college campuses for grades 8-12.

Visit the link below and click

"Full List" for a complete description, camp location, and contact information.

<http://www.okhighered.org/student-center/jrhigh-highscl/summer-academies.shtml>

Websites for Activities and Resources

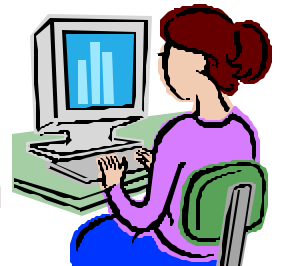
Websites with Activities

- <http://multiplication.com/>-Great website for multiplication strategies and activities!
- <http://www.edheads.org/activities/simple-machines/index.htm>- Test your knowledge on the science and application of simple machines!
- <http://www.factmonster.com/>- This site contains TONS of facts, reference materials, and trivia.
- <http://www.funbrain.com/>-Lots of great math and reading activities on this site!
- <http://pbskids.org/>-This site contains useful information and games for students.
- <http://www.coolmath4kids.com>- Amazing math games to challenge you!
- <http://www.braingle.com/>-Challenge yourself with brain teasers and trivia on this site!

Websites with Resources

- <http://www.nagc.org>-The National Association of Gifted Children. This site provides a multitude of resources and information for parents of gifted children.
- <http://oagct.org/>-Oklahoma Association for Gifted, Creative, and Talented. Local resources for parents of gifted children.
- <http://title3.sde.state.ok.us/gifted>-This site is provided by the Oklahoma Department of Education Office of Gifted and Talented.
- <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/>- This site provides additional links for gifted education, resources for parents, information on conferences, and suggestions for reading material for both parents and students.

Submitted by Keith Higa, OAGCT member



Local Summer Camps and Other Resources

Submitted by Keith Higa, OAGCT member

Greetings, parents! Below is a list of enrichment activities that various agencies/institutions offer this summer. Please keep in mind that most of these camps can only accommodate a specific number of children and require a small tuition. Please use the appropriate contact information to find out more.

Math/Science Related

- Moore-Norman Technology Center "Summer Youth Academy" offers 100 classes for students ages 9-16. <http://www.mntechology.com> Phone: 405-364-5769
- University of Oklahoma Outreach-College of Continuing Education offers "Mini College" to students entering 1st-6th grades. "2009 Mini College" will be held August 3-7. <http://youth.ou.edu/minicollege.html> Phone: 405-325-6897
- OU Sooner Flight Academy offers camps to challenge students ages 4-18 to learn scientific and mathematic principles using aviation education. <http://flightcamp.ou.edu/summer.html> Phone: 405-325-6808
- University of Oklahoma Outreach-College of Continuing Education offers "Horizons Unlimited," a one week intensive program July 12-17 for academically gifted and talented youth who enter grades 6-8 in the fall. <http://youth.ou.edu/horizons.html> Phone: 405-325-6897
- Oklahoma City Zoo offers a variety of summer camps. The camps' topics range from underwater discovery to the hidden life of turtles. Each camp is from 8 am to noon and lasts 4 days. Phone: 425-0218
- Science Museum Oklahoma offers two summer camps: "Pilot's Pursuit"- June 23-27 and "Science Challenge" - July 14-18. Both hands-on camps run 9 am-4 pm during the session. Phone: 405-602-6664
- Stafford Air and Space Camp-The Stafford Museum in Weatherford is offering camps over the first three weeks in June for 3rd-8th graders. Go to <http://www.staffordmuseum.com> for more information.



Arts Related

- City Arts Center offers day camps for painting, acting, video production, photography, and more. Camps are scheduled throughout May 27th-August 15th. Phone: 405-951-0000
- Oklahoma City Museum of Art is offering 21 art camps over the summer for ages 5 to 16. Each camp is thematic based on the museum's collection and special exhibitions. This summer Roman Art from the Louvre will be the featured exhibition. Phone: 405-236-3100 ext.213
- Gaylord-Pickens Oklahoma Heritage Museum offers "This is MY Oklahoma" camps for children ages 5-11. The camp offers artwork and a dig for crystals at the Great Salt Plains. Camps are on the weeks of June 9, 16, and 23. Phone: 405-235-4458

Promoting the Dream: Visions for the Future!

August 3 - 7, 2009

For Gifted and Talented Students (Aged 15 -18 years old)

Housed at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

Early Registration - \$495 (Includes program, speakers, meals, snacks and residence)

\$150 activity fee for off-site activities is highly recommended.

Activity fee includes cruise, recreation, and educational tourism activities with transportation.

For online registration follow the Youth Summit links at: www.worldgifted2009.com



Summer, 2009 Coursework
Gifted and Talented Education
Oklahoma State University - Tulsa

Enroll today!! Call Stacy Coleman at OSU-Tulsa (918) 594-8527

EPSY 5063: Introduction to Gifted Education

The purpose of this course is to survey the foundation of gifted education for all ages (preschool through adult), specifically, the theory and practices in the education of gifted and talented children and youth. State and federal legislation, advocacy, programming, development of talent, identification, and curriculum models will be reviewed. *June 8 – July 31, fully online, all you need is internet access and a computer.*

Instructor: Diane Montgomery, Ph.D.

EPSY 5163: Counseling Techniques for Teachers of Gifted Learners

Understanding the social and emotional needs of students who are gifted is an important component to planning their educational programs. Perfectionism, motivation, creativity, personality, friends and family are discussed as these topics relate to gifted children and youth. *This class meets on Mondays and Wednesdays from June 8 to July 29 at 9:00-11:50 am at OSU-Tulsa.*

Instructor: Diane Montgomery, Ph.D.

EPSY 5363: Differentiated Curriculum for Gifted Learners

This course will focus on developing curricula for students who are gifted. Differentiation strategies for regular-paced curriculum will be used, along with curricular models that assist teachers in planning content that is faster, broader, and deeper than general classroom pacing. Strategies for developing appropriate scope and sequence and assessment strategies for placement in the curriculum will be practiced. *This class meets on Mondays and Wednesdays from June 8 to July 29 at noon to 2:50 pm at OSU-Tulsa.*

Instructor: Debra Hull, Ph.D.

Additionally: A special opportunity for EPSY 5163 and EPSY 5363 (described above) will be offered at Yukon Schools if enrollment from central Oklahoma allows.

Instructor: Nancy Campbell, Ph.D. Contact diane.montgomery@okstate.edu.

Research Corner

by Diane Montgomery, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University

diane.Montgomery@okstate.edu

You might be interested in reading the most recent issue of the *Roeper Review*, which is a special issue (Volume 31, Issue 2) on **Dabrowski theory**. We have seen interest in this theory of positive disintegration in the context of emotional development for students who are gifted in recent issues of the *OAGCT News*. The special issue was the idea of Don Ambrose, the editor of *Roeper*, who invited Cheryl Ackerman and Vicky Frankfourth Moyle to organize the authors, researchers, and resources for those interested in the theory.

In general, Dabrowski theory assists us in understanding the inner angst, sensitivity, and intensities we observe among the high ability students. An innovative group interview by Michele Kane introduces the concepts of the theory from international experts. You will get a taste of the totality of the theory (Moyle), the role of emotions (Mendaglio), the importance of positive integration (Mika), and the levels of the theory (Silverman). After an introductory article, five articles assist in better understanding the importance of the theory. This issue provides the beginning of great discussions when working with children and youth of high ability. Let me know if you are interested in delving deeper!

OACGT Spring Conference 2009

Thank you to all those who came to our Spring Conference. We had a great turn out! We hope you enjoyed the day with Susan Winebrenner. Our thanks go out to our vendors; Mindware (donating door prizes), Cookie Lee Jewelry, Riverside Publishing, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, City Arts Center, Moore-Norman Vo-Tech, PCS Edventures, and M-Group Marketing. Breakout sessions were also a huge hit, and we sincerely thank those who took time to prepare and present.

Once again we had student performances and loved being able to showcase our talented kids across the state. We want to thank the Mid-Del String Quartet, Zambuko, and Jill Minihan for performing and sharing your talents at our conference. Great job!

On evaluations, several people mentioned that they would like more vendors and sessions; this is where the board needs your help. If you have a suggestion or contact for an exhibitor, please let a board member know. In the past few years, vendors have been difficult to find. Please help us!

Awards of Excellence

Each year OACGT recognizes four outstanding young students in grades three through six. These Awards of Excellence were presented at the annual State Convention held on February 20 at the University of Central Oklahoma. They are designed to recognize excellence in students who have distinguished themselves in the area of academics, leadership, or the arts. One student in each of the three areas was selected to receive a \$250 savings bond and a copy of the book, *The Nicholas Effect: A Boy's Gift the World* by Reg Green.

Academics - Jenna Fowlers

Jenna is a fifth grader at Highland Park Elementary in Stillwater. Jenna is an honor student who attends gifted classes and frequently tutors and helps others in her school. She does well in all areas, but her particular strength is in mathematics and logic in which she receives advanced instruction. She finds time to participate in the arts and has performed in the Stillwater Children's Theater in Annie Jr. and The Aristocats and also plays the piano. She is active in community service through her church and girl scout troop which has earned

the Bronze Award and helped to make the hospital emergency room a better place for siblings of young patients to wait. On her own, she has raised money for the Humane Society, helped to serve at local community dinners, and initiated recycling projects to make her community a better place to live.

Arts - Cristina Rivas

Cristina is a fifth grader at Monroe Elementary in Norman. She excels academically and is a strong leader. She participates in the Manyawi! World Music Ensemble. With the Cimarron Circuit Opera in Norman, she performed Ruddigore and Mikado at the Sooner Theatre. She has also performed with the school Opera Company and in Dear Edwina at the Lyric Plaza. In addition, she plays cello and sings in her church choir.

Leadership - Hannah Mohr

Hannah is a fifth grader at Washington Elementary in Norman. Hannah exemplifies a maturity, kindness and sense of character not often seen in fifth graders. She participates in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities which include sports, school clubs and community service. She served as Student Council vice president last year and is currently serving as president. As captain of her com-

petitive soccer team she helps encourage and direct her teammates. She also works as a soccer referee in Norman. She would like to become a politician and to make a difference in her future roles.

Nathaniel Grady, the Overall Winner, received a \$500 savings bond and the book about Nicholas Green. He has also been recognized by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) as the Nicholas Green Distinguished Student from Oklahoma and will receive an additional \$500 savings bond from them.

Nathaniel is a fifth grader at McKinley Elementary in Norman. He sets high standards for himself and is goal-oriented. He is outstanding in all of the areas of academics, leadership and the arts. He has particularly inspired others through his writing and illustrating and participation in the Oklahoma Writing Project. He wants to become either an author, illustrator, or song writer and to inspire or make people happy through his work as well as to express his thoughts and feelings. He is already an exceptional writer!

Congratulations to these four outstanding young people!

Beverly Riggs Camp Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to this year's Beverly Riggs Camp Scholarship winners! And look at the wide array of wonderful experiences in store for them!

Garrett Chase, Edmond--\$500 Aerospace Academy; Huntsville, Alabama

Jordan Givens, Edmond--\$425 Heritage Hall Video Game Creation Camp; Oklahoma City

Hunter Stout, Edmond--\$400 Heritage Hall Chess Camp; Oklahoma City

Katherine Lambert, Edmond—\$500 Tulsa Ballet

Matthew Lambert, Edmond--\$500 Heritage Hall Video Game Creation; Oklahoma City

Ethan and Maddie Gay, Stillwater--\$500 OSU Wonder Camp through the College of Education and the College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology Summer Camp

Noah and Mira Alpers, Norman--\$500 Concordia Language Villages (German); MN

Emma Cooledge, Stillwater--\$500 Horizons Unlimited; OU

Audrey Underwood, Morris Middle School--\$500 Horizons Unlimited; OU

Karis D'Alessandro, Tulsa University School--\$500 Missouri Southern State University Spanish Village

Taylor Brown, Stillwater--\$400 Ozark Natural Science Center; Huntsville, Arkansas

Symphony Simmons, Marshall--\$200 Camp Incredible; Tulsa

Greg Worthy, Stillwater--\$370 University of Arkansas Summer Music Camp

Riggs Campers will be asked to share their summer experiences with us at the OAGCT Luncheon at Encyclo-Media calendar so you do not miss meeting and hearing from these students!



**A special "Congrats!" to our
Past President, Dr. Toni Pantier!**

**She received this year's
Outstanding Service Award!**

**Thank you Dr. Pantier for
all you do!!!**

OAGCT Wants You!

**Please contact OAGCT's
President-Elect, Robbie
Duck, if you would like to
join us in serving on the
Board of Directors.**

**Positions could include
officers, committee chairs,
conference vendor organizer,
conference student showcase
organizer, conference break-
out sessions organizer, news-
letter editor, or webmaster.**

OAGCT Announces 2010 Spring Conference Speaker

Sally Reis will join OAGCT as the guest speaker for the Spring Conference in February 2010! Reis' research interests are related to special populations of gifted and talented students, including: students with learning disabilities, gifted females, and diverse groups of talented students. She is also interested in extensions of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model for both gifted and talented students and as a way to expand offerings and provide general enrichment to identify talents and potentials in students who have not been previously identified as gifted.

Reis is a Distinguished Professor and Teaching Fellow of the Educational Psychology Department at the University of Connecticut and Principal Investigator of the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. Reis was a teacher for 15 years, 11 of which were spent working with gifted students on the elementary, junior high, and high school levels. She has authored more than 130 articles, nine books, 40 book chapters, and numerous monographs and technical reports.

In addition, Reis has traveled extensively conducting workshops and providing professional development for school districts on gifted education, enrichment programs, and talent development programs. She is co-author of *The Schoolwide Enrichment Model*, *The Secondary Triad Model*, *Dilemmas in Talent Development in the Middle Years*, and a book about women's talent development entitled *Work Left Undone: Choices and Compromises of Talented Females*. Reis serves on several editorial boards, including the Gifted Child Quarterly and is a past President of the National Association for Gifted Children.

Coordinator

Confratute, Summer
Institute on Enrichment
Learning and Teaching

Principal Researcher

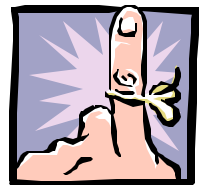
The National Research
Center on the Gifted and
Talented



Do you know a creative, energetic, and responsible student who loves to read, write, or draw? The editors of Creative Kids are looking for students, ages 8-14, to serve as members of their next advisory board. Ideal advisory board members should be creative, proactive, and outgoing. Students will serve on the board for 2 years and will be required to submit at least two pieces of work for publication in the magazine. If you are interested in nominating a student, please visit the applications guideline page at http://www.prufrock.com/client/client_pages/CK/Advisory

Don't Forget

The 3rd week in July each year is National Parenting Gifted Children Week. The week is intended to celebrate the joys and challenges of raising, guiding, and supporting bright young minds. Contact a gifted child's parents and tell them about all the things you know they are doing right!



“Building Academic Success with Underachieving Adolescents”

by Eric Cooper, Ph.D.

Overview by Lucinda Francis, Special Populations Chair

Dr. Eric Cooper speaks of the pedagogy of confidence in his chapter with the above name in *Adolescent Literacy: Turning Promise into Practice*. This pedagogy is based on the “fearless expectation” that ALL students will learn. High intellectual performance is the goal of this pedagogy, Cooper states. He says when teachers have such expectations, they do not doubt the potential of their students, even their underachieving ones, and they switch their focus from covering curriculum to what kind of teaching will maximize learning.

He believes this requires a change in the very definition of literacy itself and that we must embrace a definition of literacy that:

- Fosters engagement of behaviors that are vital to adolescents (making connections, inquiring, giving personal perspective, critically evaluating situations);
- Incorporates authentic literacy

Recognizes the critical role of a student’s frame of reference in literacy development, enabling them to feel smart

Dr. Cooper points out the Elliot Eisner’s definition of literacy does this (1994) when he defines literacy as an individual’s ability to construct, create, and communicate meaning in many forms (e.g., written text, mathematical symbols, all forms of the arts).

Dr. Cooper makes the point that there are many teens that do not see themselves as people living a literate life, engaging in “smart” literate behaviors. He feels they have lost their sense of smartness because their self-motivated literate behaviors and experiences are not recognized or valued in the narrow scope of “discipline literacies” valued in school, those that he calls the “sanctioned literacies”.

He believes part of the answer to reversing underachievement is to demonstrate to adolescents that we value their literate behaviors and perspectives but also must validate their behaviors and perspectives, so that they see the connection between what they know and what is being taught, thus making them feel smart again. He also passionately believes that we must become more aware of the effects of widely held negative stereotypes regarding the intellectual capacity of children and youth of color (Harrison and Murray 1994; Seligman 2005). He speaks of “that corrosive feeling among students that they are not good enough to intellectually succeed solely because of their gender, race, ethnicity, or background” (quoted in Froning 2006, 72).

Dr. Cooper says we must believe in the capacity of people to succeed when nurtured, guided, and strengthened through education reform. “And though it is popular today to declare that education policy should be data driven, we hold that policy should be driven by values and vision that are informed by data.”

This chapter reminds us that learning happens when the brain makes connections among engaging experiences and that adolescents are engaged when they are actively involved and understand what they are studying. He says that constructing meaning is the major requisite to learning and the key to engaging adolescents –connecting to their personal experiences and personal centeredness (seeing the world from their perspective).

This chapter continues by urging teachers and parents to think of the following factors:

- Strategies to ensure understanding
- Catalysts that engage students, bridging to their experiences
- Skills or background information needed to guarantee comprehension

Opportunities that will be provided to enable students to communicate with competence and confidence the meaning they have constructed.

Cooper, Eric and Yvette Jackson. “Building Academic Success with Underachieving Adolescents.” *Adolescent Literacy: Turning Promise into Practice*. Editors: Kylene Beers, Robert E. Probst, Linda Rief. Portsmouth, NH, 2007. 243-256.

Dr. Eric Cooper will be a presenter and OAGCT luncheon speaker at Encyclomedia in September. He is a “must-see.”

Preaching to the GT Choir

by Dick Kantenberger

Texas Teacher Certified in Secondary and Elementary Mathematics and Science, Physics, Special Education and Gifted and Talented Member, Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented

Original Draft - Published in TEMPO Magazine, Feb. 2009

We love to talk about GT and giftedness. We love talk to each other about it by the hour. We go to seminars and talk and listen all day about GT and sometimes several days at a time. We read and write books and articles about giftedness primarily aimed at other people in GT and to the students and parents of gifted or potentially gifted children. There is nothing wrong with these things at all. First, we enjoy talking about GT because we are very interested in it, and second, there are many students and parents that need the help that gifted and talented education can give them. But if we are going to broaden the support for gifted and talented education in this country, we are going to have to broaden our message.

Look what Special Education has been able to accomplish. But how long did it take them? Both GT and Special Ed have been studied in academia for about 40 years prior to World War II, but after the war special education grassroots advocacy organizations began to spring up, like the American Association on Mental Deficiency, United Cerebral Palsy Association and the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Then in the sixties an increasing level of school access was established for children with disabilities at the state and local levels.

The grassroots advocacy for Special Education began to swell as Congress approved Public Law 94-142 "Education for All Handicapped Children Act" in 1975, but it did not prove effective until legislation for federal funding was approved two years later. It mandated that school districts provide such schooling in the "least restrictive environment" possible. But Special Education did not take off until 1990 with the passage of "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (IDEA). Before IDEA, the condition of Special Education in this country was pretty bleak. In 1970, American schools educated only one in five children with disabilities, and many states had laws that excluded children with major disabilities like deafness, blindness and mental retardation. There is no doubt that Special Education programs have helped a great number of students assimilate into the public education system. However, 80% of students in Special Education are there because of weak underlying cognitive skills according to LearningRx. There-

fore, identifying and retraining these cognitive skills is essential for overcoming learning struggles on a permanent basis.

The goals of Gifted and Talented education are to identify and train the cognitive skills of gifted students whose vulnerability is such that it is estimated we are losing about a million kids a year because the public and the state and federal politicians still mostly have the misconception that if a child is gifted then "don't worry about it, s/he is bound to turn out OK"

Unless we want to wait another forty years, it seems to me our goal is clear. As much as we love talking about GT among ourselves, we must accelerate the GT grassroots ground-swell by directing our message to the general public and especially to our state and federal legislators.

Currently we in Texas have almost as many identified gifted students as we have special education students (actually it is 1 to 1.4), but in public education we spend 11 times more on Special Education than GT. Sadly that number is pretty good compared to the national average where Special Ed out-spends GT by over 100 to 1. That's because many states spend virtually nothing on GT. But even our 11 to 1 ratio is not all that noteworthy because a handful of school districts are spending most of the money while most school districts are spending little or nothing. My own affluent school district is spending 43 times as much on Special Ed as GT. Go into any public school in the country and you will find twenty or so Special Ed teachers for every one (or none) GT teacher.

We in GT education are the "tree-trucks" of our movement. However, we need many "leaves" on our "trees". The "leaves" we need, if we are to accomplish our goals, are the support of the general public and the state and federal legislators. Tree-trucks can not grow many leaves on their own, so we all need to make a concerted effort over a period of time to grow many "limbs" which can in turn grow many "leaves". This means that since we are small in numbers we all have to take a pro-active role in educating all of our non-GT teachers, councilors, principals, and the parents of our GT children. So, all of us need to contact the general public and the state and federal governments, especially the state legislators. With a new Congress in Washington DC and a new Legislature in Austin, there is no better time to get our message to these very important people. What can we do?

a) Most important is to contact your own state senators and representatives via personal contact, telephone, letter, fax, or e-mail and ask them to specifically support Gifted and Talented education by passing and funding legislation to 1) require state certification exams of Gifted and

Talented teachers, and 2) that all identified Gifted and Talented students be taught by state certified Gifted and Talented teachers. 3) Place an emphasis on finding these gifted kids at the beginning of elementary school. BE SURE TO ALWAYS ASK FOR THESE SPECIFIC ACTIONS. To find all of your legislators click on: <http://www.ncsl.org/public/leglinks.cfm> then [1st] select your "State" and [2nd] select "Legislator", then click on "Legislature Links". There you will find all the senators and representatives and their addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail links.

b) Contact your local school district superintendent and request these same actions.

c) Write to your local newspaper education reporters, and letters-to-the-editor expressing your concerns about gifted education. Many specific GT concerns can be found on <http://ednews.org/articles/25992/1/>

d) Call local radio talk-shows to express your concerns.

e) For more detailed help contact the National Association for

Gifted Children at <http://www.nagc.org> and click on "Advocacy & Legislation", then "Toolkit". Also contact your state Gifted and Talent organization at this same web-site by clicking on "State by State".

Be aware that a few individual names may be out of date, but you can Google your state association shown and find the latest contacts in your state. We need to do this now while all of these politicians are getting their agendas prioritized.

In order to get a gauge of what it was the lawmakers in Texas and in Washington thought about GT, the idea for this article started in April 2008 when I first sent a type written letter on my personal stationery to President Bush. I followed that up with same typed written letter only personally address to every federal lawmaker from Texas that represents my district in any way. I wrote the same thing to all of the top state lawmakers and many from other districts who are on various education committees in Austin. I got written responses from all the federal politicians except from the White House. Lt. Governor Dewhurst's office called to ask me some questions. All the responses were very polite but each reflected only their own policies on education. None indicated any understanding of Gifted and Talented issues and only mentioned it as a throw-in phrase when talking

(continued next page)

about "No Child Left Behind". However, the State Senator and the District State Representative in my own district, both wrote letters to Texas Education Agency asking them to respond to my letter. Both duly wrote me again afterward. But at least now they knew of the GT situation and they were now also aware of TEA's current policy on it. Of course I was advised of the current state policy on education which I already knew. The salient result of this exercise was clear; that we will get more attention and involvement from the lawmakers in our own districts because, you guessed it, they need your vote. A few GT advocates, and that includes all GT teachers, administrator, parents and advocates, will only make but a very small impact. We need a broad "grass roots" advocacy. That is from where my "tree" analogy was derived.

It will not be easy and we have a long way to go. From an early draft of this article, Roxanna Cramer wrote, "From another choir member: A good article, but unfortunately the timing is bad. G/T kids have never been sympathetic "poster children", especially in comparison with handicapped kids. And in this time of economic downturn, chances of getting more attention focused on G/T kids is practically nil. Science and Math stand a chance, but no body can see the symphony uncomposed or the novel unwritten." I found a 14 year old boy in ISS (In School Suspension) for refusing to do his class work. In talking with the boy and his father I found the kid read War and Peace when he was 10. He wants to be a writer and has taught himself Greek and Latin. I love Roxanna's comment and I'm sure most Music and Language Arts teachers do too. We have a long way to go. From an Assistant Principal in my own district I received the following message "Why did you send me this obnoxious article?" From another "unsigned", " I didn't realize that "gifted" meant being educational snobs" So you see, it will not be easy, however, that is no reason not to try, especially considering the value of the commodity we are dealing with.

In June 2008 I released my unacknowledged letter to President Bush as an open letter. I am the first to admit he had other very serious problems to deal with. It was published by Education News and is shown below.

The misunderstanding about Gifted and Talented issues is widespread. A public school administrator in Maryland said "three-fourths of all of our students are gifted". Another, who I will identify as she posted this response on the internet is Jamie Ruppman who wrote "I believe that all our children should be provided the support and education that they need. That is why I have spent many years as an educational advocate. I am always discouraged, then, when I read editorial offerings and letters suggesting that by addressing the needs of one group of youngsters, we are necessarily and inevitably

short changing or harming another group. Child advocacy has never been and should not be some sort of competition for "our energy and resources". In fact, our nation has the resources and energy it needs to put all children "first". Unfortunately, Dick Kantenberger continues to insist that gifted children (and in my school district that is just about everyone) are worthy of the resources they need.." A bit more far out is an un-signed person in New Hampshire who said "Get the government out of education, they have no business". I wonder who funds public education in New Hampshire!

There are many who do "get it". From Kate Gladstone, "The educational system also tend to ignore and under-represent gifted/talents among those with disabilities of any sort (especially among the neurological disabilities) - see the work of Meredith Warshaw at www.hoagiesgifted.org/twice-exceptional.htm. Amen to this and Amen again. I taught all math courses from sixth-grade math through calculus at a well known psychiatric hospital for a year. Obviously all the students were special education, but I was surprised to find that 15%-20% of these kids were gifted too. This is three to four times what I had expected. This truly is an area that needs to be given much more study and research.

Bert Franks, MD in Dallas said "As a pediatrician I have advocated for years that we have terribly neglected the gifted students who come to me for poor performance because of boredom and not being challenged by the system or parents. The attitude of the cream rising to the top does not always hold true. These very bright kids are a major part of the future of our national growth". Richard Olenchak, PhD at the University of Houston wrote "Keep up the good fight! This is the most dreadful catastrophe of American society; sacrificing our children's talents".

Ann Sheldon, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Gifted Children about an article that I wrote in May 2008, Education's Wag the Dog: Lost Geniuses, www.ednews.org/articles/25922/1/.html . She wrote to me: "This article is a must read for every state lawmaker. We can not continue to be a world class country if we continue to ignore our most gifted future leaders". She then sent a copy of the article to every GT teacher and lawmaker in the State of Ohio. The article has been reprinted with permission by Gifted and Talented organizations in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Mississippi, North Dakota and , I am told, by several other states.

It is clear that we in GT try to absorb everything we can GT. We spend a lot of time studying and talking to each other, but unless we intensify the spreading of our message, it may be another 40 years before our goals of GT are recognized and

met. Do not assume that your principals, counselors, and other non-GT teachers really understand giftedness. Most do not. Some will tell you they do, but that usually does not go beyond understanding a few words, like the meaning of acceleration or asynchronous development, but they do not know the symptoms of identifying the hard to find kids in minority groups, the poor and even girls, and they do not know how to go about implementing the necessary curriculums for the students they do find. Thirty clock-hours on Saturday mornings alone with not do it. The principals and administrators don't have or want to spend the money. That's were Special Education was fifty years ago. We'd better get started now!

GT Bio 12-08:

Mr. Kantenberger is a 17 year teacher, baseball and tennis coach in Texas public schools. He was honored on Fox Sports (TV) Network as "Coach Who Makes a Difference". Before education he owned his own businesses and had offices in Cairo, Johannesburg and Houston and was a Marketing Consultant to The Boeing Co. on projects in Saudi Arabia. He was a member of a U. S. Dept. of Commerce Trade Mission to West Africa. He was on the campaign committee that successfully made Dolph Briscoe (Dem) Governor of Texas and served on several campaigns for George H. W. Bush (Rep). He served on the Houston Grand Opera General Director's Marketing Committee; was Chairman of the Speakers Bureau, Chairman of Arts Advocacy and Pre-curtain Lecturer as well as on the Board of HGO's Opera Guild. He also served on the Boards of First Methodist Church in Houston, the Houston Tennis Association and the Spring Branch-Memorial Sports Association. A native Texan, he holds degrees in electrical engineering from the University of Houston and business administration from Southern Methodist University.

Dedication:

I would like to dedicate this article to Dr. Rick Olenchak, Professor, Psychologist and Director of the Urban Talent Research Institute at the University of Houston who first lit my GT fire and to Dr. Lynette Breedlove, Director, Advanced Academic Studies, Spring Branch ISD in Houston, who as my mentor cultivated it.

The End is in Sight!

by Alicia Steer, Treasurer-Elect

As the end of the school year approaches, teachers and students can both get a little antsy about summer break. Trying to keep students engaged and under control can be challenging. If you have been putting off art lessons to prep for tests, this can be a good time to take a break from the rigor of the classroom and be creative. The following lessons and websites might make the remaining school days informative and challenging, yet fun for all.

* Have you been putting off art lessons because you think you can't draw? Take a visit to Uncle Fred. <http://www.unclefred.com/index.html> This site is very user friendly. Students of all ages and their teachers can have fun with these simple guided drawing lessons.

* Combine art with fun writing prompts at Art Junction. <http://www.artjunction.org/index.php> To the right of the home page is a section just for kids. There are some great art projects that should keep your students thinking creatively for quite a while.

* I have taught a fun unit called Hatscapades and Shoetopia. Research the history of shoes and hats with your students (or assign to individuals or small groups), just Google. Paint/decorate old shoes (never to be worn again) with all kinds of left over art materials. Then create a hat to go with your "new shoes." Of course, after making such fabulous attire, students can write poetry or a descriptive piece telling why and where someone would wear their shoes and hats, or have a fashion parade. Kinderart has a related lesson as well as many other art ideas.

<http://www.kinderart.com/painting/shoes.shtml>

How about some wacky word play by combining students' love of word games and drawing to promote critical thinking?

http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/02/lp264-01.shtml

* Check out The Meaning of Droodles lesson plan. <http://www.droodles.com>

I hope this has been a successful school year, and you will be able to rest and recharge during the summer.

National Standards for Teachers of Gifted and Talented Students

Find them on-line at
www.cectag.org

FAMILY FACTOIDS

When we extend our membership family to more parents, then we do a better job of nurturing gifted students in our state. Connect more parents to OAGCT! Please take the two "Family Factoids" pages in each newsletter, copy them, and share the handout with parents. Let's involve more parents in OAGCT?

Looking Ahead . . .



23rd Annual Conference on the Autonomous Learner Model

“Facilitating 21st Century Learners: Response to Intervention, Curriculum Differentiation, and Advance Learning Class”

June 16-21, 2009

Estes Park Center/YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colorado

32nd Annual Confratute

“Think It Forward to Creativity and Innovation”

July 13-24, 2009 (attend 1 or 2 weeks)

University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut

Keynotes: Sandra Kaplan, Rachel McAnallen, Susan Baum, Sally Reis, Joseph Renzulli, Del Siegle, Jean Gubbin

26th Annual SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) Conference

“Mission Possible”

July 17-19, 2009

Orlando, Florida

56th Annual National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) Convention

“Gateway to Gifted”

November 5-8, 2009

St. Louis, Missouri

2010 Atlanta, Georgia November 1–5

2011 New Orleans, Louisiana November 3-6

2012 Denver, Colorado November 15-18

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Subject Descriptions

Counseling - includes program development, prevention and support programs, counseling, academic advising, safety, crisis management, educational and career planning.

Curriculum and Instruction - includes instructional strategies related to *Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS)*.

Gifted and Talented - includes flexible pacing, differentiated instructional strategies, social and emotional needs of gifted students.

Library Media - includes collaboration, information literacy, roles of the library media specialist, library management, reading promotion, storytelling, Sequoyah Book Awards, intellectual freedom.

Technology - includes classroom technology, Internet, telecommunications, distance learning, integration of technology into the curriculum, using technology to gather and analyze student data.

Gifted Oklahomans Foundation
and
Oklahoma Association of the Gifted, Creative & Talented

Scholarship Application for University Coursework

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail Address: _____

School District: _____

School Site: _____

Educational Background: _____

Hours in G/T education completed: _____

Hours planned this semester: _____

Course title: _____

Institution: _____

Please attach a description of why your are enrolling in coursework.

Mail completed application to:
Gifted Oklahomans Foundation
P.O. Box 300113
Midwest City, OK 73140

OAGCT MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Yes, I want to become a member of OAGCT

? New Member

? Membership renewal

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State and Zip _____
Phone _____
E-mail Address _____
School District _____

_____ **Individual membership: \$20.00 per year**

_____ Student

_____ Parent

_____ Teacher of Gifted Students

_____ Regular Education Teacher

_____ Administrator

_____ Other _____

_____ Donation of \$2 or more to our teacher scholarship fund for college classes

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